



Brody: Eine galizische Grenzstadt im langen 19. Jahrhundert by Börries K. Kuzmany

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Slavic Review, Vol. 72, No. 3 (FALL 2013), pp. 606-607

Published by:

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5612/slavicreview.72.3.0606>

Accessed: 17/09/2013 14:43

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transformed into a hostile one. Péter argues that besides national dominance and oppression, which characterized the nationality policy of both Vienna and Budapest, great power interests, including the traditional European balance of power, played a role. R. W. Seton-Watson and his liberal colleagues “were preoccupied with order and they also believed in national justice, but how these two concerns may be connected can only be a matter of conjecture” (465). This last sentence of the essay and of the book reflects perfectly the author’s cautious and reflective attitude toward history. Although he was an exponent of text-centered and narrative-based constitutional history, his passionate terminological interest testifies to his openness to more modern approaches, especially to German *Begriffsgeschichte*.

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Brody: Eine galizische Grenzstadt im langen 19. Jahrhundert. By Börries K. Kuzmany. Vienna: Böhlau, 2011. 406 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Plates. Photographs. Figures. Tables. Maps. €35.00, hard bound.

Brody was the Habsburg monarchy’s “most Jewish city” (14). Perched north of Lwów on the post-1772 border between Austria and Russia, it became for a century an enclave of free trade—a kind of east European Jewish Hong Kong. This resulted from a 1779 Austrian edict, issued following the first partition of Poland, that aimed to preserve Brody’s well-established strength as commercial mediator between western Russia, via Berdichev, across southern Poland to Leipzig and points west.

Brody’s high noon arrived under Napoleon’s Continental Blockade (1806–1814), when it bestrode the stage as a “world-historical actor” and a “transfer-zone of European importance” (71). Not only were Russia’s imports funneled almost exclusively through Brody, but smuggling and espionage also flourished. After 1815, when Russia and Austria raised tariff walls, Brody, not a manufacturing center, struggled against inexorable economic decline. From the mid-nineteenth century, this was hastened by the rise of Odessa, a city heavily financed from Brody and a beneficiary of the Brody Jewish elites’ embrace of German-Jewish Enlightenment. The coming of railroads also rendered Brody’s goods-transfer function obsolete. In 1880, it lost its free-trade privilege, which sealed its fate. The town reached its pre-1918 population zenith in 1852, with nearly 18,000 Jews and almost 4,000 Christians, mainly Poles but also Ruthenians and a few wealthy Armenians. In 1910, however, there were but 12,000 Jews and 6,000 Christians and by 1921, the numbers had decreased to 7,000 and 4,000, respectively.

Börries Kuzmany attributes Brody’s distinctiveness, as a sizable Jewish community, to the high degree in which urban self-government, including law enforcement, rested in Jewish hands. The Jewish elites, thanks to Maria Theresa’s and Joseph II’s emancipation of the Jews, culminating in full civil equality in 1869, warmly embraced pro-Habsburg loyalty. They adopted the German language and harmonized their religious life—Orthodox, though some 60 percent of Brody Jews (mainly in the lower classes) were Chassidim—with the German Jewish Enlightenment (*Haskalah*). From their schools strode forth many pious notables, including rabbis of Rome and Amsterdam.

Kuzmany’s sources are rich on Brody’s innovative Israelitische Realschule (Jewish Secondary Academy), launched in 1818 by *Haskalah* proselytizers (*maskilim*), merchant notables, and city authorities. In 1853, the Viennese government benevolently transformed it into a supra-confessional Unter-Realschule and in 1881 into an Ober-

gymnasium. Christian youth attended it in large and increasing numbers. Use of German as the instructional language equalized the mostly non-German students, many traveling from afar to this prestigious academy. In 1882, after the Galician provincial government was secure in Polish hands, the school underwent *Utraquisierung*, mandating alternation between German and Polish in the classroom.

Brody's Jewish elites clung to the German language longer than other Galician Jews. But in 1907 Polish became the sole instructional language in Brody's numerous public schools. Unable to officially declare Yiddish a mother tongue, Brody's Jewish students, like their parents, became ever more inclined toward public identification with Polishness. Though a Yiddish-speaking Chassidic subculture flourished, in the political sphere it was Zionists who arose to challenge the *maskilim*. Also, among Poles and Ukrainians antagonisms grew bitter especially between Ruthenian Russophiles (unusually strong in Brody) and Ukrainophiles. In contrast to such new political conflicts, Kuzmany emphasizes Christian-Jewish comity and collaboration in urban affairs and education. In the 1890s, 58 percent of elementary schoolchildren spoke two or more languages (including Yiddish). Yet the reader gains little sense of Christian Brodyites' subjective self-understanding.

The book also examines travelers' accounts, entertaining but distorted by prejudices, including those of Honoré de Balzac, who expressed typical western superciliousness over eastern backwardness, inclining to blame it on the ubiquitous "*vrais talmudistes*" (209). Though Kuzmany finesses the point, such accounts cannot weigh the merits of widespread stereotypes of "Galician misery." Similarly, it is unsurprising that post-1945 memory-books of Jews, Poles, and Ukrainians virtually air-brush each other out of a common history.

Kuzmany's thesis that Brody gradually "galicianized" (330) itself through Jewish elites' self-Polonization seems questionable. He identifies the "problem" (328) Brody poses as the Jewish elites' long allegiance, strengthened by staunch Germanophile Judaism, to an idealized multicultural Habsburg monarchy. The Brody Jews, trapped in an increasingly ominous Polish-Ukrainian conflict, finally sought escape from this irresolvable dilemma by bowing to Galicia's Polish overlords.

Yet, as Larry Wolff has shown in his *Idea of Galicia* (2010), provincialized nationality conflict pitting Poles against Ukrainians, and leaving Jews to face impossible choices, was the *negation* of a Habsburg-invented Galicia symbolizing multiculturalism under benevolent dynasts spreading enlightenment and social well-being through imperial institutions rooted in German culture. In this light, one may conclude that Brody's Jewish elites were perhaps the first and last Galicians. Their self-Polonization was a strategic—if not self-deceiving—offer of marriage to a deeply ambivalent suitor.

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Barricades and Banners: The Revolution of 1905 and the Transformation of Warsaw Jewry. By Scott Ury. Stanford Studies in Jewish History and Culture. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012. xxvii, 415 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Chronology. Glossary. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Table. Maps. \$60.00, hard bound.

In his *Barricades and Banners*, Scott Ury follows in the footsteps of his illustrious mentors, Ezra Mendelsohn and the late Jonathan Frankel. While his teachers, each in his own way, dealt with the "what?" of Jewish politics, Ury carries their work fur-