

# JEWISH EDUCATIONAL HERITAGE AT TARTU UNIVERSITY

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## JEWISH STUDENTS AND JEWISH STUDENT ORGANISATIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

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### **Introduction**

On December 16, 1999, we could celebrate 125 years from the emergence of the first Jewish student fraternity at the University of Tartu. Let the forthcoming article commemorate this event.

### **On the history of Jews in the Russian Empire**

The "Jewish Problem" for Russia emerged on a wider scale after the partitioning of Poland in 1772, 1793, 1795 and the uniting of the so-called Congress-Poland in 1815. Although Jews retained their rights during these acts, officials soon started to favour the emigration of Jews, and soon also attempts at assimilation were started. According to a law enforced in 1795 Jews had to pay double taxes, and when emigrating, a three year double tax.<sup>1</sup>

*Энциклопедический словарь. Т* совершенно переработанное издание под редакцией проф. В. Я. Железнова, М. М. Ковалевского,

The regions where Jews were permitted to settle (*черта оседлости*) were the provinces of Besarabia, Vilno (Vilnius), Vitebsk, Volynia, Grodno, Jekaterinoslav, Kiev, Kovno (Kaunas), Minsk, Mogilyov, Podolia, Poltava, Tauria, Herson and Tchernigov, and the provinces of Poland and Curonia (*Kurland*), the latter as the only part of historic Livonia.<sup>2</sup>

An attempt was made to distinguish the Jewish communities from the local peasant populations. At the end of 1802 a commission was formed to work out a special decree concerning the position of Jews in the Russian Empire. The "Decree on the Jews" issued on December 21,<sup>5</sup> 1804, with its section 34, forbade the Jews to keep traditional professions in villages and other rural settlements but also to inhabit them.<sup>6</sup> By January 13, 1808, the resettlement of Jews from rural areas to towns was to be complete. The three years should have witnessed the resettlement of 60 000 families, or about 300 000 people. No means existed for this and on January 10, 1809, the fulfilment of this decree was halted.<sup>7</sup> Such attempts had been made earlier and were made later too. In 1821 the moving of Jews from the villages and rural settlements of the province of Chernigov, in 1822 those of Poltava, in 1823 those of the provinces of White Russia, in 1835 partially those of Grodno, was launched. In 1835 the resettlement campaign was temporarily stopped, yet in 1843 the Jews were moved out from the military settlements of Kiev and Podolia. The temporary regulations for the Jews, even from as late as the year 1882 prohibited Jews to

С. А. Муромцева и К. А. Тимирязева. Типография "Бр. А. и И. Гранатъ и К°" [Henceforth: *Энциклопедическiи словарь*]. Vol. XIX. P. 447.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 486

In Russian: Комитетъ для составленiя положенiя о евреяхъ.

<sup>4</sup> In Russian: Положенiе о евреяхъ.

<sup>5</sup> All the dates given by the Gregorian Calendar.

<sup>6</sup> "...никто изъ евреевъ...ни въ какой деревне и селе не можетъ содержать никакихъ арендъ, шинковъ, кабаковъ и постоялыхъ дворовъ. ни подѣ своимъ, ни подѣ чужимъ именемъ, ни продавать въ нихъ вина и даже жить въ нихъ, подѣ какимъ бы то видомъ ни было, разве проездомъ".

<sup>7</sup> Гессенъ, Ю. И. *Евреи въ Россiи. Очерки общественной, правовой и экономической жизни русскихъ евреевъ*. С.-Петербургъ, 1906 [Henceforth: Гессенъ]. Pp. 302-331.

settle outside towns<sup>8</sup>. Besides, already in 1816 the Jews were also expelled from the regions closer than 50 *versts* from the Western border. Some of those expelled, later returned. In 1825 they were again expelled with the exception of those managing to buy real-estate. By the decree of May 2, 1843, all the Jews were again settled away from the territories closer than 50 *versts* from the borders of Austria-Hungary and Prussia. This decree was annulled in 1904.<sup>9</sup> In 1817 a society for converting Jews to Christianity was founded (*Общество израильских християнь*). In 1824 the Jews from foreign countries were forbidden to settle in Russia.

In the years 1827-1856 the Jewish communities had greater obligations to give conscripts: for every 1000 men 10 conscripts were to be given (for other social and ethnic layers this number was smaller, depending also on the need). Among the Jews teenagers were also recruited. These were the so-called cantonists. They were trained in special military units, where attempts were also made to convert them to Christainity.<sup>10</sup> Slightly easier for the Jews in Russia was the era of Alexander II. In 1856 the bigger obligations concerning conscripts were cancelled; in 1874 general military service was established in Russia.

From 1861 the Jews with an academic degree of magister, doctor or candidate could freely choose where to live. In 1862 the Jews in the Polish Kingdom were granted equal rights with the Polish people. In 1879 the limitations for settlement were wained for all the Jews with a higher education and the representatives of some other qualified professions (obstreticians, pharmacists, dentists, also part of the merchant body).

The processes not achieved by enforcement started, in more liberal times, to take place by themselves — the Jewish people were getting assimilated more and more, and more and more Jews were entering the universities. Instead of the *Talmud*, the works of more European-type philosophers like Maimonides, Mendelssohn, etc began to be

Гессень, Ю. И. *Евреи въ Россіи. Очерки общественной, правовой и экономической жизни русскихъ евреевъ*. С.-Петербургъ, 1906 [Henceforth: Гессень]. Pp. 336-338.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. Pp. 337-338.

<sup>10</sup> *Энциклопедический словарь*, vol. XIX. P. 451.

studied. The Jewish leftists together with Russians became *narodniks*. Then came social democracy and then *Bund*.<sup>11</sup>

In March 1881 Alexander II was murdered. Jews were accused of the crime, and one and a half months after the assassination the pogroms started. Single pogroms had in fact taken place in Russia before— mainly in Odessa, launched by the Greeks.<sup>12</sup> On May 15, 1882, temporary regulations concerning Jews were established, limiting the rights which had been achieved by the Jews by that time, and remaining in force till the end of Tsarist Russia. The new limitations also touched higher education:

1) *Numerus clausus*, concerning the Jews, for places in high schools and gymnasiums was limited to 5% in St. Petersburg and Moscow; in the regions of Jewish settlement the number was 15%, and outside the areas of Jewish settlement, 10%. *Numerus clausus* concerning the universities in St. Petersburg and Moscow was 3%, in the areas of Jewish settlement 10% and outside the latter 5%. The *numerus clausus* for Jewish students of pharmacy was to be 20% in the areas of Jewish settlement, and 10% outside of it. Some gymnasiums and facilities of higher education were totally closed to Jews — the best known among the latter was the Military Medical Academy of St. Petersburg;

2) To the civil service only the Jews with an academic degree of a doctor, magister and candidate were accepted, or the ones graduating from university with a grade I diploma, or specialists like doctors, engineers-technologists and land surveyors,

3) From the year 1889 Jews could be admitted to the bar only with the permission of the Minister of Justice. Between 1889 and 1904 no Jews crossed this obstacle;

4) In 1892 Jews were prohibited to participate in the local government elections.<sup>13</sup>

The discrimination, especially the pogroms, forced the Jews to emigrate. During the years 1881-1908 about 1 545 000 Jews left Russia. Of these, 1 250 000 arrived the United States, large numbers of them remaining in New York, creating a strong basis for the Jewish community in the States. The next destination of Russian Jews was Great

*Энциклопедический словарь*, vol. XIX. Pp. 456-457.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. P. 457.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. Pp. 464-66.

Britain. Immigration of Jews was favoured also by Argentina. About 20 000 Jews went to Palestine. At the turn of the century Jews constituted 5% of the whole population of Russia; that amounted to about 5 million people.

### 1.2. On the history of Jews in the Baltic provinces of *Kurland, Livland and Estland*

The area of Jewish settlement closest to (the University of) Tartu (belonging to the educational circle of Tartu / Riga) was the Province of Curonia (*Kurland*) — see the Map. Until the year 1882 most of the



The historic Baltic Provinces.

Jewish students at Tartu University came from this province. Curonia was united with Russia during the last partitioning of Poland in 1795. Up to the end of the 17th century the Dukedom of Curonia, as a subsidiary state of Poland, had been practically independent; later it fell into the sphere of Russian influence. The Dukedom was founded by the last Master of the Livonian Order, Gottfried Kettler, in 1561 from the territories the Order possessed in Curonia. The lands of the Bishopric of Curonia (the so called *stift* of Piltene) were bought in 1560 by the last Catholic Bishop, J. v. Münchhausen. By the Treaty of Kroneburg of 1585 the King of Poland bought the *stift* and mortgaged it to the margrave of Barndeburg, who had financed the deal. In the period 1656-1717 Piltene belonged to the Curonian Dukedom, later again to Poland.

Due to the different sovereigns, the Jews of the different parts of Curonia had different rights. As J. v. Münchhausen was financed by Jewish merchants, the rights of Jews in the part of the territory initially belonging to the church exceeded the ones of their brethren in the Dukedom. In Piltene the Jews, already in 1570, could become town citizens. In 1797 one of the aldermen of Aizpute (*Hasenpot*) was Jewish.<sup>14</sup> By the decision of the diet of 1750 Jews were granted the right to live in the *stiff* of Piltene, they just had to pay the so-called *Schutzgeld*.<sup>15</sup> The Dukedom of Curonia, until the return from exile of Duke Ernst Johann Biron in 1763, tried to expel Jews from the country. Later the situation became more favourable and in 1782 the diets permitted the Jews to live on the territory of the Dukedom of Curonia too.<sup>16</sup>

In 1797 there were 4851 Jews living in Curonia, in 1835 the number was 23,030, and 22,743 in 1850.<sup>17</sup> The fall in their numbers was caused by the emigration of 2530 people to the Province of Herson in 1840 and the epidemics of cholera in 1848. According to the census of 1897 there were 51,070 Jews in the Province of Curonia, i.e. 7,5% of the whole population, sharing second place with Germans after Latvians. The Province of Livonia did not belong to those territories in which Jews were permitted to settle. Yet, in 1785 at Sloka (German *Schlock*, now part of town Jurmala), on the border between Curonia and Livonia, by the *ukaz* of Catherine II, everybody regardless of descent and faith could settle and practice trade. By 1822 Jews were living in the suburbs of Riga, and in 1853 there were 120 Jewish families.<sup>18</sup>

There were less Jews living on the territory of present day Estonia. There is evidence of a Jew called Johannes Jode living in Tallinn since the year 1333. In 1413 somebody named Pawele der Jode lived in Tallinn. In the 16th century Jews were not permitted to live in Estonia and Livonia; the prohibition was repeated once more when Riga sur-

<sup>14</sup> Wunderbar, R. J. Geschichte der Juden in den Provinzen Liv- und Kurland seit ihrer frühesten Niederlassung daselbst bis auf die gegenwärtige Zeit. Nach den authentischen Quellen bearbeitet. Mitau, 1853 [Henceforth: Wunderbar]. P. 17.

<sup>15</sup> *Гессенъ*, pp. 380-382.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* Pp. 384-387.

<sup>17</sup> Wunderbar, pp. 50,58-60.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* Pp. 9-15.

rendered to Poland in 1561. In 1595 and 1613 the King of Poland ordered, at the request of local ranks, that foreigners, especially the Scottish, Dutch and Jewish merchants, be expelled from the counties of Tartu, Cesis (Wenden) and Pärnu. In a privilege given in 1621 to Riga it has been mentioned that the Jews have no right to "harm the citizens". Yet, in the Polish times there were rather many Jews present in the suites of Polish nobles and merchants.<sup>19</sup>

After the provinces of Estonia and Livonia were conquered by the Russians, in 1738 and 1742, Jews were expelled by the order of the Empress Jelizaveta Petrovna. In this way, in 1743 18 Jews from Tartu left. During the reign of Catherine II the plight of the Jews became better. In the first quarter of the 19th century, Jews were permitted to be treated at the hospitals of the University of Tartu.<sup>20</sup>

The Estonian Jewish community was founded by the cantonists. During the years 1828-1849, half a battailion of cantonists (600-800 boys), in 1849-1854, 300-400 boys, was located near Tallinn. A great proportion of these people were of Jewish origin. During the Crimean war, the so called Nikolai Soldiers with families, were settled in Estonia. In 1858 there were 60-80 families of the latter in Tallinn, there were 10 families in Tartu in 1859 and 10 in Pärnu in 1865. In 1893 an order was given to expel the Jews from the regions not belonging to the Jewish settlement area. In 1894 the ones having arrived before 1879 were permitted to remain.<sup>21</sup>

The Jewish community was numerous in Latgale (South Eastern region of the present day Latvia), the three counties of which belonged to the Province of Vitebsk.

Liebmann, A. *Ajaloolised ja kultuurilised eeldused juudi koguduste tekimiseks ja arenemiseks Eestis* [Historic and cultural preconditions for the emergence of Jewish communities in Estonia]. Master's thesis, manuscript. Tartu, 1937. Pp. 14-27.

*Ibid.* Pp. 32-39.

*Ibid.* Pp. 44-47.

Table 1. The ratio of Jews in the county centres of the Baltic provinces Curonia, Livonia and Estonia in 1897, and in *Estonian and Latvian* centres respectively in 1934 and 1935.

Town	Number of inhabitants		Jewish		% of Jewish	
	1897	1934/1935	1897	1934/1935	1897	1934/1935
Riga	282 230	377 917	221 15	42 328	7,8	11,2
Province of Curonia:						
Jelgava ( <i>Mitau</i> )	35 131	34 099	5 879	2 039	16,7	6,0
Liepaja ( <i>Libau</i> )	64 489	57 098	9 461	7 379	14,7	12,9
Kuldiga	9 720	7 180	1 368	646	14,1	9,0
Tukums	7 555	8 144	2 296	953	30,4	11,7
Ventspils ( <i>Windau</i> )	7 127	15 671	1 313	1 246	18,4	8,0
Bauska	6 544	4 904	2 745	778	41,9	15,9
Jaunjelgava	5 829	2 153	3 256	561	55,9	26,1
Jekabpils	5 829	5 826	2 068	793	35,5	13,6
Talsi	4 200	3 819	1 402	83	33,4	2,2
Ilūkste	3 652	1 300	842	71	23,1	5,5
Aizpute	3 340	3 418	1 170	534	35,0	15,6
Province of Livonia:						
Cēsis ( <i>Wenden</i> )	6 356	8 748	326	180	5,1	2,1
Valmiera	5 050	8 482	161	93	3,2	1,1
Madona		2 142		115		5,4
Tartu ( <i>Dorpat/Yuryev</i> )	42 308	58 876	1 760	920	4,2	1,6
Pärnu	12 897	20 334	396	248	3,1	1,2
Viljandi	7 736	11 788	166	123	2,1	1,0
Kuressaare	4 603	4 478	30	22	0,7	0,5
Võru	4 152	5 332	258	96	6,2	1,8
Valga	10 923		303		2,8	
Valka (Latvia)		3 268		57		1,7
Valga (Estonia)		10 842		262		2,4
Province of Estonia:						
Tallinn	64 600	137 792	1 191	2 203	1,8	1,6
Rakvere	5 890	10 027	89	100	1,5	1,0
Haapsalu	2 996	4 649	18	5	0,6	0,1
Paide	2 507	3 285	4	18	0,2	0,5
Narva	28 600	23 512		188		0,8

SOURCES: Тройницкий Н. А. (1905). *Первая всеобщая перепись населения Российской Империи 1897 г.* Эстляндская губерния, pp. 122-125, Лифляндская губерния, pp. 222-229; *Baltisches historisches Ortslexikon, II* (Lettland). Quellen und Studien zur baltischen Geschichte 8/II. Köln-Wien,



1990.; II *rahvaloendus Eestis* [II Census of Estonia in 1934]. Vihik II: Rahvastiku koostis ja korteriolud. 1. III 1934 rahvaloenduse andmed. Tallinn, 1935. Pp. 48, 53. One has to take into accordance the changes in administrative borders of some towns.

## 2. The first Jewish student organisations in Austria-Hungary and Germany

In Europe, in general, civil rights for Jews were granted in the middle of the 19th century. While in Western Europe the assimilation of Jews had already started at the beginning of the Modern Times, in Austria-Hungary the process started in the second half of the 19th century. More and more Jews received European education and entered the universities, where the ratio of Jewish students was rising rapidly. If in 1863/1864 the Jewish students at the University of Vienna constituted 17,4%, then in 1873/1874 the ratio was already 22.4% and in 1883/1884 32.7%, at the Medical Faculty even 55.8%.<sup>22</sup>

Jewish students entered the student corporations Equally with others. The rapid increase in their numbers caused a negative reaction among Germans. In 1880 *Burschenschaft Silesia* announced that it was no longer going to accept Jews as its members; by the beginning of the 1890s all the *burschenschaft's* of Vienna and the majority of other corporations had ceased to accept Jewish members. In 1896 the Austrian societies of German students accepted the so called *Waidhofen Declaration*, stating the Jews incapable of satisfaction. The acceptance of the right of Jews to defend their honour in duels was renounced. Later the *Waidhofen Declaration* was accepted by the majority of Austrian German corporations.

<sup>22</sup> Seewann, H. "Der Antisemitismus auf akademischen Boden. Die Genugtuungsfrage. Das "Waidhofener Prinzip."". In: *Zirkel und Zionsstern*. Seewann, H. (Ed.) 1990 (I, II), 1992, 1994, 1996. *Bilder und Dokumente aus der versunkenen Welt des jüdisch-nationalen Korporationswesens. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Zionismus auf akademischem Boden. Bd. I-V.*, Graz. [Henceforth: *Zirkel und Zionsstern*]. Bd. I, 1990. P. 22.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. Pp. 22-23.

As Jews were no longer admitted to the existing organisations, they founded ones of their own. Although, already in 1836, at the University of Prague, there is believed to have been a Palestinophilic Jewish student fraternity,<sup>24</sup> the Jewish community in general in the forthcoming years was more oriented towards the assimilation into the Western society, and Jewish students preferred German corporations and other student organisations. In this way the first Jewish student organisations emerged at the universities of Austria-Hungary and Germany (and at Tartu) only after the emergence of antisemitism in the academic circles of the particular region. The oldest Jewish corporation is believed to be *Kadimah*, founded in 1882 in Vienna. In the coming decade about ten Jewish corporations emerged just in Vienna. Most of them were wearing coloured caps and swordplaying, they supported new Zionist positions contrary to that of the old-fashioned researchers of the *Talmud*. Most of the emerging Jewish corporations elected Theodor Herzl their honorary member. In the end of the 19th century the Austrian Jewish corporations gathered under a covering-organisation *Senioren-Convent*.<sup>26</sup>

At German universities the numbers of Jewish students were not as big. In the German student body the old (founded mainly from the beginning of the 19th century — *Corps*) student fraternities were dominating.<sup>27</sup> The *Corps* was insistently apolitical and international in its membership. These corporations took the prescripts of Arianism into their statutes only in the 1920s-1930s (which did not spare them from dissolvment in the Naziera). Antisemitism in Germany was characteristic of the Bismarck-oriented *Vereine Deutscher Studenten* (their covering-organisation — *Verband der Vereine Deutscher Studenten*, also *Kyffhäuserverband*, founded in 1881) emerging from the 1880s onwards. As a counterbalance to the latter tendencies, the German Jewish corporations were emerging, the first of which *Viadrina*

<sup>24</sup> *Еврейская энциклопедія. Сводъ знаній о еврействе и его культурѣ въ прошломъ и настоящемъ. С.-Петербургъ. Vol. XIV. P. 584*

<sup>25</sup> Official name: *Jüdischer Akademischer Verein, JAV*.

<sup>26</sup> Seewann, H. "Das Entstehen der ersten jüdisch-nationalen Korporationen in Wien". In: *Zirkel und Zionsstern*. Bd. I, 1990. Pp. 33-37; Seewann, H. "Die einzelnen Verbindungen und Vereine". *Zirkel und Zionsstern*. Bd. I, 1990. Pp. 123-198.

<sup>27</sup> *Kösener Senioren-Convents-Verband, KSCV*.

(later *Thuringia*) was founded in 1886 in Breslau. On August 8, 1896, the German Jewish corporations united under a roof-organisation *Kartell-Convent* (13 corporations in 1931). Later also *Kartell Jüdischer Verbindungen* (17 corporations in 1931) and *Bund Jüdischer Akademiker* (9 corporations in 1931) were founded. Besides these 39 corporations, there were some which did not enter the covering-organisations.<sup>28</sup>

The Jewish corporations of Austria and Germany were established since Jews were not admitted to other corporations but also to defend the honour of Jewish students. The members of the corporations belonging to the *Kartell-Convent* were obliged, when insulted on an ethnic basis (usually the insult was *Judenjunge*), to summon the insulter to a duel with sabres, before WW I also to a duel with pistols. If not acting in such a way, the student was automatically expelled. It must be said that the sabre duel was pretty frightening, as was the duel with pistols, the sabres were heavier than rapiers and the wounds much more dangerous.

At the beginning of the 20th century the restrictions concerning the acceptance of Jewish students into student organisations switched from religious criteria to racial — the so called Arian principles were enforced.<sup>29</sup> Mistakenly, some positions in the statutes of many German corporations (especially the *Burschenschaft*), by which the members could be only Germans, are also taken as criteria of antisemitism. It must be remembered that in general the statutes of Estonian (and other nationality based) student fraternities also assume that the members be of Estonian or relevant origin. The Arian principles were stressing directly the racial aspects.

<sup>28</sup> Schindler, T. "Der Kampf des Kartell-Convents (K.C.) gegen den Antisemitismus. Dargestellt am Beispiel von Hellmuth Schreiber Spreviae, Nassovia." *Einst und Jetzt*. München und Stamsried/Opf, 1991, (Bd 36). Pp. 189-203.

<sup>29</sup> Schindler, T. "Der Kampf des Kartell-Convents (K.C.) gegen den Antisemitismus. Dargestellt am Beispiel von Hellmuth Schreiber Spreviae, Nassovia." *Einst und Jetzt*. München und Stamsried/Opf, 1991, (Bd 36). Pp. 189-203.

### 3. The archives of the Jewish student organisations in Tartu

The archives of the Jewish student organisations,<sup>30</sup> with the exception *Hasmonaea*, *Hacfiro* and *Schatal*, have been preserved relatively well. On March 31, 1953, all the files belonging to the Jewish student organisations active in the 1920s and 1930s, i.e. in the inter-war Estonian Republic, were transferred from Tartu to Tallinn. Among others this concerned the materials of corporations *Limuwia* and its alumni association, the Academic Society for Studying Jewish History and Culture (henceforth Academic Society), and corporation *Hasmonaea*. As the archives of *Hasmonaea* were destroyed, perhaps by its own members, in 1940<sup>31</sup>, there was not much concerning the latter to be handed over (6 files, including the German standing rules of the corporation). Why, several weeks after the death of Stalin, the Jewish archives were taken to Tallinn, is not known. The people organising the transfer, were not interested in the organisations active during Tsarist Russia. The files kept at the University of Tartu of the Estonian Republic, concerning the corporations *Hasmonaea* and *Limuwia* have also not been found. These files had to exist and could perhaps still be somewhere. The majority of the materials concerning other student fraternities, corporations and organisations have been preserved in the University archives.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Treasury of Jewish Students: general files in the Estonian History Archives [Henceforth: EHA] Stock 402, Series 7, Item 197 and Stock 2100, series 19, Item 160; The Academic Society for Learning Jewish History and Culture: Estonian State Archives [Henceforth: ESA] Stock 2294; general files, EHA, Stock 402, Series 7, Items 199, 261; Stock 2100, Series 19, Item 27; *Limuwia* (Society for Literature and Music): ESA Stock 2292; general files, EHA Stock 402, Series 7, Item 198 ja 297; The Scientific Society for History and Literature: EHA Stock 2653, general files, EHA, Stock 402, Series 7, Item 204 ja 240; *Hasmonaea*: ESA Stock 2293; *Hacfiro*: only general files, EHA Stock 2100, Series 19, Item 150; *Šatal*: the same, EHA, Stock 2100, Series 19, Item 291.

<sup>31</sup> It is the guess of the author by parrallel: the *Hasmonaea* at Latvian University, by the example of which the one in Tartu was founded, did destroy its archives, to avoid *NKVD* to use the materials as an evidence of guilt.

<sup>32</sup> EHA, Stock 2100, Series 19.

In general, when compared with other corporations, the preservation of the documents concerning Jewish students could be qualified as rather satisfactory. One can get an overview of most of the organisations. Also it is possible to reconstruct the membership of the latter (there are slight problems with the years 1905-1909/1910 and 1916—1918 concerning the freshmen). The membership of *Hasmonea* can be reconstructed indirectly, mainly by the semester lists sent to other corporations, but for some semesters these could be missing too.

Literature concerning Jewish corporations is rather scarce. If material on every Estonian or Baltic German corporation has been published by the kilogramme (unfortunately more in the direct meaning, less in the substantial), then writings on Estonian Jewish corporations are almost non-existing. An overview of them is given in a book by Kopl Jokton, reprinted in 1992,<sup>33</sup> and the work of Harald Seewann.

#### 4. Jewish students at the University of Tartu before the year 1918

Jewish students (see **Figure 1**) were studying at Tartu from the first years after the re-establishment of the University by the Russian authorities in 1802. In 1807 and 1808 Simon Meierovitsch and Salomon Zeidler from Vilnius were matriculated to the Medical Faculty. During 1809-1812 the Medical Faculty enrolled three Levi's: Demetrius August, Joachim, and Moses Ezechieel. The first of them received a gold medal at the contest of student research in 1810, the last one was rusticated by Baltic-German students in 1816.<sup>34</sup> In 1812 Hirsch Rappaport from Austria entered the university in Tartu. Up to the year 1850 those enrolled included Benjamin, David and Eduard

<sup>33</sup> Jokton, K. *Juutide ajaloost Eestis* [On the History of Jews in Estonia]. Tartu, 1992.

<sup>34</sup> *Album Academicum der Kaiserlichen Universität zu Dorpat 1802-1889*. Bearbeitet von A. Hasselblatt und Dr. G. Otto. Dorpat, 1889; Kudu, E. "Üliõpilaste omavahelistest sidemetest ja organiseerumiskatsetest Tartus XIX saj esimestel aastakümnetel" [On the attempts of the students of Tartu University to build up organisations in the beginning of the 19th century]. *Tartu Ülikooli ajaloo küsimusi*. Vol XVI, 1985. Pp. 36-37.

Levi (Levy), Abram and Hirsch Schapir (Schapiro), Paul Israelsohn, Alexander, Emanuel and Paul Wulffius, Leopold Cohn and others. The number of Jewish students started to rise in the second half of the 19th century. In Tartu statistics concerning the religious background of the students was kept from the year 1878.<sup>35</sup> After the pogroms of 1881 the University of Tartu received Jewish students from more distant regions too, among them several students from Kiev University.<sup>36</sup> When in 1881 there were 63 students of Jewish religion at Tartu, then in 1882 the number was already 115.<sup>37</sup> During 1884-1893 the proportion of Jewish students rose from 10.4% to 24.1%.<sup>38</sup> The rapid growth in the percentage of Jewish students was in fact not only caused by the growth in the absolute numbers of Jewish students, but by the outburst of Russification at the university, starting in 1889. As the teaching language at Tartu had become Russian, numerous German students left. One has also to mention the closing in 1892 of local German private schools, belonging to the knighthoods, in Tallinn, Riga, Viljandi (Fellin), Berzaine (Birkenruh), Kuldiga (Goldingen), which also diminished greatly the number of potential German language students. Since at the beginning of the 1890s not many students from Russia came to study in Tartu, the absolute number of students enrolled fell, while the absolute number of Jewish students was rising. If in 1890 of the 1812 students matriculated 333 were Jewish, then in 1893, when 1546 students were enrolled, 373 of them were Jewish. From this year the University in Tartu started to introduce the *numerus clausus* concerning Jews. The limit for Tartu was 5% among ordinary students and 10% among pharmacists.

<sup>35</sup> *Статистическія таблицы и личные списки по Императорскому Юрьевскому, бывшему дерптскому университету 1802-1901.* Юрьевъ, 1902. P. 22; *Personal der Kaiserlichen Universität zu Dorpat 1844-II-1891-II* (1844-II-1848-II Verzeichniß des Personals und der Studierender auf der Kaiserlichen Universität zu Dorpat). Dorpat.

<sup>36</sup> Kaplan, J. "Akademischer Verein für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur, Dorpat." In: *Zirkel und Zionsstern*. Bd. V, 1996. [Henceforth: Kaplan 1996] P. 85.

<sup>37</sup> *Статистическія таблицы и личные списки по Императорскому Юрьевскому, бывшему дерптскому университету 1802-1901.* Юрьевъ, 1902. P. 22.

<sup>38</sup> *Личный состав Императорского Юрьевского Университета 1892-1916.* Юрьевъ, 1916.

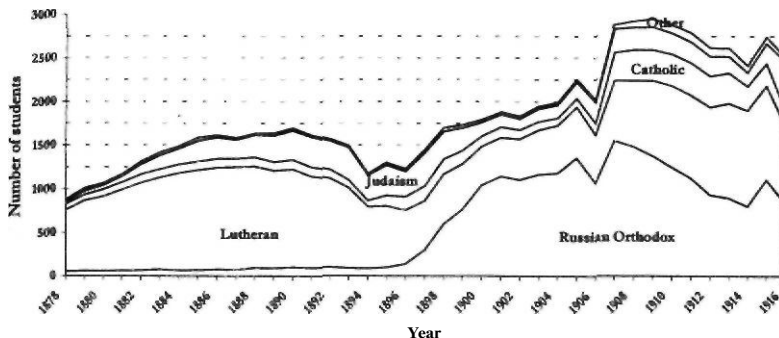


Figure 1. The changes in the religious constitution of the student body of Tartu University 1878-1916.

By the year 1896 the number of Jewish students had fallen to 188 and the absolute number of students to 1225. The university, in fact, was in a rather bad state: the German students had left, it was prohibited to accept Jews, and there were not enough Estonian, Latvian, and Polish people to fill the university. To solve the problem, in 1897, the board of the university made a decision enabling the graduates of the theological seminaries, although their educational level could not be compared to that of gymnasiums. These, so called seminarists, were accepted to the universities of Tartu (then Yuryev), Tomsk and Warsaw. The resultingly hordes of new students were rushing to Tartu, the student body was Russified and the ratio of Jews fell to the required level, up until WWI when, by 1916, it rose again up to 19.4% due to the war refugees.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Личный состав Императорского Юрьевского Университета 1892—1916. Юрьевъ, 1916.

## 5. Student organisations at the University of Tartu in the 1880s

By the beginning of the 1880s a student state dominated by 6 Baltic-German corporations and the Latvian *Lettonia*, and possessing unofficial legal power concerning the student life had formed in Tartu. The highest organ — *Chargierten Convent (Ch!C!)* — was formed by the managing commissions of seven corporations. The uniform legislation was called *allgemeiner Comment*. Most of the "wild" students, incl. the Jews, endorsed at some corporation the *Comment*. The corporations in Tartu had been legally registered according to the regulations<sup>40</sup> given by the Curator of the Tartu Study Circle, G. F. v. Bradke. To establish a new corporation, first the agreement of *Ch!C!* was needed, second, was that of the university board. When these two were positive, the final decision was made by the Minister of Education or his deputy. From the beginning of the 1880s the establishment of student societies also started. According to the new student regulations, given in 1868 by the Curator of the University, Duke A. Keyserling, the founding of scientific-literary societies was permitted.<sup>41</sup> The registration of their statutes was limited to the Rector alone.<sup>42</sup> By these regulations, in 1883 and 1884, three Jewish societies were registered: The Society for Literature and Music, The Academic Society of Jewish History and Literature, and the Scientific Society of History and Literature. By these regulations other, by their content also national, societies also emerged: The Estonian Student Society (1883), The Society of Russian Students (1881/1885-1918), The Literary-Scientific Society of Young Latvians (1888-1899), The Society of the Friends of Natural Sciences — the latter in fact a Polish student organisation, thereby legalising the corporation *Polonia* (1888-1906) already existing since 1828 — and several professional societies.<sup>43</sup> All

<sup>40</sup> *Regeln für die Corporationen unter der Studierenden der Dorpat'schen Universität*, 1855. (EHA, Stock 402, Series 7, Item 105.)

<sup>41</sup> German: *Verein*, Russian: *общество*

<sup>42</sup> *Regeln für die Studierenden der Kaiserlichen Universität Dorpat* (mit Anlagen). Dorpat, 1869.

<sup>43</sup> EHA, Stock 402, Series 7, Items 196, 282, 242, 241.



these societies were obliged to acknowledge the *Comment*, and all their members were to be registered at corporations as "wild" students.<sup>44</sup>

## 6. Jewish students at the Baltic-German corporations

As the four oldest Baltic-German corporations were founded as territorial organisations, the place of birth or the school from which the member graduated was more important than their nationality. Therefore the Baltic-German corporations included numerous more or less Germanised Estonians, Latvians, Russian etc. The same concerned also Jews. Perhaps for the first time in the history of the Baltic corporations the Jewish issue arose in 1841 at the assembly of corporation *Estonia* on May 20th. There it was stated that colours could be worn only by Germans.<sup>45</sup> The issue was raised in connection with a Jewish student of mathematics, Isidor Schmämann, who was a *fechtbodist*<sup>46</sup> of *Estonia*. There is no evidence of the details of the conflict. Anyhow, *Estonia* did continue to include Estonian, Russian and Jewish (i.e. non-German) students. Since most of the Jews studying in Tartu came from Curonia, there were several Jews in the corporation *Curonia*. E. Kuehn has found at least 5 of them as active members: Paul Israelsohn-Voss (accepted to *Curonia* in 1850), Johann Claasen (1858), Adolf Knie (1867), Renatus Kapeller (1867) and Julius Klein (1882). They all studied medicine.<sup>47</sup> Jews were included also in younger corporations. The founder and author of the

<sup>44</sup> There have been compared the lists of the "wild students" (*Liste der Wilden*) in the reports of the *Ch!C!* (EHA, Stock 2090, Series 1) and the lists of the particular student organisations (EHA, Stock 402, Series 7). *"Eine Vorschlag, das nur deutsche bei uns Landsleute werden können, wurde mit 12 Stimmen pro u. 9 contra angenommen"*. EHA, Stock 1843, Series 1, Item 51.

<sup>46</sup> A membership-status in the Baltic-German corporations. The name is derived from the hall of fencing (*Fechtboden*). In 1820s-1840s the *F.* were students who by an agreement and pay used the fencing hall and inventaria of the corporation, without being the members of it. Starting from the 1850s *F.* was a term for all the not active members, incl. also the freshmen.

<sup>47</sup> Kuehn, E. "Jüdische Studenten — aktiv in einer deutsch-baltischen Korporation". *Zirkel und Zionsstern*. Bd. V, 1996. P. 53

anthem of *Fraternitas Academica* (founded in 1881), Joseph Ferdinand Feitelberg was a Jew from Jelgava (Mitau). A freshman from the same year, Boris Sacher from Kiev, died in a duel with pistols in December 1884.<sup>48</sup> This corporation had Jewish members later too. At the end of the 1920s, Leonid Weiner (by his matriculation book a Lutheran, a graduate from the Tallinn German Gymnasium) from Tallinn, was accepted a member. He worked as an assistant at the Clinics of Tartu University. In 1939 he did not leave Estonia with the Baltic-German *Umsiedlung*, and in 1941 he did not evacuate to the Soviet rear. After the beginning of the German occupation he was helped to the position of a district physician in Simuna, where he could survive the German occupation.<sup>49</sup>

## 7. Jewish student organisations at the Imperial Russian University of Tartu — (Figure 2)

### 7.1. The Treasury of Mutual Help of Jewish Students

The oldest Jewish organisation at Tartu University was the Treasury of Mutual Help of Jewish Students, founded in December 16, 1874.<sup>50</sup> The first chairman of the treasury was Aizik Feiertag. Initially the Treasury had 22 members.<sup>51</sup> The resources of the Treasury were made up of the semester fees of the members and donations received from the "Society for Spreading Education among Russian Jews", in St. Petersburg. The Treasury had broader importance than in the student context. In 1875 the members of the Treasury supported the founding of the Jewish primary school in Tartu and agreed to teach in it without salary.

<sup>48</sup> *Album Fratrum Academicorum. Zusammengetragen von Johann Brockhausen. München, 1981. [Henceforth: *Album Fratrum*, 1981] No. 7. P 39.*

<sup>49</sup> *Album Academicum Universitatis Tartuensis 1918-1944 I-III. Tartu, 1994 [Henceforth: *Album Academicum*, 1994]. # 10413; *Album Fratrum*, 1981. #277.*

<sup>50</sup> German: *Kassa zur Unterstützung jüdischer Studierender zu Dorpat*, Russian: *Касса взаимопомощи студентовъ-евреевъ Юрьевского университета.*

<sup>51</sup> Kaplan 1996. P 85.

The Treasury of Jewish Students  
1874–1918...1920–1940

Academic (Jewish) Society of  
History and Literature  
1883–1918...1920–1940

*Geselliger  
Kreis* 1882–1883

Society of Literature  
and Music 1883–1907  
Scientific Society of History  
and Literature 1884–1907...1912

The Library of  
Jewish Students 1907–1911

The Musico-Literary  
Scientific Society  
of Jewish Students  
1912–1918, 1922–1925

*HASMONAEA*  
(1923) 1926–1940

*KADIMAH*  
1915...1918

*HACFTIRO*  
1925–1938

*ŠATAL*  
1932–1940

*LIMU/WIA*  
(1883) 1925–1940

1870      1880      1890      1900      1910      1920      1930      1940

Figure 2. Jewish student organisations of Tartu University 1874–1940.

In 1907 the new statutes of the Treasury were registered. According to the latter, the members of the Treasury were all the Jewish students at the University; its highest institution was the general assembly, held at the beginning of every semester. The assembly elected a 8-member board; the latter nominated the chairman, treasurer and secretary. Starting from the year 1907 printed reports were issued, which together with the statement of accounts contained the list of debtors and a report on the activities. As the management of the Treasury ran from February till October and from October till February, but the student lists of the University were made at different times, the number of members of the treasury can not be compared with the number of Jewish students. In 1914 the treasury had 171 members and an alumni of 604. In the first semester of 1915 there were 266 members (of whom 51 worked as medical personnel at the front, and one was a POW in Germany); in the second semester of 1915 the treasury already had 419 members of.<sup>52</sup>

## **7.2. The Society for Literature and Music and the Scientific Society for History and Literature**

On September 10, 1882, Jewish students from the Province of Curonia founded an organisation known as the Social Circle (*Geselliger Kreis*).<sup>53</sup> For unknown reasons, the Circle split during the next semester. At the meetings held on July 12 and November 2, 1883, part of the members stepped out and established the Society for Literature and Music (*Literarisch-musikalischer Verein*), which was registered by Rector, E. v. Wahl, on December 12, 1883.<sup>54</sup> On March 12, 1884, the remainder of the Circle, founded the Scientific Society for History and Literature (*Wissenschaftlicher Verein für Geschichte und Literatur*), which was registered by the Rector on March 17.<sup>55</sup> The only difference between the membership of the two societies could be that in the first there were more graduates from the Nikolai Gymnasium of Liepaja (Libau), but in the second one, the graduates from the Gymnasium of Jelgava (Mitau) predominated. The conflict between Mitau and Libau (perhaps it did not

<sup>52</sup> EHA, Stock 402, Series 7, Item 197.

<sup>53</sup> ESA, Stock 2292, Series 1, Item 1.

<sup>54</sup> EHA, Stock 402, Series 7, Item 198.

<sup>55</sup> EHA, Stock 402, Series 7, Item 204.

go back to the times when Curonia was divided into two between the Bishop and Order) diminished as time passed, and finally the memberships of the two organisations became rather similar in their geographic constitution.<sup>56</sup> Besides, as the number of Jews in Riga was growing rapidly, the proportion of graduates from the gymnasiums of Riga among the members of both organisations grew fast, making up about a quarter of each of them. The gymnasiums of Riga were also attended by Jews coming from other regions.

According to the places of birth of the members (see **Table 2**) one can not find enough clear trends when comparing the two societies. Of the 170 (whose place of birth we know) members of the Society for Literature and Music, 57 were born in the Province of Curonia (25 in smaller towns and in the countryside, 18 in Liepaja, 14 in Jelgava). At the same time 30 members of the Society were born in the Province of Kaunas (Kovno), although there was nobody who had graduated from a gymnasium in that province. 9 members were graduates of the Gymnasium of Vilnius (Vilno)). Of the 143 members of the Scientific Society for History and Literature, 53 were born in the Province of Curonia (28 in Jelgava, 23 in smaller towns and in the countryside, only 2 in Liepaja. 15 members of this society were born in Kaunas and in the Province of Kaunas.

At the beginning of the 1880s, when in Tartu the Jewish students were treated equally with the others, they could also dedicate themselves to the nagging between societies and corporations concerning the issues of social descent and previous education which was typical to the student world. After the Russification and the introduction of formal antisemitism to the University of Tartu, the resistance to the Russification and antisemitism became more actual for the Jews.

<sup>56</sup> See Tables 2 and 3 (based on the lists of organisations (EHA, Stock 402, Items 198, 204, 240 ja 297) and data from *Album Academicum... 1802-1889* and *Album Academicum... 1889-1918*. The Tables do not include the listeners of pharmacy, as the latters should not have obtained the gymnasium education. Also the data of the latter can not be found in *Album Academicum*).

**Table 2.** The birth places of the members of Jewish student organisations

Place of birth	Academic Society (224 ind., 1883-1904)	The Society of Literature and Music (170 ind., 1883-1905)	The Scientific Society of History and Literature (143 ind., 1884-1905)
Austro-Hungary	1	-	
Province of Bessarabia	12		2
Province of Grodno	21	4	4
Province of Herson and Odessa	27	3	3
Province of Yekaterinosiav	2	-	1
Province of Kalisz	1	-	-
Province of Kaunas	25	30	15
Province of Kielce	-	1	-
Province of Kiev	10	1	2
Province of Curonia, incl <i>Mitau Qelgava)</i>	14	57	53
<i>Kuldiga and district</i>		14	28
<i>Libau (Liepaja)</i>	-	18	10
<i>Other Curonia</i>		25	2
Province of Kursk	-	1	13
Province of Kutaisi	1	-	-
Province of Livonia, incl.	3	22	24
<i>Tartu</i>	2	18	18
<i>Other Livonia</i>	1	-	5
Province of Lodž	-	4	1
Province of Lublin	-	-	1
Province of Lublin	1	1	-
Province of Minsk	23	6	5
Province of Mogilyov	15	3	1
<i>St. Petersburg and Kronstadt</i>	1	11	3
Province of Pskov	3		
Province of Podolia	4	1	2
Province of Poltava	1	1	-
Germany		2	1
Province of Smolensk	4	1	
Province of Suwalki	4	3	1
Province of Zhitomir	1	-	-
Tallinn	1	1	-
Province of Tauria	3	-	3
Province of Tobolsk	-	1	-

Place of birth	Academic Society (224 ind, 1883-1904)	The Society of Literature and Music (170 ind, 1883-1905)	The Scientific Society of History and Literature (143 ind, 1884-1905)
Province of Tomsk	1	-	-
Province of Tschernigov	3	1	-
Province of Tver		2	
Province of Ufa	1	-	-
Province of Varsaw	3	2	1
Province of Viborg	1		
Province of Vilnius	14	8	12
Province of Vitebsk	19	6	7
Province of Volynia	3	1	2
Province of Voronezh	1		

SOURCE: The comparison between the data in *Album Academicum ... 1802-1889*, *Album Academicum ... 1889-1918* and the membership lists of the organisations (Stock 402, Items 199, 261, 198, 297, 204, 240).

In their structure both the organisations were similar to German corporations, but there was no hope of registering a Jewish corporation at the Ministry of Education after the Jewish Regulations of 1882. In this way the Jews could be active as members of the societies. The same was the case for the Estonians, who after a failure to organise a corporation, *Vironia*, continued as the Estonian Students' Society. The members of the societies were also divided into active members and freshmen, and the alumni association. The meetings took place twice a week. There presentations were given and the activities of the society discussed. Both societies compiled a proper library. The managing committee of the Society for Literature and Music consisted of a chairman, a vice-chairman in the literary field and a vice-chairman of the musical field. The managing committee of the Society of History and Literature constituted of five persons — the chairman, vice-chairman, treasurer, secretary, librarian. The Society for Literature and Music applied in 1886 to the *ChlCl* for permission to carry as an external sign a blue watch-pendant, with a white rim. Whether or not they received this right, is not known.<sup>57</sup> During the first ten years of their history both societies grew rapidly. The peak was 51 members of

<sup>57</sup> EHA, Stock 2090, Series 1, Item 129,136.

the Society for Literature and Music in the second semester of 1892 and 40 members of the Society for History and Literature at the second semester of 1893. The fall in the numbers of Jewish students also ended the flourishing of the societies. In 1902 the Society for History and Literature, whose membership had fallen to less than 15 made, a proposal to its partner for uniting. The Russian Revolution of 1905 stopped the process of unification for some years; finally, it was signed on November 3, 1907. For some formal reasons the Society of History and Literature was retained until 1912, when, on December 2, the university board was informed that the activities were temporarily stopped and that the properties were handed over to the Society for Literature and Music.

As it had been impossible to create either society as a Jewish national one, they were according to their statutes open to all students. In fact, though there were no non-Jewish members. On March 1917, in the new statutes of the society, a demand that members should belong to the Jewish faith, was established. The new name of the society became The Society of Jewish Students for Literature, Music and Science.<sup>61</sup>

### **7.3. The Academic Society for Learning Jewish History and Culture**

A number of Jewish students coming to Tartu from more distant regions of Russia belonged to the Society of Russian Students, founded on November 26, 1881. In 1882 the Russians attempted to establish a *numerus clausus* for the Jewish. As a reaction to that, the latter stepped out<sup>62</sup> and founded the Academic Society for Learning Jewish History and Culture (henceforth the Academic Society) which was registered by the Rector on December 21, 1883.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>58</sup> ESA, Stock 2292, Series 1, Item 6.

<sup>59</sup> EHA, Stock 402, Series 7, Item 240.

<sup>60</sup> EHA, Stock 402, Series 7, Item 297,473.

<sup>61</sup> Official name in Russian: *Литературно-музыкальное и научное общество студентов-евреевъ.*

<sup>62</sup> Kaplan 1996. P. 85.

<sup>63</sup> Official name in German: *Akademischer Verein für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*, and Russian: *Академическое общество для изучения еврейской истории и литературы* (EHA, Stock 402, Series 7, Item 199).



The members of the Academic Society differed greatly, both regarding their places of birth but also the gymnasiums from where they graduated, from the Jewish societies mentioned before. We know the names of the gymnasiums of 179 members from the years 1883-1904 (see **Table 3**). In this list, 38 schools are mentioned only once or twice. 14 and 13 members graduated the gymnasiums of Riga and Minsk respectively. 5 to 10 people had graduated from each of the gymnasiums of Tartu, Odessa, Nikolayev, Moskva, Herson, Grodno or Pskov. When compared with the previously mentioned societies, then the graduates from the Gymnasium of Liepaja were numbered 7 and from the Gymnasium of Jelgava 4.

Of the members of the Academic Society the greatest number (27) were born in Odessa and the Province of Herson (we must remember here the previously stated data by which more than 2000 Jews from the Province of Curonia had moved to this region). 25 members had birthplaces in the Province of Kaunas. 23 were from the Province of Minsk, followed by the provinces of Grodno (21), Vitebsk and Mogilyov (15). 14 members had been born in the provinces of Curonia and Vilnius (see Table 2).

Table 3. The gymnasiums and high schools graduated by the members of the Jewish student organisations

Gymnasium or high school	Academic Society (179 ind., 1883-1905)	The Society of Literature and Music (173 ind., 1883-1905)	The Scientific Society of History and Literature (144 ind., 1884-1905)
Ananyev	1	-	-
The graduates of pharmacists' courses at <i>the University of Kharkov</i>	21	10	6
<i>the University of Kazan</i>	2		2
<i>the University of Kiev</i>	1	-	-
<i>the University of Moscow</i>	6	-	-
<i>the University of Tartu (Dorpat/Yuryev)</i>	9	2	2
<i>the University of Varsaw</i>	2	8	2
Belaya Tserkov	1	-	-
Belsk	1	-	-
Bolgrad	1	-	-

Gymnasium or high school	Academic Society (179 ind., 1883-1905)	The Society of Literature and Music (173 ind., 1883-1905)	The Scientific Society of History and Literature (144 ind., 1884-1905)
Gymnasiums of Chisinau	6	—	1
Feodosia	2		1
Gomel	1	1	2
Grodno	8	1	2
I Gymnasium of Harkov	1	-	-
Kherson	8		
Irkutsk	2	-	-
Yekaterinoslav	2	-	1
Kamenets-Podolsk	1	-	2
Kaunas ( <i>Kovno</i> )	1		6
Kertsch		1	
Gymnasiums of Kiev	4	1	2
Kronstadt	-	2	-
Kuldiga ( <i>Goldigen</i> )	1	2	13
Kuressaare ( <i>Arensburg</i> )		1	
Kutaisi	1	1	
Nikolai Gymnasium of Liepaja ( <i>Libau</i> )	7	47	10
<i>Lodz</i>		1	
Marijampole	4	1	1
Mariupol	1		
Jelgava ( <i>Mitau</i> )	3	12	32
Minsk	13	1	1
Mogilyov	4	1	2
The Commercial High School of Narva		1	
Nemirov	1	-	1
Nezhin	1	-	-
Nikolayev	8	1	
Novgorod			1
Novgorod-Seversk	1		
Gymnasiums of Odessa	8		2
Oryol			1
Ostrogzhk	1		
Gymnasiums of St. Petersburg	2	13	7
Gymnasiums of Pskov	7	1	
Piotrköw	1		
Plock	-	1	-

Gymnasium or high school	Academic Society (179 ind., 1883-1905)	The Society of Literature and Music (173 ind., 1883-1905)	The Scientific Society of History and Literature (144 ind., 1884-1905)
Poltava	1	-	-
Priluk	1	1	-
Pärnu ( <i>Pernau</i> )	-	2	1
Alexander Gymnasium of Riga	13	15	16
Town Gymnasium of Riga	1	15	10
Nikolai Gymnasium of Riga	-	11	10
Slutsk	2	1	1
Smolensk	4	-	-
Suwalki	-	1	-
Šiauliai	2	-	-
Zlatopol	1	-	-
Zhitomir	1	-	-
Alexander Gymnasium of Tallinn ( <i>Reval/Revel</i> )	3	1	—
Nikolai Gymnasium of Tallinn ( <i>Reval/Revel</i> )	3	2	—
Tartu ( <i>Dorpat/Yuryev</i> )	8	8	7
I Gymnasium of Tbilisi	1	-	-
Tobolsk	-	1	-
Tsarskoye Selo	1	1	-
Tschernigov	-	-	1
Ufa	1	-	-
Gymnasiums of Varsaw	4	1	2
Viljandi ( <i>Fellin</i> )	-	1	-
Gymnasiums of Vilnius ( <i>Vilno</i> )	4	9	2
Vitebsk	1	3	-
Vyazma	1	-	-
Vladimir	1	-	-

SOURCE: The comparison between the data in *Album Academicum ... 1889-1918* and the membership lists of the organisations (EHA, Stock 402, Items 199,261,198,297,204,240).

The arrival of Jewish students to Tartu from more distant areas of Jewish settlement was caused by the outbursts of pogroms and the anti Jewish legislation, which started to become severe from 1882. Until the end of the century these processes were less noticeable in the Bal-

tic Provinces and the University of Tartu. In this way, the students who had started their academic career at other universities could continue their studies in Tartu. During 1883-1889 of the 110 members entering the Academic Society 33 had an earlier academic experience, mainly from the universities of Kiev, Odessa Novorossiya, Moscow, St. Petersburg and Warsaw.<sup>64</sup> From the 1890s, when the inner ruling of the University of Tartu was levelled to that of other Russian universities, the transfers became very scarce.

The Academic Society flourished till the beginning of the 20th century; then a rapid decline started, and in the first semester of 1902 there were only 4 members enlisted. After the Revolution of 1905 the number of members started to grow again, and in the first semester of 1916 there were already 114 of them (many students coming from other universities — war refugees — joined this society). The managing commission of the society consisted of the chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, treasurer and librarian. With the new statutes, accepted on May 5, 1916, a precondition for joining was belonging to the Jewish nation. From the same time female students were also accepted.

On November 29, 1907, the university board registered the Reading Hall-Library of Jewish Students.<sup>65</sup> It is not known whether it started its activities at all, or was founded just in case, to use the temporary regulations issued on January 3, 1902, by the Minister of Education ("Temporary regulations of the Ministry of Education concerning student organisations at the facilities of higher education")<sup>67</sup> and a decree of the Board of Ministers of June 11, 1907 ("Regulations concerning the student organisations and -meetings arranged at the

<sup>64</sup> The data received by the comparison of the lists in *Album Academicum... 1802-1889* and the lists in the stocks of the Estonian National Archives (ЕНА, Stock 402, Series 7, Item 199).

<sup>65</sup> Although women were permitted to study at Tartu University already in 1915, the first of them were listed in the matriculation books only in 1917.

<sup>66</sup> Official Russian name: *Юрьевская читальня-библиотека еврейских студентовъ*.

<sup>67</sup> In Russian: *Временныя правила организацији студенческихъ учрежденіи въ высшихъ учебныхъ заведенгяхъ ведомства Министерства Народного Просвещенія* (ЕНА, Stock 402, Series 7, Item 624).

premises of the facilities of higher education").<sup>68</sup> By 1911 the organisation mentioned here in any case had ceased to exist.

#### **7.4. The common traits of Jewish organisations**

All three Jewish societies are characterised by a greater stress on cultural activities than was typical of the Baltic German corporations. In this sense the Jewish societies can be compared to those of the Latvians and Estonians, where, besides the merry student life and preservation of dignity, an important part of the activities was the creation and keeping of national identities.

In the 1880s and 1890s the Jewish societies included only the students studying medicine or pharmacy. Such a choice of profession was the result of the limitations in Russia concerning the profession, living place and education of Jewish people. The Jewish students of the era saw their future in the accommodation with the society. This could also explain the great success of the members of the Jewish societies in their studies — most of them graduated from the Medical Faculty within the foreseen 10 semesters and defended a doctoral degree. From the 1890s one can also notice the emergence of Jewish students at other faculties. The reason for that could have been the development of the Jewish community itself, creating a demand for professions of a secular character (lawyers). This also enabled numerous students to study the disciplines they really preferred. Unfortunately data concerning the fates of the Jewish graduates is scarce.

At the Societies for Literature and Music and History the working language was German. At the beginning of the 20th century the importance of Russian started to rise. If we also add Jiddish, then in the 1920s in some fraternities as many as three languages were used. At the Academic Society Russian and German were used. The communi-

<sup>68</sup> In Russian: *Правила относительно студенческих организаций и устройства собраний в стенах высших учебных заведений* (ЕНА, Stock 402, Series 7, Item 624).

<sup>69</sup> It is interesting to note that the *Jewish Encyclopaedia* in Russian mentions as the single Jewish organisation at Tartu, The Academic Society, which is said to be emerging as a reaction of Jewish students to the antisemitism of their fellow students and the expelling them from the existing organisations. *Еврейская энциклопедия, vol. XVI. P. 347.*

cation with the University authorities until 1892 was in German, from then on, mainly in Russian because it had become the official language.<sup>70</sup>

Not all the Jewish students were included in Jewish societies. One can only guess the proportion of Jewish students participating in the societies. It is a hypothesis that during 1884-1905 the members of the three Jewish societies constituted about 30-40% of the total number of Jewish students.<sup>71</sup>

Although there is no adequate overview of the economic situation of the Jewish students, it can be guessed that the wealthier students, who could pay the membership fee and cover the expense accounts, belonged to the societies. Besides, some members of the societies studied abroad, mainly at the universities of Germany and Austria, which also hints to broader opportunities.

Numerous Jewish students were participating at the scientific circles founded from 1900 onwards and territorial bodies (*Землячество*) emerging from 1907 onwards, also one could find Jewish students in the clandestine organisations of the Social Democrats.<sup>72</sup>

### **7.5. Jewish students at other facilities of higher education in Tartu**

At the beginning of the second decade of the 20th century the University of Tartu was just one of the four universities located in this town. In 1848-1918 the Veterinary Institute (1848-1875 The Veterinary School) existed, in 1908-1919 The Private University Courses of Tartu and in 1908-1915 The Higher Female Courses. The latter two, known according to their founders also as the universities of Rostovtsev and Jassinski, were founded namely due to the limitations females and Jews were facing while aiming towards higher education. So, for example, of the 600 participants at the Rostovtsev University, 30%

<sup>70</sup> ESA, Stock 2292; EHA, Stock 2653.

<sup>71</sup> And of course there exists a constant problem caused by the different ways of transcription concerning Jewish first names (i.e. Moses-Moissei-Mowscha).

<sup>72</sup> See: Tšudovski, N. "Lehekülgi mälestustest." [Lists from the memory] In: *Mälestusi Tartu Ülikoolist 1900-1944*. Issakov, S., Palamets, H. (Eds.) Tallinn, 1992. Pp. 130-144.

were Jews. As the Jewish student societies in Tartu were registered at the University of Tartu, the students from other universities could not become their members. In fact we do not know what were the relations between the student societies and the large Jewish student body in the town of Tartu in these times.

### **8. Jewish students and organisations at the *Landesuniversität* in September-November 1918**

The Russian Imperial University ended its activities on May 31, 1918. The so called *Landesuniversität zu Dorpat* acting from September till November, 1918, under the support of the German occupation army, had from the matriculated 1044 students and auditors of pharmacy, 254 individuals (24.3%) being of Jewish origin.<sup>74</sup> It must however be noted that as most of the Estonian students were boycotting the *Landesuniversität*, the number of students in it was smaller than it could have been. The changes concerning Jewish students, taking place in the particular transition period, can be seen in **Table 4**.

**Table 4.** Jewish students at *Landesuniversität Dorpat*

Were matriculated before 31.05.1918 and in <i>Landesuniversität</i> , did not continue after 01.12.1919	65
Were matriculated before 31.05.1918 and in <i>Landesuniversität</i> , continued after 01.12.1919	50
Were matriculated before 31.05.1918 and after 01.12.1919, were not matriculated in <i>Landesuniversität</i>	12
Matriculated only in <i>Landesuniversität</i>	122
Matriculated in <i>Landesuniversität</i> and continuing after 01.12.1919	17

In 1916 more than 500 Jewish students and pharmacists were enlisted at the University of Tartu. From Table 4 it becomes evident that remarkable changes took place between 1918-1919 in the make-up of

<sup>73</sup> EH A, Stock 1734.

<sup>74</sup> EHA, Stock 2100, Series 16, Item 6.

the Jewish student body. A large number of Jewish students evacuated together with the university to Voronezh; some moved to other places.

The following era in the history of the university was dominated by the German occupation of 1918. Unfortunately there is very little information concerning the fate of those students enrolled only at the *Landesuniversität zu Dorpat*. Several of them had come to Tartu from Russian universities and had later returned to Russia; some continued their studies at the Latvian University.

At the *Landesuniversität* the Academic Society and the treasury of Mutual Aid were registered. Here one also has to mention an organisation new to this study. Perhaps in 1915 the Zionist Academic Society *Kadimah* (*Zionistisch-Akademischer Verein Kadimah*) was founded.<sup>75</sup> This was the first Zionist student organisation registered at Tartu University. Unfortunately only its statutes, prepared to be proposed to the *Landesuniversität*, where *Kadimah* was registered on October 16, 1918, have survived. In the Estonian Republic this organisation was not active.

### 9. The Jewish students at the University of Tartu of the Republic of Estonia

Of the population of independent Estonia of the 1920s-1930s Jews constituted less than 0.5%.<sup>76</sup> The ratio of Jewish students at Tarm University was consistently at least four times bigger (see **Figure 3**). One must still note that not all the Jewish students studying in Tartu had graduated from the gymnasiums in Estonia. From the enrolled, 648 Jews,<sup>77</sup> 130, i.e. more than 1/5, graduated from gymnasiums in Latvia. One may guess that, besides a good reputation and the university-traditions, the

<sup>75</sup> EHA, Stock 402, Series 7, Item 205.

<sup>76</sup> By the census of 1934, 4,434 people of Jewish origin were living in Estonia, among whom 4,277 were living in towns, 25 in small towns and 79 in the countryside.

<sup>77</sup> This number given, could be in fact smaller than the reality, as the nationality of the students was not until the first half of the 1930s mentioned in the matriculation books.



Latvian Jews came to Tartu and studied Estonian also because there was a more tolerant attitude towards the Jewish students.

In Estonia the Jews had cultural autonomy. According to this there were two Jewish gymnasiums working in the country. Of the students of Tartu, 26 had, during 1930-1933, graduated from the Private Jewish Gymnasium in Tartu and 64, during 1927-1940, from a similar institution in Tallinn. Nevertheless, most of the Jewish students had received their education at the Russian gymnasiums of Tartu and Tallinn, and some had graduated from schools in Germany or Lithuania. There were just occasional graduates from Estonian-language gymnasiums.

As there were no restrictions in Estonia concerning the occupation and settlement of Jews, these factors could not have influenced their choice of profession. Thus the specialisations preferred by Jews did not differ from the preferences of the whole student body. In 1934 a Chair of Jewish studies was founded at Tartu University,<sup>78</sup> where as a main course 15 matriculated students were studying *Judaica*. The faculty was graduated by 4 students, Dina Michelson and Abe Liebman defended their Master's theses.<sup>79</sup>

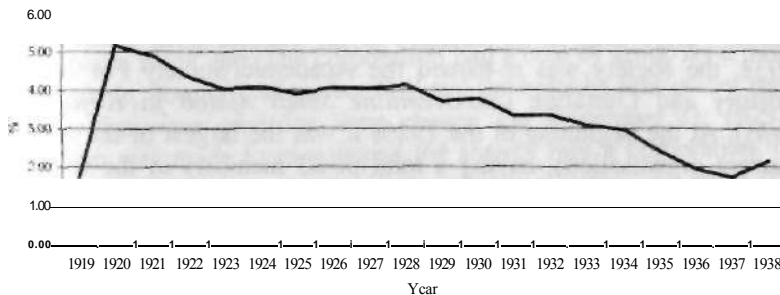


Figure 3. The ratio of Jewish students at the University of Tartu in 1919—1938.

<sup>78</sup> See the article by K. Lindroos in this booklet.

<sup>79</sup> *Album Academicum*, 1994.

## **10. Jewish student organisations at the Tartu University of the Republic of Estonia**

### **10.1. Treasury of Jewish Students**

The first Jewish student organisation registered on May 19, 1920, by the temporary board of Tartu University was the Treasury of Jewish Students (*Juudi Soost Üliõpilaste Kassa*). If before WW I almost all the Jewish students had been members of the treasury then now the proportion could be about 1/2. Perhaps, in the different situation, the functions of the treasury were taken over by the societies and corporations.

### **10.2. The Academic Society for Learning Jewish History and Culture**

On september 24, 1920, the temporary board of the University of Tartu registered the Society of Jewish Students (*Juudi Soost Üliõpilaste Selts*). The people aiming to continue the tradition of the Academic Society for Learning Jewish History and Culture registered themselves under this name. Initially it was not clear whether they could be the successor of the Academic Society. The situation became clear by April 1, 1921, when the society was registered by its correct name.<sup>80</sup> According to the changes in the statutes from October 25, 1938, the society was re-named the Academic Society For Jewish History and Literature (*Akadeemiline Juudi Ajaloo ja Kirjanduse Selts*). At the beginning of the 1920s it was the largest of the Jewish student organisations, having a total of 53 members in the first semester of 1924. From this time the Society began also to include women.

But soon the organisation *Hacfiro* which was founded later, drew away the members and potential members of the Academic Society. The corporation *Hasmonaea* was also first established as a branch of the Academic Society, and later split from it.<sup>81</sup> The number of members of the Academic Society was diminishing in the 1930s. The rea-

<sup>80</sup> Jokton, K. *Juutide ajalooost Eestis* [On the History of Jews in Estonia]. Tartu, 1992.

<sup>81</sup> ESA, Stock 2294, Series 1.

son could be the general tendency, noticed also in Estonian student organisations, by which the students started, more and more, to prefer the corporations to the societies (the latter not wearing "colours" for example). In 1931, when there were only 13 members in the society, the then 8-member managing commission was exchanged for a 3-member institution. In 1934 the institution of a host and hostess of the society was established. In 1938, together with the change of name, the society was registered as an Academic Circle, in order to avoid becoming subject to the so-called convent-prescript in the new Universities Act. By 1939 the nadir was passed and the society already had 17 members. The last entry in the files of the society dates from March 17, 1941, when the Jewish Community Centre in Tallinn asked the University to submit the library of the society to them.

### 10.3. *Limuwia*

On October 27, 1922, the board of Tartu University registered the previous Jewish' Students Society for Literature, Music and Science under the Estonian name (*Juudi Üliõpilaste Muusika-Kirjandus-Teadusline Ühing*). In the Estonian Republic nobody hindered the formation of a Jewish corporation. On December 4, 1924, the corporation chose its colours: these were dark-blue, white and golden. These colours were depicted on the band and student cap; the freshmen had a black cap. The corporation had a coat of arms. As a motto *Friendship, honour and nationality!* and the heraldic text *amore more ore re firmantur amicitiae*, were chosen. On September 23, 1925, a decision was made to re-organise the society into a corporation. On October 3, 1925, the necessary changes in the statutes were made. The board of the University re-registered the Society as a corporation,<sup>82</sup> with the chosen name of *Limuwia*. The statutes of the corporation aimed to raise national consciousness, to improve cultural situation and to support the sense of honour and improve friendship between the members. To become a freshman one had to collect (in the case of a

<sup>82</sup> ESA, Stock 2292, Series 1, Items 7-9.

<sup>83</sup> Derived from the first syllables of the first words in the German name of the organisation: *Literärisch-musikalisch-wissenschaftlicher Verein*. When in Estonian language the letter "W" was abandoned, the name of the corporation changed into *Limuvia*.

quorum (1/2+1) present) 2/3 of the votes of the participants of the general meeting and to become an active member 3/4 of the votes.<sup>84</sup> The alumni organisations were working in Estonia, Riga and Berlin.

In 1924 a written agreement was signed between *Limuwia*, *Vetulia* (a Jewish corporation from Riga — founded in 1902, colours: azure, white, golden) and a Jewish corporation *Vetaria* from Kaunas (founded in 1924, colours: white, blue, golden).<sup>85</sup> In the post WW I Jewish student movements, where Zionist-revisionist political ideas became popular, affecting most of the student organisations, *Limuwia*, *Vetulia* and *Vetaria* remained politically neutral.<sup>86</sup> Yet these were clearly national organisations. In Tartu, of the Jewish organisations, *Limuwia* was most similar to the local Estonian student organisations.

The everyday life of *Limuwia* did not differ from the everyday life of any other student corporation. In addition to meetings, the merry student life was not forgotten. There is evidence in the archives that on April 5, 1933, the *A le Coq* brewery has sent a letter, politely asking for payment of a debt of 136.64 *Kroons*. On May 25, a letter has arrived, asking to pay for the *Gambrinus* beer from Pärnu. These sums, if compared to other student organisations, were not big. There was time for more spiritual activities too — it becomes evident from the fact by which the corporation dued for a long time period to the publishing house in Berlin issuing *Encyclopaedia Judaica*.<sup>87</sup>

In 1933 the 50th anniversary of *Limuwia* was festively celebrated. This event drew the attention of the press, at least in Estonia and Latvia. From Tartu University *Limuwia* was greeted by the Rector, J. Kõpp, and Prorector J. Uluots. From the founders, Adolph Krüger, Salomon Salmanowitz and Adolph Wolosinsky in Riga, Hermann Schumacher in Lithuania, and Hermann Wunderbar in Bendery, Besarabia, were alive in 1933. From the most prominent members of *Limuwia*, the press named *dr.* Isidor Feiertag (the doctor of Latvian President Janis Cakste); *dr.* Rabinovitsch (the doctor of Fyodor Schalypapin); the head of the National Theatre in Kaunas, Berkowitsch; professor of Lausanne University, E. Landau; and professor of the Uni-

<sup>84</sup> ESA, Stock 2292, Series 1, Item 9.

<sup>85</sup> ESA, Stock 2292, Series 1, Item 76.

<sup>86</sup> Zaltsmann, S. "Die Korporation Limuwia Dorpat." In: *Zirkel und Zionsstern*. Bd. IV, 1994. Pp. 64-65.

<sup>87</sup> ESA, Stock 2292, Series 1, Item 76.

versity of Concepcion in Chile, Alexander Lipschiitz. It was also mentioned that 17 members of the corporation had participated in the Estonian War of Liberation.<sup>88</sup>

### 10.3.1. *Fraternitas Ossidia*

In connection with *Limuwia* one has to mention a unique phenomenon in the history of Baltic corporations — the pupils' corporations. The latter are widespread in South Germany and Austria. In Estonia and Latvia, among Estonians, Latvians and Russians there is no evidence of the existence of such institutions. Usually the pupils' corporations were organised extensions of student corporation. In December 1925, in Tartu, *Fraternitas Ossidia (Osidia)*, a pupils' corporation, being the nursery of *Limuwia*, emerged. The new corporation had an elected three-member managing committee and an elderman; the meetings were held at the premises of *Limuwia*. In the second half of the 1920s a subsidiary convent of *Fraternitas Ossidia* was founded in Tallinn. From May 14, 1931, it acted as an independent convent *Ossidia Revalensis*. Similar nurseries were also created by *Vetulia* of Riga (the founded in September 1923 *Eberia*) and *Vetaria* of Kaunas (*Macadea*).<sup>89</sup> On June 27, 1927, *Fraternitas Ossidia* and *Eberia* concluded a cartel-agreement. Later there are also hints of a triple treaty with *Ossidia Revalensis*. There is not enough data from the archive materials available to say whether it was successful.<sup>90</sup>

The registering of *Fraternitas Ossidia* at the Jewish Gymnasium of Tartu was perhaps not successful, although it was attempted. In the 1930s, together with *Eberia* and *Macadea*, an all-Baltic centre for Jewish pupils' corporations was planned, but there are also some problematic aspects in this plan, since most of the Jewish pupils' organisations were Zionist.

<sup>88</sup> ESA, Stock 2292, Series 1, Item 41.

<sup>89</sup> Perhaps the correct names should be *Betaria* and *Macabea* — the mistake in the sources could be created by the wrong interpretation of the text written in Hebrew into the Latin script. Also *Eberia* could in reality be *Ivria* or *Evria*. The comments here became possible due to the kind remarks by Jakob Kaplan (Tel Aviv). ESA, Stock 2296, Series 1, Item 11.

<sup>90</sup> ESA, Stock 2296, Series 1, Item 2.

<sup>91</sup> Kurman, M. "Einiges über zionistische Schülerverbindungen in Riga". In: *Zirkel und Zionsstern*. Bd. IV, 1994. P. 82.

#### 10.4. *Hasmonaea*

Together with the emancipation of Jews in the second half of the 19th century, a national-political ideology, Zionism, emerged. This propagated the cultivation of a national consciousness among Jews, their settlement to Palestine and finally the formation of the State of Israel. The most prominent ideologists of Zionism at the end of the 19th century were Leo Pinsker and Theodor Herzl. In 1897, in Basle, the first Congress of Zionists took place, accepting the so called Programme of Basle. By the beginning of the 1920s the movement had developed several streams. In the history of student organisations the revisionist flow was the most pronounced. The aim of the revisionists was to radicalise the politics concerning Palestine by immigration, to achieve a Jewish majority in Palestine, and then, by mass demonstrations and petitions, to make Great Britain found a State of Israel on the both banks of river Jordan. Unlike other Zionist movements, the revisionists paid a great attention to the military preparation. The revisionists played a big role in the paramilitary organisations supporting the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948-1949. Most of the Jewish organisations in the European universities after WW I were under the influence of revisionists. An important reason for the growth in the influence of revisionism in Latvia and Estonia, was the visit of one of their main ideologists, Wladimir Zeev Jabotinsky, to Riga in 1923.<sup>93</sup>

Already in April 1922 a Zionist-revisionist student corporation *Hasmonaea* had been founded in Riga. Its subsidiary convent was founded in Tartu in 1923 initially within the framework of the Academic Society. Soon the *Hasmonites* of Tartu stepped out of the Academic Society. The Society of Jewish Students *Hasmonaea* (*Verbindung jüdischer Studenten Hasmonaea*) was registered at the board of the University on October 5, 1923.<sup>94</sup> The public active wearing of colours, about which information had been spread among other stu-

<sup>92</sup> Schechter, E. "Einleitung. Betrachtungen zur Geschichte der jüdisch-nationalen Studentenverbindungen." In: *Zirkel und Zionsstern*. Bd. I, 1990. Pp. 18-20.

<sup>93</sup> Jabotinsky, W. Z. "Die "Hasmonäa" in Riga." In: *Zirkel und Zionsstern*. Bd. IV, 1994. Pp. 67-72.

<sup>94</sup> ESA, Stock 2293.

dent organisations, took place on April 1, 1926, on the eighth anniversary of the University of Jerusalem.

By its statutes,<sup>96</sup> *Hasmonaea* was a Zionist corporation, which acknowledged the Programme of Basle. There were seven different membership statuses: freshman, *bursch*, alumni member, *bursch* alumni member, extraordinary alumni member, honorary alumni member and official guest. In the German language standing rules a Baltic-German term for alumni member in student organisations — *Philister* — is used, but its official abbreviation was *AH!* (*Alte Herr*), which was typical of the student terminology in Germany. The managing commission was called *Chargiertenconvent* (*Ch/C!*). This is the way the Baltic German tradition named the board of managing commissions. The members of the managing commissions were fixed from the first to the third accordingly: *x!*, *xx!*, *xxx!*. This tradition was also not used in Tartu, but in Germany.

In the 1920s, in Tartu, several new Estonian, Russian and Latvian corporations were founded. Their symbolics they derived mainly from the traditions of the 100 year old Baltic German corporations. That was also the case for *Limuwia*. *Hasmonaea* however used several elements coming from Germany. The colours of *Hasmonaea* were azure, golden and white. The colours were carried as a cap and band, and the coloured band of *Hamonea* possessed a silver edge, which was common in Germany, but scarce in the ascetic student symbolics of Tartu. Besides that, the members of *Hasmonaea* wore, at festive events, a special *cerevis-cap*, also an element from Germany (perhaps the greenish-yellow specimens kept at the Tartu Town Museum have changed their colour. In the standing rules, the colour of these caps is not mentioned). Such a cap was besides *Hasmonaea*, also worn carried in Tartu by *Baltica*, active in 1850–1856, and is worn since 1994 by the members of *Arminia Dorpatensis*.

Unlike *Limuwia* and the Academic Society, *Hasmonaea* did not participate actively in the student life of Tartu. If other student organisations sent their membership lists to the Student Senate every semester, then *Hasmonaea* informed only about the changes of its address.<sup>97</sup> There are invitations to the events organised by *Hasmonaea* in

<sup>95</sup> EHA, Stock 1769, Series 1, Item 622.

<sup>96</sup> ESA, Stock 2293, Series 1, Item 1.

<sup>97</sup> EHA Stock 2100, Series 19, Items 69–77.

the files of the student society *Liivika*.<sup>98</sup> Whether the two possessed more close contacts due to their links with Riga (*Liivika* was the Society of Estonian Students at the Riga Polytechnical University in 1909-1918), or whether other Estonian student organisations have just not preserved the materials concerning *Hasmonaea*, we do not know.

For the members of *Hasmonaea* the cooperation with their sympathisers in Riga (first of all the *Hasmonaea* there) and in Kaunas, and with the Zionist organisations of Estonia was more important.

*Hasmonaea* was closed in 1940. The undersigned does not possess any detailed circumstances concerning the closure of this student organisation. The *Hasmonaea* in Riga was closed on July 18, 1940 and its members were persecuted by the Soviets" — the members of the managing commission of the corporation and that of its alumni association were arrested in June 1941 and sent to Siberia.<sup>100</sup>

### 10.5. *Hacfiro*

It was 1925 when 6 female members of the Academic Society and 5 "wild" students founded the Society of Jewish Female Students *Hacfiro* (also *Hazfiro*, meaning "dawn" in Hebrew), registered on February 27, 1925. By the statutes the members of *Hacfiro* could be Jewish female students of Tartu University. There were three membership statuses: guest members, members and the alumni members. To be accepted as a guest member the recommendations of two active members were needed; to be accepted a member 2/3 of the votes of the general convent, with 2/3 quorum present were required and the status of a guest member for at least one semester. The alumni members could be those who had graduated from the university or who had left it, having been a member for at least two semesters. The managing commission was chosen for one semester, including the chairperson, vice chairperson and the secretary. *Hacfiro* did not carry colours, their badge was an emblem composed by the first letters of the German name of the society: *Verband jidisher Studentinen Hacfiro Dorpat*.

<sup>98</sup> EHA, Stock 1769, Series 1, Item 622.

<sup>99</sup> Rosenthal, L. "Mitglieder der "Hasmonäa" Riga — verfolgt wegen Zionismus." In: *Zirkel und Zionsstern*. Bd. V, 1996. Pp. 64.

<sup>100</sup> Kadischewitsch, S. "Einige ausserordentliche Ereignisse aus dem Leben der Hasmonäa Riga." In: *Zirkel und Zionsstern*. Bd. V, 1996. P. 56.



*Hacfiro* did not meet the demands imposed on the student organisations by the new University Law from 1938, since it had too few members. It announced its dissolution to the board of the university on January 1, 1938. Some of the members of *Hacfiro* later joined the Academic Society.

### 10.6. *Schatal*

The last Jewish student organisation to be founded in the Republic of Estonia, on September 25, 1932, was the Academic Society for Learning Jewish Sciences *Schatal*, registered on November 4, 1932. *Schatal* promoted activities related to Jewish studies among the Jewish students. The name of the society is derived from a Hebrew expression *Seurei talmud leakadimoim* ("The lectures of *Talmud* for the academicians"). The members of *Schatal* could join other organisations. So, of its 46 members 29 were parallelly members of the Academic Society, *Limuwia* or *Hasmonaea*. To become a member of *Schatal* one could make an application to the board. The honorary members were elected by a 2/3 majority vote of the members. The board consisted of the chairman, secretary and treasurer, who were elected for one semester.

### 10.7. The descent and fate of the members of Jewish organisations active at the University of Tartu of the Republic of Estonia<sup>101</sup>

During the years 1920-1937 the proportion of students entering the Academic Society, *Limuwa* (no data from 1927) and *Hacfiro* was growing constantly among the Jewish students. Unfortunately information concerning *Hasmonaea* is not available. The members of the Treasury of Mutual Aid and *Schatal* can not be counted, as their membership was partially overlapping with the already named organisations. If, in 1926, the members of the above three organisations constituted 49% of all the matriculated Jewish students in Tartu, then in 1937 the number was already 82.7%. As data concerning *Hasmonaea* is missing, one can only guess that the members of the Academic Society, *Limuwia*, *Hasmonaea* and *Hacfiro* had always made up over

<sup>101</sup> Analyses based on Tables 5 and 6.

half of all the Jewish students in Tartu; in the next half of the 1930s the ratio must have already been more than two thirds.

The descent of the Jewish students studying at the Estonian university differed significantly from that of their predecessors before Estonian independence (see **Table 5**). There were more students coming from the territory of Estonia — even if not born here, then receiving their education at Estonian schools. Yet, a notable share still belonged to the Jewish students coming from Curonia and first of all, Riga.<sup>102</sup> When different student organisations are compared, descent and education were becoming less important — this tendency becoming evident already by the beginning of the 20th century. Among the members of the Academic Society the students born in Tallinn and Tartu were dominating. There were more than one third of them in this relevant institution. Almost 1/6 of the members came from the smaller towns of Estonia. A quarter of the members had been born in the regions belonging to the Latvian part of Livonia, Curonia and Latgale (the Latvian province historically in the Province of Vitebsk). Of the members of *Limuwia*, more than 1/3 had been born in Tallinn and Tartu. About one fifth had been born in the smaller towns of Estonia. In this way the preparation of students coming from Estonian territory was even bigger than in the Academic Society. One fifth of the members of *Limuwia* came from the territories belonging to Latvia. More than half of the latter came from Riga. Of the 69 members of the female society *Hacfiro*, 19 had been born in Tallinn and Tartu and 13 in smaller Estonian towns. The members coming from Estonia made up less than half of the members. 20 members of *Hacfiro* came from Latvia.

One has to remember that most of the students studying during the time of the Estonian Republic had been born before independence had been achieved. The generation of 1919 matriculated only in 1937, i. e. in the period when the number of Jewish students was two times less when compared to the second half of the 1920s.

For the small sample at random the analysis on the birth places could be viewed more as illustrative material than as an attempt to discover important tendencies. At first sight the analysis by schools (see **Table 6**) is motley and inexpressive.

<sup>102</sup> In 1930 there were living 94,388 Jews in Latvia. Only in Riga ten times as much Jews as in Estonia altogether.

**Table 5.** The birth places of the members of Jewish student organisations

Place of birth	Academic Society (142 ind., 1920-1938)	<i>Limuwia</i> (124 ind., 1922-1938)	<i>Haçfiro</i> (68 ind., 1925-1938)
Estonia	73	75	32
Haapsalu	1		
Jõhvi		2	
Kuressaare	1	1	2
Narva	2	4	5
Põltsamaa	2	1	-
Pärnu	2	4	2
Rakvere	2	2	1
Tapa	1		
Tartu	29	33	8
Tallinn	22	14	11
Valga	4	7	2
Viljandi		5	1
Võra	7	2	
<b>Latvia</b>	37	26	20
Alüksne	-		1
Daugavpils and Daugavpils district	7		3
Jaunjelgava	1		1
Jekabpils	2		
Jelgava	3	-	2
Liepāja	1		2
Ludza	2		
Rezekne and Rezekne district	4		1
Rīga	12	16	7
Rūjiena	2		1
Talsi		2	
Tukums	-	-	1
Valmiera	2	-	-
Latvia broadly	1	1	1
<b>Lithuania</b>	5		2
Kaunas	-	-	1
Skaidvile, Raseiniai district	1	-	-
Šiauliai	2		
Zarasai	2	-	1
<b>Poland</b>	7	5	3
Lódź	-	2	-
Sejny near Suwalki	1	-	-

Place of birth	Academic Society (142 ind., 1920-1938)	<i>Limuwia</i> (124 ind., 1922-1938)	<i>Hacfiro</i> (68 ind., 1925-1938)
Tomaszów Mazowiecki	-	1	-
Tomaszów Lubelski	1	-	-
Varsaw	-	1	-
Vilnius	5	1	3
<b>White Russia</b>	3	1	1
Minsk	-	1	-
Senno district, Province of Mogilyov	1		
Tschaussy, Province of Mogilyov	1	-	
Zablyudovo, Province of Grodno			1
Province of Vitebsk	1	-	-
<b>Ukraine</b>	-	1	1
Jekaterinoslav	-	-	1
Kiev	-	1	-
<b>Russia</b>	16	15	8
Jamburg, Province of St. Petersburg	1		
Jekaterinburg, Province of Perm		-	1
Jelets, Province of Oryol	1		
Krasnoye Selo, Province of St. Petersburg	1		
Krasnyi, Province of Smolensk			1
Kursk	2	-	-
Moscow	-	2	-
St.Petersburg	2	8	
Pskov	8	3	2
Rostov at Don	-	1	1
Rybinsk, Province of Jaroslavl	-	-	1
Sormovo, Province of Nizhni Novgorod			1
Toropets, Province of Pskov		1	
Vyazma, Province of Smolensk	1		
Russia broadly			1
<b>Other</b>	1	1	1
Berlin	1	-	-
Canton (USA, Ohio)		1	
Stockholm	-		1

SOURCE: The comparison between the data in *Album Academicum ... 1918-1944* and the membership lists of the organisations (EHA, Stock, 2100, Series 19, Items 27, 150).

Table 6. The gymnasiums and high schools graduated by the members of the Jewish student organisations

<i>Gymnasium or high school</i>	Academic Society (142 ind., 1920-1938)	<i>Limuwia</i> (124 ind., 1922-1938)	Hacfiro (68 ind., 1925-1937)
Institutions at the Estonian <b>territory</b> before <b>1918</b>	22	12	1
Pharmacists' courses at Tartu University	1	3	-
Private Girl's Gymnasium of E. Lender (Tallinn)	1	-	-
Private Gymnasium of H. Treffher (Tartu)	1	1	-
Gymnasium of Narva	1	2	-
The Commercial High School of Narva	-	1	-
Girl's Gymnasium of Narva	2	-	-
Gymnasium of Pärnu	1	-	-
Boy's Gymnasium of Rakvere	-	1	-
Alexander Gymnasium of Tallinn	3	-	-
Private Girl's Gymnasium of L. N. Belyayeva (Tallinn)	3	-	-
Nikolai Gymnasium of Tallinn	2	-	-
Alexander Gymnasium of Tartu	3	2	-
The Courses of the Tartu Pedagogic Society	2	-	-
Girl's Gymnasium of A. S. Pushkin (Tartu)	-	-	1
<i>Realschule</i> of Tartu	-	2	-
Private Girl's Gymnasium of A. G. Zhilova (Tartu)	1	-	-
Girl's Gymnasium of Valga	1	-	-
Jewish schools in Estonia	<b>11</b>	21	13
Jewish Private Gymnasium of Tallinn	9	10	12
Jewish Private Gymnasium of Tartu	2	11	1
Estonian schools in Estonia	4	6	2
Gymnasium of Saaremaa	1	-	2
Tallinn 1 Secondary Scientific School as a non-resident pupil	1	1	-
The Evening Gymnasium of Tartu	1	-	-
Gymnasium of Valga	-	3	-
Boy's Gymnasium of Viljandi District	-	2	-
Gymnasium of Võru Educational Society	1	-	-
<b>Russian schools in Estonia</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>34</b>
Russian Gymnasium of Narva	3	-	4

<i>Gymnasium or high school</i>	Academic Society (142 ind., 1920- 1938)	<i>Limuwia</i> (124 ind., 1922-1938)	Hacifiro (68 ind., 1925-1937)
Russian High-School Courses of Pärnu	2	1	2
0. Amoretti Russian Private Gymnasium of Tallinn	2	-	-
Russian Private Gymnasium of Tallinn	20	15	11
Russian Gymnasium of Tallinn	-	1	-
Russian Town-Gymnasium of Tartu	2	3	1
Russian Private Gymnasium of Tartu	33	23	13
Russian Private Gymnasium of Valga	3	5	3
<b>German schools in Estonia</b>	3	16	2
Private German Gymnasium of Kuressaare	-	1	-
German Private Gymnasium of the Pärnu School Society	-	2	-
Private German Gymnasium of Rakvere	1	-	-
German Boy's Town-Gymnasium of <b>Tallinn</b>	-	6	-
German Girl's Private Gymnasium of Tallinn	-	-	1
A. Walter German Gymnasium of Tartu	1	1	-
German Town-Gymnasium of Tartu	1	4	-
Private German Gymnasium of Viljandi	-	2	1
<b>Institutions at the Latvian territory before 1918</b>	2	1	-
N. A. Ado Boy's Gymnasium of Rezekne	1	-	-
Town Gymnasium of Riga	1	1	-
<b>Jewish schools of Latvia</b>	22	11	8
Jewish High School (later Gymnasium) of Daugavpils	5	-	1
Jewish Town-Gymnasium of Jelgava	1	1	1
Jewish Town-Gymnasium of Liepaja	-	-	1
Jewish High School of Ludza	1	1	-
Jewish State High School of Rezekne	3	-	1
K. Bintsā High School of Riga	-	1	-
S. Gorfinkel Gymnasium of Riga	-	3	-
Jewish Private Gymnasium "Ezra" of Riga	-	-	1
Jewish Gymnasium of Riga	1	-	-
The High School of the Riga Jewish Society for Promotion Sciences and Arts (later gymnasium)	3	-	-
J. L. Landau Gymnasium of Riga	1	2	-

<i>Gymnasium or high school</i>	Academic Society (142 ind., 1920- 1938)	<i>Limuwia</i> (124 ind., 1922-1938)	Hacfiro (68 ind., 1925-1937)
D. M. Levin High School Courses of Riga	1	-	-
Jewish Town High School of Riga	6	-	2
J Rauchwarger Jewish Gymnasium of Riga	-	1	1
E. Salemann Jewish Private Gymnasium of Riga	-	1	-
Jewish High School of Talsi	-	1	-
<b>Latvian schools of Latvia</b>	2	3	3
Girl's Gymnasium of Daugavpils	2	-	1
Commercial Town-Gymnasium of Jaunjelgava	-	-	1
I High School of Liepaja	-	-	1
Boy's Gymnasium of Liepaja	-	1	-
P. Dzenis Gymnasium of Riga	-	1	-
State Gymnasium of Talsi	-	1	-
<b>Russian schools of Latvia</b>	6	1	4
State Russian High School of Rezekne	-	-	1
Russian Town High School of Riga	3	-	-
O. E. Beater Russian High School of Riga	2	-	-
V J. Blum Russian High School of Riga	1	1	-
O. N. Lishin Russian High School of Riga	-	-	1
L. I. Tailov Russian High School of Riga	-	-	2
<b>German schools of Latvia</b>	-	4	1
German Town High School of Riga	-	-	1
E. Germann German High School of Riga (later Boy's Gymnasium)	-	4	-
<b>Institutions in Russia before 1918</b>	5	-	-
Commercial High School of Yamburg	1	-	-
Girl's Gymnasium of Krementschug	1	-	-
E. D. Jürgenson Girl's Gymnasium of Moscow	1	-	-
Gymnasium of Pskov	2	-	-
<b>Institutions in Russia after 1918</b>	-	1	-
Commercial High School of Pskov	-	1	-

SOURCE: The comparison between the data in *Album Academicum ... 1918-1944* and the membership lists of the organisations (EHA, Stock 2100, Series 19, Items 27, 150).

57 members of the Academic Society had graduated from the Russian schools in Tallinn and Tartu. Into this group the 14 people graduating from the schools of the relevant towns before 1918 and a similar number of those graduating from Russian schools in smaller Estonian towns or in Latvia are also added. In this way, 2/3 of the members of the Academic Society had received a Russian language education. 11 students had studied at the Jewish gymnasiums of Tallinn and Tartu, the graduates from the Latvian Jewish gymnasiums made up a number twice that size.

These tendencies should not be taken as a sign of the tepidity of Estonian Jews towards education in their mother tongue. Probably the Estonian Jewish community was just too small to support its own school system (the Baltic Germans also had, in the 1930s, to close several private gymnasiums). The first class of the Jewish Gymnasium in Tallinn did not graduate until 1927. The Jewish Gymnasium in Tartu had a graduation class only in the years 1930-1933, after which the school was closed. By the beginning of the 1930s the peak of the Academic Society had passed, so the graduates from the Estonian Jewish gymnasiums could not be participating in it in large numbers.

Although the general picture concerning *Limuwia* is in broad terms the same, notable differences can also be found. First, the number of the graduates from Russian gymnasiums is significantly smaller, and accordingly that from German language schools is bigger. In this way one can see here some continuation of tradition — *Limuwia* being founded on the basis of German language Jewish organisations. Secondly, *Limuwia* also had as its members, more students graduating from Jewish gymnasiums (more than a quarter of the students came from the respective schools in Tallinn, Tartu and Riga). Third, the number of graduates from Tartu schools reaches almost 40%. On this basis one could state that the members of *Limuwia* were more integrated to the local community than the members of the Academic Society.

When the schools from which the students graduated, are analysed, the small number of graduates from Estonian language schools can be noticed. Of the 334 individuals analysed in Table 6, only 12 have graduated from Estonian facilities of education. Similar tendencies among Jewish students not belonging to the academic organisations can also be detected: from 186 people 15 had graduated from Estonian



schools. Although broader conclusions made on the basis of these rather small numbers could prove to be false, one could nevertheless state that between 1920 and 1938 the Jews living in Estonia preferred German and Russian schools to the Estonian ones. It should be also stressed that of the 12 graduates of Estonian schools at least 5 had been in a position of no choice. One graduate was a non-resident student from the Secondary Scientific School in Tallinn (only at few schools in Estonia could one study as a none-resident pupil — the named school was one of them), 3 were graduates from Saaremaa and one from Võru, where there were no Russian Schools, and in Võru, no German school either.

Due to the lack of information on the members of *Hasmonaea* the latter is not analysed.

Data concerning the fate of the members of Jewish student organisations after WW II is patchy. Of the 398 individuals analysed in **Table 7**, one fifth were the citizens of Latvia when starting their studies. As, after their graduation, in most cases they returned to Latvia, there is little biographic data available on them in Estonian archives.<sup>103</sup> So, one may guess that the number of the Jewish graduates from Tartu murdered during the Nazi occupation should be bigger. On the other hand, the numbers of those deported to Siberia and repressed by the Soviets could also be bigger (especially as the Jewish having a possibility to study at the University of Tartu, had to belong to the social layers liable to suffer under the Soviet terror). To put it in another way — the number of Jewish students suffering either from Nazi or Soviet repressions could in rough terms be equal. Hopefully there will soon be more data concerning the fates of the members of the Jewish organisations, since the human losses during both occupations of Estonia and Latvia are being studied thoroughly.

The history of Jewish student organisations at the universities of German tradition ended after the coming to power of the Nazis in Germany in the middle of the 1930s, in Austria after the *Anschluss*, in Checkoslovakia after the German annexation in the same year, in Poland after the outburst of WW II in 1939, in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania after their annexation into the Soviet Union in 1940. The same fate also befell the other student organisations in these countries. In Germany and Austria the student organisations were re-established

<sup>103</sup> *Album Academicum*, 1994.

at the beginning of the 1950s. In Poland, Checkoslovakia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, starting from the end of the 1980s. Yet, there are no Jewish organisations re-established in Eastern Europe. The few alumni members of the latter are living in Israel, USA etc.

Table 7. The fate of the Jewish students of the University of Tartu of the Estonian Republic

	Acad. Society	Limuwia	Hasmonaea	Hacfiro
Number of persons	143	131	58	68
No data concerning the fate after the graduation	38	62	18	40
Died in Estonia before WW II	3	2		1
Settled before WW II to USA, France, RSA	4	1	1	
Settled before WW II to Palestine	15	1	7	1
Died in Israel (not known whether leaving Estonia before or after WW II)	3		2	
Murdered during the nazi occupation	7	12	3	6
Died in Soviet labour camps, as deported, exiled, or executed	9	6	2	
Died when in labour battailon, or as evacuated to the Soviet rear, or in the Red Army	1	6	3	
Remained after WW II in Estonia (died in Estonia)	48	46	17	13
Remained after WW II in Russia or moved there	5	-	2	-
Settled after WW II to Israel	8	1	3	
Settled after WW II to USA, Germany or RSA	2	3	-	4
Settled after WW II to Latvia	1	1	-	
<i>Was arrested by NKVD, deported, exiled and returned</i>	7 <sup>104</sup>	5	2	
<i>Returned from Nazi concentration camp</i>				
<i>Worked during 1940-1941 in the structures of NKVD, KGB, Communist Party, was in the Soviet destroyer battalion or workers defence unit</i>	4	2	3	

SOURCE: comparison of the data from *Album Academicum, 1994* and the membership lists of Jewish organisations at the Estonian History Archives (Stock 2100, Series 19, Items 27, 150).

<sup>104</sup> Indented data is included also in the previously brought numbers.

During the 900 year old European university tradition few universities have been monoethnic. The sciences up to the 17th century were cosmopolitically Latin and the ethnic origin of the professors and students not important. In the 19th century nationalism became important also in academic life. From the second half of the 19th century national student organisations began emerging at the universities of the borderlands of the Austria-Hungarian and Russian Empires. After the emancipation of the national states there, the student organisations founded on an ethnic basis continued their existance to a degree which depended on the tolerance of the (often inclining to nationalism) political context in the particular state. WW II, and the changes brought about by it, did in a broad sense put an end to national minorities (we are not speaking here about the post WW II migrations). 50 years after the end of the last big war, on the brink of a new English language cosmopolitanism, one has to admit that for the University of Tartu, but also for all the Eastern European universities, the student organisations of national minorities remain just a piece of history.

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  - Stock 2090        *Chargiertenconvent*
  - Stock 2100        The University of Tartu 1918-1944
  - Stock 2653        Scientific Society for History and Literature
2. Estonian State Archives = ESA
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  - Stock 2296        Student Fraternity "Fratemitas Ossidia"

## Regulations

- Временныя правила организаціи студенческих учреждений въ высшихъ учебныхъ заведешяхъ ведомства Министерства Народнаго Просвещенія: EAA Stock 402, Series 7, Item 624, Pages 3-8.
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