

Binyamin Hunyadi

# Morose News for a Mundane World. Towards an Ultra-Orthodox *Öffentlichkeit* in Hungary: Akiva Yosef Schlesinger and His Yiddish ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a*’, 1866–1867

שמועה שמענו מארץ מולדתי (אונגארן) כי בשנה זו נשטפו העיירות מישקאץ ואחריו[ה] סעגעדין ובנות[ה] דמים בדמים נגעו. נפשם וממונם נאבדו לרוב ה"י [=השם ירחם]. ועל כן יאמרו המושלים לאשר אינם מבני קרי כ"א [=כי אם] מאמינים בהשגחת ה' באו חשבון על מה עשה ה' ככה לעם הזה. רבתי בגוים. סעגעדין אשר ישבו יותר משה רבוא נאבדה מן העולם ותהי לתל עולמים. חרקו עליה שן כל עובר ושב. הזאת העיר אשר פעה פיה מבלי חק. בעת צרתה פנו אל היכלם החדש (טעמפעל) והוא לא יכול להושיעם. כי היה לצור מכשול. בתיהם קברם לקברם בחייהם. ופנו אל בית למודם (שוהלע) שם לא ימצאו מרגוע. הבל פיהם של "תנוקות בית רבם" כאילו לא יגן עליהם כי אינו הבל בלי חטא. לימודי בני נכר אשר פיהם דיבר שוא.

We had news from my native country (Hungary) that this year the town Miskolc was flooded and then Szeged, and 'that the blood of their daughters commingled' [Hos 4:2]. They suffered great losses in life and property, God will have mercy. Thus, shall the sovereigns say who are not amongst the impure [*bène qeri*], but who have faith in the providence of God, when they come to give an account of what God has done to this people, that was 'great amongst nations' [Lam 1:1]. Szeged, where more than six thousand people lived, vanished from the face of the earth and became a mound for eternity. The passersby ground their teeth [for they were furious of what had happened] [based on Ps 37:12]. This was the city that had unlawfully set its mouth agape. In their time of distress, they turned to their new house of prayer (*tempel*), but in vain. It had become a 'rock of offence' [Isa 8:14]. Their houses buried them as one who is buried alive, and they turned to their house of study (*shule*), but were unable to find peace therein. The breath of the 'children of the study-house' [bShab 119b] would not defend them, for no breath there was free of sin, for their study was that of foreigners whose mouth utters empty words (Schlesinger 1879:2).

It was with these harsh words that the famous Hungarian rabbi Akiva Yehosef (Yosef) Schlesinger (1837–1922) (עקיבא יחוסף שלעזינגער) described the flooding, which had lain waste two major Hungarian cities, killing hundreds of their inhabitants in the process. The flood struck Miskolc (*Mishkots* מישקאץ) in 1878 and Szeged (*Segedin* | סעגעדין) in the following year (Bodovics 2014:202–209). Schlesinger published his thoughts on this tragic series of events in his recently revived journal in Jerusalem. The new edition of ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a*’ (*Amud Hajirah* | עמוד היראה) [God Fearers’ Journal]—published in Hebrew, unlike its predecessor—treated major news from

---

**Note:** The present text is an expanded version of my article in Hungarian: “Istennek szolgálai: R. Akiva Jozsef Schlesinger ultra-orthodox újságja az 1860-as években Magyarországon, a jiddis *Amud ha-Jira*.” *REGIO* 23(1) (2015): 50–71, DOI 10.17355/rkkpt.v23i1.37.

Hungary as items of particular interest, and they were so for Schlesinger himself as well as for his readers.<sup>1</sup> It would seem that Schlesinger made several attempts to re-found his journal following his emigration to the Holy Land in 1870, and that he eventually failed in all of them (Ungar 1937:159; Genichowsky 1992:105). Among new editions of the journal published in 1879 only two copies are extant. It is rather uncertain whether Schlesinger could have published any other editions that same year, seeing how by then he had scandalized the publishers of Eretz Israel, much as he had their Hungarian predecessors, with claims of being intentionally unwilling to collaborate with him or print any of his works (Schlesinger, ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a*’ 9, 17 November 1866, 41\*–42\*;<sup>2</sup> and Schlesinger, ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a*’ 7, 16 October 1866, 1\*;<sup>3</sup> Genichowsky 1992:107).<sup>3</sup> ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a*’ had a somewhat biased take on current events, as can be gleaned from the excerpt cited above. Schlesinger tended to present a *chronique scandaleuse* [a chronicle of scandalous events] to his reading public. ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a*’ mostly discussed either local news or events transpiring back in Austro-Hungary. In these articles Schlesinger saw a means of propagating and perhaps partially fulfilling his prophecy. The Jews of Hungary did not hearken to the words of their rabbis, and now they had to suffer the consequences of their misdeeds, since “the rabbis’ curse cannot be undone” (לְטוֹתֵי דְרַבְנָן (לִית לִיה אִסּוּחָא) (bShab 110a) (an injunction also included in the above-mentioned article). Schlesinger thought that nothing remained for Hungarian Jews but to pack their belongings and immigrate to Eretz Israel, the last viable holdfast of the Jewish people, relatively untainted by the ‘impurity’ of the Haskalah (השכלה) [Jewish Enlightenment]. At this point we may justly pose the question: What could have infuriated Schlesinger to such a bitterness of *schadenfreude* over the catastrophe and destruction of his Jewish brethren? The answer lies, as we shall see, primarily in Schlesinger’s failure to rally popular support for his ‘Manichean’ project of battling the ‘malicious’ spread of the Reform movement, which had recently taken root in Hungary, via the conduit of his polemical Yiddish journal.

Akiva Yosef Schlesinger’s figure as an ardent proto-Zionist and as a fervent Ultra-Orthodox was the source of numerous controversies, not only in academic

1 A single issue from 1879 is partially accessible at <https://www.hebrewbooks.org/34442> [Accessed 25.02.2025].

2 Pagination in the collected volumes of ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a*’ starts anew after page 139. The references marked by an asterisk refer to the second half of the collected volumes of ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a*’.

3 Accessible online from the National Library of Israel <https://www.nli.org.il/he/journals/NNL-Journals/990017827290205171/NLI> [Accessed 25.02.2025].

circles,<sup>4</sup> but in the Jewish religious world as well.<sup>5</sup> Schlesinger was born in Pressburg (Bratislava/Pozsony/פרעשבורג, modern day Bratislava, capital of Slovakia) in 1837, and was brought up in traditional Jewish religious education. His early years were marked by two important events which left a meaningful imprint on his later development. Firstly, the *Ḥatam Sofer* (Moše Sofer/*Khasem Soyfer*/Moses Schreiber/חתם סופר) (1762–1839) died two years after Schlesinger's birth, leaving behind him a rabbinical legacy that was to determine the future of Hungarian Orthodoxy for at least a century to come. Rabbis ordained in the famous Pressburg yeshiva came to occupy rabbinical positions in the majority of traditional communities in the Hungarian territories (Silber 2008b:775), through which vocation the legacy and ideology of their great leader, the *Ḥatam Sofer*, was able to disseminate itself throughout the country.

This is important to note in order to understand the deep rift between the Traditionalist and Reform parties in the 1850s and 1860s. During this period, a political and ideological discourse engulfed the entirety of Jewish society in Hungary, its controversies seeping even into the more doctrinaire and formalized medium of rabbinical debates. The transformation of Jewish society beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, in accordance with the Reform leanings of the affluent lay leadership, adhered to the German example in wishing to arrive at full emancipation by means of *halakhic* reform (Silber 1985:79–82). This can be said to characterize the main political aims of the Hungarian Jewish elite in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The Traditionalist reaction to these attempts, perceived as altering the very structure of the community, was stark and loud. The Orthodoxy was not interested in participating in any rabbinic negotiations with the Reformists, deeming fundamental matters of *halakha* to be at stake. They were of the opinion that where the Torah's reputation was attacked, decisive rebuttals were called for. Thus they were not averse to invoking rabbinical stringencies, excommunications and social ostracisms against their opponents (Katz 1995:234–241).

The rabbinical debates exacerbated the ongoing controversies between the Liberal and Traditionalist parties, aiding in the consolidation of their respective, rivaling ideologies. One of these was Schlesinger's journalistic venture, *'Ammud ha-Yir'a*, which prepared the ground for and closely followed the proceedings of the Michalowitz (Mihalovce/Grossmichel, today in Slovakia) rabbinical conference, which took place in 1865. In Michalowitz the Orthodox had put forward a

---

4 Silber (1992:23–84); Silber (1994:84–105, especially 84–91) which surveys the past literature, with responses from Salmon (1994:106–111) and Bartal (1994:112–114); Salmon (1998:424–446); Silber (2008a:119–147); Silber (2008d:1672–1674); Salmon (2016:171–184) and most recently Salmon (2019:177–193).

5 Shachray (1942); and Teitelbaum (1978:313).

harsh and uncompromising ideological line (Katzburg 1980:273–286). The conference prepared the ground for the Congress of 1868–1869, in which leaders of the Reformist faction had largely the upper hand. With time the respective camps formed full-blown communities, dividing Hungarian Jewry into three distinct groups, each with its own leadership and social structure: Orthodox, Neolog and Status quo. The former two denominations derive their names from popular cognomen, denoting either their ‘Traditionalism’ or their ‘religious innovations.’ These very camps would continue their dissension for decades to come. The faction would eventually ‘poison the air’ to such an extent that a complete segregation would come to be established between them, and Jews enjoined to sever all ties with their fellows, even if living in close proximity to them, if they but belonged to another faction. Schlesinger played no small part in shaping the rhetoric of the Traditionalists during these debates, mostly through his journal and half a dozen polemical writings which he published prior to his decision to leave Hungary—a country he saw as hopelessly given to reckless religious modernism—in 1870. The rigid Orthodox views expressed in *‘Ammud ha-Yir’a* served to further exacerbate the already existing gulf in Jewish religious practice. Schlesinger’s *‘Ammud ha-Yir’a* represented Hungary as the last bulwark of the group later known as Ultra-Orthodoxy, a party extremely sensitive to religious change (Silber 1992:23–25). By the first decade of the twentieth century the relationship between the two factions, the Orthodox and the Neolog was so embittered that Hungarian Jewry came to be widely regarded as a battleground between the two Jewish religious camps.

In what follows I argue that Schlesinger’s journalistic publication was the first step taken within the Hungarian territories towards an Ultra-Orthodox public discourse. The article underlines the novel rhetorics of *‘Ammud ha-Yir’a*, positioning it as the authentic new voice of Orthodoxy, which emerges as such in opposition to the other publications of the period, and stresses the political significance of its choice of language. First, I would like to show how Schlesinger dealt with the question of newspaper editing and dissemination of news from a strictly religious standpoint. Secondly, we shall see how Schlesinger positioned himself and his newspaper within the wider scene of the contemporary Jewish press. What were the main questions and polemics to engage in, and what rhetoric did Schlesinger employ in his paper in order to best express his own unique ideology?

# 1 Schlesinger's *'Ammud ha-Yir'a*: Background, Structure and Ideological Influences

*'Ammud ha-Yir'a* was first published in 1866 (*Nisan*, 5626), in Kassa (Kaschau/Košice/קאָשאוי, today in Slovakia), appearing just before Passover (Lieberman 1980:271–278; Komoróczy 2011a:304.1), and for twelve monthly issues. The lead article published in the first issue set the tone of the entire publication; it was a copy of Hillel Lichtenstein's *droshe* (דרשה) [homily] on the occasion of *Shabbat ha-Gadol* (*shabes ha-godl*/שבת הגדול), the Saturday preceding the first day of Passover (Schlesinger, *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* 1, [exact date missing] March 1866, 1–4), a moralistic piece concerned with the necessity of repentance. Each monthly issue of the journal contained a Hebrew supplement devoted to Torah study, *'Ammud ha-Tora* (*Amud ha-toyro/Omed ha-toyre*/עמוד התורה). These supplements were meant to provide Schlesinger's 'ideal community' with study materials, for the sake of strengthening its members' intellectual and spiritual unity. The main publication and the supplement were designed to cater to the tastes of two distinct readerships. Schlesinger's purpose of reaching the widest possible audience meant that the core text of *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* had to be written in Yiddish, the language most accessible to the majority of Orthodox Jews in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. This section of *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* usually opened with a central article, a transcribed version of a homily, originally delivered on the occasion of a sacred holiday or as a eulogy for a deceased rabbi who figured as a semi-legendary leader in Orthodox tradition (Schlesinger, *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* 4, 16 July 1866, 104–110). This article was often followed by news from different localities, starting with Jerusalem, then from various cities in Austro-Hungary, and finally from all over the world. While these materials were directed at the general population, the Hebrew-only supplement sought to interest the educated elite. Here, Schlesinger discussed the rabbinical sources of his ideology and the *halakhic* reasoning behind it. The first seven issues of *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* were published in Kassa, yet Schlesinger was forced to change publishers later that year, the publisher refusing his further participation, by Schlesinger's own admission, due to the journal's ideological extremism. The last five issues were therefore published in Ungvár (Ungwar/Uzhhorod/Uzhgorod/Ungvar/אונגווער, today in Ukraine). In the last issue Schlesinger confessed that he was denied further access to printing facilities, and that *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* must temporarily cease publication (Schlesinger, *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* 12, 27 February 1867, 101\*). However, the hope thus indicated by Schlesinger for the continuance of his journal will prove unfounded, for after a year of struggling to find the necessary funds and willing publishers he was forced to give up his efforts. No new issues of *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* were put to press after February 1867 (Adar 1867).

The issues we possess today of *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* are ordered in runs, bound in a single volume. They were sent in this compendium form to subscribers at the end of the year of publication, the volume containing all issues published in the course of the year. The yearly volume also contains a table of contents (Schlesinger, *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* 12, 27 February 1867, 102\*–104\*, see index) which suggests that the journal was an object of preservation from the start. There are only two extant copies of *'Ammud ha-Yir'a*, one preserved in the Library of Agudas Chasidei Chabad Lubavitch (New York), and the other in the National Library of Israel (Jerusalem). Neither of them possess single issues of the Yiddish journal, only the collected volumes of all published issues. Along with the monthly supplements entitled *'Ammud ha-Tora* two other special supplements were also included in the collected volumes of *'Ammud ha-Yir'a*, namely *El ha-Adarim ha-Šeni* (El Hua-durem hascheni\El ho-Adorim ha-Sheyne) השני\העדרים [אל] [The Second Call to the Flocks], a polemically-worded Yiddish *muser* [Jewish ethics] booklet, promulgating repentance as the only sure safeguard against the dangers of cultural and religious assimilation,<sup>6</sup> and a rabbinical ordinance (*takone*/תקנה) from Michalowitz, which Schlesinger rendered into Yiddish rather loosely, translating some of its points in a way which best suited his purposes. Archiving was, in fact, one of Schlesinger's main concerns. He did not publish his journal for the sole purpose of direct dissemination. His eyes were set on posterity, and he aimed to produce a corpus of works which would transcend mere commentary and current events, serving as a codex of what he considered to be a comprehensive morality. Wishing for the journal to be viewed as an institution, and for his readership to have a sense of continuity in their identification with it, he engaged with them in regular correspondence, both in private and as part of a series of letters to the editor published in the journal along with commentary. In this way he succeeded in forming an unbroken thread of discussion, each new issue of *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* usually starting off but a hair's breadth from where the preceding one ended, closely referencing and carrying on discussion points, reports, and stories which the latter left unconcluded.

As Jürgen Habermas (1968:101) pointed out in his seminal work *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* [*The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*], ideology emerged concomitantly with the growth of journalism. The development of press and ideology complemented each other; since the disseminated news created the sentiment of a certain *Weltanschauung* [worldview] throughout the social field. This was also one of the motivating forces behind Akiva Yosef Schlesinger's activities. Schlesinger founded the first Yiddish periodical in Hungary, which was extremely traditionalist (Ultra-Orthodox) and meant to reflect the ideology of the

---

6 Schlesinger (1987:16–92); Lieberman (1980:271–278); and Komoróczy (2011a:153.1).

*Hatam Sofer*, whose legacy he saw as his personal task to disseminate. His primary goal was to combat Reform, and through his rallying cry, to unify Orthodox Jews under one flag. Apart from the political and social atmosphere of mid-nineteenth century Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, Schlesinger's ideological role models served as another important factor in the shaping of his worldview. Schlesinger grew up in the shadow of a triumvirate of strictly religious and ideologically determined figures. His father was Yēhi'el Schlesinger, whom he considered his spiritual mentor. Later Schlesinger would dedicate his collection of commentaries on the Torah to his father's memory, by giving his book the title *Sefer Torat Yēhi'el* (*Seyfer toyras Yekhiel* יחיאל/ספר תורת) [*The Book of Yehi'el's Teaching*], the first volume on Genesis published in Jerusalem (1902). Like Schlesinger, his father had also studied in the prestigious yeshiva (*yeshiva*/ישיבה) of Pressburg headed by the *Hatam Sofer*. The *Hatam Sofer* was Schlesinger's godfather (Y. *sandek*/H. *sandaq*/סנדק), who even acted as the infant's *mohel* (*moyel*/מוהל) [ritual circumciser]. This episode, which had become a standard narrative in the later hagiography on Schlesinger's life, was the fundamental link between the two, since two years after the ritual the *Hatam Sofer* had passed away (Schlesinger 1977:13). Allegedly, the news of the passing of another prominent rabbinic figure, R. Akiva Eger (or Eiger; Akiva Güns/עקיבא אייגער) (1761–1837) reached the gathered community during the circumcision ceremony in the synagogue and the rabbi added Akiva to the infant's name (Schlesinger 1977:13). In the various narratives on Schlesinger's life the ritual of circumcision is represented as a “passage,” a “ritual ordination,” a “covenant,” both physical and cultural, that consigned the task to Schlesinger to act in the spirit of the *Hatam Sofer*. The third important figure in Schlesinger's life was his father-in-law, Hillel Lichtenstein (Wetsch/Lesch/ליכטנשטיין) (1814–1891). By marrying Lichtenstein's daughter, Liba, Schlesinger joined ways with his father-in-law in his wanderings from one Jewish community to the other. A charismatic preacher and acknowledged holy man, Lichtenstein was also a *persona non grata* [an ‘ostracized’ person] in several traditional Jewish communities, being uncompromising in what he believed was the ‘right’ interpretation of Jewish law. Lichtenstein did not shy away from conflict, which often led to him being forced to leave a community after functioning as its rabbi for a short period of time. Finally, Lichtenstein was chosen to the rabbinical position of the Galician community Kolomea (Colomeea/קאָלמֶעא, today in Ukraine), where he spent most of his days (Silber 2008d).

These three rabbinical personalities shaped Schlesinger's identity to a large extent vis-à-vis the Jewish communal milieu. Yēhi'el Schlesinger embedded in his son a strict observance of Jewish tradition, a feeling that each and every member of a Jewish community must dedicate his life to study and adhere closely to the minutiae of Jewish law. The *Hatam Sofer* was Schlesinger's inspiration in his battle against Reform tendencies in Hungary, which he would wage as if it was his per-

sonal duty and vocation. The *Ḥatam Sofer* had already experienced the influence that religious reform could have on traditional Jewish community structures, as evinced by the example of Western Europe, which made him move eastward to Hungarian territories, where he would take up the ardent struggle to uproot any trace of Reform tendencies (Katz 1990:223–266). Lastly, Lichtenstein showed Schlesinger the way to maximize the effects of language by employing traditional forms of discourse to address modern-day concerns. Lichtenstein also acknowledged the importance of the use of the vernacular, Yiddish in this enterprise, as we may see in his unique compilation of rabbinical *responsa* (*Shayles-tshuves*/שאלות ותשובות) [*Responsa*] *‘Et la’asot* (*Eys laasoy*/עז לעשו), written in Yiddish (Silber 2008c; Komoróczy 2011:107–123; Komoróczy 2011:115–130; Reyzen 1927:149–150<sup>7</sup>).

However, it was Schlesinger who preceded his father-in-law in seeking to establish a viable and efficient mode of writing, which would be relevant for most classes of the Jewish social spectrum. The monthly publication of *‘Ammud ha-Yir’a*, as of its first appearance in 1866, was meant to precipitate the forming of disparate Ultra-Orthodox communities into a unified whole. This project came to be known as *Maḥazire ‘Aṭara lē-Yošna* (*Makhzirey atoro lē-yoshno*/מחזירי עטרה לישנה) [Those who Restore the Former Glory of the Crown], whose members aimed at mobilizing the right-wing of Orthodoxy, from the most learned to the lay people of every Jewish community, and to garner popular support for their Traditionalist agenda, the preservation of a stringent *Yidishkeyt* [Jewishness]. Schlesinger’s *‘Ammud ha-Yir’a* aimed to serve this project, albeit it seems that it was laden with many conflicting ideological stimuli. Paradoxically, Schlesinger advocated for the complete rejection of novelties, yet it was through the relatively new medium of journalism in Traditional circles that he sought to reach his goal. This put Schlesinger in an intricate situation. On the one hand, he had to explain to his readers why they should subscribe and support his enterprise, and on the other, he attacked anyone who tried to innovate in any subject related to the traditional Jewish religious lifestyle. Schlesinger expressed his radically conservative view on a wide variety of subjects, such as (in-country and inter-country) migration, social mobility (Schlesinger, *‘Ammud ha-Yir’a* 4, 16 July 1866, 116), the status of *minhag* [Jewish custom] in Jewish law (Schlesinger, supplement to *‘Ammud ha-Yir’a* 9, 17 November 1866, 22\*–25\*), the status of women (Schlesinger, *‘Ammud ha-Yir’a* 6, 15 September 1866, 183), Jewish political representation (Schlesinger, supplement to *‘Ammud ha-Yir’a* 7, 16 October 1866, 24\*–26\*), Jewish secular education (Schlesinger, *‘Ammud ha-Yir’a* 10, 14 December 1866, 60\*), and the Jewish dress code (Schlesinger,

7 Reyzen, like many others, mistakenly attributes the authorship of Schlesinger’s books *Lev ha-Tvri* and *El ha-Adarim* to Lichtenstein.



‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a* 10, 14 December 1866, 63\*–64\*). Naturally, Schlesinger addressed all these issues within the framework of Jewish Law, manipulating its tenets so as to best suit his own personal interpretation and ideological agenda. Schlesinger contextualized every news item pertaining to political events as well as social issues, within ‘the four cubits of *halakha*.’

## 2 Jewish Law, Journalism and the Use of Yiddish

‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a* was published during a time when the newspaper consumption practices amongst traditional Jewish circles were undergoing a significant change. Hungarian, German and Yiddish journals had become a part of daily experience for the majority of religiously devout readers in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. As one of the readers of ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a*, Ḥayyim Şëvi Yosef Kahana Heller (חיים צבי יוסף כהנא העללער), a disciple of Hillel Lichtenstein from Bihar county in eastern Hungary, remarked in a letter sent to the editor in the winter of 1867, published in ‘*Ammud ha-Tora*, the Hebrew supplement of the paper:

ואת חטאי אני מזכיר כי בעת אשר מקדם באו לידי אם כי ראיתי בהם פלפל בדברי תורה, עשיתי מהם כלי תשמיש בבית הכסא

I mention my sins that earlier whenever I came across [a newspaper], unless it concerned matters of Torah, I used it as toilet-paper (Schlesinger, ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a* 12, 27 February 1867, 97\*).

This letter indicates two significant features of the correspondent’s attitude. Firstly, his ‘confession’ seems to imply that newspapers were a rather common phenomenon, even in his undoubtedly religious milieu, and that such printed materials could be easily acquired. Furthermore, as we now know, the writer of the letter was most likely exposed to a large variety of such news products and journalistic sources: beginning with lampoons or *pashkeviln* [פאַשקעוילן], through pronouncements or *medoes* [מודעות], *kruzim* [כרוזים] [proclamations] published by Jewish communal authorities, or *eydeshaftn* [עדותשאַפֿטן/עדויות] [testimonies], he was even exposed inadvertently to non-Jewish sources in the form of official reports and newspapers written in German or Hungarian. We may pose the question then, why does the correspondent have to confess his sin? Probably because he had almost thrown ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a* down the loo as he was wont to do with other newspapers, before realizing the importance of this particular journal.

This report, sent to Schlesinger, the editor and presumably chief contributor to ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a*, obviously did not express the only possible Orthodox Jewish reaction to the appearance of newspapers. Another convert to Schlesinger’s ideology who became an enthusiast of his new newspaper likewise expressed himself

in overtly satirical tones, in expressing a shared sense of contempt for journalism as a whole, a contempt which paradoxically encompassed the readership of which he was a part, as well as journalists themselves (Schlesinger, 'Ammud ha-Tora, supplement to 'Ammud ha-Yir'a 8, 16 October 1866:7\*). Furthermore, these views were not unique to Orthodox Jewish readers. It was tied to a larger phenomenon of a nascent rejection of this new currency of social exchange, which seemed to blur dangerously the differences between nations, languages, ethnic groups, and religious denominations.

Engrossed in a rapidly changing world, society had suddenly become absorbed in the new medium of world news. If we may view the emergence of Ultra-Orthodoxy as an integral part of a wide, trans-national phenomenon, namely the emergence around this time of an Ultra-Orthodox attitude originating in Hungary (Silber 1992:27–37), then it is in this context that we must try to understand rabbinical opinions published at this time, opinions which reflected the commonly-held views of the rabbinic elite concerning the consumption of newspapers. It is not by chance that prominent rabbis issued their opinion with regard to journalism around this time: the 1860s and onwards was a period of rapid growth in the Jewish press, a process which was spearheaded by Schlesinger himself among others. Yisra'el Me'ir Pupko (1839–1933)—better known as the Chofetz Haim (*Hafes Hayyim*), author of the world-famous *Mišna Bērura* (משנה ברורה), a compendium of extremely stringent rulings on the most accepted post-medieval code of Jewish law, Yosef Karo's sixteenth-century *Šulḥan 'Aruk* (שולחן ערוך)—felt an urgent need to voice his direct opposition to, and issue an ethical ban against the spread of this new genre. In one of his homiletic pieces he writes:

בעונותינו הרבים נהפוך הוא, כי התגבר עלינו היצר הרע מאד, ומבקש עצות ותחבולות איך ללכדנו בעון בטול תורה... ולמשל, קריאת עיתונים, שנתרבו מאד בזמננו, ורבו כיום מאד הקוראים אותם. כל זה הוא רק אודות הביטול תורה בעצמו המגיע מקריאת העיתונים, והנה מצוי הרבה פעמים שנמצאים בהם דברי ליצנות ולשון הרע זה על זה, ורכילות ומחלוקת אלו עם אלו. ולולא נמצאו קוראים ומקבלים לזה, כי איז לא הדפיסו אותם. ודבר זה נעלם מכל, שכולם יהיו נתפסים על זה לדין בבואם ליתן דין וחשבון לפני כסא הכבוד.

For our great sins it came about that the evil instinct has overcome us and now seeks counsel and ruses so as the better to capture us [. . .]. For example, the reading of newspapers has spread in our time, and their readers have multiplied. All information acquired in this manner ought to be considered *biṭṭul Tora* [abstention from the studying of Jewish law without sufficient excuse], and in some cases such foolishness and rumors are published as to create enmity between a man and his fellows and to sow gossiping and dissension among the people. If there were no readers and readership for this, then they would not print them. Though they ignore this, all [readers and writers] will be brought to judgment once they come to account for their deeds before the Throne of the Almighty (Kohen 1990:50).

The opinion of the Chofetz Haim, written in the early 1870s, gradually became a *locus classicus*, an authoritative passage, epitomizing the deep-seated reserve and

skepticism which some sectors of the Jewish religious world experienced towards any sign of modernity.

Interestingly, two years before he published *'Ammud ha-Yir'a*, Akiva Yosef Schlesinger voiced a similar opinion in his commentary treatise on the ethical will of the *Ḥatam Sofer*, the *Lev ha-Ṭvri* (לב העיברי) [The Hebrew Heart], which became an instant bestseller. Schlesinger writes:

ואף גם שרוב העולם שכורים בטרדות זה זה בכה וזה בכה, ועל אחת כמה וכמה אלו אשר שכלם מטושטש בספרי חצונים ומבלים עליהם על צייטונג ולעשות פרעדיגען, תורה מנין להם

Since most people are intoxicated by this nuisance, each after his own fashion, and how much the more so are those, whose intellect is blurred by secular books and who spend their days with newspapers and with creating new-fangled sermons, how could they acquire the Torah? (Schlesinger 1990:84).

As seen from the above examples, in the eyes of early religious Jewish critics, printed news was an unpredictable and suspicious medium, liable to be manipulated by any and all anti-religious propagandists, bent on turning the readers away from God's Torah. Schlesinger understood that while the modern press could pose a great threat, in the right hands it could also prove a powerful ally. He further recognized that the political discourse of the period was growing progressively dependent on public opinion as a means of garnering communal support. Schlesinger's goal was to tap public opinion not only for the aims of combatting the newly-fledged Reform-tendencies within Hungarian Jewry, but also, as a further step, as a means of leading his followers into an imagined realm of a Jewish religious-historic past. According to Schlesinger, this imagined past represented a form of authentic Jewish existence and experience, opposed to the degenerating effects of Jewish Emancipation, the Haskalah, and the spread of social mobility and religious freedom, even among his own readership, the Orthodox Jews. At this point the prohibition of the *Ḥatam Sofer*, the legendary head of the Pressburg yeshiva should be borne in mind: "*hadas' asur min ha-Tora*" [innovations to the Jewish lifestyle are prohibited *dē-orayta*, that is, according to the laws of the Torah]<sup>8</sup> (Samet 2005:19–20). The *Ḥatam Sofer's* saying became a cornerstone of the emergent Ultra-Orthodox ideology, partly due to the extreme popularity of *Lev ha-Ṭvri* even outside Hungary, in such places as Lithuania (*Y. Lite/H. Lita*) and others of the Tsar's domains (Kamenetsky 2002:214–215). Moreover, this dictum states that it was not merely the purpose of the Talmudic sages to distance people from transgressions by restricting alterations to the *halakhic* code, but also, to qualify any such prospective alterations so as to restrict them from modifying what was seen as a timeless, sacred, and inherently

8 Echoing Mishnah, *'Orla* 3:9: "New [produce] is prohibited by the Torah in all places."

Jewish lifestyle. In short, the *Ḥatam Sofer's* intended legacy was to perpetuate a perceived conservatism, in legal and practical matters alike, inherent to the Jewish tradition. For Schlesinger and his father-in-law, R. Hillel Lichtenstein, this stance determined each and every facet of their worldview, starting with the question of language (Komoróczy 2011:203–210).

According to the teachings of the *Ḥatam Sofer* the Jews used the local vernacular during their bondage in Egypt, and it was purposefully corrupted by them in order to make it Jewish, suitable for their private use (Schreiber 2008:29, *Responsa Even ha-'Ezer*, vol. 2, no. 11; Katz 2004:249–253). On the basis of this premise, the *Ḥatam Sofer* constructed a genealogy of Yiddish, as an exceptionally Jewish phenomenon unfolding concomitantly with the history of the Jewish diaspora. Yiddish was not, he insisted, a corrupted German, nor was it a mere jargon, as the *maskilim*—the intellectuals of the Jewish Enlightenment—saw fit to define it, but rather an ‘upgraded’ form of German, enhanced by light touches of sanctity (Hayle 1991:171–174). Therefore, the language of ‘*Ammud ha-Yir'a*’ was Yiddish, specifically the Yiddish spoken and written in the *Oberland*, the part of Northern Hungary adjacent to Vienna, capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Katz 1975:36–40; Bin-Nun 1973:54–55, 90–93; and recently Fleischer 2018:245). Due to the spread of newspapers discussing modern, political issues, designed for consumption by God-fearing Jews, and to the Germanized written style of the region (Kaddari 1966:185–190), the language of ‘*Ammud ha-Yir'a*’ took the form of a highly Germanized Yiddish. In its first issue, Schlesinger explains his reasons for publishing his journal thus:

איך ווײַס גוט דאָס מאַנכע פאַרטייען זעלבסט פאַן ייִדישע זײַט ווירד דאָס ספֿר נאָך איהרען וויללען זײַן, איינע ווירד עס איבער שפּאַנט האַלטען, דען ווירד די שפּראַך נישט געפֿאַלען א.ד.ג. [=אונד דאָס גלייכע] אין איבריגען ווײַס איך אײַן מענטש קאָן נישט יעדן רעכט טהון [...] מיר מוזען אונזער מעגליכקײַט טהון אום (מקרבֿ לבבות לאַבינו שבשמיים) די ייִדושקײַט (!) מיט אַללע קרעפֿטען צו שטערקען בעזח"י [=בעזרת השם יתברך]. אונזער הויפּט געוויכט ווערדען מיר לעגען דאָרויף דאָס געזונדע געזונד צוערהאַלטען דאָמיט דאָס קרעבסליידען פֿאַן פרצת הדור ר"ל [=רחמנא לעלן] נישט ווײַטער פֿרעסט. וואָס דיא שפּראַך (!) בעטריפֿט רײַן דײַטש וויל איך נישט שרײַבען ווען אויך אין ייִדושע (!) בוכשטאַבן דער איסר גרינגער איסט. איבריגענס דער פֿערשטעהען ווירד וועללען ווירד פֿערשטעהן קענען זאָגט דער אויסלענדער וויא דער אינלענדער.

Ikh vays gut das mankhe partayen zelbst fon yidishe zayt vird das seyfer nikht nakh iren viln zayn, ayne vird es iber shpant halten, den vird di shprakh nikht gefalen und das glaykhe in ibrigen vays ikh ayn mentsh kan nikht yedn rekht tun [...]. Mir muzn undzer meglikhkayt tun um (mekarev levovaus le-ovinu she-ba-shomayim) di yidishkayt mit ale kreften tsu shterken be-ezras ha-shem yisborekh. Undzer hoypt gevikht verden mir legen daroyf das gezunde gezond tsuerhalten damit das krebslayden fon pirtsas ha-dor rakhmone litslan nikht vayter frest. Vas di shprakh betrift rayn daytsh vil ikh nikht shraybn ven oykh in yidishe bukhshتابן der iser gringer ist. Ibrigen der fershtehen vird velen vird fershtehen kenen zogut der oyslender vi der inlender.

I know well that this book [*'Ammud ha-Yir'a*] will not be to the liking of most Jewish parties. One will think that it is outrageous, and another will reject the language thereof, etc. It is impossible besides, I know, to do right by everyone [. . .]. We must do everything in our power (let our hearts cleave unto our Father in heaven) to strengthen Jewishness, with all our might and with God's help, praised be He. We put the main emphasis on keeping the healthy and thus avoiding the further spread of the cancer [caused by the] faithlessness of the generation, God preserve us. Concerning the language, I shall not write pure German, though by using Hebrew letters the prohibition is less stringent. Moreover, those who have a mind to understand will understand [the language of *'Ammud ha-Yir'a*], be they native or foreign (Schlesinger, *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* 1, [exact date missing] March 1866, 1).

As we may see from this excerpt taken from the introduction to *'Ammud ha-Yir'a*, Schlesinger faced a major linguistic challenge. He had to create a journalistic language in Yiddish which could discuss all facets of life, including political and social issues. This language was not in existence at the time, since *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* was the first journal of its kind in the region. As the linguist Dovid Katz points out, a split had formed during this time between spoken and written Yiddish in Hungary, the written language resembling more and more *Hochdeutsch*, or literary German, while the spoken language did not undergo similar processes of change (Katz 1997:3–4, 5–6, 35–37).

Schlesinger sought to answer the question of the importance of the preservation of Yiddish in the two special supplements of *'Ammud ha-Yir'a*. In *El ha-Adarim ha-Šeni* he wrote that so long as Jews retained the primary characteristics of their Jewishness, i.e., their Jewish names, language and clothing, even were they to become wicked, there would be no need to worry for their future as a people:

אונד זוא לאנג דאס יידען צווישען דיא יידישע פיהרונג זיך געהאלטען האבען ווען אויך צו צייטען זיא געזינדיגט האבען וואהר ניקט זוא צו טרויערן אונד מאן האט ניקט זוא געברויכט מרעיש עולם צו זיין. עס וואהר נאך איממער צו האפען דאס זעלבסט דער פשע (!) זיך בעסערן קאן אויף דיא אלטע טעג אונד דערגלייכען אונד ווען אויך דאס ער קיין תשובה האט געטהון מיר וויסן דאך דאס עס זעהר פאסט געוועזען דאס פון רשעים זיין צדיקים עהער געקומען קינדער וואהרען אין פיעלע דורות בעסער וויא איהרע פאטער דאס אלעס וואהר צו האפען זוא לאנג דער ייד איין ייד וואהר. דאס דיא ערציעהונג פון די קינדער יידיש וואהר. דאס בית הכנסת יידיש וואהר, דער מנהיג איין יידישער וואהר די טראכט די פיהרונג די נאעמען דיא שפראך יידישע וואהרען זוא לאנג דאס דאס כלל יהדות ערהאלטען געווארדען איזט פאר דען וואס אין כלל וואהר ווען ער זיך אויך ניקט גוט נאך דען דת געפיהרט האט קיין האפנונג וואהר בייא איהם דאך ניקט פערלארען.

Und zo lang das yiden tsvishen di yidishe führung zikh gehalten haben ven oykh tsu tsayten zey gezindigt haben vahr nikht zo tsu troeyern und man hat nikht zo gebroykht marish aulem tsu zayn. Es vahr nokh immer tsu hofen das zelbst der poshe zikh besern kan oyf di alte teg und derglaykhen und ven oykh das er kayn tshuve hat gethun mir visen dokh das es zehr oft gezeven das fun reshaim zayn tsadikim eher gekumen kinder vahren in fiele daures beser vi ihre feter. Das alles vahr tsu hofen zo lang der yid ayn yid vahr, das di ertsihung fun di kinder yidish vahr, das beys hakneses yidish vahr, der manhig ayn yidisher vahr di trakht di führung di nemen di shprakh yidishe vahren zo lang das das klal yaades erhalten gevorden izt far den

vas in klal vahr ven er zikh oykh nikht gut nokh den das gefihrt hat kayn hofnung vahr bay ihm dokh nit ferloren.

So long as Jews lead a Jewish life, even if they sin at times, one need not be sad or desperate. There is always hope that a wicked man will right himself in his old age, etc. And even if he does not repent, we know that oftentimes the righteous arise from the wicked, and that in several generations' time a bad man's progeny may become better than their ancestors. For as long as a Jew remains a Jew, as long as Jewish education prevails and the synagogue remains Jewish, as long as the leaders are Jewish; their garb, their self-conduct, their names, the language they speak maintain their Jewish nature, there is hope. And this will continue to be the case only inasmuch as Jews adhere to *Yidishkeyt* in its entirety, without the least deviation. Even if a Jew does not conduct himself in accordance with the precepts of Jewish law, hope for the future is not yet entirely lost (Schlesinger 1867:8–9).

As can be seen in the cited excerpt, Schlesinger pinpoints concrete features in Jewish conduct which are essential, according to him, for the perpetuation of an authentic Jewish existence. The three main points that Schlesinger stipulates (*šem, lašon, malbuš*) are frequently repeated in his polemics (Silber 1992:68–73), and clearly define the direction he wished the Jewish community to take. *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* sought to popularize these ideas not only in its supplements, but also among the pages of its news section where, as we shall see below, the consequences of major catastrophes are often linked with the dangerous slide towards the abandonment of those features. Next, in his interpretative translation of Michalovice's *halakhic* ordinance, Schlesinger expresses feelings of loss and despair over what he perceives as the tendency of many Jews to distance themselves from the Jewish identifiers of name, garb, conduct and language, and he calls for urgent collective action to reverse this process of assimilation (Schlesinger, supplement to *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* 9, 17 November 1866, 23\*, 25\*; Katz 2015:218–222).

### 3 Sin and Punishment in the Rabbinic Rhetoric of *'Ammud ha-Yir'a*

It should be noted that Schlesinger's political stance is always intertwined with an ongoing rabbinical discourse. To his readers, Schlesinger epitomized a Jewish tradition that was fixed and permanent, an entity lacking in any historical dimension. Presenting things thus was an intentional strategy on his part, which allowed him to implant his own novelties into the news items he reported or commentated on. Let me illustrate this by using two examples. The first is related to the practice of *mineg* (H. *minhag*), or Jewish religious custom. Schlesinger contended that if someone abrogated *minhogim* (H. *minhagim*), or local practices, or even dared to question

their significance, in doing this he severed the cord which united him to the Jewish people. Schlesinger did not distinguish between *mineg vosikin* (H. *minhag watiqin*), traditions enrooted in the distant past, and customs which were internalized as part of 'practiced religion', and which were often based on a false understanding of rabbinic sources. He went so far as to claim, in his Torah commentary (*Sefer Torat Yēhi'el*) that "to keep the [sense of a law] hidden [from the public] is praiseworthy, for in this way the *minhag* of Israel may uproot (!) *halakha*" [Jewish law] (היה כדאי ... (Schlesinger 1971, vol. 1:404), meaning that the observance of Jewish custom was superior—indeed, even legally—to the very reasons and rationales on which Jewish law is based. Practice-oriented legal radicalism of this sort is similarly expressed in a report, published in 1866, in the August-September volume of *'Ammud ha-Yir'a*, concerning an incident, which took place in Nagymád (Mad/מאד, today in Slovakia). The report relates the case of a couple, about to get married, who came afoul of Jewish marriage customs. The groom was not willing to wear the *kitl* (or *kitli*), the traditional Ashkenazic Jewish man's solemn white linen robe, and the bride protested implacably against having her hair cut. The consequences were not long to follow:

דאס נייע יונגע פאָר האָבען גליקליך צו זאמען געלעבט דרייזשן חדשים אָבער ליידער נור דרייזשן חדשים, קוים וואָהרען דיא פֿאַריבער האָט זיך דער חתן דער יונגע מאַן געלעגט אין דען קראַנקען בעט אונד איזט געשטאַרבען ר"ל [=רחמנא לצלן] וויא בעטריעבט דאָס הויס וואָהר וויא (אחרית שמחה תוגה) וועלכער יאָמער אונד קלאָג אין דען הויס הערליך געקומען איזט אין דען ערשט פֿאַר אַיין קורצע צייט דיא גרוסע בעלוסטיגונג וואָהר קאָן זיך יעדער דענקען. אונד דיא יונגע אלמנה איזט אַיבער געבליעבען אין איהר עלענדען אונגליק אין דיא גוטע האַפֿנונג (מעוברת) עס איזט אַינע קורצע צייט וויעדער פֿאַריבער געגאנגען דיא צייט איזט געקומען צום ניעדערקומען, זיא האָט אַיין קינד אַיין זוכר אויף דיא וועלט געבראַכט, אָבער באלד נאָך דער געבורט איזט זיא געפֿעהרליך געוואָרדען מאַן האָט אויסגעשיקט נאָך דיא געשיקטעסטען רופֿאים דאָקטאָרים אַיבער (!) אָהנע צונוטצען עס וואָהר קיין הילף ר"ל [=רחמנא לצלן], מאַן האָט פֿיעל צדקה געגען געלאָסט דיא גאַמצע (!) שעהנע אויסשטאַפֿירונג איזט אַן אַרמע לייט פֿערטעהילט געוואָרדען אָבער ליידער צו שפּעט וואָהר אַללעס דאָס יונגע ווייב האָט אַנגעפֿאַנגען נון אין איהרע וועהען מתודה צו זיין דאָס זיא עס פֿערזינד האָט אונד האָט זיך געלאָסט דיא האָר אַבשניידען האָט געשאַפֿט דאָס מאַן מיט איהר וודוי זאָגען זאָלל האָט צוואה געלאָסט דאָס מאַן טראַכטען זאָלל דאָס דאָס קינד זאָלל וויא אַם געשווינדעסטען פֿיר איהר קדש זאָגען ווען זיא צו זיין דרשה ניכט דיא זוכה האָט. אונד מיט גרוס תשובה פֿון רעד פֿון בערליאונג (!) וואָס זיא באלד ניט געהערט איזט געוואָהרען איזט איהר ריינע נשמה אונטער גרוס יאָמער געשריין פֿון שמע ישראל אויס געגאנגען.

Das naye yunge paar haben gliklikh tsu zamen gelebt dray khadoshim aber layder nur dray khadoshim, koym varen di foriber hat zikh der khosn der yunge man gelegt in den kranken bet und izt geshtorben rakhmone litslan vi betribt das hoys var vi (akharis simkho tugo) velkher yamer und klag in den hoys herayn gekomen izt in den ersht for ayne kurtse tsayt di grose belustigung var kan zikh yeder denken. Und di yunge almone izt iber gehliben in ir elenden ungluk in di gute hofnung (meuberes) es izt ayne kurtse tsayt vider foriber gegangen di tsayt izt gekumen tsum niderkumen, zi hat ayn kind ayn ben zokher oyf di velt gebrakht, aber bald nakh der geburt izt zi geferlikh gevorden man hat oysgeshikt nakh di geshiktesten royfim doktorim aber one tsunutsen es var kayn hilf rakhmone litslan, man hat fil tsdoke geben gelast di gantse shehne oyshtafirung izt an arme layt fertaylt gevorden aber layder

tsu shpet var ales das yunge vayb hat angefangen nun in ire vehen misvade tsu zayn das zi es ferzind hat und hat zikh gelast di haar abshnayden hat geschaft das man mit ir vide zagen zol hat tsavoe gelast das man trakhten zol das das kind zol vi am geshvindesten fir ir kadish zagen ven zi tsu zayn droshe nikht di skhie hat. Und mit gros tshuve fun red fun befrayung vas zo bald nit gehert izt gevaren izt ir rayne neshome unter gros yamer geshray fun shma yisroel oys gegangen.

The young couple could enjoy their happiness, but unfortunately only for three months. Not long after this, the young husband took to his bed and died, God should save us from such a fate! How disturbed the whole family was! 'Graveness follows in the footsteps of mirth.' [Prov 14:13] You can imagine what sorrow and lamentation entered the house that had only too recently been a place of great merriment! And the young widow was left alone in her misfortune, but with great expectations (she was pregnant). After a short time, she was in labor to give birth, and she successfully gave birth to a baby boy. But immediately her state became critical, and they sent for expert surgeons, but it was of no use. Her family gave alms, and donated her whole accoutrement to charity, but to no avail, all this was already too late. The young widow confessed her sins and asked that her hair be cut and then left a testament to the effect that when the child reaches the age of *bar mitzvah* [coming of age ritual at his thirteenth birthday], he should say *kadish* [mourner's prayer] for her, since she would not have the privilege to hear his *droshe* (H. *dēraša*) [the homily said in the synagogue on the day of his *bar mitzvah* celebration]. And she truly repented, and talked of her release (from her miserable state), which alas did not come quickly, until with one sorrowful outcry of '*Shema Israel*' [H. *Šēma' Yisra'el*, Hear Israel] her pure soul left her body (Schlesinger, '*Ammud ha-Yir'a*' 6, 15 September 1866, 183).

It is important to understand why Schlesinger is so profuse in detail concerning this seemingly minor episode, which has nothing to do with either politics or major rabbinic issues. At a closer inspection we can observe that this story rests at the core of any polemical issue Schlesinger thought was worth fighting for. The couple came from affluent families, and it was due to their social standing that they could dictate even to the rabbinical elite, as to how they should be treated, concerning certain traditional demands the community had of them. The incident touches on a wider context: lay community leaders felt themselves increasingly autonomous with respect to the rabbinical elite, and tensions between these two ruling classes came to the fore in the ideological debates between the Reformists and the Conservatives in Hungary in the 1860s (Katz 1995:53–70). Schlesinger was inclined to the opinion that every rebellion against the rabbinical elite was doomed to failure, and that God pronounced a sentence of death, carried out immediately or in the future, against anyone who tried to append the social order in this way. Contrary to all examples of newspapers acting as a convergent medium, and one which adapts itself to the demands of potential readers, Schlesinger resolved to use journalistic content to serve sectarian, divergent ends. Not only did he have no scruples about injecting



his own personal judgments into matters requiring factual objectivity, which was, admittedly, a prevalent early practice in newspaper editing (Woolf 2005:100–107), but it would even not be too amiss to say that events and information existed for him only insofar as they bore a certain relevance to rabbinic polemics.

Schlesinger predicted that with the advent of the “*gebildete oyfgeklerte velt*” (געבילדעטע אויפגעקלערטע וועלט) [the educated, enlightened world], the messianic times must be hard by. People lost all interest in spiritual matters and bowed before the idols of materialism. As the Talmudic saying prophesized, the generation which merely seeks to satisfy its bodily desires to the exclusion of all other yearnings would be the last one before the coming of the Messiah. Schlesinger claimed that his contemporaries were the very incarnation of this prophesized generation. He drew a parallel between the needs and wants of his generation and those of a dog. This most miserable of creatures, explained Schlesinger, was unable to appreciate anything apart from the bones thrown to it for its physical sustenance (Schlesinger 1983:20–21). Thus, “the face of this generation is like the face of a dog” (פני הדור כפני הכלב) (based on bSota 49b, Schlesinger 1970:735), he concluded. Schlesinger used this metaphor to describe the leadership of his generation. The Jewish leaders were desperate to find guidance and a ‘lord’ that would direct their actions. Like the dog they expected merely rewards of their powerful masters, in this case the non-Jewish authorities, who possessed the means to reward or punish the loyalty of their subjects. The metaphor of the dog would later become a common motif in Jewish hagiographical literature, used to characterize the spiritual deviation and corruption of Hungarian Jewish society. Later texts would often resort to this trope as a way to distinguish the grandeur of Schlesinger’s spiritual mentors from the inferiority of those who opposed them. Schlesinger recounted a story that he insisted really did happen. A black dog was constantly pestering Schlesinger’s father-in-law, R. Hillel Lichtenstein. Lichtenstein tried to get rid of the dog, which was always biting at his heels, by severely thrashing it. This was to no avail and each time the dog would return after a short time to pester Lichtenstein. Finally, a mysterious traveler—a symbol of Eliyyahu the prophet in Jewish lore—had revealed to Lichtenstein that the black dog was the *gilgul* [reincarnation] of a certain *maskil* [a member of the Jewish Enlightenment movement], one of Lichtenstein’s fervent adversaries, who haunted him as a way of asking forgiveness and as an atonement for his transgressions (Margalit 1999:56). A similar story is recorded concerning the *Ḥatam Sofer*, in which the black dog was the reincarnated spirit of Moses Mendelssohn (Levenshteyn 2007:355–358).

## 4 The Act of Spitting: *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* Polemicizes the Jewish Press

The ideology of *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* crystallized over the course of prolonged, bitter debates which Schlesinger had with various opponents. This belligerency, however, did not prevent him from being a prominent actor in the Jewish journalistic world of his day (despite claiming, rather disingenuously, never to read printed news, which he described as a waste of his precious time—time better spent studying the Torah). Thus, while he polemicized fervently with the 'Reformist' views put forward in the Hungarian German-language periodical, *Ben Chananja* (1844, 1858–1867), edited by Leopold Löw (Löw Lipót/לעף לייב יהודה) (1811–1875) (Schlesinger, *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* 5, 14 August 1866, 10\*), he was also involved in a correspondence with the editors of *Ha-Lēvanon* (הלֵבָנוֹן) (1863–1886), a 'Traditionalist' journal published in Paris in the years 1865–1868, and in recycling various news items appearing there (Schlesinger, *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* 8, 16 October 1866, 37–39) and in other publications such as *Ha-Maggid* (המגיד) [The Preacher] (1856–1903), a Hebrew weekly published at that time in Prussia.

Yet Schlesinger's involvement in Jewish journalistic controversies was not only in his role as a commentator. He intended to dictate the main topics of discussion for the Jewish press. In this way he sought to widen his readership to encompass even his starkest adversaries. He attacked the prominent rabbinic figures of the era in order to clarify his ideological standpoint in such matters as compulsory secular education for Jewish children, classical Ashkenazic synagogue architecture, and the significance of traditional Jewish clothing. One of his main antagonists in the debates over matters of Jewish law was Azriel Hildesheimer ('Azri'el/Ezriel/Israel Hildesheimer/עזריאל הילדסהיימר) (1820–1899), a theoretician of moderate/conservative leanings. Hildesheimer propagated his Reform plans in the German-language *Der Israelit*, a weekly edited by Marcus Lehmann (1830–1890) and published in Mainz. Hildesheimer, together with Lehmann, advocated for a viable middle path that would allow an adherence to Jewish law coupled with a modern lifestyle. Similar to Schlesinger, he did not balk at the prospect of clashing with other organs that were addressing the same potential readership. In a leading article published in 1866 in *Der Israelit*, an anonymous correspondent from Vienna—surprisingly identified as the editor in chief, Marcus Lehmann himself by one of Schlesinger's readers (Schlesinger, *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* 6, 16 September 1866, 189–190)—accused Schlesinger of religious extremism, claiming that Schlesinger's radicalism could do serious damage not only to his small circle of dedicated followers, but to the whole Jewish community as well. In volume no. 25, in the article

“Warnung und Aufforderung” [Warning and Request] Hildesheimer expressed his support towards the ideological positions sketched up in the anonymous article and called for a full-fledged polemical attack against Schlesinger and his followers (Hildesheimer 1866:427, 428). In the volumes to come, Hildesheimer continued to criticize Lichtenstein’s and Schlesinger’s activities in rapport with the Michalovce conference (Hildesheimer 1866:521–523, 1866:521–523, 533–535, 549–551, 564–566, 629), which provoked the ire of one of Schlesinger’s ardent supporters (Schlesinger, ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a* 12, 27 February 1867, 97\*–99\*).

The Viennese correspondent thought Schlesinger was advocating for isolation and conflict with non-Jews, instead of opting for a peaceful co-existence. Furthermore, he believed that Schlesinger’s *Kulturkampf* would not stop at foiling all efforts made thus far for the achievement of a full, cultural and religious acceptance of Jews. He deemed Schlesinger’s radical rhetoric as extremely dangerous in a social context of roiling political and social turmoil. The raucous and uncompromising nature of ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a*’s reporting style could be gleaned unmistakably from the pages of its very first issue. In an article published in *Der Israelit*, the author quoted Schlesinger’s father-in-law’s words from the *Nisan* (March) volume of ‘*Ammud ha-Yir’a*, drawing a comparison between the current plight of Jews in their respective countries and that of their forefathers in Egypt:

(ויקוצו מפני בני ישראל) זיא זיין געוועזען דאָדורך פֿעראַכט אונד וואָהרען (בקוצים) וויא דערנער אין דיא מצרים'ס אויגען. אונד וואָרעם דער זכות פֿון (שלא שנו לשונם וכו') דאָס דער זכות עזו (!) גרוס איסט איס דער טעם דער מדרש זאגט דער זכות וואָהר דאָס יידען האָבען זוכה געוועזען צו קבלת התורה ווייל (מפני ששמרו יחוסיהם) יידען האָבען קענען זיך אויסצייגען איין יעדער פֿון איהרע עהרליכע אַבשטאַמונג אונד דאָס זיך צווישען איהנען ניט געפֿונען האָט דער מינדעסטע (זנות) אָדער אויסשוויפֿונג ח"ו [=חס וחלילה]. וויא וועהר אָבער דאָס מעגליך געוועזען אין מצרים וואָס דאָך צומינסטען וואָהרען (שטופֿי זימה) אויסגעלאָזען אין זנות אונד גלוי עריות אויסשוויפֿונגען וויא העטען זיך ייִדישע טעכטער אונד ייִדישע קינדער צווישען איהנען געקענט ריין אונד אונבעפֿלקט פֿון דען ערהאַלטען. איבער דען האָט געמאַכט השי"ת (=השם יתברך) (ויקוצו מפני בני ישראל) דאָס דיא מצרים האָבען געהאַט איין אַבשייע פֿאַר דיא בני ישראל ווען איין מצרי האָט געזען איין ישראליט האָט ער פֿאַר איהר אויסגעשפּיגען עס וואָר פֿעראַכט בייא איהם.

(Va-yakutsu mi-pney bney yisroel) zey zayn gevezen dadurkh ferakht und varen (ke-kautsim) vi derner in di mitsrims oygen. Und varum der skhus fun (she-lau shinu es leschaunom vekhu') das der skhus azo gros ist is der tam der medresh zagt der skhus var das yiden haben zukhe gevezen tsu kaboles ha-taure vayl (mi-pney she-shomru yikhuseyhem) yiden haben kenen zikh oystsaygen ayn yeder fun ire erlekhe abshtamung und das zikh tsvishen inen nit gefunen hat der mindeste (znus) oder oysshvayfung khas ve-kholile. Vi ver aber das meglikh gevezen in Mitsraim vas dokh tsumaystens vahren (shtufey zimo) oysgelazen in znus und gilearoyes oysshvayfungen vi heten zikh yidishe tekhter und yidishe kinder tsvishen inen gekent rayn und unbeflekt fun den erhalten. Iber den hat gemakht ha-shem yisborekh (va-yakutsu mi-pney bney yisroel) das di mitsrim haben gehat ayn abshay far di bney yisroel ven ayn mitsri hat gezen ayn yisroelis hat er for ir oysgeshpigen es var ferakht bay im.

[. . .] (So the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites) [Exod 1:12] whom they despised for that [for being Jews in Egypt], and who were (like thorns) in their eyes. And why is the merit of this (that they did not alter their language, etc.) so great? The reason for this is to be found in the *Midrash* [rabbinic commentary] which says: the merit for which the Jews received the Torah was that (they preserved their lineage), and so could display their noble pedigree, displaying not the slightest (defilement) and having no debauchery in them, God forbid. How was this possible in Egypt where in general people were lecherous, reveling in prostitution, incest and debauchery? How was it possible that Jewish daughters and Jewish children could remain pure and undefiled? For this reason, did God ordain that (so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites) the Egyptians should feel revulsion for the children of Israel. When an Egyptian saw a Jewess he spat at the very sight of her, for it [=she] was despicable for him (Schlesinger, 'Ammud ha-Yir'a 1, [exact date missing] March 1866, 24–25).

Hildesheimer was especially scandalized by the fact that Lichtenstein rejected all public dialogue over questions pertaining to Jewish social change. What their contemporaries regarded as change was for Schlesinger and Lichtenstein in truth a regression. Both sides, however, can be seen as idealists, envisioning futures equally as imaginary. The difference merely lay in the direction of the transformation each had sought: both advocated radical social change, but one hoped to open up and dissolve centuries-old Jewish social structures, while the other wished forcefully to close all possible contacts that could lead to cultural or social interaction between Jews and non-Jews.

In Lichtenstein's and Schlesinger's worldview social tolerance and liberalism were merely different ways of achieving the same end: the conversion of Jews to Christianity, and thus the disappearance of the Jewish 'nation'. In their eyes the strategy of the modern Orthodox or Neo-Orthodox camp was a simple meretricious attempt to cover up a lie, the lie of social integration or cultural assimilation of the Jews. Schlesinger therefore despised all Jewish and non-Jewish plans that tried to allure religious Jews out of their 'ghettos', which were their protective environment in face of a threatening modernity. *Der Israelit* interpreted Schlesinger's ideology as part of the nascent nationalistic agendas within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and his use of Yiddish as a central concern of his ideology. The leading article cited below argued that Schlesinger's and Lichtenstein's religious extremism was a process of deviating from Judaism, since it had nothing to do with the 'true' religion they claimed to represent:

Nein und a tausendmal Nein! Das Judenthum des R. Hillel Wetsch und seines Schwiegersohns ist nicht das echte, wahre; es ist nicht das Judenthum der Bibel, die dem treuen Bekenner der heiligen Religion Israels die Achtung aller Völker verheißt, es ist nicht die Religion des Talmuds, der nirgendwo die Erlernung von Sprachen ec. verbietet—diese befremdende Erscheinung findet höchstens in dem Sprachenstreit, der seit einigen Jahrzehnten in den österreichischen Kronländern herrscht seine Erklärung. Wie der Böhme das Czechische

vergöttert und das Deutsche verpönt, wie der Ungar das Magyarische verhimmelt und das Deutsche verwirrt, so will R. Hillel Lesch den jüdisch-deutschen Jargon als Jüdische National-sprache heilig gesprochen und das reine Deutsch verketzert wissen!!!

No, and a thousand times no! The Judaism of R. Hillel Wetsch [=Lichtenstein] and his son-in-law is not true and not right. It is not the Judaism of the Bible, which calls for the respect of all nations, of every true confessor of the holy religion of Israel. This is not the religion of the Talmud, which never forbade the acquisition of foreign languages, etc. This alien phenomenon is most characteristic of the language war, prevalent throughout all countries ruled by the Austrian crown. The Bohemian idolizes Czech and persecutes German, the Hungarian praises the Magyar [language] to high heaven and he subverts German. In the same way claims R. Hillel Lesch [=Lichtenstein] that the Yiddish-German jargon (=Yiddish) is to become a Jewish national language, and he brands pure German as heretical!!! (An anonymous correspondent from Vienna, Anonymous, 1866:379, cited also in Silber 1994:104–105).

Schlesinger was not long in delivering his answer. In an article which appeared in December 1866 he attacked Hildesheimer on the grounds that the latter wrote and published in German. Schlesinger mentioned ironically that he was perplexed by Hildesheimer's Neo-Orthodox claims, for they seemingly implied an equivalence between internal Jewish controversies and external, non-Jewish affairs, a fact which goes much further towards destabilizing Jewish identity than any polemical argument put forward in *'Ammud ha-Yir'a*. In inviting non-Jews to participate in debates pertaining to specific Jewish issues—an intention which was proven by Hildesheimer's article being in German, i.e., a non-Jewish language—he was to be regarded, claimed Schlesinger, as a traitor to his people, a heretic. Schlesinger continued his accusation by calling Hildesheimer a 'wicked person', who had committed a cardinal sin—that of using a non-Jewish language—by which act 'he exposed his wickedness in public' (*khozi khozi eykh nisgalo roosau ba-kol* חזי חזי איך נתגלה רעונו בקהל). Schlesinger was moreover scandalized by the fact that Hildesheimer advocated the reformation of Jewish education and the introduction of preachers (*prediger* פֿרעדיגער) into synagogue service (Schlesinger, *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* 10, 14 December 1866, 77\*–78\*). In another article touching on the same issues Schlesinger expressed his fear over the spread of the 'last fashion' of Judaism (*letste mode* לעצטע מאָדע) and his utter terror with the successes of the 'Epicurean' camp, which was gradually gaining ground even in communities that only recently were considered amongst the most traditional in Hungary (Schlesinger, *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* 10, 14 December 1866, 63).

## 5 Summary

To date, historical research concentrated principally on Schlesinger's polemical works written in Hebrew and on his ideological shift following his move to Eretz Israel. Schlesinger's Yiddish journal *'Ammud ha-Yir'a*, the first of its kind in Hungary, had been largely ignored. The ideological perspective which Schlesinger expressed chiefly through this journalistic outlet, through his commentary on and presentation of the news of the day was a crystallization and popularization of his previous literary achievements and of the main signposts of his literary formation in 1860s Hungary. While his best-known work, *Lev ha-Yvri* was immensely popular with Jewish religious readers, its renown reaching even the Jewish public of Czarist Russia, researchers of Schlesinger should be careful of relegating *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* to a minor position in his *œuvre*, given its importance as the first extant Yiddish journal in Hungary. Furthermore, the ideas and ideological standpoint presented in this unique journalistic outlet were unprecedented. Schlesinger exhibited a profound understanding of the challenges of modernity and tried to find a suitable way for religion to answer them, though the solutions he came up with were often more radical than those of his contemporaries. He recognized that the Ultra-Orthodoxy he tried to create could only combat integration and cultural assimilation by using the very tools of the world he so starkly rejected. His printing of a Yiddish journal in Hungary was a consequence of this understanding. With *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* Schlesinger was trying to create a distinct, Ultra-Orthodox *Öffentlichkeit*, which would appeal to the widest variety of readers, from the linguistically assimilated to the rabbinic elite. The dissemination of news meant for Schlesinger the elaboration and induction of his ideologically-loaded ideas.

In summary, we can say that Schlesinger's *'Ammud ha-Yir'a* was one of the first major signs of a nascent Ultra-Orthodox consciousness, a current which had merely sporadic manifestations at the time. Schlesinger's publications should therefore be regarded as an early symptom of a distinct *Öffentlichkeit*, to use Habermas's terminology: a discourse marked by its own narrative and its own informational and cultural symbols. The Hungarian Jewish and non-Jewish press had their own examples of such *Öffentlichkeit* during the earliest days of their history. The first "newspaper" ever was a written leaflet disseminated in Hungary in 1485, informing its readers of the cruelties of Vlad Țepeș [Vlad the Impaler] (1428/1431–1476/1477) (commonly known as Count Dracula), entitled *Dracula Waida* (Houston 1988:178), and the first woman to edit a Yiddish journal was the *rebetsn* [rabbi's wife] of Munkács (Mukacheve/Mukačevo/מונקאטש, today in Ukraine), who published her *Am* (עם) [People] in 1879 (Shatsky 1942:250). I hope that by highlighting a few unique features of Schlesinger's *'Ammud ha-Yir'a*, we may understand in greater depth an important moment, not unlike the latter, of cultural transition.

## References

- Anonymous. 1866. "Der sogenannte Chassidismus und dessen Vorkämpfer." *Der Israelit* 22, 30 May 1866, 375–379.
- Bartal, Israel. 1994. "Who is Ha-'Ivri?" *Katedra* 73: 112–114 (in Hebrew).
- Bin-Nun, Jechiel. 1973. *Jiddisch und die deutschen Mundarten*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Bodovics, Éva Judit. 2014. "Town in Flood—The Flood in the Press: Verbal Narratives of the Flood in Miskolc (1878) and Szeged (1879)." In *Úr és szolga a történettudomány egységében. Társadalomtörténeti tanulmányok. In Memoriam Vári András (1953–2011)*, ed. Gyulai Éva. Miskolc: ME BTK TTI, 202–209 (in Hungarian).
- Fleischer, Jürg. 2018. "Western Yiddish and Judeo-German." In *Languages in Jewish Communities, Past and Present*, eds. Benjamin Hary and Sarah Bunin Benor. Berlin–Boston: De Gruyter, 239–275, DOI 10.1515/9781501504631 [Accessed 03.03.2025].
- Genichowsky, Dov. 1992. "'Ammud ha-Yir'a', Lev Ha-'Ivri's Newspaper." *Kesher* 12: 102–107 (in Hebrew).
- Habermas, Jürgen. 1962. *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*. Berlin: Luchterhand.
- Hayle, Shmuel. 1991. "Halokhishe asmakhtes far oyfhitn yidish bay frume yidn." *Oksforder yidish* 2: 171–175 (in Yiddish).
- Houston, R. A. 1988. *Literacy in Early Modern Europe: Culture and Education 1500–1800*. London: Longman.
- Kaddari, Menachem Zvi. 1966. "Ha-mēšī'ut ha-lēšonit šel yahadut Hungaria." *Sinai* 59: 185–190 (in Hebrew).
- Kamenetzky, Nathan. 2002. *Making of a Godol: A Study of Episodes in the Lives of Great Torah Personalities*. Jerusalem: HaMesorah Publishers.
- Katz, Dovid. 1997. "Dos 'yidishistishe' bukh fun Khasem Soyfers talmed Reb Akive Yehoysef Shlezinger." *Yidishe kultur* 3–4, 5–6: 33–37, 34–40.
- Katz, Dovid. 2004. *Words on Fire. The Unfinished Story of Yiddish*. New York: Basic Books.
- Katz, Dovid. 2015. *Yiddish and Power*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Katz, Jacob. 1991. "Towards a Biography of the Hatam Sofer." In *From East and West*, eds. Frances Malino and David Sorkin. Cambridge: Blackwell, 223–266.
- Katz, Jacob. 1995 *A House Divided: Orthodoxy and Schism in Nineteenth-Century Central European Jewry*. Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center (in Hebrew).
- Katzburg, Nathaniel. 1980. "The Rabbinical Decision of Michalovce in 1865." In *Studies in the History of Jewish Society: In the Middle Ages and in the Modern Period*, eds. Emmanuel Etkes and Yosef Salmon. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 273–287 (in Hebrew).
- Katzburg, Nathaniel. 1985. "Central Authority in the Hungarian Jewish Community, 1870–1939." *Zion* 50: 379–395 (in Hebrew).
- Kohen, Israel Meir. 1990. "Za'or lē-Miryam." In *Kol kitve Hafeš Hayyim ha-šalem*. Vol 1. Jerusalem: Yēšivat Hafeš Hayyim mi-Radin, 23–50 (in Hebrew).
- Komoróczy, Szonja Ráhel. 2011a. *Yiddish Printing in Hungary: An Annotated Bibliography*. Budapest: Center for Jewish Studies at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
- Komoróczy, Szonja Ráhel. 2011b. "Language Assimilation and Dissimilation in the Works of R. Hillel Lichtenstein." In *Sheelot u-Teshuvot: Studies in Responsa Literature*, eds. Bányai Viktória and Szonja Ráhel Komoróczy. Budapest: Center of Jewish Studies at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 107–123.

- Komoróczy, Szonja Ráhel. 2011c. “Tudatos nyelvi disszimiláció: Jiddis a magyarországi ultra-orthodox zsidó eszmerendszerben.” In *Asszimiláció, integráció, szegregáció: Párhuzamos értelmezések és modellek a kisebbségkutatásban*, eds. Bárdi Nándor and Ágnes Tóth. Budapest: Argumentum, 115–130 (in Hungarian).
- Levenshteyn, Shlomo. 2007. *Haggada šel pesaḥ u-matoq ha-or. Pēnim me’irim, mēšalim na’im, sippure mofet, mēšubbašim ‘al seder ha-haggada*. Jerusalem: Yēfe Nof (in Hebrew).
- Lieberman, Ḥayyim. 1980. “Sifre ‘Aqiva Yosef Schlesinger še-nidpēšu bē-Ungvar.” In *Ohel Raḥel*, ed. Ḥayyim Lieberman. New York: Haim Lieberman, 271–278 (in Hebrew).
- Margalit, B. 1999. *Ragle mēvasser. Qorot ḥayyav šel rabii ‘Aqiva Yosef Shlezinger. Tolēdot ḥayyim u-mēḥqar*. Benei Brak: Peraḥ Hoša’ot (in Hebrew).
- Rashi, Tsurie. 2008. “Ben histaggērūt lē-šimmuš muskal: Yaḥas manhigut ha-yēhudit ha-ortodoksit lē-tiqšoret ha-hamonim ba-me’a ha-20.” *Mayim mi-Dolyaw* 19–20: 399–424 (in Hebrew).
- Reyzen, Zalmen, ed. 1927. *Leksikon fun der yidisher literatur, prese un filologye*. Vol. 2. Vilna: Kletskin (in Yiddish).
- Rosenthal, Chaim Shlomo. 2005. *Sefer ha-rav ha-dome lē-mal’aḳ. Qēšot dēraḳav šel rabbi Baruk Dov Leibovits, ba’al ha-Birkat Šēmu’el wē-roš yēšivat Kamenits bē-Lita*. Jerusalem: Rosenthal (in Hebrew).
- Salmon, Yosef. 1994. “Harbingers of Zionism and Harbingers of Ultra-Orthodoxy.” *Cathedra* 73: 106–111 (in Hebrew).
- Salmon, Yosef. 1998. “Ereš Yisra’el ba-maḥšaḥa ha-ortodoksit šel ha-me’a ha-19.” In *Ereš Yisrael ba-hagut ha-yēhudit ba-et he-ḥadaša*, ed. Avi’ezer Ravitzki. Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 436–440 (in Hebrew).
- Salmon, Yosef. 2016. “Akiva Yosef Schlesinger—a Forerunner of Zionism or a Forerunner of Ultra-Orthodoxy.” *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 15(2): 171–187, DOI 10.1080/14725886.2015.1111549 [Accessed 03/03/2025].
- Salmon, Yosef. 2019. *Keeping Divine Law: Orthodoxy and Ultra-Orthodoxy*. Jerusalem: Bialik Institute (in Hebrew).
- Shatsky, Ya’aqov. 1942. “Prese bay yidn: geshikhte fun der yidisher prese.” In *Algemeyne entsyklopedye*. New York: CYCO. *Yidn* 3, 199–285 (in Yiddish).
- Schlesinger, Akiva Yosef, ed. 1866–1867. *‘Ammud ha-Yir’a (Amud Hajirah)*. Kassa–Ungvár (in Yiddish).
- Schlesinger, Akiva Yosef. 1971. *Torat sefer Yēḥi’el*. 5 vols. Jerusalem: Wa’ad lē-ḥoša’at sifre ha-ga’on Rabbi ‘Aqiva Yosef Schlesinger (in Hebrew).
- Schlesinger, Akiva Yosef. [1867] 1987. “El ha-adarim ha-šeni. Der tsveyter oyfruf an yidishe kinder.” In *Vunderlekhe mayes fun talmidey Besht ha-kodesh*. Vol. 10. New York: Ha-achim Groys, 16–92 (in Yiddish).
- Schlesinger, Akiva Yosef. 1990. *Sefer lev ha-ivri*. 2 vols. Jerusalem: Schlesinger (in Hebrew).
- Schlesinger, Hillel Mordechai Eliezer. 1971. “Lē-tolēdot rabbenu ha-mēḥabber.” In *Torat sefer Yēḥi’el*, Akiva Yosef Schlesinger. Vol. 1. Jerusalem: Wa’ad lē-ḥoša’at sifre ha-ga’on Rabbi ‘Aqiva Yosef Schlesinger, 11–64 (in Hebrew).
- Schreiber, Moses. 2008. *Tēšuvot Ḥatam Sofer: ‘Al arba’ ḥelqe Šulḥan ‘Aruk: Even ha-ezer*. Vol. 2. Jerusalem: Nusnsvayg (in Hebrew).
- Shachray, Alter Ya’aqov. 1942. *Rabbi ‘Aqiva Yosef Shlesinger*. Jerusalem: Mosad ha-rav Kook (in Hebrew).
- Silber, Michael K. 1985. *Roots of the Schism in Hungarian Jewry: Cultural and Social Change from the Reign of Joseph II until the Eve of the 1848 Revolution*. Doctoral dissertation, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (in Hebrew).
- Silber, Michael K. 1992. “The Emergence of Ultra-Orthodoxy: The Invention of a Tradition.” In *The Uses of Tradition. Jewish Continuity in the Modern Era*, ed. Jack Wertheimer. New York–Jerusalem: The Jewish Theological Seminary in America, 23–84.



- Silber, Michael K. 1994. "Rabbi Akiva Joseph Schlesinger between Ultra-Orthodoxy and Jewish Nationalism." *Cathedra* 73: 84–105 (in Hebrew).
- Silber, Michael K. 2003. "A Hebrew Heart Beats in Hungary: Akiva Yosef Schlesinger–Ultra-Orthodoxy and Early Jewish Nationalism." In *Me'a šēnot šiyyonut datit* [A Century of Religious Zionism], eds. Avi Sagi and Dov Schwartz. Vol. 1. Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 225–254 (in Hebrew).
- Silber, Michael K. 2008a. "Alliance of Hebrews 1863–1875: The Diaspora roots of an Ultra-Orthodox proto-Zionist Utopia in Palestine." *The Journal of Israeli History* 27(2): 119–147, DOI 10.1080/13531040802284031 [Accessed 03.03.2025].
- Silber, Michael K. 2008b. "Hungary before the First World War." In *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, ed. Gershon D. Hundert. Vol. 1. New Haven: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, 770–782.
- Silber, Michael K. 2008c. "Lichtenstein, Hillel." In *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, ed. Gershon D. Hundert. Vol. 2. New Haven: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, 1031–1033.
- Silber, Michael K. 2008d. "Schlesinger, Akiva Yosef." In *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, ed. Gershon D. Hundert. Vol. 2. New Haven: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, 1672–1674.
- Teitelbaum, Yoel. 1978. *Wē-Yo'el Moše*. New York: Sender Deutsch (in Hebrew).
- Ungar, Mēnašše. 1937. "Bibliografye fun der yidisher prese in Erets Yisroel." In *Zamlbukh lekoved dem tsvey hundert un fuftsikstn yoyvl fun der yidisher prese, 1686–1936*, ed. Yankev Shatsky. New York: YIVO, 136–175 (in Yiddish).
- Woolf, Daniel. 2001. "News, History and the Construction of the Present in Early Modern England." In *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Brendan Dooley and Sabrina A. Baron. New York–London: Routledge, 80–118.

