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A Stormy Turn for the Better

Jewish Studies in Russia

After a long hiatus under Soviet rule, Jewish Studies in Russia has taken a stormy turn for the better since Perestroika. Schools and institutions for adult education have been established. Numerous publications, research institutes, and information centres now address Jewish topics. The emphasis is on ethnographic field work and history, especially with regard to the 20th century. But Russian academia still refuses to recognise Jewish Studies as an independent field of study. A decline in private donations has hit Jewish Studies in Russia particularly hard. And to this day, official schoolbooks remain silent about Russia's Jewish heritage.

After flourishing in the late 19th century, Jewish Studies in Russia languished throughout the Soviet era. Only since the end of the 1980s has the field begun to reassert itself – quite literally out of nothing. The first new specialists were individual enthusiasts, academics who often came from quite different fields of study. The reawakening of national consciousness, the struggle to emigrate, and participation in Russia's democratisation had also stirred a desire among the Russian-Jewish intelligentsia to take a closer look at Jewish history and culture.¹

Academic work in Jewish Studies developed primarily within Russian academia, not within Jewish organisations. Not every field of Jewish Studies had been forbidden in the Soviet period. For example, the study of Dead Sea Scrolls undertaken by the Leningrad branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences enjoyed official recognition. There was also an Israel department within the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Within the philosophy faculties of major universities, first and foremost at the state universities in Moscow and Leningrad, some aspects of Hebraic Studies and Biblical Studies could be addressed. This "official" side of Jewish Studies, which often had a political propaganda component, gradually underwent a transformation and ultimately provided the foundation for the field's further development.²

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¹ Dimitrii Eliashevich, "Russia", in M. Davis, ed., *Teaching Jewish Civilization: A Global Approach to Higher Education* (New York and London 1995), pp. 67-70.

² S. Charnyi, "Pozdnesovetskaia i postsovetskaia iudaika", in A. Epshtein, ed., *Evrei v postsovetskikh stranakh: samosoznanie i obrazovanie, sbornik statei* (Jerusalem 2008), p. 262.

The first attempts to legalise unofficial Jewish Studies was made in 1981, when the editors of the Yiddish monthly *Sovyetish Heymland* set up a Moscow Historical-Ethnographic Committee within its editorial offices.³ In a short time, this committee was able to find the most important academics who wanted to study Jewish topics. Among those that gathered around what was then the only Jewish publication in the Soviet Union were many later well-known figures, such as Rashid Kaplanov, Il'ja Dvorkin, Igor' Krupnik, Mark Kupovetskii, Abram Torpusman, Valerii Engel', Anatolii Khazanov, Vladimir Chernin, and Mikhail Chlenov. October 1987 saw the founding of the Jewish Historical Society, which offered lectures on Jewish history and culture. In 1989, the Leningrad Society of Jewish Culture was formed. Among the forums for Jewish research topics were the Leningrad Jewish history seminar, annual symposiums on the "Ethnography of Petersburg-Leningrad" at the Leningrad branch of the Institute of Ethnography, the ethnographic commission of the Moscow branch of the Geographic Society, and many others. Shaul Shtampfer, a professor at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, played a major role in founding Jewish Studies in Russia. While working at Rabbi Adin Steinsalz's *Academy of World Civilisations* in Kuntsevo (Moscow), Shtampfer advised numerous up-and-coming academics and provided them with literature from Israel and the West.

Reconstruction

In the last 20 years, Jewish Studies has gone from unofficial associations that emerged from the semi-underground circles to full-fledged, partly state academic institutions and education facilities. Most of these institutions combine research and education under one roof.

In the early 1990s, research and education centres for Jewish Studies began to appear throughout Russia and the post-Soviet realm. One of the first major events was an international conference called "The Historical Fate of Jews in Russia and the USSR: the Beginning of Dialogue", which was held in Moscow in December 1989 and included historians from the Soviet Union, Israel, and the United States.⁴ In November 1989, the Petersburg Open Jewish University was founded. At about the same time in Moscow, the *Jewish University in Moscow*, the *Maimonides State Jewish Academy*, and the Department of Jewish Studies at the Russian State University for the Humanities were established. In Ukraine, the International Solomonov University in Kiev opened its doors in 1992.

The oldest establishment of Jewish higher education in Russia is the Petersburg Open Jewish University, from which the Petersburg Institute of Jewish Studies (*Peterburgskii Institut Iudaiki*, PII) emerged in 1997.⁵ The institute is the only accredited private establishment of higher education in Russia that specialises in Jewish Studies. It has a history and a philology faculty and trains qualified specialists in the history, culture, ethnography, and epigraphy of East European Jewry. These topics also represent the core of the

³ Arkhiv Vaada Rossii. Putevoditel'; <<http://www.memo.ru/history/DISS/vaad>>.

⁴ Leonid Praisman, ed., *Istoriia Evreev Rossii. Uchebnik* (Moscow 2005), p. 659.

⁵ Dimitrii El'iashevich, "Petersburg Jewish University – New Beginnings: Studies in Jewish Education", in W. Ackerman, ed. *Origins: The Beginnings of Jewish Educational Institutions VII* (Jerusalem 1995) pp. 124-127.

institute's research and publication output. In the 1990s, PII organised a series of expeditions to record and preserve key elements of Jewish material culture.⁶ To foster cooperation among Jewish general education schools founded after 1991, PII organised conferences on Jewish pedagogy and published the journal *Evreiskaia Shkola* [Jewish school] from 1993 to 1996. Together with the Chais Centre at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, PII published the journal *Evreiskoe obrazovanie* [Jewish education] from 2000 to 2004, as well as a range of educational and teachers manuals.

PII's contribution to the development of academic Jewish Studies was extremely important. In addition to sponsoring the aforementioned expeditions, which marked the start of the systematic study of Jewish traditions and epigraphy in the former Pale of Settlement (1791-1917) and in Central Asia, the institute's lecturers and staff prepared and published a series called *Trudy po iudiake* [Works on Judaica], the first publication of its kind in Russia for 70 years. Several international conferences dedicated to the study of the Jewish cultural heritage in the former Soviet Union were arranged. Finally, in the 1990s, PII also revived the tradition of publishing of academic reference works on Judaica, a tradition going back to the pre-revolutionary European Historical and Ethnographic Society. These included archival and bibliographic editions that opened up a tremendous wealth of sources and literature for academia.⁷

The private Jewish University of Moscow (*Evreiskii Universitet Moskvy*, EUM) opened in 1991.⁸ Since 2003, it has been known as the Simon Dubnov Advanced School for Humanities (*Vyshshaia gumanitarnaia shkola imeni S. Dubnova*, VGSh). It now has three faculties: history, philology, and social psychology, with the three strongest disciplines being East European Jewish History, Biblical Studies, and Sociology. The first Russian-language academic journal in Jewish Studies, *Vestnik evreiskogo universiteta v Moskve* [Messenger of the Jewish university in Moscow], started publishing in 1993. The Moscow magazine *Diaspora*, which appears under the aegis of VGSh, also plays an important role in the study of Russia's Jewish communities.⁹ VGSh has been experiencing serious financial difficulties since September 2005 and is now on the verge of being forced to close.¹⁰

The Maimonides State Classical Academy (*Gosudarstvennaia klassicheskaia akademiia imeni Maimonida*), formerly the Maimonides State Jewish Academy, was founded by a decree of the government of the Russian Federation in Moscow on 29 December 1991.¹¹ With that, one of the first institutions in the field of Jewish Studies acquired state status. The academy has the widest possible range of faculties, includ-

⁶ The expeditions in the 1990s were a continuation of the work on Jewish material cultural heritage done by enthusiasts in the 1980s (I. Dvorkin, B. Khaimovich, V. Lukin). The materials collected laid the foundation for the archive of the PII and have been used widely for publication and academic work.

⁷ Dimitrii El'iashevich, comp. *Dokumental'nye materialy po istorii evreev v arkhivakh SNG i stran Baltii. Predvaritelnyi spisok arkhivnykh fondov* (St. Petersburg 1994); V.E. Kel'ner and D. El'iashevich, comp. *Literatura o evreiakh na russkom iazyke, 1890-1947. Knigi, broshury, ottiski statey, organy periodicheskoi pechati. Bibliograficheskii ukazatel'* (St. Petersburg 1995) (together with the Russian National Library).

⁸ <www.jum.ru/rusjum/rvsatboardoftr.htm>.

⁹ A. Epshtein, "Russkoiazycznaia iudaika: dostizheniia i problemy", *Narod moi*, 19 (383), (16 October 2006).

¹⁰ Charnyi, "Pozdnesovetskaia i postsovetskaia iudaika", p. 278.

¹¹ <www.gka.ru/obchie.html>.

ing medicine, law, and music. Several of them offer special courses on Jewish topics; Jewish Studies in the actual meaning of the word is located with the Faculty of Jewish and Hebraic Studies. The chairman of the faculty is the renowned ethnographer Mikhail Chlenov. The faculty specialises in Modern Hebrew and Semitic Philology. There is a compulsory two-year programme in Yiddish language and literature. Academy graduates teach Hebrew (both modern and Biblical) in practically all the Jewish grade schools and schools of higher learning in Moscow.

In 1991, the Institute of History and Archival Science in Moscow introduced a programme of study called Jewish Languages, Culture, Texts, and Archives. This was the result of co-operation with the Jewish Theological Seminary and the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York. Originally, this was to train specialists to read, analyse and record systematically the Jewish documents held in Russian archives. With the integration of the Institute of History and Archival Science into the Russian State University for the Humanities (*Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi gumanitarnyi universitet*, RGGU), the range of tasks for the Department of Jewish Studies already at the University for the Humanities broadened considerably. In 1993, the university's Department of History and Philology established the programme Jewish Languages, Literature, and History. Given the presence of these two programmes, the Russian-American Centre of Biblical and Hebraic Studies (*Rossiisko-Amerikanskii Tsentri Bibleistiki i Iudaiki*, TsBI) opened at RGGU; the Department of Jewish Studies was merged into TsBI.¹² The American partner programme was called Project Judaica. Since 2001, TsBI has published the series *Judaica Rossica*, which was turned into a magazine in 2004. At present, TsBI, together with separate faculties at RGGU, trains experts in Jewish history and culture: archivists, historians, philologists, cultural anthropologists, and sociologists, who have specialised in intercultural relations and the contemporary ethnic identity of Jews and have mastered Hebrew and Yiddish. RGGU's offerings include courses in medieval and modern Jewish philosophy, Hebrew palaeography, modern and contemporary Jewish history, socio-linguistics of Jewish languages, and the history of antisemitism. Courses in Biblical studies and Biblical Hebrew are offered not only at TsBI but elsewhere at RGGU: the Institute of Oriental Studies and the Theology Faculty. Since early 2008, budget cuts have put the TsBI and RGGU in a difficult financial situation.

Among the Moscow schools of higher learning offering Jewish Studies are the Institute for Jewish Studies TURO, which is run by Shlomo Gendel', and the Institute for Progressive Judaism, which existed from 1992 until April 2008.¹³

Founded in 1993, the private Institute for the Study of Israel – which was known from 1995 to 2005 as the Institute for the Study of Israel and the Middle East and was renamed the Institute for the Middle East in 2005 – is the largest Russian centre dedicated to the study of Israel. Emphasis is given to research in politics, economics, and religion in contemporary Israel. The institute also boasts an extensive publishing programme.¹⁴

In Ukraine, the International *Solomonov University* (*Mizhnarodnyi Solomonovi universytet*, MSU) in Kiev is the oldest institution of higher education that trains special-

¹² <www.sem40.ru/edu/1057408305.shtml>.

¹³ <www.mignews.com/news/disasters/cis/160408_94353_76744.html>.

¹⁴ <www.iimes.ru/rus/about.html>.

ists in Jewish Studies.¹⁵ The MSU's Department of Jewish Studies trains historians and philosophers.

Networks and Exchange

The Sefer Centre for specialists in Jewish Studies has a special place among the institutions and organisations mentioned here.¹⁶ It came into being at the initiative of two professors in Jerusalem, Nehemia Levtzion and Shaul Stampfer, as an independent department of the International Centre for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization, which is located at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The Sefer Centre was officially registered in December 1994. Its goals are to network scholars and co-ordinate the activities of various organisations. Among the up-and-coming scholars, the centre is a highly recognised institution.

The annual international interdisciplinary conferences that have been organised under the aegis of the Sefer Centre since 1994 are very productive for academic exchange.¹⁷ The differentiated system of sections, the growing number of participants from around the world, and the diversity of topics convey an impression of the state of the Jewish Studies in the post-Soviet realm and make these conferences the highlight of the Jewish academic year. The academic level of the first Sefer conferences was rather low: Many participants, especially those from the provinces, lacked the academic tools of the trade, and they were not aware of the state of international research.¹⁸ Gradually, however, the level has grown considerably as the publications show.

Since summer 1996, Sefer has organised similar conferences for young scholars. Every year since 1997, the most interesting contributions from these conferences have also been published in collections within the series *Tirosh – Trudy po iudaika*. Together with the Institute of Slavic Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Sefer conducts an annual conference dedicated to topics related to the Jewish-Slavic cultural dialogue. Another Sefer activity are the Jewish summer and winter schools for students and doctoral candidates. Each year up to ten such schools take place with several hundred participants. Furthermore, since 2003, field schools have been organised where methods of field research are taught.

The Sefer Centre holds continuing education courses and re-education seminars for university instructors, who are overwhelmingly from the provinces. Since 1997, young specialists have been sent to Israel for a year-long internship within the framework of the Eshnav programme. The programme is aimed at young scholars who are pursuing their research projects and young instructors who are preparing classes on Jewish topics. The Sefer bureau organises lecture series and courses by leading experts at provincial universities.

Sefer's multi-faceted activity touches on many areas of Jewish education and academic research. The centre offers methodical help in the conception of curricula in the field of Jewish Studies, organises themed seminars, and offers help in putting together academic libraries.

¹⁵ <www.isu.edu.ua/ru/index0.html>.

¹⁶ <www.Sefer.ru/>.

¹⁷ Charnyi, "Pozdnesovetskaia i postsovetskaia iudaika", p. 269.

¹⁸ *ibid.*

From Flourishing to Waning

By the mid-1990s, the number of new institutions in the field of Jewish Studies declined somewhat. But the market for research and teaching, which had looked satiated, began to grow again and went through a second boom at the turn of the century. In 1998, the Centre of Jewish Studies and Jewish Civilisation (*Tsentra iudaiki i evreiskoi tsivilizatsii*) was founded under the auspices of the Institute of Asian and Africa Studies at Moscow State University on the basis of a tripartite agreement between the Moscow State University, Jewish University of Moscow, and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The centre's director was Arkadii Kovel'man, historian of antiquity and Talmud specialist, on the Russian side and Professor Israel Bertal on the Israeli side.¹⁹ The centre offers bachelor and master's programmes in Jewish history, philology, and the economics of modern Israel. The centre's offering of courses is compiled with the Chais Center for Jewish Studies in Russia, an affiliate of the Hebrew University, and is co-ordinated with the programme at the Simon Dubnov Advanced School for Humanities. The centre also offers individual courses at the historical and philosophical faculty of Moscow State University. The chair of Jewish Studies created at the centre in 2005 is held by Kovel'man.

An analogous institution was created along the same lines at the Faculty of Philosophy and Political Science at St. Petersburg University and – the Centre for Biblical and Hebrew Studies (as of 2002, the Centre for Biblical and Jewish Studies, *Tsentra bibliestiki i iudaiki*) was a joint project between St. Petersburg University, the Petersburg Institute of Jewish Studies, and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.²⁰ In addition to Biblical studies, this centre teaches medieval studies and the history and culture of East European Jewry. In 2003, it began to publish a multi-lingual journal: *Jewish Studies. Texts and Research*. The Center "Petersburg Judaica" (*Mezhfakul'tetskii tsentr "Peterburgskaia iudaika"*) of the European University at St. Petersburg opened its doors in 1999.²¹

Since 2002, special courses in Jewish Studies have been on offer in St. Petersburg and Moscow for older school students. These courses were initially developed by individual Jewish schools of higher learning and are co-ordinated today by an inter-university centre.

Among the new institutions was also the International Research Centre for Russian and Eastern European Judaism (*Mezhdunarodnyi issledovatel'skii tsentr rossiiskogo i vostochnoevropenskogo evreistva*), which opened in Moscow in 2003. It is headed by Oleg Budnitskii and awards stipends to scholars in Jewish Studies.²² The centre combines scholarly research with the functions of a foundation. Together with the Sefer Centre, it organised the VIII Congress of the European Association for Jewish Studies in Moscow. At the end of 2007, International Research Centre de facto suspended its activities due to a shortage of funds.

¹⁹ <www.jum.ru/rusjum/rvdeps/rveducatproject.htm>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ <www.eu.spb.ru/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=96&Itemid=109>.

²² <www.worldhist.ru/science/center/Iudaei.htm>.

The Centre for Middle Eastern Research (*Tsentr blizhnevostochnykh issledovaniï*), part of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, came into being in 2004. The director is Andrei Fedorchenko, a leading specialist on the Israeli economy.²³

The new boom is not limited to the Russia's two major cities. There is, for example, a Centre for Israel and Jewish Studies (*Tsentr Izrailevedeniia i Iudaiki*) at the Ural State University in Ekaterinburg.²⁴ The Krasnoïarsk Institute for Social Workers cooperates primarily with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) and, since 2000, has organised conferences under the rubric "The Jews in Siberia and the Far East: Past and Present".²⁵

Jewish higher religious education has also developed in Russia. In February 1989, Rabbi Adin Steinsalz founded the Academy of World Civilisations under the auspices of Soviet Academy of Sciences. Since 1992, the academy has been known as the *Institute for the Study of Judaism in the CIS (Institut izucheniiia iudaizma v SNG)*. Within the Academy of World Civilisations was the educational centre Mekor Khaim, the first legal Jewish religious educational establishment in the Soviet Union.²⁶ Today there are several yeshivas in the country, most of which belong to the Tomchei Tmimim ("supporters of the pure ones") network of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement. There is also a Jewish school of higher learning for women, the Institute Makhon Khamesh, under the auspices of the Federation of Russian Jewish Communities. The Institute Makhon Khamesh offers religious and secular education.²⁷ In 2003, the Chabad founded a similar institution for boys in Moscow: the International Institute of the 21st Century (Hebrew University) (*Mezhdunarodnyi institut XXI veka [Evreiskii universitet]*).²⁸

New centres for Jewish Studies also came into being in Ukraine. In 1998, the eastern Ukrainian branch of the International Solomonov University opened in Kharkiv. It has an international centre for research of the khazar culture and publishes its own journal. Additional facilities that deal with the study of Jewish culture are the *Ukrainian Institute for Holocaust Studies* and the Judaica Institute (founded 1993), from which the Centre for Research on the History and Culture of East European Jewry emerged.²⁹ This centre also has de facto suspended its activity due to financial difficulties. In 2008, a restructuring of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine resulted in the creation of a *Centre for Jewish History and Culture (Tsentr ievreiskoi istorii i kul'tury)*.³⁰

The offerings in Kiev include an interdisciplinary programme in Jewish Studies at the Kiev-Mohyla Academy. Jewish Studies are also offered at Donetsk State University and the Horlivka Pedagogical Institute as well as via individual courses in L'viv, Simferopol', Mykolaïv, Chernivtsi, and elsewhere in Ukraine. In Odessa, the Orthodox religious organisation Or sameach supports training in the field of Jewish Studies. It includes a secondary school, a cheder, a yeshiva, and a local branch of the *Crimean University for the Humanities*. The *Maor Centre*, which was recently founded in

²³ <www.mgimo.ru/nksmi/cbi/index.phtml?text=full>.

²⁴ <<http://fir.usu.ru/research/israel/>>.

²⁵ The conference papers appear in the series *Istoriia Evrei v Sibiri i na Dal'nem Vostoke*.

²⁶ <www.religare.ru/article13081.htm>.

²⁷ <www.chamesh.ru/>.

²⁸ "Evreiskaia zhizn'. Itogi 2003 goda", *Russkii arhipelag* (Setevoi proekt *Russkogo mira*), <www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/religio/resume/euro2003/>; "Ob"iavlenie o nabore abiturientov na 2004-2004 uchebnyi god", <http://base.ijc.ru/o_vyz19.html>.

²⁹ <www.judaicacenter.kiev.ua/index.php?lang=1>.

³⁰ <www.ipiend.gov.ua/?mid=106>.

Ukraine, co-ordinates the activities of all Ukrainian schools of higher learning that offer Jewish Studies.³¹

In Belarus, the most important centre for teaching Jewish Studies was the International Institute of the Humanities, founded in 1999 as part of Belarus State University. Its programme was divided between Jewish art and culture. Since the authorities liquidated the institute in 2004, the key centre for Jewish Studies has been the Museum of the History and Culture of Jews in Belarus, in Minsk.³²

In Moldova, Jewish culture is researched at the Moldovan Academy of Sciences within the Institute of Interethnic Research and the Institute of Cultural Heritage. Hebrew is taught (together with Romanian!) at the State University of the Republic of Moldova. Corresponding offerings are to be found at the State University at Tbilisi in Georgia and the Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University in Bishkek.³³

Until recently, it was possible to characterise post-Soviet Jewish Studies as enjoying a period of vibrant growth. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, an institutional foundation for a steady stream of new research topics and young scholars was created. However, organisational efforts alone do not yield scholarly results. It will take a certain amount of time until a new generation can produce full-fledged academic work. If the positive trends of the late 1990s and recent years continue, Jewish Studies in Russia could in the near future achieve important results and reach international standards. However, in late 2007 and early 2008, the situation changed noticeably. One part of the institutions ceased operating, and another is now in financial crisis. The private institutions have been hit hardest, but state schools are struggling with insufficient funding as well.

Jewish Studies in the post-Soviet realm were initially financed mainly by the JDC, which was replaced by the Jewish Congress of Russia and a number of private foundations outside Russia. In the meantime the JDC has completely suspended its activities in this field, while the Jewish Congress of Russia has cut the means for education and research by 60 per cent. At most, the Petersburg branch of the Jewish Congress and the private foundation Avi Chai are willing to provide noteworthy subsidies to build up Jewish Studies, but their possibilities are limited. The financial crisis is rooted less in political causes than economic ones, for example, ineffective fundraising and confusing Russian legislation on non-profit status. As far as state academic structures are concerned, their budgets are not being cut, but those budgets have not been adjusted to meet the general increase in the cost of living in Russia. As a result, they are gradually experiencing a lack of funds.

Jewish History

History is one of the most fruitful areas of Jewish Studies in Russia. The rapid development of the past 20 years particularly in this field shows, for one, that there is a

³¹ V. Likhachev, A. Fedorchuk, "Vyssee obrazovanie v oblasti iudaiki na postsovetskom prostanstve", <<http://www.kehila.ru/article/?32>>.

³² <www.charter97.org/rus/news/2004/02/04/inst>.

³³ Likhachev, Fedorchuk, "Vyssee obrazovanie".

great need for historical research and, for another, that the field was previously underdeveloped. The number of academic publications on Jewish history and culture in Russia is overwhelming. Alone the Russian-Israeli publishing house Gesharim – Mosty kul'tury has put out over 300 books, with a total number of 1 million copies.³⁴ Academic titles also appear at the same publishing house in the series *Biblioteca Judaica*, however, the works here involve mostly translations. The spectrum of publications stretches from periodicals to source editions, from collections to monographs. Regional topics are at present one of the most popular fields. The history of the shtetl, religion, and culture, migration, assimilation, and other aspects of Jewish lifeworlds in the past and present were not researched in the Soviet era. Even the most elementary information in these fields was off-limits to researchers. After the end of the Soviet Union, this deplorable situation prompted a large number of studies into local history based on sources from provincial archives.³⁵ This work has primarily served to collect data. Systematic analysis remains to be done.

The opening of the archives has given historians previously unimaginable opportunities. Academic or pseudo-academic publications containing source materials make up a considerable part of the publications in Jewish Studies. One of the largest archival science projects is the series *Documents on the History and Culture of Jews in the Archives of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus*, which was initiated by the Centre for Biblical and Judaic Studies at RGGU, guides to the sources in post-Soviet archives. Between 1997 and 2006, descriptions of the archives of Moscow, Kiev, and Belarus appeared.³⁶ Another six volumes are planned, with the next one covering the archives of St. Petersburg. Vaad of Russia, the Holocaust Centre, and the Centre for Research on the History and Culture of East European Jewry each have their own Archive projects. Collections with archival material on certain topics – for example, the pogroms on Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian territory during the Civil War era, the activity of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, agitation and propaganda material, etc. – have been appearing.³⁷

The huge interest within the Jewish community in everything that belongs to national history and tradition helps to fill in the gaps of knowledge. Among the publications on Jewish history, there are numerous reference works, textbooks, and non-specialist literature. Since 1994, the Russian Jewish Encyclopaedia has been published amid a controversy surrounding its content. There have been six volumes thus far. Similar publica-

³⁴ Praisman, ed., *Istoria Evreev Rossii*, p. 670.

³⁵ According to estimates by Aleksandr Frenkel', the editor in chief of the journal *Narod knigi v mire knig*, 215 books related to Jewish regional studies were published between 1991 and 2003 in the former Soviet Union (83 of them dealt with the history of Jewish communities in Russia, 94 with those in Ukraine), quoted in Charnyi, "Pozdnesovetskaia i postsovetskaia iudaika", p. 275.

³⁶ M.S. Kupovetskii, E.V. Starostin, M. Veb, eds., *Dokumenty po Istorii i Kul'ture Evreev v Arkhivakh Moskvy: Putevoditel'* (Moscow 1997); M.S. Kupovetskii, E.V. Starostin, M. Veb, eds., *Dokumenty po Istorii i Kul'ture Evreev v Arkhivakh Belarusi: Putevoditel'* (Moscow 2003); E.I. Melamed, M.S. Kupovetskii, eds., *Dokumenty po Istorii i Kul'ture Evreev v Arkhivakh Kieva: Putevoditel'* (Kiev 2006).

³⁷ See, for example, L.B. Miliakova, ed., *Kniga pogromov: Pogromy na Ukraine, v Belorussii i evropeiskoi chasti Rossii v period Grazhdanskoi Voiny 1918–1922, sbornik dokumentov* (Moscow 2007); D.G. Nazhdafov, ed., *Stalin i Kosmopolitizm, 1945–1953: Dokumenty agitpropa TsK KPSS* (Moscow 2005); Sh. Redlikh, G. Kostyrchenko *Evreiskii antifashistskii komitet v SSSR 1941–1948. Dokumentirovannaia istoriia* (Moscow 1996); A.N. Iakovlev, ed., *Gosudarstvennyi antisemitizm v SSSR. Ot nachala do kul'minatsii. 1938–1953, sbornik dokumentov* (Moscow 2005).

tions have been planned for Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The *Kratkaia evreiskaia entsiklopediia*, which appeared in Israel, and the re-print of the standard 16-volume *Evreiskaia entsiklopediia*, which appeared at the publishing house Brokgaus-Efron, have circulated widely. A comprehensive university textbook for schools of higher learning, *Istoriia Evreev Rossii* [History of the Russian Jews], has been in existence since 2006.³⁸

With Russia's active Middle East policy, Israeli Studies have grown rapidly in Russia. Holocaust research, which simply did not exist in the Soviet Union, has undergone considerable development. As early as 1989-1990, there were groups collecting and examining oral testimony on the history of the Holocaust. In 1992, the Holocaust Information Centre was founded in Moscow under the direction of the historian and philosopher Mikhail Gefter (1918-1995). In 1997, the Holocaust Foundation was added. The information centre has the most Holocaust researchers in the post-Soviet realm. Their goals are to keep the memory of the victims of the Holocaust alive, to build museums and exhibitions, to embed the topic in the curricula of schools and institutions of higher learning, to hold commemoration ceremonies, to set up monuments for the victims, as well as to collect documents, testimony, and memoirs. The centre has published several dozen books on the subject and is working on an encyclopaedia of the Holocaust on the territory of the Soviet Union.³⁹ The Holocaust Foundation runs summer schools and continuing education seminars for teachers at secondary schools and institutions of higher learning.

In Ukraine and Belarus as well, a number of institutions have been created to address the history of the Holocaust: Educational centres exist in Kiev, Dnipropetrovs'k, Kharkiv, L'viv, Minsk, and Brest. All of these organisations organise conferences on the topic of the Holocaust and publish periodicals and books.⁴⁰ Until the mid-1990s, research in Ukraine was dominated by the collection of materials and local studies.⁴¹ In the last few years, the spectrum has grown broader. Dissertations and monographs have appeared, and a substantial assessment of the tragedy is gradually getting underway.⁴²

Although scholarly research of Jewish history has made remarkable progress in the past 20 years, general educational and popular publications are predominant. There is also a lack of translations of standard Western works. Most Russian works focus on the recent past and do not go beyond the 20th century. This not surprising, for due to the taboos that existed in the Soviet Union, a large gap in the historiography had come into being. Works on other periods are therefore clearly underrepresented.

³⁸ Praisman, ed., *Istoriia Evreev Rossii*.

³⁹ Ibid. p. 273. In 2005 the publisher ROSPEN released a monumental 800-page Russian translation of a work prepared by U. Laker (English original published by Yale University Press): *Kholokost: Entsiklopediia* (Moscow 2005).

⁴⁰ The magazine *Kholokost i sovremenmost'* appears in Kiev. *Problemy Kholokosta* and the series *Ukrainskaia biblioteka Kholokosta* appear in Dnipropetrovs'k.

⁴¹ See Ia. Khongisman, *Katastrofa evreistva Zapadnoi Ukrainy* (L'viv, 1998); S. Elisavetskii, *Polveka zabvenii: Evrei v dvizhenii Soprotivleniia i partizanskoi bor'be v Ukraine (1941 — 1944)* (Kiev 1998); Iu. Marionvskii, E. Shofar, *Istoričko-kraevedchskii al'manakh* (Dokumenty i materialy po istorii evreev na Cherkasshchine. Nach. XIX st. — 1960) (Cherkassy 2004); *Evreiskoe naselenie na Nikolaevshchine, sbornik dokumentov i materialov*, 1 (Mykolaïv 2004).

⁴² I. Shchupak, "Opyt izuchenii i prepodavaniia istorii Kholokosta v postsovetskoi Ukraine", in Epshtein, ed., *Evrei v postsovetskikh stranakh*, pp. 232-241.

Ethnography and Anthropology

The flowering of ethnographic research in Jewish Studies in the past 20 years in the end has to do with the overall development of ethnology, which did not exist as a discipline in the Soviet Union. Ethnography as an ancillary discipline to history was very limited theoretically and practically. Only after 1991 was this gap slowly closed.

In 1981, the Moscow-based Jewish Historical and Ethnographic Commission developed a plan to research Jewish monuments in which particular emphasis was put on non-Ashkenazi communities and Judaizing communities. In 1991, researchers from St. Petersburg began systematically documenting Jewish cemeteries and traditional Jewish art in Ukraine. The Petersburg Institute of Jewish Studies and the Centre of Jewish Art at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem conducted several dozen ethnographic expeditions between 1992-2001 in Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Uzbekistan, Georgia, and the Eastern Caucasus. During these expeditions, they measured more than 300 synagogues and described approximately 200 cemeteries.⁴³ Numerous works have appeared based on the results of these expeditions. The Centre Petersburg Judaica also conducts folklore, archaeological and ethnographic expeditions.

Since the start of the 21st century, there has been a growing interest in Khazar culture. The International Solomonov University has organised archaeological expeditions to the Don, the lower Volga, and the Northern Caucasus. Colloquia on the matter took place in Jerusalem in 1999 and Moscow in 2002.⁴⁴ At the same time, interest in the Mountain Jews is booming. In March, the first international academic symposium took place on this subject.⁴⁵ Research is concentrated on Makhachkala and Nal'chik, where Iurii Murzakhanov, one of the most important experts, works. Several collections with documents have appeared here as well.⁴⁶ Since the 1990s, the Karaim have been attracting greater attention from scholars.⁴⁷ A catalogue on the Mangup cemetery, where excavations took place in 2004, is due out shortly.

One of the biggest ethnographic projects is the field school in Jewish Studies in the Crimea, which was organised by the Sefer Centre. The project managed to describe in full one of the oldest Jewish cemeteries in Eastern Europe: the Chufut Kale cemetery. In the course of 12 expeditions between 2004 and 2007, approximately 3,400 gravestones from the 14th-20th centuries were collected. An electronic catalogue is being created.⁴⁸

⁴³ V. Dymshits, A. Fedorchuk, B. Khaimovich, „Polevye shkoly po iudaïke na postsovet'skom prostranstve”, *Evroaziatskii evreiskii ezhegodnik*, 5764 (2003-2004) (Kiev 2004), p. 177.

⁴⁴ Vladimir Petruchin, Vol'f Moskovich, Artem Fedorchuk, eds., *Khazary* (Moscow and Jerusalem 2006).

⁴⁵ Charnyi, „Pozdnesovetskaia i postsovetskaia iudaïka”, p. 265.

⁴⁶ See, for example, Danilova S.A. *Istoriia i etnografiia gorskikh evreev Kavkaza* (Nal'chik 1998); *Istoriia gorskikh evreev Severnogo Kavkaza v dokumentakh 1829-1917* (Nal'chik 1999).

⁴⁷ M.B. Kizilov, *Karaimy: Ot kimmeriitsev do krymchakov (narody Kryma s drevneishikh vermen do kontsa v.)* (Simferopol' 2004); O. Belyi, „Dokumenty k istorii rossiiskoi karaimistiki v pervye gody posle smerti A.S. Firkovicha”, *Desiataia ezhegodnaia mezhdunarodnaia mezhdistsiplinarnaia konferentsiia po iudaïke 28-30 ianvaria 2003* (Moscow 2003); I. Iurchenko, O. Kefeli, N. Iurchenko, O. Beregov'skii, *Karaim's'ke kladovishche bilia Halycha. Kataloh nadmohil'nikh pam'iatnikiv* (L'viv and Halych 2000).

⁴⁸ A. Fedorchuk, „Polevye shkoly po iudaïke v Krymu i ikh pervye rezul'taty”, in Epshtein, ed., *Evrei v postsovetskikh stranakh*, pp. 146-151.

These expeditions have collected an enormous amount of material, which must now be analysed. Unfortunately, the interdisciplinary discipline of ethnography does not fit in well with the traditional Russian system of higher education. Therefore field studies on Jewish topics are also torn apart and distributed over various related disciplines such as history, cultural anthropology, philology, or sociology. This in turn makes it difficult to teach a common method and leads to a certain isolation within academia.

Jewish Philology

Every philology presupposes mastery of the language to be investigated. However, despite extensive contact with Israel and the abundance of learning opportunities, most Russian scholars have yet to master Modern Hebrew well enough. The Philological Faculty of the Maimonides Academy, the chair of Jewish Studies within the Institute of Asian and Africa Studies at Moscow State University, and the Institute of Oriental Studies at RGGU put considerable emphasis on Modern Hebrew. The study of Biblical and Medieval Hebrew, which was permitted within Soviet academia, remains strong at a high standard. The Soviet tradition of Qumran and Hebraic Studies continues in St. Petersburg at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences.⁴⁹ By contrast, at the Centre of Hebraic Studies, which used to be the Oriental Studies Faculty at Petersburg University, this problem has almost been eliminated. The chair of Semitology specialises primarily in Arabic philology, and only two Hebraists work there.

In the field of Yiddish, there has been no noteworthy progress in the last 20 years. There are several reasons for this. There are only a few native-speakers of the language left. Many documents are available in two languages so that researchers are not inevitably forced to consult the Yiddish original; Yiddish has a lesser status compared to Hebrew. As a result, sponsors as well have less of an interest in supporting the study of Yiddish. Nonetheless, Yiddish philology in Russia is taken quite seriously. The leading centre for the study and teaching Yiddish is today – thanks to the close connections with academic centres in the United States – the TsBI of the RGGU. It was here that the only modern Russian textbook for Yiddish appeared.⁵⁰ In addition, the annual conferences at the Sefer Centre dedicate a section to Yiddish.

An interesting social phenomenon in Russia in recent years, especially in St. Petersburg, is “the return to Yiddish”. Private groups of enthusiasts organise lessons and courses to popularise Yiddish culture and translate texts from Yiddish into Russian. The leaders of the movement are Aleksandr Frenkel' and Valerii Dymshits, who have both been actively supported by émigré scholars in the West and Israel, such as Mikhail Krutinov and Velvl Chernin.

The study of Jewish literature is at a relatively high level in Russia and Belarus. It deals with classical Hebrew texts as well as Israeli contemporary literature and jour-

⁴⁹ I. P. Tantlevskii, *Istoriia i ideologiya Kumranskoi obshchiny* (St. Petersburg 1994); *Teksty Kumrana*. II. ed., Intr., translations from ancient and Aramaic languages, A.M. Gazov-Ginzberg, M.M. Elizaroskaia, K. B. Starkovaia, comm. (St. Petersburg 1996).

⁵⁰ S.A. Sandler, *Idish: Uchebnik dlia russkogovoriashchikh* (Moscow 2001). This was based on a book published by the same author in the last days of the Soviet Union, *Samouchitel' iazyka idish* (Moscow 1989).

nalism.⁵¹ Research on the specifically Jewish mentality and the study of Russian-Jewish literature is enjoying some popularity. An important factor for arousing interest in Jewish literature is the large amount of translations from Hebrew and Yiddish that have appeared in recent years.

Jewish School Education

There is a system of Jewish education in Russia at the moment that runs from nursery school to postgraduate level. But that does not mean that these institutions have solved their tasks satisfactorily, especially as their content is fiercely debated.

At the beginning of the 1990s, when Jewish Studies began its renaissance, school education was not forgotten. At first, there were Sunday schools and experimental Jewish classes at general education state schools. By 1991, there were 20 Jewish schools in Moscow alone, both Sunday and day schools, teaching around 650 pupils.⁵² The exodus of Jews from the former Soviet Union to Israel was at this time in full gear; the main task of the Jewish schools was to prepare children for the new country and the transition to Israeli schools. In these transition schools, emphasis was on basic Hebrew and Jewish culture and history. The main problem facing the schools was the high turnover of students. Children arrived at Jewish schools only a year or two before their planned departure. New pupils were constantly showing up. This made it difficult to stick to a systematic plan. The second problem was the catastrophic lack of textbooks and teachers manuals and the lack of qualified teaching staff. Nonetheless, the system continued to develop and spread. By 2002, there were around 40 Jewish day schools in the country, with eight of them in Moscow and three in St. Petersburg.

Financing and organisational support for Jewish school education now lie in the hands of various institutions, including the Or Avner network and the international Jewish organisation ORT. In Moscow, the Jewish religious school Mesivta for boys has existed since 1999. In St. Petersburg, a religious Jewish gymnasium Migdal existed from 1991-2008; it has now closed due to financial problems.⁵³ In 2003, there were some 10,000 children attending Jewish schools.⁵⁴ A considerable part of the schools are supported by the Hephzibah Programme of the Israeli Ministry of Education and the Jewish Agency. Alongside the day schools, there are approximately 80 Sunday schools, of which the vast majority of which are financed by FEOR.⁵⁵

Over time, the situation has changed markedly. The decline in Jewish emigration confronted Jewish schools with a new task. The children no longer had to be prepared for departure, but for life in their homeland. This required systematic teaching, new textbooks, and methodological literature, and standardising learning goals. The last few years have seen the development of a number of textbooks on Jewish history for secon-

⁵¹ A. Kriukov, *Ocherki po istorii izrail'skoi literatury* (St. Petersburg 1998); G. Sinilo, *Drevnie literatury Blizhnego Vostoka i mir Tanakha* (Moscow 2008).

⁵² V. Sobkin, "Evreiskie shkoly v Moskve (po materialam ekspertnogo oprosa)", *Vestnik evreiskogo universiteta v Moskve*, 3 (1993), p. 7. Unfortunately, statistics at that time were not analysed for national schools, so we have had to use fragmentary evaluations.

⁵³ <www.nashisrael.ru/news/index.php?a=21&i=28856&Krasland_Session=ec585d82839409b84e5278f903288a47>.

⁵⁴ *Istoriia evreev Possii. Uchebnik*, p. 669.

⁵⁵ <www.jafi.dp.ua/JewishAgency/Russian/Delegations/Kiev/4>.

dary schools.⁵⁶ Curricula and the introduction of teaching goals are being discussed. The question how a Jewish school should look also has to do with ideological positions that come with a religious, secular, Zionist, or some other kind of orientation.

A major problem facing Jewish schools is the lack of a unified curriculum. Many schools follow the example of Israeli schools, although their standards run completely counter to Russian traditions. The first attempt to design a curriculum on the history of the Jewish people was made by the New Jewish School in St. Petersburg in 2002. Since 2003, the development of a special education system for Russia has been supported by the Hephzibah Programme, but these theoretical concepts are far from what is practiced in the schools and are therefore not often implemented.

However, the spontaneity and unsystematic character of the development of Jewish education in Russia is not solely due to specifically Jewish issues. The entire Russian education system is undergoing reforms. Curricula are changing. There is a struggle over standardisation of textbooks. New examination systems are being introduced. Under these conditions, it is not so astonishing that to this day there are still no state standards for national history. Whether this is for better or for worse remains to be seen. On top of all these problems come financial difficulties. The Jewish school system is at present underfinanced.

Jewish History in Textbooks and Curricula

In Soviet history textbooks, there was practically no mention made about the Jews. During Perestroika, a decentralisation of the education system got underway. This led to a growing number of school books. This tendency has grown stronger over the years. The various textbooks are written from different political points of view, and Jewish history is accordingly depicted in different ways. The spectrum of topics in the context of which Jews are mentioned stretches from the Khazar Khaganate, to the census of 1897 and the Second World War, to the dissident movement and refusal to grant permission to emigrate during the Brezhnev era, to the resumption of diplomatic relations with Israel. They are conspicuously missing in the texts on the Khmel'nyts'kyi Uprising (1648), the partitions of Poland, the non-Russian population of the Russian Empire and religious affiliation of its subjects, antisemitism during the era of Aleksander III, the last years of Stalin's rule, and the Suez War in 1956.⁵⁷ There are, however, a small number of textbooks that discuss subjects such as the pogroms in the Civil War, Jewish agricultural settlement in the Crimea, Stalin's domestic policy and the Soviet Union's pro-Arab policies during the conflict in the Middle East.

A recent analysis of textbooks on Russian history for the latter years of high school from 1996 to 2007 shows that Jewish themes are hardly any better represented than in the Soviet era. The frequency with which Jews are mentioned has somewhat increased but the difference is minimal. All of the textbooks on the history Russia fail to make any reference to the annihilation of the Jews during the war, or they make only insufficient reference to it. The term Holocaust does not crop up in any of the books ana-

⁵⁶ For example, M.O. Mel'tsin, *Istoriia evreiskogo naroda: Ucheb. pos. dlia 4-5 klassov srednei evreiskoi obshcheobrazovatel'noi shkoly* (St. Petersburg 2004); D. Dan, *Evreiskii narod v ellinisticheskoi mire. Ucheb. pos. dlia 5-6 klassov srednei evreiskoi obshcheobrazovatel'noi shkoly* (St. Petersburg 2002).

⁵⁷ V. Stolov, "Evreiskaia istoriia v rossiiskoi shkole", *Evreiskaia shkola*, 1 (1998).

lysed.⁵⁸ And the prevailing ideological direction of textbooks in the spirit of the Orthodox Church does not help the situation. Under these conditions, there is practically no place on the pages of textbooks for Russian citizens of Jewish, Moslem, or any other faith. But wherever Jewish history is studied only by Jews and the rest of the population in the country is left with only vague and negative notions, the consequences will inevitably be an “intellectual ghetto”.⁵⁹

The textbooks for universities are much more varied than those for schools, as almost every Russian university publishes its own textbooks. If we limit the overview to the literature in circulation at the largest universities, it can be said that Jews regularly come up in courses on the history of foreign countries, but far from always in Russian history.⁶⁰ Perhaps this has something to do with the fact that the texts on the history of other countries are only for students of history faculties and ancillary fields, while those on Russia’s history are for students of all faculties. For example, the textbook on Russian history for non-historians that is published almost annually by Moscow State University mentions Jews three times: Jewish heresy, the events of Second World War, and in the population list of the Russian Federation.⁶¹ Stalin’s “campaign against Cosmopolitanism” and the “Doctors’ Plot” are mentioned in the book, but without any indication of their specifically antisemitic thrust.⁶² Such important subjects as the Pale of Settlement, numerus clausus for Jews, and the pogroms are not touched upon. Judging by the textbook here, the nationality question did not exist in Russia at all; more precisely, it arose only during Perestroika.⁶³ This book omits the Polish uprisings of 1830-1831 and 1863 as well as Stalin’s resettlement policy of 1944. Thus, the impression is created that the Jews were not particularly “disadvantaged”. The history textbook for the humanities in general that St. Petersburg State University publishes is no better. In the history of Russia before 1917, Jews are mentioned only once: in the context of Sergei Zubatov’s “Independent Jewish Party”.⁶⁴ Jews received a little more attention in a textbook for future professional historians.⁶⁵

The situation in Ukraine is much more optimistic. The study of the Holocaust was included in the curriculum of a non-Jewish university there in the mid-1990s, the History Faculty of Zaporizhzhia State University. In 2000, the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science sent out a letter of instruction about the need to teach the

⁵⁸ Comprehensive schools do not use books such as: I. Al’tman, A. Gerber, D. Poltorak, *Istoriia Kholokosta na territorii SSSR. Uchebnoe posobie dlia srednei shkoly* (Moscow 2002).

⁵⁹ N. Dem’ianov, *Obraz evreev v uchebnykh posobiakh po istorii Rossii dlia postupaiushchikh v VUZ. Diplomnaia rabota* (St. Petersburg 2007) (Manuscript).

⁶⁰ On textbooks, for example: S.P. Karpov, ed., *Istoriia srednikh vekov*, 1–2 (Moscow 2000); *Novaia istoriia stran Evropy i Ameriki: Uchebnik dlia vuzov po spetsial’nosti istoriia* (Moscow 1997); *Novaia istoriia stran Evropy i Ameriki: Vtoroi period* (Moscow 1998). See also L. Gatagova, T. Filippova, *Strany Tsentral’noi i Vostochnoi Evropy v rossiiskikh uchebnikakh istorii*, <www.history.ru/2004/01/evropa.htm>.

⁶¹ A.S. Orlov, V.A. Georgiev, N.G. Georgieva et al., *Istoriia Rossii: Uchebnik* (Moscow 2001), pp. 73, 410, 497. There are virtually identical editions of this book for every year of this century.

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 422, 479.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 461-462.

⁶⁴ I.Ia. Froianov, ed., A.Iu. Dvornichenko, S.G. Kashchenko, M.F. Florinskii, *Otechestvennaia istoriia (do 1917): Uchebnik posobie* (Moscow 2002), p. 380.

⁶⁵ V.A. Fedorov, *Istoriia Rossii. 1861-1917: Uchebnik dlia vuzov*. 2nd edition., corr. (Moscow 2004), p. 142. This book was written a comparatively long time ago, but its publication as part of the “Classic University Book” series shows that university administrators consider its approaches and judgements current even today.

Holocaust in Universities in Ukraine. The introduction of this into schools soon followed. Not long thereafter, the Holocaust became a part of the curriculum for schools. Standard textbooks containing material on the Holocaust began to appear in Ukraine in 1998. The different textbooks address the subject in varying levels of detail, with much being left up to the teacher.⁶⁶

Conclusions

The rapid development of Jewish Studies in the past 20 years and the present crisis, which is primarily a financial one, show that the field has yet to find a secure place in Russia's academic system. On the one hand, concrete works on Jewish topics easily connect with various academic disciplines; on the other hand, Jewish Studies is often not accepted in the consciousness of the academic community as an independent and new, but as merely another configuration of knowledge.⁶⁷ Jewish Studies is not recognised as an autonomous, complex academic discipline, and in the nomenclature of the recognised subjects of the highest attestation committees and the Ministry of Education, Jewish Studies do not exist.

Unlike in the traditional Soviet system, Jewish Studies – inspired by Western models but also forced due to the lack of personnel – frequently unites research and teaching in one institution. The organisational development of the discipline overall is taking shape unevenly. There is above all a lack of museums and suitable possibilities to store materials collected on field trips. Archives with properly trained staff and a central library that collects literature on Jewish topics are to be included among the desiderata.⁶⁸

Public consciousness in Russia associates Jewish Studies less with academic study than with Jewish national identity. The dedication of many scholars to their educational work, on the one hand, and the relatively low level of a large part of published works, on the other, is leading to a situation in which Jewish Studies is often perceived as a “special kind of community life”, as Viktoriia Mochalova tersely put it.⁶⁹ The engagement of non-Jewish scholars in the field is therefore met with a lack of understanding. Overall, Jewish Studies in Russia is bearing rather modest fruit, but its potential is without a doubt great.

Translated by Mark Belcher, Berlin

⁶⁶ Ia.M. Berdichevskii, T.V. Ladychenko, I.Ia. Shchupak, *Vsemirnaia istoriia: Noveishee vremia 1939–2001* (Zaporizhzhia 2001). See also I. Shchupak, *ibid.*, pp. 223–231.

⁶⁷ A. L'vov, “Chto takoe iudaika?” (From the foreword to the collection *Greki i evrei*) <<http://lvov.judaica.spb.ru/judaica.shtml>>.

⁶⁸ A. Epstein, “What Has Been Done and What Remains to Be Done: Reconsidering the Development of Academic Jewish and Israel Studies in Russia”, in V. Khanin, A. Epstein, V. Chernin, eds., *Constructing the National Identity. Jewish Education in Russia: Twenty Years after the End of the Cold War* (Jerusalem 2008), p. 132.

⁶⁹ V. Mochalova, “Rol' akademicheskikh program po iudaike v samoidentifikatsii postsovetskogo evreistva”, in Epshtein, ed., *Evrei v postsovetskikh stranakh*, p. 110.