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THE ZIONIST MAGAZINE „ŽIDOV“ (THE JEW) AND MACEDONIAN JEWS DURING THE INTERWAR PERIOD

Abstract

A Zionist magazine titled “Židov” (The Jew) was published every Friday from 1917 to 1941, and was the only such magazine in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Apart from reports on the socio-political events in Yugoslavia, Palestine, Europe, and the rest of the world, the magazine also contained various cultural supplements, polemics, advertisements, as well as obituaries, marriage, birth, and other announcements. A special column titled “From Yugoslavia” contained information on the activities of Jewish municipalities in Yugoslavia, regardless of whether said municipalities were of Sephardic or Ashkenazi origin. Since there was no significant contact between the Croatian and Macedonian Jews, this paper will examine if and how the Zagreb “Židov” wrote about the Jews in Macedonia.

Key words: Jews, Zidov, Zagreb, Macedonia, Bitola, Skopje

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Very little is known in Croatia today about the Macedonian Jews. Only a few works published in Croatia in the last twenty or so years refer to these Jews, and then only in passing. One of the earliest among them was the one published in Zagreb in 1988, in the catalogue “Židovi na tlu Jugoslavije” (Jews on Yugoslav Soil), when an exhibition of the same name was also held. It contained a brief history of the Macedonian Jews, with emphasis on the history of the Jewish municipalities in Bitola and Skopje.¹ In 1999, an issue of the *Novi Omanut*, a journal about Jewish history and culture, was dedicated to the Sephardic Jews in general, and included a paper on the Jews in Macedonia.² In late 2000, a Croatian translation of Maren Frejdenberg’s book titled “Židovi na Balkanu na isteku srednjeg vijeka” (Jews in the Balkans at the End of the Middle Ages) was published in Zagreb, and includes sporadic mentions of the Jews in Macedonia.³ All this tells us that we know nothing except the most basic information about the Macedonian Jews, and even less about the links between Macedonian and Croatian Jews. This paper is a small contribution towards shedding more light on this topic, until more systematic research can be done.

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¹ V. Nedomački, S. Goldstein, *Jevrejske općine u jugoslavenskim zemljama, Židovi na tlu Jugoslavije, Katalog izložbe*, 1988, 132-136

² Ognjen Bojadžiski, *Židovi u povijesti Makedonije, Novi Omanut*, no. 34/35, May-August, Zagreb, 1999, 4-6.

³ Maren Frejdenberg, *Židovi na Balkanu na isteku srednjeg vijeka*, Zagreb, 2000.

Jews in Croatia⁴ and Jews in Macedonia⁵ had quite different histories, and are also ethnically different, since most of the Croatian Jews are Ashkenazi, while the Sephardic Jews predominate in Macedonia. After the end of the First World War and the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, these two groups found themselves part of the same state for the first time in their histories. We know almost nothing about their earlier connections and interactions, save for their commercial links with the Jews in Dubrovnik, but this is another topic and falls outside the scope of this paper.⁶ Even though Croatian Zionist leaders organized Zionist congresses on the turn of the 20th century with the goal of strengthening the connections between the Jews throughout Austria-Hungary and beyond,⁷ only the Jews from the Kingdom of Serbia (Belgrade) responded to their calls,⁸ hence contact with the Macedonian Jews only becomes apparent after the end of the First World War.

The magazine *Židov*

Due to a lack of documents, archival data, or testimonies on the contacts between Croatian and Macedonian Jews, we have decided to make use of the Zionist magazine *Židov* (The Jew), which was published in Zagreb.⁹ An organ on Jewish matters called *Židov – Hajehudi* was launched by a postwar Zionist group headed by Dr. Alexander Licht (1884-1948),¹⁰ who later became the president of

⁴ See: Ljiljana Dobrovshak, *Povijest nacionalnih i vjerskih zajednica u Hrvatskoj od 1868. do 1941. godine, Hrvati i manjine u Hrvatskoj: moderni identiteti*, Marijana Marinović (ed.), AZOO, Zagreb, 2014, 23-53

⁵ See: Александар Матковски, *Историја на евреите во Македонија*, Скопје 1983.

⁶ O. Bojadžiski, *Židovi u povijesti Makedonije*, 5; Jorjo Tadić, *Jevreji u Dubrovniku do polovine XVII stoljeća*, Sarajevo 1937, 47-48, 70, 96, 141, 361., V. Nedomački, S. Goldstein, *Jevrejske općine u jugoslavenskim zemljama*, 132-136. The State Archives in Dubrovnik contain personal and professional information on the Skopje Jews.

⁷ See: Ljiljana Dobrovshak, *Židovi u Osijeku od odseljavanja do kraja Prvoga svjetskoga rata*, Osijek, 2013, 187-210; Ljiljana Dobrovshak, *Prvi cionistički kongres u Osijeku 1904. godine, Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, no. 37., vol. 2., Zagreb, 2005, 479-495; Ljiljana Dobrovshak, *Prva konferencija zemaljskog udruženja cionista južnoslavenskih krajeva Austrougarske Monarhije u Brodu na Savi 1909. godine, Scrinia Slavonica*, 6, Slavonski Brod, 2006, 234-266.

⁸ Lj. Dobrovshak, *Prvi cionistički kongres u Osijeku 1904. godine*, 479-495; Lj. Dobrovshak, *Prva konferencija zemaljskog udruženja cionista južnoslavenskih krajeva Austrougarske Monarhije u Brodu na Savi 1909. godine*, 234-266.

⁹ Lj. Dobrovshak, *Židovi u Osijeku od odseljavanja do kraja Prvoga svjetskoga rata*, 207-210; the predecessor of the *Židov* was the *Židovska smotra*, which was published from 1906 until 1914, first in Osijek, and later in Zagreb. An organ of the Association of the Zionists of the South Slavic Lands of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was published starting in 1910. Its editors were: Herman Licht (1906-1909), Edmund Fischer (1909-1911), Rikard Herzer (1911-1914).

¹⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aleksandar_Licht (10 January 2014), *Hrvatski biografski leksikon*, no. VIII, Kr-Li, Zagreb, 2013, 668-669; Aleksandar Licht, (Lepavina near Koprivnica, 28 March or 11 April 1884 – Geneva, 14 June 1948), lawyer and Jewish activist. One of the pioneers of Zionism in Zagreb and Croatia and in the southern parts of the South Slavic Lands. He launched the *Židovska smotra*, the first Jewish magazine published among the Southern Slavs, with his brother Herman in September 1906. It was also distributed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and even Bulgaria. One

the Zionist Federation of Yugoslavia. The magazine was first published during the First World War. The first issue was published on the Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashanah), 16 September 1917.¹¹ *Židov* was the successor of *Židovska smotra*, which was published from 1906 until 1914.¹² At first, it was a biweekly magazine, coming out on the first and fifteenth day of each month,¹³ later it was published every 10 days, until it finally became a weekly magazine in 1922, coming out each Friday. The editorial board consisted of Aleksandar Licht, Prof. Aleksa Szemnitz, Dr. Edmund Fischer, Slavko Deucht, Robert Veith, Josip Krausz, Dr. Robert Glückstal, Dr. Žiga Baum, and Lav Stern.¹⁴ The secretary of editorial board was Mirjam Weiller.¹⁵ For a while, it was published by S. Spitzer.¹⁶ Later, it was edited by Afred Singer, Richard Hercer, Drago Steiner, Dr. Cvi Rothmüller, Dr. Oton Gross,¹⁷ and Joel Rosenberg. In 1926, a new editorial board was elected, consisting of Hans Hochsinger, Filip Reiner, Dr. R. Rosner, Dr. Alfred Singer, and Dr. Beno Stein.¹⁸ The magazine was financed through Zionist supporters' subscriptions, partly through subsidies provided by the Zionist Federation of Yugoslavia, and partly through the Jewish Municipality of Zagreb.¹⁹ It was printed in the Latin script – articles written in Cyrillic were very rare before 1930,²⁰ but somewhat more common thereafter. It was printed by Dragutin Schulhof. In the beginning, the paper had a circulation of 1,500 copies, each with eight pages and costing 185 crowns. At that moment the paper had 800 subscribers.²¹ Already in 1919, the number of subscribers rose to 1,800.²² The editing office was first located at Bregovita Ulica 5, then at Petrinjska 22, Ilica 31, and finally Dolac 9.²³ The last chief editor was the psychologist Zev Glück.²⁴ In March 1941, he moved the place of publication to Novi Sad and renamed the magazine *Jevrejske novine* (Jewish

of the most prominent members of the Association of General Zionists of Yugoslavia. During the interwar period, he became a respected lawyer in Zagreb. After the founding of the Independent State of Croatia, he was arrested by the Gestapo and imprisoned in Graz. He was later released. In September 1943 he ended up in Switzerland, where he also died.

¹¹ *Židov*, no. 1.-2 January 1919., 9.

¹² Joel Rosenberger, 1906, *Židovska smotra*–1931, *Židov*, no. 49.- 4 December 1931.

¹³ *Židov*, no.1.- 1 September 1917, 1.

¹⁴ Pre dvadeset godina, *Židov*, no. 38.- 18 September 1936.

¹⁵ Pre dvadeset godina, *Židov*, no. 38.- 18 September 1936.

¹⁶ *Židov*, no. 1.-2. January 1919, 12.

¹⁷ Pre dvadeset godina, *Židov*, no. 38.- 18 September 1936.

¹⁸ Službeno glasilo „Židov“, *Židov*, no. 41.- 8 October 1926.

¹⁹ Ivo Goldstein, *Židovi u Zagrebu 1918.-1941.*, Zagreb, 2004, 37- 41.

²⁰ *Židov*, no. 4.- and 5. – 31 January 1919, 11.; no. 23.- 10 June. 1927; no. 42.- 21. October. 1927, 4.; *Židov*, no. 8.- 19 February 1937. This is the first time that the cover and first article were printed in Cyrillic.

²¹ Pre dvadeset godina, *Židov*, no. 38.- 18 September 1936.

²² *Židov*, no.1. -2 January, 1919, 9.

²³ Pre dvadeset godina, *Židov*, no. 38.- 18 September 1936.

²⁴ Vlasta Kovač, *Obnova židovskog tiska u Hrvatskoj*, Ognjen Kraus (ed.), *Dva stoljeća povijesti i kulture Židova u Zagrebu i Hrvatskoj*, Zagreb, 1998, 92-93. Jasminka Domash, Zeev Glück, Posljednji urednik tjednika „Židov“, *Bilten*, 17 January 1991, 5.

News). After Yugoslavia was occupied, the Hungarian authorities allowed the paper to be published for a while, but it was quickly banned.

At the very beginning of publishing, the editorial board stressed that it belonged to “no political, religious, social, or cultural party or movement, but exclusively serves Jewish interests.” However, in October 1918, *Židov* became the official organ of the Land Committee of the Zionist Federation of Yugoslavia.²⁵ Several other Jewish magazines were published in inter-war Croatia (*Hadegel*, Slavonski Brod, 1921; *Vjesnik Saveza židovskih omladinskih udruženja*, Zagreb, 1924-1931; *Hanoar*, Zagreb, 1927-1937; *Haaviv*, Zagreb, 1922-1941; *Gideon*, Zagreb, 1919-1926, *Omanut, časopis za kulturu*, Zagreb, 1936-1941, *Jevrejski list*, Zagreb, 1934; *Jevrejska tribuna*, Zagreb-Belgrade, 1938-1940; *Herut*, Zagreb 1930-1931; *Pokret*, Osijek, 1932-1935),²⁶ but *Židov* was the longest-lasting, most read, and most influential weekly newspaper in the history of the Jews in this region, and this is precisely the reason it was selected as the subject of this research. Here it is necessary to stress that the *Židov* was a Zionist magazine, and thus most of its articles were favourable towards Zionism.²⁷

On average, an issue had 10-15 pages, depending on the number of articles. The title page included an introductory article concerning current events in the country or the Jewish world in general, while the bottom part of the magazine had a „Feuilleton“, a literary or polemical text written by a Jewish author, a translated work, or a book review. Various columns followed: “Notes and News”, “From the Zionist World”, “The Youth Movement”, “From the Jewish World”, “From Palestine”, “Towards the Palestinian Question”, “The Situation in Palestine”, “From Around the World”, “From Yugoslavia”, “Our Deceased”, “A Reflection on the Galut”, “Cultural Chronicle”, “Sport and Gymnastics”, “From the Press”. At the end of the paper there was a “Herald of the Commission of the Jewish National Fund / Keren Kayemet Leisrael for Yugoslavia”, i. e. a “List of Donations” or monetary contributions which included municipalities and individuals, various advertisements, and death notifications. The organ covered various topics, including the activities of the Zionists in Yugoslavia, anti-Semitic manifestations in Yugoslavia and the world, brief news from across the world, notifications from Jewish municipalities (mostly in Croatia), wedding and engagement announcements, short stories (from 1932) and anecdotes from the Jewish and non-Jewish world (from 1934).²⁸

Since most of the contributions were unsigned or signed only with initials, it is difficult to determine the authors of the various parts of the magazine. We can assume that the unsigned editorials of the *Židov* were written by the chief editor or

²⁵ Ivo Goldstein, *Židovi u Zagrebu 1918.-1941.*, Zagreb, 2004, 40.

²⁶ Vlasta Kovač, *Obnova židovskog tiska u Hrvatskoj*, 92-93; I. Goldstein, *Židovi u Zagrebu 1918.-1941.*, 540-544; Samuel Romano, *Jevrejsko novinstvo u Jugoslaviji, Jevrejski narodni kalendar 1936-37*, No. III, Zagreb-Beograd, 1936, 146-156;

²⁷ I. Goldstein, *Židovi u Zagrebu 1918.-1941.*, 38. *Židov* remained a Zionist magazine during the 1930s. However, after the schism in the Zionist movement, it became closer to the left than the general Zionists.

²⁸ I. Goldstein, *Židovi u Zagrebu 1918.-1941.*, 40.

members of the editorial board, while news from the various Yugoslav municipalities were sent by individuals who rarely signed them. Some of the articles were signed, and the authors include well-known Zionist activists such as Gavro Schwarz,²⁹ Dr. Lavoslav SHik,³⁰ Rabbi Mojsije Margel from Požega,³¹ Lav Stern,³² Nikola Tolnauer,³³ Aleksandar Licht,³⁴ Hugo Zaloscer,³⁵ SHalom Freiburger,³⁶ Oto Rechnitzer,³⁷ Solomon J. Alkalaj,³⁸ Julius Rosenberger, Cvi Rothmüller,³⁹ and many others.

The Links between the Macedonian and Croatian Jews

The most interesting column in the context of this article is “From Yugoslavia”, since it was where reports from many Yugoslav Jewish municipalities were published. There were no reports from Macedonia in the period from 1917 until 1920, which is unsurprising considering that this was the time of positioning in the new state. This meant that most news came from Croatian municipalities, together with news from the Jewish municipality in Belgrade and the Jewish municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Next to appear were the news from Southern Serbia, which at that time included today’s Macedonia, southern Serbia, and Kosovo.

One of the first articles on Macedonian Jews was published in issue no. 12 from 1920, titled “Zionist Life in Bitola”. The article was signed by A. P. from Bitola. The article states that “Bitola is beginning to reawaken” thanks to the “Bne Cijon Society” which has organized the first “shekel celebration” on Pesach. Near the end of the article, the correspondent writes that “Never has Bitola showed itself so enthusiastic for Zionism – it was the first time in its history that the shekel was paid.”⁴⁰ In the next issue, news from Skopje and Bitola were published, in the context of reactions to the peace conference in San Remo, where the resolution giving the Mandate for Palestine and the implementation of the restoration of Jewish Palestine to the British was adopted. A member of the Bene Sion Society reported that “the Jewish population of Bitola received the news on the successes regarding Palestine with great joy,” and that a service had been held in a synagogue on the initiative of the Tehilat Israel Society, celebrating the decision on the Mandate for Palestine and issuing a protest “against the crimes committed by the

²⁹ *Židov*, no. 5.- 15 November 1917, 2.-3.

³⁰ *Židov*, no. 8.- 2 March 1919, 4.; no. 39.- 28 September 1934.

³¹ *Židov*, no. 11.- 1 April 1919, 5.; no. 32.-15 December 1922, 2-4.

³² *Židov*, no. 5.- 15 November 1917, 1-2, no. 14.-29 April 1919, 1-2.

³³ *Židov*, no. 7.- 3 February 1922, 2-3.

³⁴ *Židov*, no. 47.- 27 October 1922; no. 2.- 12 January 1923.

³⁵ *Židov*, no. 18.- 2 May 1924.

³⁶ *Židov*, no. 26.- 19 June 1925, 2-3.

³⁷ *Židov*, no. 16.- 15 April 1926.

³⁸ *Židov*, no. 16.- 15 April 1926.

³⁹ Palestinski dopisnik *Židova*, *Židov*, no. 38.- 21 September 1934.

⁴⁰ “Cijonistički život u Bitolju”, *Židov*, no. 12.-27 April 1920, 5.

Arabs against our brothers in Palestine.”⁴¹ That same year, more news from the Tehilat Israel Society, supported by the Zionist movement in Skopje, were published (the correspondent was Jakov Talvi).⁴² In November 1921, a report claimed that there are many Jews in Bitola, but few Zionist activists, and that their activities are of a propagandistic nature.⁴³ In 1923, news on the Geulat Haarec action in Bitola were published, organized by the Bne Cijon association. A play was arranged during the meeting, and attracted many visitors.⁴⁴ Later, in November 1923, the readers were informed that the Bitola societies Bnei Cijon and Makabi had founded a common association named Atehija, and that all correspondence from the Jewish National Fund should be directed to the address of the new society.⁴⁵ In addition, this issue contained a rather large report on the journey of the Keren Hayesod representatives for Yugoslavia Dr. Vito Kajon and Dr. Braco Poljokan to Bitola and Skopje. The report also states that the visit was “a complete success”.⁴⁶ In early January 1924, the Jewish youth association of Skopje Bne Israel visited the Jewish community in Belgrade and its youth. Correspondent A. K. from Macedonia made a brief report on their journey,⁴⁷ while in March there was a report on the chief rabbi of Bitola, SHabetaj Djaen.⁴⁸ In June 1924, the visit of Prof. Pazi Goldmann from the Keren Hayesod to Skopje⁴⁹ and Bitola was described.⁵⁰ In early 1925, an article on the newly-founded young women’s section of the Zionist youth of Skopje Bne Israel was published. It organized its first concert with dancing in late December 1924.⁵¹ A ceremony held in Skopje in honour of the opening of the first Jewish university in Jerusalem was described in April 1925. It was stressed that the Zionist youth of Skopje Bne Israel had called the “Club of Skopje Jews” to cooperate with them, which the latter agreed to.⁵² A similar ceremony had been organized in Bitola. Apart from the report from Bitola, this issue contains the first published report by a Jew from Shtip, where yet another ceremony in its synagogue regarding the newly-opened university had been organized.⁵³ In late 1925, a list of the Bitola Jews and their contributions to the Herzl-action was published,⁵⁴ as was a report on the celebration of the Balfour

⁴¹ *Židov*, no. 13.- 10 May 1920, 6.

⁴² *Židov*, no. 31. and 32., 24 November 1920, 15

⁴³ Perc Bencijon, Dopis iz Bitolja, *Židov*, no. 36.- 20 November 1921.

⁴⁴ “Geulat haarec akcija u Bitolju” *Židov*, no. 23.-24. – 8 June 1923.

⁴⁵ Društva B’nej Cijon u Bitolju, *Židov*, no. 47.- 17 November 1923, 6.

⁴⁶ Uspjeh puta dra Vite Kajona i dra. Brace Poljokana u Bitolj i Skoplje, *Židov*, no.47.- 17 November 1923, 6.

⁴⁷ A.K. Skopljanska jevrejska Omladina Bene Izrael u Beogradu, *Židov*, no. 3.- 19 January 1924, 6.

⁴⁸ Novi nadrabin u Bitolju i Vrhovni rabin u Bitolju“, *Židov*, 14.-6 April 1924, 6.

⁴⁹ Keren Hajesod akcija u Skoplju, *Židov*, no. 30. 11 July 1924, 5.

⁵⁰ Keren Hajesod u Bitolju, *Židov*, no.33.- 8., 1 August 1924.

⁵¹ Koncert djevojačke sekcije Bne Israel u Skoplju, *Židov*, no. 2.- 9 January 1924, 6.

⁵² M. M. Proslave prigodom otvorenja hebrejskog sveučilišta u našoj Kraljevini, *Židov*, no. 15.- 8 April 1925, 8.

⁵³ Bitolj, Shtip, *Židov*, no. 16.- 17 April 1925, 5.

⁵⁴ Herzl akcija - Bitolj, *Židov*, no. 39.- 11 September 1925, 9.

Declaration anniversary in Skopje.⁵⁵ In early 1926, news on the visit of the representatives of the scout societies “Hakoah” in Skopje,⁵⁶ the celebration of Lag BaOmer, the establishment of the new and expanded committee of the Local Zionist Organization in Bitola,⁵⁷ and the work of the Keren Kayemeth Leisrael in Skopje (the Jewish National Fund/KKL) were published.⁵⁸ A travelogue from southern Serbia written by Zagrebian Zionist Cvi Rothmüller,⁵⁹ where he described the Bitola Jews, was published in early 1927.⁶⁰ At that time a delegation of the Propaganda Committee of the Sephardic Youth of Zagreb, led by B. Pinto, Atias, and Samuel Kamhi visited the Jewish committee in Bitola. Several days later, the Local Sephardic Organization was founded on their initiative.⁶¹ A Zionist conference was held in Skopje on 3 and 4 June 1928, attended by the Zionists of Southern Serbia and reported on by one of *Židov*'s regular correspondents. Dr. Salamon Löwy arrived as a representative from Zagreb, and helped organize the conference there.⁶² In the next issue, Dr. Salomon Löwy published his travelogue and experiences from Southern Serbia.⁶³ Only in mid-July 1928 did an introductory article titled “Southern Serbia” appear on the title page. It included a discussion on the position of Jews in that part of the “Balkans” i. e. in Skopje and Bitola. The author stressed that the Jews in Southern Serbia were “left to rely only on themselves and those honourable people in their community to whom the letters of the [Zionist] Federation were motivation enough to help them work on awakening national consciousness...”.⁶⁴ He described the poor economic, social, and religious situation of the Macedonian Jews, who had neither schools of

⁵⁵ Proslava obljetnice Balfourove deklaracije u Skoplju, *Židov*, no. 149.- 13 November 1925, 6. Izak Koen held a nice solemn speech in Spanish in the brimming synagogue.

⁵⁶ Skoplje, Gostovanje solunskog „Hakoaha“ u Skoplju, *Židov*, no. 17.- 22 April 1926, 6.

⁵⁷ Bitolj, *Židov*, no. 21.- 21 May 1926, 3.

⁵⁸ Skoplje, Organizovanje rada za Keren Keyemeth Leisrael, *Židov*, no. 16.- 15 April 1926. (Author's note: the text was written by a regular correspondent, but their name was not recorded anywhere).

⁵⁹ Cvi Rotem /Rothmüller; Artur Erich, (Trnjani near Slavonski Brod, 4 October 1904 – Tel Aviv, 7 March 1980), sociologist, lawyer, and Jewish activist. As a prominent Zionist activist he travelled throughout Yugoslavia, spent the late 1920s in Palestine, then returned to his homeland, where he held lectures on Jewish and Zionist topics, organised the Zionist movement, wrote tens of articles in the *Židov* and other mostly Zionist organs. He was the chief editor or editorial board member of the youth magazine *Gideon*, *Hanoar*, *Židov*, and the children's magazine *Haaviv*. He wrote the brochures *Židovska kolonizacija Palestine* and *Ideologija cionizma*, and translated Hebrew poems. In September 1934 he moved to Palestine together with his family, where he worked as *Židov*'s correspondent until 1941.

⁶⁰ S puta po Južnoj Srbiji, Dojmovi i refleksije iz Bitolja, *Židov*, no. 1.- 7 January 1927, 2.-3.

⁶¹ Bitolj, Od našeg redovitog dopisnika, *Židov*, no. 2.- 14 January 1927, 4.

⁶² Iz Jugoslavije, izvještaj sa cionističke konferencije održane u Skoplju, *Židov*, no. 24.- 15 June 1928. The conference was attended by: Dr. Salamon Löwy from Zagreb, and Dr. David Alkalaj and his daughter Klarisa Alkalaj, Miss Berta Trajer, Avram Koen, Samuilo de Majo, Emil Medina, all from Belgrade. Participants from Bitola included: Chief Rabbi Sabetaj Džaen, Leon Kamhi, and Jakov Izrael. Also present were Mr. Behar from Prishtina, Pinkas Levi from Shtip, and Bukus Konfino from Leskovac. The participants from Skopje were: Nisim Mashijah, Isak Koen, Avram Moshe, Hajim Levi and others.

⁶³ Dr. Salomon Löwy, Dojmovi iz Južne Srbije, *Židov*, no. 25.- 22 June 1928.

⁶⁴ Južna Srbija, *Židov*, no. 28. – 13 July 1928.

their own confession in the Spanish language nor a rabbi who could teach them. He also criticized the Zionist Federation, saying it should put more effort into providing assistance to the Jews of Southern Serbia, in order to help them organize municipalities, schools and – first and foremost – social and economic institutions.⁶⁵ In March 1929, the magazine published an introductory article titled “The Bitola Jews and their Needs”. It was signed by Cvi Rothmüller. In his article, Cvi wrote about the situation in the places he visited that year, comparing them to the situation two years ago. At the beginning of the article he presented a brief history of the Bitola Jews – there were some 7,000 of them before the First World War, but in his time the number had dropped to 3,500. Many poor families were leaving the city, most of them for South America. Bitola was nicknamed the “Verdun of the Balkans” because it had been plundered in the Balkan Wars and ruined in the First World War. Material poverty was accompanied by poverty of the spirit. “There is no public education or literacy, no determination or ability to organize, no perseverance. Those who do have it have put all their effort into Zionist work...” Despite this, the Zionist movement was still weak.⁶⁶ During the 1930s, reports from Southern Serbia started to be published in Cyrillic.⁶⁷ A feuilleton titled “Among us in Bitola” by correspondent L. M. was published in March 1931, in which the uneasiness of the Bitola Jews towards the reforms of the Jewish calendar was analysed. Zionist societies and the park for Jewish children were described, and letters from Jewish immigrants from Bitola who had gone to South or North America were presented.⁶⁸ In mid-1931, prominent Jews Isak Florentin from Thessaloniki and Leon Kamhi from Skopje undertook a journey through Southern Serbia with the goal of promoting the Zionist idea.⁶⁹ After that, a meeting of seminarians from Sarajevo was organized.⁷⁰ In September 1931, a correspondent from Skopje mentioned the fact that one of the accountants of the Skopje Jewish municipality is not a Jew and has no “understanding for specific Jewish matters” and thus didn’t want to assist two Jewish Zionists who had arrived from Germany, and criticized the representative of the KKL fund Mr. Arje for not devoting enough time to raising funds to buy land in Israel.⁷¹ The president of the Jewish municipality in Skopje J. Arje and secretary J. Rubenović responded to these attacks and demanded that an apology be published, since the aforementioned report had caused strife within the municipality. It is also mentioned that the two young Jews had been directed to the municipal president, but he could not give them financial aid because they lacked the necessary papers. Despite the fact that the municipality had a non-Jewish treasurer, they claimed he had been performing his duties for 12 years, and that the Municipality did not discriminate between the

⁶⁵ Južna Srbija, *Židov*, no. 28. – 13 July 1928; *Židov*, no. 32.- 10 August 1928.

⁶⁶ Bitoljski Židovi i njihovi potrebe, *Židov*, no. 10.-8 March 1929.

⁶⁷ Iz južne Srbije, izaslanik Keren Kajemeta u Južnoj Srbiji, *Židov*, no. 8.- 21 February 1930.

⁶⁸ Kod nas u Bitolju, *Židov*, no. 13.- 27 March 1931.

⁶⁹ Cionistička akcija u Južnoj Srbiji, *Židov*, no. 25.- 19 June 1931.

⁷⁰ Sarajevski seminaristi u Bitolju, *Židov*, no. 28.- 16 July 1931.

⁷¹ Skoplje, Nemili incident u Jevrejskoj crkvenoj opštini, *Židov*, no. 39.- 23 September 1931.

municipal officials.⁷² A polemic arose among the Jews from the Bitola Jewish municipality. First, a letter of Jakov R. Izrael was published, in which he replied to the suggestion of C. Rothmüller that 10% of the municipal budget be set aside for Zionist funds, i. e. that the precise amount the municipalities could set aside should be published. L. Kahmi replied saying that the Bitola Jewish municipality couldn't afford to set aside 10% of its budget. J. R. Izrael then called L. Kamhi out, claiming that the members of the municipality were willing to supply the funds, but were being opposed by the municipal authorities led by L. Kamhi and that such attitudes “do more harm than good for the Zionist movement...”⁷³ Revolted by this letter, L. Kamhi replied in the next issue, claiming that the municipal authorities had always supported the Zionist movement, but that he still considers the members of his municipality to be too poor to afford 10%, since they were already barely able to afford the municipal contributions.⁷⁴ In October 1931, regular meetings of the Jewish Singing Society and the Zionist Youth Association were held in Skopje.⁷⁵ In those days, Skopje and other places in Southern Serbia were visited by Karlo Friedman, secretary of the Keren Hajesod Central Committee, and lawyer David A. Alkalaj.⁷⁶ Municipal elections were held in Skopje in October 1932. A report claims that only 10% of the members voted, that the youth showed no interest for the elections, and that the municipality was still led by the same people who had led it until now. The editorial board of *Židov* commented on this report, claiming that the electoral system in the Skopje Jewish municipality was rigged in favour of the “power-holders” and that it is time that the “self-proclaimed representatives of the Skopje Jews” step down from their posts.⁷⁷ Anti-Semitic incidents occurred in Bitola in late 1933. Around 30 people (apprentices, waiters, students, and others) went to various coffee shops, seeking Jews in order to cause conflict. One young Jewish man fell victim to these outbursts. The authorities undertook certain measures to sanction those responsible, but it turned out that the incident was of an anti-Semitic nature and expressed public support for Hitler.⁷⁸ On 21 and 23 October 1934, a session of the Federation Council was held in Skopje,⁷⁹ while a Zionist delegation comprised of David Albala and Karlo Fridman was present in the cities of Southern Serbia (Bitola and Shtip) in late December 1935.⁸⁰ After the visit of the Zionist leaders in February 1936, a great interest arose for the work of the local Zionist societies in spreading the Zionist idea. A Zionist youth association was founded in Skopje. Youth member Jakov Hurvic was present

⁷² Nemili incidenti u Jevrejskoj crkvenoj opštini, odgovor *Židov*, no. 42.- 16 October 1931.

⁷³ Pismo Židovu, Bitoljčani o zadatku veroispovednih opština, *Židov*, no. 41.- 9 October 1931.

⁷⁴ Bitoljčani o zadatku veroispovednih opština, Odgovor na odgovor, *Židov*, no. 42.- 16 October 1931.

⁷⁵ Poseta u Južnoj Srbiji, *Židov*, no. 42.- 16 October 1931.

⁷⁶ *Židov*, no. 42.- 16 October 1931; Izvještaj o Kh-kamanji u Bitolju, Boravak G. Fridmana, *Židov*, no. 43.- 23 October 1931.

⁷⁷ Skoplje, Opštinska izbori. *Židov*, no. 44.- 4 November 1932.

⁷⁸ Izgredi u Bitolju, *Židov*, no. 52.- 29 December 1933.

⁷⁹ Savezno vijeće u Skoplju, *Židov*, no. 39.- 28 September 1934.

⁸⁰ Cionistička delegacija u Južnoj Srbiji, *Židov*, no. 52.- 20 December 1935.

in the city and held a lecture on the situation in Erec Israel.⁸¹ Problems with the operation of Zionist organizations in Skopje i. e. the insufficient number of members soon became apparent, and the WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organization) was the weakest link in this context.⁸² In April 1936, a group of Jews from Germany arrived in Skopje, asking the local municipality for assistance, but didn't receive it since the municipal budget had not assigned any funds for such situations. *Židov* correspondent H. S. referred to the municipality's action, demanding a public explanation.⁸³ In May 1936, Dijana Romano from Zagreb visited first Thessaloniki, and then Bitola, where she held several presentations on the role of women in the Zionist movement. During her journey, she saw the poor material condition of the Jewish community in Bitola and promised to arrange the founding of a shelter for poor and orphaned children.⁸⁴ Following Dijana Romano's suggestion and being a member of the newly-founded committee for founding the shelter, Dr. Rudolf Buchwald undertook a journey across Southern Serbia that same year and held a lecture on his experiences there in the Jewish National Society after he returned to Zagreb. Following this, *Židov* published an article titled "Through the Jewish mahalas of Southern Serbia", in which the author described the Jews of Bitola and Shtip, especially their difficult material and social conditions. Three photos taken during the journey were published alongside the article (Mr. Leon Kamhi talking with the Jewish beggar, A street in the Jewish quarter, Children in the Gan Hajeladim). Dr. Buchwald's guides in Bitola were Leon Kamhi and the teacher of Jewish Religion Meir Karasola.⁸⁵ In May 1937, the Jewish Sephardic Academic Society "Esperanza" visited the Jews in Southern Serbia (Nish, Bitola, Shtip, Skopje, Prishtina).⁸⁶ In June 1938, a supplement by Cvi Shtajn on the Jews in Skopje was published. The correspondent wrote on their economic and social status, cultural life, and Zionism.⁸⁷ The last longer text on the Macedonian Jews was published in February 1940, and was written by the Bitola rabbi Avram Romano. The text describes the Bitola Jews and their emigration. The author mentions a very interesting fact: 1,090 people had left Bitola from 1931 until 1940, of whom 429 emigrated to Palestine, 205 to Zagreb, and 181 to Skopje.⁸⁸

Later issues continued publishing articles on the development of the Zionist movement in Southern Serbia. The news were related to the founding of Zionist

⁸¹ H. S. Cionistički rad u Skoplju, *Židov*, no. 7.- 14 February 1936.

⁸² H. S. Skopski problemi, *Židov*, no. 10.- 6 March 1936.

⁸³ H. S. Slučaj današnjice, *Židov*, no. 14.- 3 April 1936.

⁸⁴ M. K. Boravak Dijane Romano u Bitolju, *Židov*, no. 22.- 29 May 1936.

⁸⁵ Dr. R. Buchwald, Kroz jevrejske mahale Južne Srbije, *Židov*, no. 46.- 13 November 1936., 9.-10. Za djecu u Bitolju, *Židov*, no. 47.- 20 November 1936. The author describes the poor Jewish community in Bitola, which once comprised 8,000 Jews, but whose number had been reduced to 3,300 after many of them left of North or South America, Greece, Palestine, Italy, Egypt, France, and other parts of Yugoslavia. He goes on to describe their life in New York. What follows is a description of the "Jewish mahala" in Bitola and the Jewish women of southern Serbia.

⁸⁶ „Esperanza“ u Južnoj Srbiji, *Židov*, no. 20.- 14 May 1937.

⁸⁷ Cvi Shtajn, Pismo iz Skoplja, *Židov*, no. 23.- 10 June 1938.

⁸⁸ Nekoliko podataka o bitoljskim Jevrejima, *Židov*, no. 6.- 9 February 1940.

societies, lectures, the Hashomer Hatzair, the visits of Zionist leaders, and Zionist actions. Most of the news were from Bitola,⁸⁹ followed by Skopje,⁹⁰ while the least

⁸⁹ Vijesti iz Bitolja, *Židov*, no. 14.- 1 May 1921; Bitolj, *Židov*, no. 30.- 27 July 1928; Početak rada za bitolj. omladince, no. 21.- 24 May 1929; Bitolj, protesti povodom krvavih događaja u Palestini, no. 36.- 6 September 1929; Bitolj, no. 37.- 13 September 1929, Bitolj, Tišri akcija-Predavanja u Atehiji, no. 42.- 18 October 1929; Izbori, Bitolj, no. 46.- 13 November 1929; no. 6.- 7 February 1930; Boravak Šimšona Goldmana, Bitolj, no. 12.- 21 March 1930; Poseta g. Davida Florentina (potpredsjednika Saveza cionista Grčke), no. 26.- 27 June 1930; Glavna skupština Mjesne cionističke organizacije-Izabrano novo vodstvo, no. 31.- 1 August 1930; Bitolj, no. 46.- 7 November 1930; Sitne vesti iz Bitolja, no. 5.- 30 January 1931; Vijesti iz Bitolja, Iseljavanje u Palestinu, Bitoljska jevrejska opština potpomaže novosadsku, no. 7.- 13 February 1931; Vijesti iz Bitolja, Pripreme za Kh akciju-Bitoljski emigrant grade sinagogu u jeruzalemu 10.- 6 March 1931, Kod nas u Bitolju, no. 13.- 27 March 1931; Cionistička akcija u Južnoj Srbiji, no. 25.- 19 June 1931, Sarajevski seminaristi u Bitolju, no. 28.-16 July 1931, Proslava Balfourova dana, no. 47.- 20 November 1931, no. 48.- 27 November 1931; Rad „Makabija“, „Atehije“, „Mizrabija“, no. 5.-5 February 1932; Opština i obnova rad-Proslava Tel Haja, no. 12.- 25 March 1932; Hanuka proslava, no. 2.- 13 January 1933; Još o dru Bencionu-Smrt dra Alfonsa Bencion, no. 7.- 17 February 1933; Osnivanje grupe WIZO, no. 9.-3 March 1933; Roditeljski sastanak-Izvještaj s konferencije SJVO, no. 16.- 21 April 1933; Cionistička uprava jevrejske opštine-Rad Wizo, no. 21.- 26 May 1933; Umro Avram Testa, no. 21.- 26 May 1933; Nova uprava jevrejske opštine, no. 24.- 16 June 1933; veliki protestni miting protiv progona Jevreja u Nemačkoj-Pomoć nemačkim jevrejima, no.26.- 30 June 1933; Posjet Karla Fridmana iz Beograda, no. 30.- 28 July 1933; Osnivanje Hehaluca, no. 15.- 13 April 1934., Uspjeli omladinski zbor, no. 17.- 27. April 1934; Odlazak predsjednice bitoljskog Viza, no. 19.-11. May 1934, Asefat hahorim i Asefat haken-Stanje Hehaluca, no. 22.- 1 June 1934, 11; Palestinski film u Bitolju, no. 24.- 15 June 1934, Rad omladinskog cionističkog udruženja u Bitolju, i Veliki narodni zbor u Bitolju, no. 25.- 22 June 1934; spomen slava za Bialika, no. 31.- 3 August 1934; Roš Hašana u bitoljskom kenu, no. 39.- 28 September 1934, Haluciu u Bitolju, no. 49.- 7 December 1934. Da li će se osnivati halučka hahšara u Bitolju, no. 6.-8 February 1935, Sa konferencije WIZO, no. 7.- 13 February 1935, Kako rade naše žene, no. 11.- 15 March 1935; Vizo bazar, no. 13.- 29 March 1935; Godišnja skupština „Keren alija mekonit“, no. 24.- 14 June 1935. Komemoracija za Herzela i Bialika, no. 30.- 26 July 1935; Roditeljski sastanak omladinaca Hašomer Hacaira, no. 1.- 3 January 1936; Proslava četverogodišnjice opsatnika Kena Hašomer Hacaira, no. 7.- 14 February 1936; Boravak L. Eškenazija, no. 10.- 6 March 1936; Vokalni koncert tenora Josipa Papo-Sasona i Palestinski tonfilm „Zemlja rada i budućnosti“, Bazar Wizo i proslava dana „Tel Haja“, no. 14.- 3 April 1936; Komemorativni zbor svih cionističkih organizacija u Bitolju povodom događaja u Palestini, Šekelska akcija i Lag Baomer no. 21.- 22 May 1936; Boravak Dijane Romano u Bitolju, no. 22.- 29 May 1936, Komemoracija za Nahuma Sokolova i Roditeljski sastanak Hašomer hacaira i Versko-nacionalna svečanost, no. 24., 12 June 1936; Početak sezone rada naših žena, no. 48.- 27 November 1936; Općinski izbori u Bitolju, no. 4.- 22 January 1937; Vijesti iz Bitole, no. 8.- 19 February 1937; Vijesti iz Bitolja, no. 10.- 5 March 1937, Svečanost Šavuota i Zabava društva „Ino Kevo“, no. 22.- 28 May 1937, Reorganizacija MCO-a u Bitolju, no. 46.- 18 November 1938, Cvi Rothmüller, Među bitoljskim iseljenicima u Petah Tikvi, no. 11.- 15 March 1940; O Židovima u Bitolju, no. 47.- 15 November 1940; Preslika teksta iz Jugoslavenske pošte o Bitoli, no. 48. - 22 November 1940; Svečani zbor Gduda Tehelet Lavana, no. 6.- 7 February 1941.

⁹⁰ Pismo iz Skoplja, *Židov*, no. 30.- 27 July 1928; Skoplje, Jedan važan uspjeh skopljske mladeži, no. 51.- 24 December 1928; Skoplje, no. 7.- 15 February 1929, Iz Skoplja, no. 29.- 17 May 1929, Herzlov dan u Skoplju, no. 31.- 2 August 1929; Skoplje, no. 37.- 13 September 1929, Gideon, omladinsko društvo, no. 38.- 20 September 1929; Ujedinjenje skopljske židovske omladine, no. 41.- 11 October 1929; Posle ujedinjenja židovske omladine u Skoplju, no. 44.- 31 October 1929, Skoplje, skupština Mjesne cionističke organizacije, no. 47.- 22 November 1929, Boravak gospode B. Josif (iz Beograda), Skoplje, no. 48.- 29 November 1929, Slet jevrejske omladine Srbije i Južne Srbije, no. 51.- 20 December 1929, Kongres cionističke omladine u Skoplju, no. 2.- 18 January 1930; Vrhovni rabin dr. Alkalay u Skoplju, no. 6.- 7 February 1930; Iz Južne Srbije, Buđenje January

news came from Shtip.⁹¹ Even though most of the reports from Macedonia were unsigned or signed only with initials, we do know some of the correspondents'

organizovanje rada za Keren Hajesod u Jugu Srbije, no. 6.- 7 February 1930; Iz južne Srbije, izaslanik Keren Kajemeta u Južnoj Srbiji, no. 8.- 21 February 1930; Propagandna akcija, Put gosp. Branka Grossmanna po Srbiji, Južna Srbija, no. 18.- 2 May 1930; Skoplje, Komemoracija za T. Herzla, no. 30.- 25 July 1930; Skoplje, no. 46.- 7 November 1930; Purimska zabava, Skoplje, no. 12.- 20 March 1931; Cionistička akcija u Južnoj Srbiji, no. 25.- 19 June 1931, Skoplje, Nova uprava Jevrejskog narodnog fonda, no. 39.- 25 September 1931, Bitoljčani o zadatku veroispovednih opština, no. 42.- 16 October 1931; Skoplje, Proslava Balfourova dana, no. 45.- 6 November 1931, no. 46.- 13 November 1931, Jevrejski gosti, no. 24.- 17 June 1932; Smrt glavnog sveštenika Moše S. Adriki, Smrt Leona January. Levina i Sabitaja Kamhija, no. 48.- 2 December 1932; Vanredna skupština, no. 5.- 3 February 1933; Dečji dan Gan Ajeladima- Smrt han rebi Josfa S. Hajima, no. 13.- 31 March 1933, Reorganizacija Mesne cionističke organizacije, no. 16.- 21 April 1933; Skupština MCO, no. 26.- 30 June 1933; Herzlov dan, no. 30.- 28 July 1933; Izbori za XVIII cionistički kongres-Boravak Karla Fridmanna u Skoplju-Boravak dr. Salomon Ishakia iz Soluna, no. 31.- 4 August 1933; Cionističko omladinsko udruženje pretvoreno u ken Hašomer hacaira, no. 39.- 29 September 1933, Rad mjesne cionističke organizacije, no. 44.- 3 November 1933; proslava obljetnice Balfourove deklaracije, no. 46.- 17 November 1933, Godišnja skupština Mjesne cionističke organizacije, no. 15.- 13 April 1934, Osnivanje organizacije Hehaluc u Skoplju, no. 24.- 15 June. 1934, Osnivačka skupština organizacije „Hehaluc“, no. 26.- 29 June 1934; Pomen dr. Theodor Herzlu, no. 28.- 13 July 1934; Narodna žalost u Skoplju, no. 45.- 9 November 1934; Uspela manifestacija Skopskog Kena „Hašomer Hacaira“, no. 40.- 27 September 1935, Vijesti iz Skoplja, no. 14.- 3 April 1936. Predavanje rabina g. Romana, no. 31.- 31 July 1936; Š., Pismo iz Skoplja, dolazak rabina- Rad MCO-Izvjestaj o radu JVO- Proslava Tubišvata, no. 3.- 21 January 1938; Skopsko pismo- Vijesti iz Skopja, no. 10.- 11 March 1938, Vijesti iz Skoplja, Godišnja skupština skopske cionističke organizacije, no. 14.- 8 April 1938; Cvi Štajn, Pismo iz Skoplja, no. 23.- 10 June 1938; Š., Pismo iz Skoplja, Cionistički rad, Proslava Lag baomera, osnivanje Kadime, no. 24.- 17 June 1938; Pismo iz Skoplja, no. 48.- 2 December 1938; Rad za KKL, no. 1.- 6 January 1939; Posjed Moše de Majo iz Beograda, no. 3.- 20 January 1939; Godišnja skupština MCO, no. 5.- 3 February 1939, Predavanje Msnojls Čučkovića, no. 10.- 10 March 1939; Hašomer Hacair, no. 11.- 17 March 1939; Kronika iz Skoplja, no. 12.- 24 March 1939; Predavanje dr. Gregora Čremožnika, no. 14.- 7 April 1939; Vijesti iz Skoplja-Palestinsko veče, no. 17.- 28 April 1939; Boravak sarajevskog nadrabina u Skoplju, no. 20.- 19 May 1939; Svečani godišnji zbor Hašomer Hacaira, no. 39.- 22 October 1939; Skupština Kadime i Hanuka, no. 52. 22 December 1939, Nova uprava MCO, Izbori u Općini, no. 1.- 5 January 1940; Godišnja svečanost Kena Hašomer Hacaira, no. 5.- 2 February 1939; Vijesti, no. 10.- 8 March 1940; Posjeta Samuila Demaja predsjednika Centralne uprave KKH i dr. Rudolfa Buchwalda, gl. Tajnika, no. 30.- 26 July 1940; Otvaranje nove radne grupe skopskog gduda „Tehelet Lavana“, no. 39.- 27 September 1940; Proslava 10 godina Tehelet Lavana, no. 46.- 8 November 1940; Velika priredba Hašomer Hacaira, no. 5.- 31 January 1941; Novo istraživanje o skopskim Židovima, osvrt na tekst Davida Ginsberga, no. 9.- 28 February 1941.

⁹¹ Štip, *Židov*, no. 24.- 15 June 1928, Dopis iz Štipa, no. 48.- 30 November 1928; Štip, no. 15.- 12 April 1929, Pomen Teodora Herzla, Štip, i osnivanje jevrejskog sportskog i pevačkog kluba, no. 33.- 16 August 1929, Proslava Balfourove deklaracije, Štip, no. 46.- 13 November 1929; Izbori u društvu „Mikve Israel“, no. 46.- 13 November 1929; no. 6.- 7 February 1930; Glavna skupština Omladinskog udruženja – Predavanja, no. 9.- 28 February 1930; Hespod za Herzla-Protestna rezolucija radi suspenzije halučke imigracije, Štip, no. 30.- 25 July 1930; Cionistička akcija u Južnoj Srbiji, no. 25.- 19 June 1931, Osnovano jevrejsko pjevačko udruženje, no. 21.- 24 May 1935; smrt članice Sterina Kapuano, no. 26.- 26 June 1936; Vijesti iz Štipa, osnovano društvo omladinaca, no. 41.- 24 September 1937; Glavna skupština Mjesne cionističke organizacije, no. 1.- 7 January 1938; Samuel Koen, Vijesti iz Štipa, no. 5.- 25 February 1938, Hanuka, no. 2.- 13 January 1939, Rad cionističke organizacije, no. 5.- 3 February 1939; Proslava dana Trumpeidora, no. 10.- 10 March 1939; Boravak nadrabina Levija, no. 20.- 19 May. 1939; Miting protiv engleske politike, no. 22.- 2 June. 1939;

names. For example, we can assume that B. A. from Shtip⁹² is actually Beceal S. Assnel, while S. Koen is Samuel Koen.⁹³ The correspondent from Bitola signed his articles with the initials L. K., and was thus most likely Leon Kamhi.⁹⁴ M. K. is most likely Meir Kasorla,⁹⁵ while we have no knowledge of the identity of L. M.⁹⁶ or L. P.⁹⁷ Dr. Samuilo Amodaj first appeared in July 1928 as the correspondent from Skopje (he wrote a letter in Cyrillic), as do J. A. (Josif T. Andjel),⁹⁸ J. B. (possibly Josef Behar),⁹⁹ H. S. (Shlomo Hernan),¹⁰⁰ Nisim R. Alfany,¹⁰¹ Cvi/Zvi Shtajn¹⁰² and, starting in 1939, Menahem Carafati,¹⁰³ who signed as just “Carafati”. Most of the reports from Bitola were written by Meir Kasorl, a teacher of Jewish Religion and prominent Zionist, while in the 1930s Menehem Carafati from Skopje and Samuel Coen from Shtip were the most productive correspondents.

From what can be discerned from an analysis of the *Židov*, the Croatian and Yugoslav public received more and more information on the Jews in Macedonia (or, as it was then called, Southern Serbia). Most of the reports were on the topic of the development of Zionism in Southern Serbia¹⁰⁴ and the Zionist actions of Macedonian Jews, but there were also brief histories and reports on the status of Jews in Skopje, Bitola, and Shtip. The Jewish communities in what is today Macedonia (Skopje, Bitola, Shtip) were poor and recorded a steady outflow of emigrants to North and South America. The Federation of Jewish Confessional Communities of Yugoslavia and the Zionist Federation spent a long time discussing on how to find a way to help the Jews of Southern Serbia. Many solutions were proposed, but they addressed only part of the problem and promised only partial aid.¹⁰⁵ There were very few articles on the cooperation between Croatian and Macedonian Jews save those of a formal nature, such as those on the meetings between rabbis from the whole of Yugoslavia, reports from the Zionist Federation meetings, or telegrams addressed to Croatian Jewish municipalities

Proslava Tehelet Lavana, no. 28.- 24 November 1939; Godišnja skupština MCO, no. 1.- 5 January 1940.

⁹² Štip, *Židov*, no. 15.- 12 April 1929, no. 46.- 13 November 1929.

⁹³ Vijesti iz Štipa, osnovano društvo omladinaca, *Židov*, no. 41.- 24 September 1937.

⁹⁴ Bitolj, Od našeg redovitog dopisnika, *Židov*, no. 2.- 14 January 1927, 4; Poseta g. Davida Florentina (potpredsjednika Saveza cionista Grčke), *Židov*, no. 26.- 27 June 1930.

⁹⁵ Meir Kasorla, Boravak L. Eškenazija, no. 10.- 6 March 1936; *Židov*, no. 14.- 3 April 1936.

⁹⁶ Kod nas u Bitolju, *Židov*, no. 13.- 27 March 1931.

⁹⁷ *Židov*, no. 16.- 21 April 1933.

⁹⁸ Pismo iz Skoplja, Bitolj, *Židov*, no. 30.- 27 July 1928; *Židov*, no. 32.- 10 August 1928; Skoplje, Jedan važan uspjeh skopljske mladeži, *Židov*, no. 51.- 24 December 1928.

⁹⁹ *Židov*, no. 16.- 21 April 1933.

¹⁰⁰ H.S. Skopski problemi, *Židov*, no. 10.- 6 March 1936.

¹⁰¹ „Esperanza“ u Južnoj Srbiji, *Židov*, no. 20.- 14 May 1937.

¹⁰² Cvi Shtajn, Pismo iz Skoplja, *Židov*, no. 23.- 10 June 1938.

¹⁰³ *Židov*, no. 12.- 24 March 1939.

¹⁰⁴ Leon Kamhi, Podaci o razvitku cionizma u Južnoj Srbiji, *Židov*, no. 49.- 4 December 1931.

¹⁰⁵ Za djecu u Bitolju, *Židov*, no. 47.- 20 November 1936.

regarding the death of rabbis or prominent Zionists,¹⁰⁶ despite the fact that, starting from the 1930s, the Zagreb Zionist municipality offered intensive support to the Jewish communities of Macedonia (“Southern Serbia”), especially the one in Bitola, which was known for its poverty.¹⁰⁷ The visits of Croatian Zionists to Macedonian Zionist organizations began in the late 1920s and continued throughout the 1930s, so Macedonia was visited by several Croatian Zionists, including Cvi Rothmüller, Salamon Löwy, and Rudolf Buchwald.¹⁰⁸ In summer 1936, Dijana Romano from the Zagreb WIZO centre also visited Bitola. She reported on the poor children of Bitola and asked the WIZO for help. After her visit, the Jewish centre for social assistance in Zagreb established a Committee for helping the Bitola Jews,¹⁰⁹ with the goal of founding an orphanage in Bitola. Committee member Dr. Buchwald later visited Bitola to investigate the situation, describing his findings in a public lecture and a short supplement in *Židov*. Jelena Demajo, wife of the president of the Federation of Jewish Women’s Societies in Belgrade, joined the action for providing homes for orphans, while the action in Bosnia, Croatia, and Slavonia was led by Dijana Romano.¹¹⁰ A special women’s committee was organized for this purpose in late 1936.¹¹¹ In spring 1938, the presidency of the Zagreb Jewish municipality announced that most of the necessary funds have been acquired,¹¹² and the setting of the foundation stone of the shelter was scheduled for April 1939. However, all this came to naught because it seems that most of the money had been spent to provide for an ever-increasing number of refugees.¹¹³ The only ones to arrive in Zagreb were 22 children from Bitola in 1937/38, for whom lodgings were arranged in the community itself. In autumn 1939, there were between 30 and 50 of them.¹¹⁴ In addition to the Zagreb Jewish municipality, the Bitola Jewish municipality was assisted by the municipalities in Vinkovci and Osijek, who sent aid in the form of money and clothing.¹¹⁵ Zagreb

¹⁰⁶ Povodom smrti zagrebačkog nadrabina Hose Jacobia, brzojav sućuti uputio je skopski rabin Šlang, *Židov*, no. 19.- 1 May 1925, 5.

¹⁰⁷ I. Goldstein, *Židovi u Zagrebu 1918.-1941.*, 228.

¹⁰⁸ Iz Jugoslavije, izvještaj sa cionističke konferencije održane u Skoplju 3. i 4. o.g. *Židov*, no. 24.- 15 June 1928, S puta po Južnoj Srbiji, Dojmovi i refleksije iz Bitolja, no. 1.- 7 January 1927, 2-3; Dr. Salomon Löwy, Dojmovi iz Južne Srbije, no. 25.- 22 June 1928; Bitoljski Židovi i njihovi potrebe, no. 10.- 8 March 1929; Štip, Boravak dr. Rothmüllera i H. Domanyja, no. 3.- 22 January 1932; Za djecu u Bitolju, no. 47.- 20 November 1936; Bitolj, posjet R. Buchwalda, no. 45.- 22 October 1937.

¹⁰⁹ Za djecu u Bitolju, *Židov*, no. 47.- 20 November 1936. The committee consisted of: Mrs. Dijana Romano, Dr. Marko Horn, Dr. Makso Pscerhof, Dr. David Furhman, Dr. Rudolf Buchwald, Aleksa Klein, Dr. Joel Rosenberger, and Riki Kohn.

¹¹⁰ Dr. R. Buchwald, Kroz jevrejske mahale Južne Srbije, *Židov*, no. 46.- 13 November 1936, 9-10; Za djecu u Bitolju, *Židov*, no. 47.- 20 November 1936.

¹¹¹ Za bitoljsku djecu, *Židov*, no. 50.- 11 December 1936. The ladies' committee consisted of: Julija Köning, Roza Deutsch, Erna Licht, Ella Shik, Diana Romano, Elza Endreny, Mazalta Izrael, Bukica Baruh, Vera Rechnitzer, and Lili Rosenfeld

¹¹² Dječji dom u Bitolju, *Židov*, no. 15.- 15 April 1938.

¹¹³ I. Goldstein, *Židovi u Zagrebu 1918.-1941.*, 228.

¹¹⁴ I. Goldstein, *Židovi u Zagrebu 1918.-1941.*, 228.

¹¹⁵ Bitola, Zahvala, *Židov*, no. 18.- 6 May 1938.

was interesting to the Bitola Jews as an emigration destination, which can be confirmed through the mentioned article by Rabbi Avram Romano.¹¹⁶

The *Židov* published a series of short reports from the Jewish communities of Southern Serbia, while a larger article on the Macedonian Jews was published only in 1928. Even though it offered a brief overview of the history of the Macedonian Jewish community, the emphasis was on the Zionist movement.¹¹⁷ The link with Croatian Jews is attested by the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Aleksandar Licht and the 30th anniversary of Zionism in Yugoslavia.¹¹⁸ A more intensive connection i. e. action towards the Jews in Macedonia was established after 10 November 1936, when R. Buchwald held a lecture at the Jewish National Society on the “Jewish mahalas” in Southern Serbia, i. e. on his journey through Bitola and Shtip. Since Buchwald vividly described the poverty of the Jews in Bitola and Shtip, the Jews of Zagreb decided to help the Bitola Jews.¹¹⁹

The Zionist movement in Macedonia was underdeveloped in comparison to the other Yugoslav lands, but it did show signs of improvement. In the text “Sephardic Jews and Zionism”, Kalmi Baruh noted that Zionism was a sporadic phenomenon among the Sephardic Jews, and that the only well-organized Zionist organizations were those in Bulgaria.¹²⁰ Cvi Rothmüller shared his opinion,¹²¹ as did the leading Macedonian Zionists. At the conference in Skopje, Mosha Mashijah from Skopje opined that the reason for the lack of interest for Zionism in Macedonia was the fact that the elder members of the community were not receptive to it, but also that the Zionist Federation of Yugoslavia had neglected this part of the Kingdom by sending only two delegates there in the period until 1928 – Sabetaj Levi from Belgrade and Dr. Cvi Rothmüller from Zagreb. Another reason was the lack of Zionist supporters who would spread the idea, but the lack of support for Zionism in the Jewish municipalities of Macedonia (“Southern Serbia”) also played a part.¹²² In his report from his visit to Skopje, Dr. Salomon Löwy wrote that there were two political currents in the Jewish municipality in Skopje: the Zionists and the non-Zionists. The Zionists strove to nurture and strengthen the

¹¹⁶ Nekoliko podataka o bitoljskim Jevrejima, *Židov*, no. 6.- 9 February 1940.

¹¹⁷ Južna Srbija, *Židov*, no. 28. – 13 July 1928. The author doesn't directly mention Macedonian Jews, but only Jews in southern Serbia. He writes that they live in adverse conditions, because of which they feel lonely and sullen, partly due to economic and partly to social circumstances. They had once been connected with the other Sephardic Jews in the Balkans, specifically in Thessaloniki, but the political changes after the Balkan Wars left them isolated and left to themselves, against their own will. Still, they remained an oasis which managed to survive despite the adversity, thanks to its “strong Jewish spirit and soul”.

¹¹⁸ Proslava 50-godišnjice dr. Aleksandra Lichta, *Židov*, no. 18.- 4 May 1934.

¹¹⁹ Dr. R. Buchwald, Kroz jevrejske mahale Južne Srbije, *Židov*, no. 46.- 13 November 1936, 0-10.

¹²⁰ Kalmi Baruh, Sefardski Jevreji i cionizam, *Židov*, no. 16.- 15 April. 1926, 4; Iz Jugoslavije, izvještaj sa cionističke konferencije održane u Skoplju, *Židov*, no. 24.- 15 June 1928.

¹²¹ Ognjen Bojadžiski, Židovi u povijesti Makedonije, *Novi Omanut*, no. 34/35, May-August, Zagreb, 1999, 6; Izvještaj saveznog odbora, *Židov*, no. 43.- 9 October 1925; S puta po Južnoj Srbiji, Dojmovi i refleksije iz Bitolja, *Židov*, no. 1.- 7 January 1927, 2-3.

¹²² Iz Jugoslavije, izvještaj sa cionističke konferencije održane u Skoplju. *Židov*, no. 24.- 15 June 1928.

Jewish cultural values, while the non-Zionists demanded the Jews to adapt to their surroundings at all costs. Despite this, he was surprised by the turnout of the Jewish municipality members at the conference. The situation in Shtip, where poor Jewish families predominated, was even worse. Zionist ideas barely reached them, but S. Löwy claimed the error lay with the Jewish Federation and central institutions, who had failed to sufficiently address the problems of Jews in Southern Serbia.¹²³ In late 1936, Zionism still wasn't widespread even though the idea of Zionism was gaining ground among the Jewish population. During his journey across Southern Serbia, R. Buchwald stated that "The masses still don't fully understand that it is necessary to change their lives and living conditions in order to realize Zionist postulates."¹²⁴ In June 1938, Cvi Shtajn mentioned that there were not enough active Zionists to spread their idea, and that the Jews themselves did not take to it,¹²⁵ which means that Zionism had little success among the Macedonian Jewish communities on the eve of the Second World War.

From all of the above, it is obvious that some sort of link between the Croatian-Zagrebian and Macedonian Jews did exist. The Zionist magazine *Židov* had regular correspondents from Macedonia who sent reports on the happenings in their communities, so the Croatian and broader Yugoslav community was kept up to date on them, in contrast to the current situation, where the Croatian public knows very little of the Macedonian Jews. This paper will hopefully be a small step towards changing this state of affairs.

¹²³ Dr. Salomon Löwy, Dojmovi iz Južne Srbije, *Židov*, no. 25.- 22 June 1928, 5.

¹²⁴ Dr. R. Buchwald, Kroz jevrejske mahale Južne Srbije, *Židov*, no. 46.- 13 November 1936, 0-10.

¹²⁵ Cvi Shtajn, Pismo iz Skoplja, *Židov*, no. 23.- 10 June 1938.