

***The Jewish Oil Magnates of Galicia.* [Part One:] Valerie Schatzker, *The Jewish Oil Magnates: A History, 1853–1945,* and [Part Two:] *The Jewish Oil Magnates: A Novel* by Julien Hirszhaut, trans. Miriam Dashkin Beckerman, ed. Valerie Schatzker, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal&Kingston–London–Ithaca 2015, XXX, 588 pp.**

For Ukrainians, the searing accounts of the early phase of the Galician oil industry by Ivan Franko are enshrined in popular memory. Nevertheless, Valerie Schatzker is quite correct in maintaining that despite the recent monograph by Alison Frank Johnson, the history of the Galician oil industry is little known among scholars outside the region. She points out that the Holocaust that decimated Galician Jews and the emigration of survivors have virtually erased the memory of the Jewish oil magnates who played such a prominent role in the industry from the middle of the nineteenth century to the end of World War II.

The reader receives three narratives in this handsome volume published by McGill-Queen's University Press. The first 178 pages and over fifty pages of footnotes are a history of the extraction of ozokerite, a mineral wax, and petroleum in Galicia, with special attention to the Drohobych and Boryslav area. Interspersed in the account are the histories of the Jewish families who provided the capital and knew how to carry on this extraction, a role that was transformed at the beginning of the twentieth century by the infusion of international capital and after World War I and the Polish-Ukrainian war, by the interventionist policies of the Polish, Soviet, and German states. Finally, the volume contains a translation by Miriam Dashkin Beckerman of the Yiddish novel *The Jewish Oil Magnates* by Julien Hirszhaut, first published in Argentina in 1956 (pp. 180–432). With a deep interest in Jewish history, including the lives of scholars Isaac Shipper and Mayer Balaban, the Drohobych native Hirszhaut was able to encapsulate the mindsets and controversies of the Jewish community up to the eve of World War I. He concentrated his story on the historic Gartenberg family and also wrote into his narrative a leading Enlightenment intellectual and writer of the Drohobych community Shmuel Abel Apfel under the character Nathan Apfel.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a less than flattering depiction of Apfel by his home tutor, see Mykhailo Zubryts'kyi, *Avtobiografiia*, in id., *Zibrani tvory i materialy u tr'okh tomakh*, vol. 2: *Materialy do biohrafii* (Lviv, 2016), 64–65. The autobiography is of interest in depicting relations among national and religious groups in Drohobych.

Schatzker begins her account with the long prehistory of the industry as generations of Carpathian inhabitants dealt with the effusions beneath their far from fertile fields. She also places the multicultural world that developed out of the ancient Ruthenian (Ukrainian) Principality of Halych under Polish rule, above all the evolution of a stratum of Polish large landholders and the formation of Jewish communities of traders and craftsmen. The partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Habsburg creation of Galicia, based on the tradition of the Halych Principality/Kingdom but including originally Polish lands in its western areas, oriented these territories toward Vienna and Central Europe and created Austrian Lemberg as a focal point for new intellectual and commercial trends in the region. It was in Lemberg, the former Ruthenian Lviv and later Polish Lwów, that the pharmacist Jan Zeh and his colleague Ignacy Łukasiewicz took a barrel of oil from Drohobych and refined kerosene for lamps, thus providing a new method of lighting that would only later be supplanted by electricity. In so doing, the discoverers of the kerosene or naphtha lamp provided the impetus for Galicia's first oil rush and the growth of the small settlements near Drohobych and Boryslav into major extraction centers. By 1867, the 17,000 inhabitants of Drohobych, half of them Jews, were not only a major population center in Galicia, but above all a dynamic industrial and social complex influencing the entire province. Even when the oil price dropped because of competition from American and Russian oil wells, the mining of ozokerite kept the extraction industry humming. Schatzker provides the reader with the background both to the industry and the legal-social order that turned Drohobych and Boryslav into an international center of the petroleum industry just before World War I. For a book published by a Canadian author, it is fitting to see that the Canadian contribution to this development, above all William Henry McGarvey's introduction of "the Canadian rig," is given a prominent place in the account.

Schatzker is especially effective in showing how the differing composition of national groups in Western and Eastern Galicia made for divergent environments for the oil industry. Essential to these differences was the division between Polish Latin-Catholic landlords and Ruthenian Greek-Catholic peasants, who also served as workers, in Eastern Galicia. She speculates on the national composition of the early extractors of oil and wax, the *tepaks*, and the role Jews had among them. She shows how social and legal divisions created niches for Jewish workers and Jewish

industrialists in the Boryslav-Drohobych region. The author also outlines the distinctions between the Polish Catholic landowners and the Jewish entrepreneurs, some of whom became landowners in these areas. She discusses how Habsburg administrative rules and later the structuring of companies changed that relationship, including how they later limited Jewish participation in the work force at the turn of the twentieth century. Schatzker maintains that those Polish landlords and mining industry officials who thought in terms of Polish nation-building in Western Galicia sought ways to bridge the social and economic divide with their Mazur (Polish speaking) peasant-workers. She does not see this tendency toward solidarity in the Boryslav-Drohobych region, where in fact the migration of Mazurs to the Boryslav-Drohobych fields beginning in the 1870s may have only served to further estrange the Polish elite stratum from Ukrainian and Jewish workers. This occurred just as Jewish owners, now reoriented to Polish dominance in the province, came to support Polish political and economic activities, and in some cases reorient assimilation tendencies from German to Polish language and culture.

The greatest strength of the volume is in characterizing the evolution of the prominent Jewish families who played such a significant role in developing the industry and then in shaping Jewish life and the general social and institutional fabric of the towns. Schatzker effectively uses Hirszhaut's novel to explain how these families related to the economic booms and busts of Drohobych and Boryslav, above all the oil glut followed by the decline of oil production just before the war. Her discussion of philanthropy and self-interest among these families is especially valuable. She follows their encounter with the secular world and their intergenerational changes in Galicia and even in their moves to the imperial capital of Vienna. The excellent series of illustrations at the beginning of the volume highlights these developments by showing the Gartenberg family assembled at the patriarch Moses's funeral in Vienna in 1916 (Figure 26), and including a painting by Alexander Gartenberg depicting his mother's philanthropy (Figure 27). Schatzker places the evolution of the families of the Jewish oil magnates within the civic and social milieu of Drohobych and examines their interrelations with the Polish captains of industry and cultural and intellectual elite. She recounts this story against the rise of modern politics accompanying the expansion of suffrage in Galicia. Drawing effectively on Hirszhaut's novel, she demonstrates how within the Jewish community and in the general community of Drohobych and

Boryslav, the rise of modern nationalisms, including Zionism, and the struggles between traditional religion and secularism intensified, thereby challenging the world of the Jewish magnates.

Schatzker has performed a great service by taking the history of the industry and the oil magnates through World War I, the Polish-Ukrainian war, the Second Polish Republic in the interwar period, and World War II. Here her account becomes more sketchy of the industry. Still by her connection of the interwar period and above all of the ruinously exhaustive exploitation of the basin by the Nazis during the Holocaust in Drohobych and Boryslav, she has provided the final stage of the history of the industry and the Jewish families who played such a prominent role. Her own connection by marriage with one of the Jewish families from the region has given her an *entrée* into the circles of the survivors of the Holocaust and their personal accounts of the fate of their families.

Valerie Schatzker has also provided the background for the readers of Hirszhaut's novel. On the one hand, she uses the novel as a source. It serves as illustrative material for the impact of political events and social policies on the Jews of the region in the narrative of a writer closely connected with the communities' traditions and legends. On the other hand, she provides the reader with correctives for Hirszhaut's hyperboles and retelling of community "urban legends"—for example, on the social origins of Jakob (Yankl) Feuerstein and his fate. The well-translated novel gives the reader insight into the social and political movements that transformed the Jewish community, as well as material on the interrelations of Jewish workers and the Jewish elite in the last decades before World War I. At the same time relations with Poles and Ukrainians appear in the story, above all in the contested and bloody elections that shook the established order.

Schatzker has succeeded admirably in researching the oil and ozokerite industries and recounting the role of Jews, mainly the magnates. Her work has required dealing with complex and contested histories. Here her limited knowledge of Polish and lack of knowledge of Ukrainian hindered her use of sources and reading of secondary literature. She sought assistance to cover this gap. Given these limitations one must be cautious in accepting her accounts of events. For example, it is hard to understand what she means and what period she is referring to when in describing World War I she makes the inconsistent statement that "Austria feared that pan-Slavic propaganda propagated by the Russians would ignite Ukrainian nationalism, even though most Ukrainians, having

tasted the harsh Russian occupation in 1914, dreaded a Soviet return” (p. 137). One would expect her to comment on the untenable, and even unlikely, assertion that Ukrainians in 1919 were arguing their claims on a historical right to Eastern Galicia on the basis of an independent state that existed there until the sixteenth century (p. 147). If a second edition or translation into Polish or Ukrainian is undertaken, the authors should consider enlisting the additional help of Polish and Ukrainian specialists, who could broaden the source base and assist in providing a more authoritative accounting of events.

Slips in historical context and an inability to survey the full literature should not detract from the accomplishment of the study. The combination of a scholarly monograph with a vivid novel is especially successful in providing a multisided exposition of the Galician oil industry and the unique Jewish communities of the Drohobych and Boryslav regions.

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**Agata Rybińska, *Granice integracji. Religijność Żydów wrocławskich w drugiej połowie XIX wieku (1854–1890)*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław 2017, ss. 261.**

Prezentowana książka powstała na podstawie udoskonalonej dysertacji doktorskiej obronionej w 2011 r. Autorka nieco zmieniła jej tytuł, precyzując ramy chronologiczne oraz poszerzając – chyba słusznie – zakres merytorycznych rozważań, zastąpiwszy pierwotnie użyte pojęcie „praktyki religijne” bardziej pojemnym terminem „religijność”. Praca rozwija tematykę podjętą stosunkowo niedawno przez Tilla van Rahdena i Małgorzatę Stolarską-Fronię, a dotyczącą integracji wrocławskich Żydów ze społeczeństwem większościowym w XIX wieku<sup>1</sup>. O ile jednak opis van Rahdena obejmuje jedynie przejawy świeckiej aktywności reprezentantów środowiska żydowskiego, Stolarskiej-Froni zaś kulturę materialną – głównie sztuki plastyczne i mecenat nad nią – o tyle prezentowana pozycja stawia sobie za

<sup>1</sup> Till van Rahden, *Juden und ander Breslauer: Die Beziehungen zwischen Juden, Protestanten und Katholiken in einer deutschen Großstadt von 1860 bis 1925*, Göttingen 2000; Małgorzata Stolarska-Fronia, *Udział środowisk Żydów wrocławskich w artystycznym i kulturalnym życiu miasta od emancypacji do 1933 roku*, Warszawa 2008.