

‘Tell Me, Gretchen, Wouldn’t You Like to Be a Jewess?’ The Inter-War Image of Jewishness in a Magazine for Modern, Educated Women

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SYNOPSIS

A significant contribution to the formation of the image of Jewish culture in inter-war Czechoslovakia was naturally made also by the popular press, both through an intentional shaping of interpretations and through an inadvertent adherence to stereotypes. In this article we focus on *Eva* magazine, the most prestigious women’s periodical in the Czechoslovak First Republic, which was published from 1928 onwards and as its subheading proclaimed, was targeted at modern and educated women. *Eva* contained both journalistic and literary texts by eminent personalities from the cultural life of the First Republic, and thanks to its clearly delineated target group it represents an interesting source of cultural history. The thematisation of Jewishness in *Eva* appears within the framework of short stories, texts of a travelogue character, and reviews of productions and books with a Jewish theme. At times it incorporates whole texts, at others mere phrases such as similes. It ensues from the patterned regularity of media functioning in society that even apparently marginal mentions may become part of the formation of a specific discourse. Consequently this article sets itself the target of answering the question regarding what image of Jewishness the magazine created and by what means it presented this image, or in other words the outlook adopted by the cultural society of the First Republic that contributed to the magazine, as well as by its readership, namely modern and educated women.

KEYWORDS

Women’s magazine *Eva*; First Czechoslovak Republic; depiction of Jews; stereotype.

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The Jewish minority in inter-war Czechoslovakia encompassed a distinctly heterogeneous group of the population, which was internally diverse in relation to the state, its own language and religion, as well as in its degree of integration into the mainstream society.¹ This naturally also means that it is a complex matter to define

1 For further details see e.g. Čapková (2005, pp. 9–12), also Kárník (2003, p. 320). Similarly as in the work of Kateřina Čapková, the search for the identity of Jews in the Czech lands is also described by Blanka Soukupová (2003, pp. 51–64), who notes the complexity of the

inter-war Jewishness. It is not possible to speak of a uniform Jewish identity, but rather of a plurality of identities which were formed by stances ranging from the most orthodox, through Zionist oriented views for example, to nationally assimilated positions, with various different approaches towards faith as one of the previously defining characteristics.

If we are faced with such a diverse group, this raises questions concerning how this group was viewed by the other, non-Jewish inhabitants of Czechoslovakia. An interesting source in such a quest is provided by the press, since its role within society is closely linked with the formation of public opinion and the shaping of social attitudes and patterns. The important functions of the media within society indisputably include that of explaining and supporting social discourse, as well as the predominant cultural models.² With reference to the cultural milieu, the media create representations of social reality (McQuail 2009, p. 17) and thereby become significant producers of the symbolic content that helps the audience structure their understanding of reality. They offer blueprints and frameworks which, thanks to their interpretative essence, function as a way of comprehending the world; not a precise representation but rather the way in which it is perceived by the audience, who then act upon this foundation. This relationship is described for example by the theory of the social construction of reality according to Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman, who also draw attention to the power of the media in exerting control over the meanings they disseminate (Berger — Luckmann 1999, p. 73). The media therefore do not merely provide information with regard to the society and world around them, but as a significant producer of symbolic content also shape this reality.

The British media theorist Denis McQuail writes that ‘there can be little doubt that the media, whether moulders or mirrors of society, are the main messengers *about* society’ (McQuail 2009, p. 92). Indeed, as a document of society-wide communication, they capture its meaning-creating role. For our topic, this means that the press as a source has a potential predicative value with regard to the interpretations shared by society, to which it has itself contributed or has at the very least repeated.

Studies which focus on the image of Jews in the press usually concentrate on the issue of anti-Semitism, whereas the image of the culture and the image of the Jewish minority as such is left aside. Of course, there are academic publications which focus on the Jewish minority, for example with regard to its search for an inner identity (see Čapková 2005), but in all of them the standpoint occupied by the rest of society, thus a standpoint which does not have its origins in a specific colouring, for example of manifest anti-Semitic expressions, either sympathy or antipathy, is neglected.

The magazine *Eva* (1928–1943), which is the source for the following study, represents a periodical which is specific in many respects. Above all, it was the most prestigious women’s magazine of the Czechoslovak First Republic, which aimed at a new target group and modified its form accordingly. *Eva* followed on from the success of

issue of a search for balance between Czech Jewishness and Zionism within the Czechoslovak context, and the thus arising question concerning whether or not it is appropriate to link faith and the Jewish identity whatsoever.

2 See the definition of the functionalist approach to the role of the media in Jiráček — Köpplová (2003, p. 50).

Hvězda Československých paní a dívek (Star of Czechoslovak Ladies and Girls), but was intended to address a new segment of the public: educated women. Jaroslav Šalda, the then editor of the Melantrich publisher, recalls in his memoirs that when they began preparing *Eva* they were creating a type of magazine which had no parallel anywhere in the world. The magazine was intended to be a quality publication both in terms of its content and in terms of its external appearance (Šalda 2001, pp. 210–211). This intention was successfully realised, and the magazine became an important element of the production of the national-socialist³ oriented Melantrich concern.⁴

Although *Eva*, which in its way was a unique periodical on the Czechoslovak magazine market, was targeted on one hand at the ‘modern and educated woman’, as announced by its subheading, thus at women who were to a substantial degree emancipated, aspiring to develop their own outlook and to self-improvement, at the same time it was also fully integrated into the world which had hitherto been predominantly defined by men. The team of authors who prepared the magazine was managed by the female chief editor, but the regular contributors also included a whole range of men, not only writers.⁵ For our topic, *Eva* therefore does not merely represent a form of the women’s view of Jewish culture in First Republic Czech society, but on the contrary represents the reflections of the more intellectually oriented upper middle class, regardless of sex.

A more precise definition of the target group can be easily deduced from the magazine’s content and from the printed advertisements. The main themes of the magazine naturally included beauty, fashion,⁶ home, society, family and relationships. However, these themes also frequently involved a deeper overlap, for example the home topic was linked not only with modern utility household furnishings but

3 In this case ‘national socialism’ bears no relation to Nazism. The Czechoslovak National Socialist Party to which we refer here was a left-wing oriented, patriotic party, which supported the young democratic republic and President Masaryk.

4 The influence of the magazine on the fortunes of the Melantrich concern is documented also by the fact that a shop selling wool and other materials for handicrafts was established upon the initiative of the chief editor Jarmila Šaldová, responding to the fact that only two such specialised shops existed at the time. The ‘Eva works’ was established in Jindřišská street, which in addition to selling materials for handicrafts also offered editions and guidebooks from Melantrich periodicals. The shop was intended to serve as a supplement to the publishing activity, but eventually became an independent trading company belonging to the Melantrich concern. This line of business was also joined by the publication of specialist handbooks such as *Učíme se plésti* (Šalda 2001, p. 213).

5 Jarmila Nováková (later Šaldová) became the chief editor of the magazine, and under her management the magazine collaborated with a series of distinguished personalities of the time, not only from the field of journalism, literature and the fine arts, but also for example architecture. They included figures such as Staša Jílovská, Máša Broftová, Olga Scheinpflugová, Eva Vrchlická, Marie Majerová, Marie Pujmanová, Božena Benešová, František Tichý, Josef Sudek, Ondřej Sekora, Vlastimil Rada, Franta Kocourek, Emil Synek, Josef Tráger, Vilém Závada, Josef Hora, František Hrubín, Vladimír Neff, Ivan Olbracht, Jaroslav Durych, Jan E. Koula and a range of others.

6 The main fashion inspiration was naturally represented by Paris, where *Eva* even had its own correspondent (Uchalová 1996, pp. 46–47).

also crossed over with the emancipation of the modern woman, who boldly made use of various new appliances which saved her time and labour. An essential feature was of course the culture section. However, in its literary subsection for example, this went far beyond focusing only on literature for women, but took notice of what was current in the world of art, as well as other more demanding texts. With the aim of contributing to female emancipation, *Eva* provided information about all kinds of women's associations, movements or organisations. Its readers were not meant to remain only within the confines of their own home, but were encouraged to be active and dynamic, as documented for example by the emphasis on travel or the focus on automobiles and sport. An integral component of the magazine was naturally also its fiction texts, which frequently thematised the relationship between men and women, or placed an emphasis on female protagonists.

The magazine consisted of a collection of various types of text, which differed not only in their content but also in their genre classification, set on an axis between a journalistic and artistic style. Despite this diversity, we should nonetheless be aware that the magazine was intended to function as an integrated whole, based upon the editorial selection of individual articles, and that the resulting impression that it presented was created from the sum of all the texts and authorial intentions contained therein.

The image of Jews that *Eva* presents between the lines of its themes is composed of a mosaic of individual views and mentions. On one hand we find all kinds of minor fixed associations and similes in which the word 'Jew' or 'Jewish' figures, which in their way confirm stereotypical, established depictions in fictional or journalistic texts. On the other hand, we also encounter purely factual mentions or travelogue records which are far from fiction, and pursue an endeavour to capture the reality, which in this case frequently relate to the Jewish flavour of Subcarpathian Ruthenia. A specific chapter is then devoted to following current affairs, whether this concerns cultural events, which thematically cover new books, theatre productions etc., or texts which are more or less of the character of news reports, reflecting the development of the situation in Germany.⁷

MINOR REFERENCES, SIMILES AND TYPIFICATIONS

Let us first of all focus on minor references in the text and their predicative value. Some are purely factual statements, such as in an article (S. O. 1928, p. 24) which refers to the ethnic composition of the population in Slovakia. While others mention the Jewish context without more specific intentions, it is nevertheless possible to infer deeper connections from them. For example, in Jarka Hrejšová's article *Děti amerických velkoměst* (Children of American Cities) we find the comment that the

7 This text is based on the excerpting of the key words Jew, Jewess, Jews, Jewry and the adjective Jewish in all genders, performed in the available digitised volumes. The only exception is the 7th annual volume, from the years of 1934–1935, which has not yet been digitised, and was unavailable in physical form at the time of writing of this text as a consequence of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

American children playing in the streets 'have already resolved their racial and international problems, when Slavic and Irish, Negro and Jewish children play together and learn English' (Hrejsová 1929, p. 23). This mention, however small, documents a sensitivity with regard to the issue of racial discrimination, which is rarely written about explicitly in *Eva*, but is nonetheless perceptible.

Several other matter-of-fact references to Jewish origin in *Eva* are made in relation to art history, and their aim is merely to present or supplement interesting contexts. They include a comment in a text on the history of skin care, which notes that Jews were commanded by the Old Testament to wash their hands before every meal (Světničková 1930, p. 24), and a similarly purely contextual mention appears in an article about the book *Španělsko z dob Kolumbových* (Spain in the Times of Columbus), which among other matters discusses the persecution of the Jews as part of Spanish history (d. 1938, p. 13). At the same time, we could also point to such references as the folk names for plants, for example the term 'Jewish cherry' for Chinese lantern, or 'Jewish potatoes' for Jerusalem artichokes (see Úlehlová 1932, p. 18). These can be considered to document a long tradition of coexistence, which is projected into the linguistic level of naming objects.

From established names of plants, it is only a small step to the inspiration of traditional Jewish cuisine. This includes a mention of Roman 'Jewish artichokes', which are fried in oil (Štech 1937, p. 13), or recipes for goose in which the author notes that 'the greatest variety of modifications can be found in orthodox Jewish cuisine. The Jewish word "kaldoun", meaning half-cooked poultry, mixed with uncooked rice and then stewed until tender in an oven, has become common usage' (Boučková 1936, p. 23).

The character of minor references also appears in its way in the use of various established phrases and allusions relying upon a Jewish context. For example, we find the simile of hands 'shaking as if you'd killed a Jew' (unsigned 1932b, p. 28), or the phrase 'to wail like the Jews over the fall of Jerusalem' (Vochočová 1936, p. 25). Whereas the first case carries a hint of the bizarreness of the crime, the second refers to the biblical context of expressing grief, which for example included also the tearing of one's own garment.

Another example of an instance where the use of a simile draws upon factual contexts may be the article *Odborníkovy názory na trvalou ondulaci* (An Expert's Opinions of the Permanent Wave), which deals with how often it is necessary to wash permed hair. The expert in question criticises women who do not take sufficient care of their hair: 'Would anyone believe that today, in the civilised world, there are women who do not wash one part of their body for a whole six months? And these are not Polish Jewesses with wigs, these are ladies from the big city, who flaunt how in tune they are with the times' (unsigned 1932a, p. 15).

In this case, Polish Jewesses with wigs are presented as a symbol of backwardness, while at the same time they provide a sufficiently familiar context in order to create a contrast between a modern lady and a woman of dubious hygienic habits.⁸

⁸ The intelligibility of this simile may remind us of Irena Dousková's book *Hrdý Budžes* (B. Proudew) from 2002, containing the statement: 'Helena, you look like a Polish Jew' (Dousková 2002, p. 12).

However, at the same time this simile, despite its internal simplicity, is considerably more complicated in its meaning. It works with a fixedly perceived mutual association of backwardness, filth and poverty, which becomes a stereotypical characterisation of orthodox Eastern Jews.⁹ Although it is only with difficulty that we can infer the author's specific attitude towards Jews on the basis of this one brief comment in an article about the permanent wave, the fact that such a negative stereotype¹⁰ could be printed in a magazine which does not present overtly anti-Semitic attitudes, but on the contrary is frequently fascinated by the orthodox culture, documents that such a simile was socially acceptable to its readership.

The above examples, diverse as they may be, document that the overall perception of the context of Jewish society and culture was far more pronounced and multi-layered than might appear upon first impression if we were to search in *Eva* only for texts primarily focusing upon a reflection of this.

TIPIFICATION IN WORKS OF FICTION

In addition to established similes, we also find certain fixed typifications of Jews in the literary texts printed in *Eva*. Here we find relatively few Jewish characters who could unequivocally be considered to be a driving force of the plot. More often the position of these characters is secondary, associated with the portrayal of a specific community, the supplementing of a certain flavour or the intimation of semantic connections intended to complete the overall image and render it better imaginable. For example, in Adolf Veselý's short story *Albina Michaljovna* we find a description of a location somewhere in Volhynia, where an army officer is in charge of repairing a railway track. Presented as part of this environment is a mill, where 'a Jew from the neighbourhood' has taken up residence, and a forge, which is said to be haunted (Veselý 1931, p. 8). Although the character of the Jew plays absolutely no role in the further unfolding of the plot of the short story, it nevertheless presents a fixed image of a person on the periphery of society, which is essential in order to complete the atmosphere of the depicted fictional environment. This is a person who has established himself in a peculiar location, thereby himself displaying his own peculiarity and a hint of mystery.

A similar function of the Jewish origin of characters is intimated in a review by Marie Majerová, discussing Benjamin Klička's novel *Do posledního dechu* (To the Last Breath) and Poláček's texts *Okresní město* (County Town) and *Hrdinové táhnou do boje* (Heroes March into Battle). While with regard to Klička's novel, Majerová mentions the detailed description of the environment in which an old Jewish accountant is

⁹ For more details on the established image of the Polish Jew see Balík (2011, pp. 764–765).

¹⁰ Here the question arises as to whether we might regard the simile of Polish Jewesses with wigs as an expression of latent anti-Semitism, even if probably unintentional. In such a case it is necessary to be aware that this comment refers to the context of orthodox Eastern Jews, and is therefore not directed against the Western, assimilated type of Jewishness. Although it expresses distrust or revulsion towards a specific group, it does not relate universally to all Jews.

an essential requirement, practically as an accoutrement, in Poláček's texts she emphasises the figurative nature of the characters, who also include 'a Jewish cabman, whose snobbish side is to aspire to resemble Christians' (Majerová 1937, p. 15).

The character of the Jew in Josef Knap's novella *Vysoké jarní nebe* (The Great Spring Heavens) may seem to be partially in a similar spirit, i.e. that of a figure which supplements the flavour of the narrative. However, if we contemplate the full context of his portrayal, more elaborate structures of connotations appear. The novella follows the destiny of a young married couple. The man is eventually caught cheating on his wife with another woman: 'With that one who belongs to that fine pot-bellied Jew. What taste you have, Pavel, that you could do such a thing!' (Knap 1932b, p. 6). The man's lover is a former beauty queen, a racing driver, a skier, thus a thoroughly dynamic and modern woman, who has taken as her husband an old Jewish lawyer, and furthermore is rumoured within the community to be living with his son (Knap 1932a, p. 7). The pot-bellied Jewish lawyer as her husband illustrates the depravity of the aspirations of women motivated exclusively by the pursuit of their own profit, while the overall picture of immorality is further augmented by the rumours circulating among the people about the woman and her husband's son. The old lawyer appears in the stereotypical position of the wealthy Jew, whose sole, morally highly dubious attraction, consists in his property.

Probably the most extensive literary treatment of a Jewish character which we find in *Eva* during the period in question is presented in the first annual edition, in *Ukradená povídka* (The Stolen Tale) by K. J. Beneš. This short story is based on the idea that several authors could create a joint text, each always contributing one chapter. The first part, written by František Langer, was used by Beneš, who revised it and continued the story himself. The main hero is a young lawyer who meets a beautiful and mysterious woman while visiting his mother, who makes a living as a fortune teller. During the visit, the mother tells her son about one of her clients:

[...] *Once a certain gentleman came to me for advice, wanting to know if his wife, who was thirty years his junior, was cheating on him. He was a Jew, and what's more a stupid Jew, the rarest case I have encountered. I thought to myself that it would be no wonder if she was, but at the time I told him that what he thought would be to his detriment would actually be to his advantage. He believed that I had somehow, from a distance, spied a bundle of banknotes in his cash register, and he kept hold of them and earned half a million. In his jubilation he gave me a thousand crowns, which was nice, but what's unpleasant is that since that time he's been on at me to advise him on his speculations on the stock market. So what else can I do but study the stock market so that I don't blurt out some nonsense to him?* (Beneš 1929a, p. 2).

While the Jew suggests to the lawyer's mother that something terrible happened to him during the revolution in Russia, the mysterious young woman with whom the lawyer becomes involved explains that she has an immensely jealous husband, whom she married in order to safeguard her father's invention. On their wedding night, her husband revealed some kind of terrible secret to her, while at the same time he demanded something appalling from his bride. The fates of all the characters are understandably intertwined, and it transpires that the young woman is the Jew's wife. The

Jew kills the lawyer, his wife and himself, in order to take revenge for the fact that he had been castrated in Russia (Beneš 1929b, pp. 2-3; 1929c, p. 2).

His character confirms a similar typification as in the previous case, thus a marriage to an older Jew for his money, which in this case is further reinforced by the motivation of self-sacrifice of the young woman, rescuing her father from poverty. The initial, humorous portrayal of the Jew's stupidity in the first chapter is lost in Beneš's continuation of the story, and is replaced by a terrible secret, culminating in a brutal murder. The formulas used within their context become an image of a murky past which, in combination with the character's jealousy, points towards a manifestation of dangerous malice.

The aforementioned typification of the wealthy Jew is presented also in a number of other texts. These also include Richard Aldington's serialised novel *Women Must Work*. At a party, the chief heroine is introduced to a certain Mogenheim, an English-German-Jewish millionaire, who has no taste whatsoever but thanks to his wealth has accrued such power that everyone in London fears him, because he could easily ruin them all.

Similarly as in the previous case, this depiction works with the motif of fear that the Jew evokes. Whereas in *Ukradená povídka* the fear springs from the conduct of a man scarred by a dark secret, here it ensues from the power conferred by wealth.

Further connotations concerning the Jew and property, not to mention finances, specifically craftiness, are developed in a text resembling a feature story by Máša Broftová entitled *Muži jsou šizeni blondýnkami* (Men are Deceived by Blondes). It describes the girl Marieta, an enchanting womanly creature:

[...] *In addition to her natural cunning, Marieta is also the secretary of a Jewish stock exchange magnate, and everything in the world for her means nothing but business and trading. She categorises love and friendships like stocks, for her they mean only speculation papers. [...] When destiny shaped her character, it played a little game, making her up out of bizarre contradictions: It took five ounces of honourable woman, two ounces of courtesan, six ounces of Jewish usurer, two ounces of genuine naivety, one ounce of rogue and three ounces of refined lady. Then it carelessly stuffed it all in a box with red hair and green eyes, and released it into the world* (Broftová 1929a, p. 14).

The Jewish simile here is a symbol of unscrupulous guile which, in combination with an enchanting exterior and a certain form of carefree artlessness, lends the girl a hallmark of peculiar, very stark single-mindedness.

If the connection of Jews with property¹¹ is a blatantly striking motif in literary portrayals, this raises the question as to whether it also figures in texts whose function is not primarily artistic. We can find a direct depiction of the Jewish entrepreneurial spirit for example in Eva Zašlová's journalistic article *O sabatu zavřeno* (Closed

11 Within this context, let us add that whereas the stereotype of the Jew-financier may appear to us as merely an established type, from the characteristics of the demographic composition of Czechoslovak society, it ensues that there was a genuine predominance of employment in the sphere of trade or finance among Jews (see Průcha 1999, p. 76).

on the Sabbath), a feature on the American department store Klein and its founder. This article genuinely does not involve a literary typification, but rather a journalistic presentation of reality. The text presents a highly skilled Jewish businessman, who began in a small store and worked his way up to the position of a successful wholesaler of women's clothing. Although the author praises Klein's business acumen, she also stresses the downside of his operation, namely the fact that many women suffer great hardships despite working for companies that are making a profit under the management of an adroit businessman: 'He also has two faces. He is a sharp, ruthless tycoon of immense wealth. [...] At the same time he is a warm-hearted, jovial little man and a most devoted son, who remains unmarried at the will of his ageing mother' (Zašlová 1938, p. 18).¹²

The Jewish origin of Mr. Klein is highlighted in the text solely in connection with the fact stated in the headline, namely that he does not sell on Saturdays. The author does not in any way suggest a connection between finance or business acumen and his Jewish origin. The image of the owner-Jew, together with the reminder of his humble beginnings, thus subtly takes on an old-world hue — this is one of the elements that are repeated in *Eva* in association with Jews. If we place them within a context together with the depiction of the Jew as an integral part of the city, or as a figure complementing the local flavour, it becomes clear to us that these depictions accentuate the Jew as a figure associated with tradition or traditionalism, whether this relates to his own religious tradition or the tradition of the functioning of locations. In their way, Jews thus sometimes become an element that to a certain degree defies modern life as it is presented for example by *Eva*. In the case of the above-mentioned businessman Klein, this is intimated at least by the fact that he does not open on the Sabbath.

In their essence, thus in their endeavour to depict reality, published memoirs also resemble the above journalistic text. In 1932 *Eva* printed a feature from *Právo lidu*, in which Růžena Svobodová recalls the actress Hana Kvapilová (Svobodová 1932, p. 25). An absolutely unmissable context is the poverty in which Kvapilová was raised. Svobodová writes that the Kvapil family were indebted to a Jewish merchant. In order to keep the even beds that they had lost in bankruptcy proceedings, they made an agreement with the Jew to pay him off in the form of labour. Kvapilová herself as a child also had to bring the Jewish merchant samples of handicrafts that she had prepared, but the man refused to pay the poor child for them. Again we see an image of miserliness, which within the context of the above-mentioned typifications is further augmented because it takes on the form of an experience which confirms the potentially true basis of the stereotype.

Standing in contrast with this is the multi-layered conception of the theme of Jewishness opened up by the memoirs of Eva Vrchlická, entitled *Dětství s Vrchlickým* (Childhood with Vrchlický), which were published in the tenth annual edition of *Eva*. All kinds of situations are repeated in her memoirs, in which both fictional and established depictions are intertwined with family recollections influenced by friendly

12 Here it is necessary to note that although *Eva* by its nature was targeted at wealthier female readers, its emphasis on social sensitivity appears frequently, in which the above passage is only one example.

relationships with Prague Jews, from whom ‘Daddy Vrchlický’ brought home various delicacies, and who even presented him with a huge cake for his fortieth birthday (Vrchlická 1938a, p. 8). On one hand, for example, there is the shadowy picture on the wall of the ‘Jew with “swag” slung over his back, which grandmother used to scare ‘little daddy’, i.e. Vrchlický, that the Jews would carry him away if he didn’t go to sleep (Vrchlická 1938b, p. 15). In contrast with this is the comforting scene in which Daddy plays with little Eva, and together they build dwellings of a Jewish town, around which a fairytale narrative is woven:

‘And where does rabbi Levy live?’ I inquired eagerly. ‘Here, in this nice house next to the synagogue.’ ‘And where’s his garden?’ We squeezed a mossy little tree into the lane behind Levy’s house. ‘And will a rose bloom there?’ ‘A rose will grow there, and death will hide in it.’ ‘And will a granddaughter pluck that rose and bring it to her grandfather?’ (Vrchlická 1938c, p. 14).

The game becomes an impulse for a subsequent walk through the ghetto, just as later on the nursery rhyme ‘The Jewess Came from Slaný’ (Vrchlická 1938d, p. 6) stimulates the child’s curiosity and a series of questions relating to her father’s friendly relationships with the Jews.

In this text, we are presented for the first time in *Eva* with a depiction of Jews in a dual position, which in a remarkable manner corresponds with the image served up by the magazine as a whole. On one hand, the nursery rhyme or the shadowy image on the wall correspond very well with the established stereotyping of a strange man on the edge of society, but intruding into this is an element of friendly interpersonal relationships, symbolised for the young Eva by the huge birthday cake. A new dimension of both is then offered by the fairytale narrative while playing with the houses, which in its anchoring beyond the walls of the ghetto also brings a moment of mystery. The multi-layered nature of the image of Jews presented by the magazine in itself reflects the fact that Jews, as part of society, could not be perceived in a uniform manner, either due to the diversity of their own expressions of culture and faith, or as a consequence of socially established typifications.

REPRESENTATIONS OF REALITY

Above we show how Jewish characters were made use of also in an endeavour to build up the credibility of the fictional world. Viewed logically, this endeavour had to be a reaction to a familiar reality. In *Eva* this receives attention primarily in texts of a travelogue character. For example, an old-world Jewish family may be included as part of an ocean voyage (Schieszlová 1936, pp. 9–10), and similarly it is possible to observe the cultural manifestations of such passengers when, on the deck of a ship sailing to Israel, the Jews dance, sing songs and play games of an evening (Nosková 1930, p. 11).

Within a partially similar context, Máša Broftová refers to Jewish women when she writes about Switzerland:

[...] *And in pursuit of this smaller illusion of an earthly paradise, congregating here are existences of all types: frustrated hearts, secret lovers, filthy rich old Dutch couples, tenaciously clinging to the fashions of the 1890s, bored French Jewesses trailing swarms of gigolos in their wake, prim German newlyweds taking advantage of the high exchange rate of the mark, hordes of English women of indeterminate age, with impossibly thin legs and bodies that look as if they've been through a mangle; samples are procured before use by blooming Dutch women, and here and there an emerging, vigorous Czechoslovak Republic* (Broftová 1929b, p. 10).

The bored French Jewesses appearing in Switzerland alongside various other 'existences', as they are referred to by Broftová, become a part of a kind of colouring which is represented by a set of figures who come in search of an illusion, thus with a certain naivety and romantic idealism.

Similar reflections based on travels are followed also by certain texts which are rather of a light, even satirical tone. This can be seen for example in Jaroslav Přebík's portrait *Malý, ale náš... na Jadranu* (Small, but Ours... on the Adriatic; Přebík 1934, p. 19). In essence this concerns a dialogue between rather impolite gentlemen who, when on holiday in the Adriatic, assume that since they are in a foreign land it will be difficult for anyone else to understand what they are talking about. They comment on the other tourists they see, among whom there understandably must also be some Jews. With regard to the fact that the gentlemen are improper in their conduct, they inevitably find the ever-present German of their Jewish fellow travellers to be irksome. In this conception, Jews again belong to that society which complements the holiday atmosphere of the situation.

Eva Řezáčová presents a similar reflection in her text *Pás berounský aneb rozřídění národa v létě podle rolí dědičných, ježto cesty mohou býti rozličné* (The Berounka Strip, or the Categorisation of the Nation in the Summer according to Hereditary Roles, Since Paths May Differ). This essentially concerns a slightly ironic, humorous guide to locations where a summer apartment might be sought in the vicinity of the Berounka river. In a similar manner as in the travelogue sketches from abroad, she enumerates who can be seen from a train in Černošice:

[...] *The strapping figures of perfectly dressed girls with a furrow of boredom around their made-up mouths, youths in white silk shirts, light pullovers and flannel trousers with racquets under their arm and a moustache under their nose, which makes them resemble haberdashers. Nannies with tanned children in prams which resemble a miniature version of papa's Packard, numerous Jewish families ebullient with good living, surplus meat and barbershop humour* (Řezáčová 1932, p. 10).

Jewish families here are naturally an essential feature as an intelligible topos, which firstly belong to the Czech environment, and at the same time correspond to what is part of other travelogue descriptions. An interesting detail here is 'good living', 'surplus meat' and 'barbershop humour', evoking a figure which is rather corpulent and uncultivated, or exaggeratedly jovial.

All the above examples are linked by an inadvertent documenting of the diaspora. Here the Jew is a ubiquitous figure, who is easily recognisable and classifiable.

Jews are not depicted exclusively as travellers or tourists, but we see them as a part of a diverse cultural milieu, as documented by further texts which function as a mosaic, confirming the functioning of diaspora and assimilation. In a brief travelogue sketch entitled *Krámy a krámečky* (Shops and Stores) signed by Mrs. A. B. Laudin, we are presented with an episode from travels in East Africa, whereupon the writer is looking for matches and is sent to a small shop: 'Of course, the owner was a Jew. Who else could endure living for nine years in this clime, without holidays, without weekends, entirely alone' (Laudin 1931, p. 5). The very beginning of the sentence 'of course, the owner was a Jew' unequivocally declares that anyone else would have great difficulty in weathering the described situation. At the same time, however, the position in which the owner is depicted as an old-world, obliging businessman, who takes genuine pleasure in the customer's visit, supports the image of the Jew as persevering and adaptable to such an extent that he can endure even in the most arduous conditions. At the same time we find a very interesting fact here: although the Jewish merchant has been in Africa for a relatively long time, he still remains a foreigner, and a foreigner who is sufficiently recognisable that even despite the atypical environment of parched Africa he is still a Jew, who is entirely clearly identifiable as a type for the traveller. He represents a familiar phenomenon, though even were he to figure as an inhabitant in the author's place of birth, he would be no less exotic.

If we are to open up the theme of travel, then with regard to the geographical form of inter-war Czechoslovakia we cannot overlook the issue of Subcarpathian Ruthenia. In many respects, the depiction of this region in *Eva* has a hint of ethnographic fascination with the local environment. Consequently we may read about the form of an orthodox Jew at the Old Market in Košice (Oravcová 1929, p. 9), and another travelogue feature describes with similar fascination an orthodox Jew with curly payots, dressed in a soiled kaftan (Ardenová 1932, p. 20). Incidentally, it is not for nothing that the author of the article *Umělecká mapa Československé republiky* (An Artistic Map of the Czechoslovak Republic) writes: 'The most petrified and picturesque element there is the Jews, and it is no surprise that a large part of the motifs of Subcarpathian Ruthenia recall the prose of the Tharaud brothers and the paintings of Chagall' (V. H. 1937, p. 14).

According to the census of 1930, Jews were the third most numerous ethnic group in Subcarpathian Ruthenia, and after Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians also the third most numerous religious group (Kárník 2002, p. 236). It is here that the Jewish religion traditionally manifested its most distinctive form (Kárník 2003, p. 320), contrasting with the 'Western Jewishness' that was widespread in the Czech lands, which was characterised by a high degree of cultural integration and a more liberal approach to religious questions and rules (Čapková 2005, p. 7).

It is therefore entirely understandable that Jews, with their culture, became an integral component of the texts in *Eva* that focus on Subcarpathian Ruthenia. An important author publishing here, who is linked with this theme, is Ivan Olbracht. In the eighth annual edition he printed the short serial *Pojedete letos na Verchovinu?* (Are You Going to the Highlands This Year?), with the subheading *Rady starého praktika* (Advice of an Old Practitioner). In the text, Olbracht draws attention to various practical matters in relation to travelling, with which one should be well familiarised before setting out to Subcarpathian Ruthenia. First of all this relates to food.

For example, Olbracht recommends that tourists do not offer the locals the food they themselves will eat, 'i.e. "Jewish food"' (Olbracht 1936a, p. 7). From this it can be inferred that the locals kept their distance from the dietary habits of the Jewish community, which was closer to what the tourists ate, and thus created a distance between the two groups.

Olbracht also remarks that Jews are important with regard to the tourist infrastructure:

[...] If you wish to sleep in beds and be assured of comfort, then go to the noble Jew of that village, i.e. to the wealthiest shopkeeper and innkeeper. Here you will still find residues of former luxury, a European room from the times of our grandmothers, a clean tablecloth, silver tableware, and if necessary he will make you a bed with white blankets (Olbracht 1936b, p. 8).

Olbracht's descriptions are mostly of the character of ethnographic familiarity, and in contrast with other authors they demonstrate a distinct sense of detail, which is free of the naivety or romanticism that is in many respects generally typical of the travelogue sketches printed in *Eva*.

Olbracht's reflections on Subcarpathian Ruthenia in *Eva* appear not only in the form described above, thus in the form of specific texts written directly for *Eva*, but also mediated by the view of contributors to the magazine in articles highlighting new books. For example, in 1937 *Eva* refers to the awarding of the Melantrich publisher's prize to three books. One of these was Olbracht's *Golet v údolí* (The Golet in the Valley). The reviewer Marie Majerová appreciates the fact that Olbracht bases his work not only on the study of books, but also that 'he has drawn from the religious fables and superstitions of old orthodox Jews a detailed knowledge of the entire way of life, right down to the phrases and anecdotes of their descendants, who are now gradually assimilating in the West, either in Košice, Moravian Ostrava or in Prague' (M. M. 1937b, p. 17). From Olbracht's book the review draws attention to the emphasis on tradition, rituals and also certain negative characteristics of Jewishness, such as clinging to property and arrogance, and it notes the typical mixture of trades operated by a single person, while at the same time also pointing out the firmly anchored solidarity of the Jewish minority, which does not permit any disruption of the established order. It is these specific examples, however much they may simplify Olbracht's text, that become so characteristic for the reviewer that they can appeal to readers, partially by confirming their preconceptions regarding Jews and orthodox Judaism, and partially through the new contexts which ensue from Olbracht's deep knowledge of the environment.

As a result of its specificity, Subcarpathian Ruthenia evidently generated interest as an exotic location which was at the same time in close geographical proximity, where a strong, culturally different tradition had survived, with manifestations that may have appeared backward and incomprehensible from the perspective of the western part of the republic. This is hinted at also by the aforementioned review in its interpretation of *Události v mikve* (Events in the Mikveh). The author places the religious rules defining the pollution of the mikveh in Olbracht's texts in contrast with hygienic pollution, due to the fact that the entire village bathes in the mikveh (ibid.).

CULTURAL JOURNALISM ON THE THEME OF JEWISHNESS

As a whole, the reviews we find of books dealing with the theme of Jewishness present a number of different and interesting levels of writing on the theme. This is not merely a question of capturing the specificity of orthodox culture or acquainting oneself with the environment of Palestine, as in the case of the review of the book *Zaslíbená země* (Promised Land) by Alois Musil (M. M. 1937a, p. 13). The selected reviews make up a collection of texts which on the one hand illustrate how the theme of Jewishness became a part of literary communication, and on another are in essence an example of a secondary reflection of the Jewish theme (thus a reflection of the reflected).

For example, in 1932 an author using the signature -ov- recalls Egon Hostovský's book *Případ profesora Körnera* (The Case of Professor Körner), which was awarded the Melantrich literary prize. The author writes that Hostovský distinctively established himself as a writer with the book *Ghetto v nich* (The Ghetto in Them), which 'describes the sufferings of the Jewish soul within the assimilation process' (-ov- 1932a, p. 24).

The author in question (-ov-) deals more broadly with the chief Jewish protagonist two issues later:

[...] Thus Hostovský introduced himself in his first remarkable book 'Ghetto v nich', wherein he illustrated the sufferings of the Jewish soul, which cannot rid itself of the feeling of exclusion, because the ghetto is not merely a question of physical exclusion from the whole of another race but also a question of an inner dependency and internal exclusion. I mention this book in particular because professor Körner is also of these people. He is a Jew who has relinquished his dreams of grand achievements, and contents himself with acting as a parasite and feeding his sickness upon the strength of his friends, here chiefly the doctor and associate professor Osvald (-ov- 1932b, p. 24).

The feeling of otherness and exclusion which the reviewer of Hostovský points to is shown to be a common thread also in other titles, and becomes a motif which appeals to reviewers, as we shall demonstrate below.

Reviews of novels with a Jewish theme were also published on books in translation. This relates for example to *The Rose of Saron* by the Tharaud brothers, and *The Island Within* by Ludwig Lewisohn:

[...] The Tharaud brothers have discovered an exotic world in the heart of Europe: Orthodox Judaism, teachers and students of the Talmud, still-functioning ghettos with their medieval charm, remarkable Jewish schools (yeshivas) and even more remarkable Jewish students (bokhers). And this is only their more outward discovery, over which there predominates a further discovery — a poetic one, in which they have succeeded in capturing that eternally same thread, which is never changing, down-trodden and once again revolting, wandering, restless and searching throughout all the ages, the thread of the Jewish psyche. *The Rose of Saron* [...] is above all a personification of assimilating Jewishness, which emerges from the demolished ghettos, both external and internal, which at first timidly, and then enthusiastically embraces the

hitherto unfamiliar Aryan world, either to defraud itself and betray the race and its laws, or to pitch and roll, adrift in the midst of a foreign element, in which there is neither understanding nor a capacity for sharing — and ultimately to return remorsefully to its own scattered, though nevertheless concentrated co-religionists (H. 1932, p. 24).

When the author of the review then writes of the absorbing power of the magic that can be felt in synagogues, he thereby displays his romantic fascination with the mystery, the tradition handed down long ago that can only be understood with great difficulty, which nevertheless continues to exist and when fulfilled becomes remarkably compelling. However, it is precisely this that demonstrates why, at least in the view of the reviewers, the Jewish environment is so attractive. It works with motifs with which the reader is partially familiar, but within them it then opens up a space for the revelation of secrets, and for internal antagonisms which add a new depth to the milieu.

The second of these translated novels, *The Island Within*, is presented by the author signed B. B-ová as a work which in first place is intended to appeal to Jewish readers. In the first part of the book, the author supplements the chapters with essayist introductions, and according to the author of the review, the novel defends all kinds of 'Jewish errors', to the extent that it 'irritates the reader outright, and provokes antipathy' (B. B-ová 1934, p. 28). The second part of the book focuses on the fate of a young American Jew with a Christian wife, who is an ardent feminist. And it is precisely this marriage that serves to illustrate certain problems encountered by the main protagonist, who:

[...] places his science ever more deliberately in the services of the Jewish problem. He feels it above all as a perennial sense of inferiority, as incessant mimicry, which impels all of today's Jews to adapt as far as possible, both internally and externally, to a hostile Christian world, and to stifle all the traditions within themselves to such an extent that they virtually hate their own nation. In his view, this aspiration is a type of Jewish madness, like any flight from reality. It undermines in the Jews any sense of joie de vivre, the wisdom of the national collective, as well as any immediate happiness, and must inevitably end in desperate melancholy, in the best case scenario in a gradual spiritual and physical wilting. Ultimately, having seen through this process, Artur saves himself by returning to his old faith and love of the nation that he previously did not wish to know and which he in fact despised (ibid.).

The problem of uprooting as a 'Jewish national feeling' is shown to apply independently of the home country. Kateřina Čapková, who deals with the issue of Jewish identity in Bohemia, writes that the opening up of conditions for Jewish emancipation also provided a space for assimilation, which inevitably led also to a dilution of previously fixedly established characteristics defining Jewishness (Čapková 2005, pp. 5–6). With the progressive rejection of orthodoxy and the advent of the influence of Zionism or the concept of Czech Jewishness, which caused deep rifts within the Jewish minority, it was furthermore necessary to seek a new expression of faith. Jewish religious manifestations within the environment of the Czechoslovak First

Republic were concentrated mostly around regular meetings in synagogues, with the remainder left aside. And the relationship of the new state towards the teaching of religion went hand in hand with a decline in traditional Jewish scholarship (see Kružíková 2003, pp. 98–105). Czech Jews ranked among the most secularised in Europe, which also had the consequence of leading to a situation wherein some began to seek to retrieve their Jewish identity.¹³ This fact, which, as documented by the above-mentioned texts, was not only a problem for Czech Jews, or more precisely the grasping of this fact, became such an intense issue that it was interpreted by *Eva*, in the position of an independent observer, and made accessible to a wider readership.

For our discourse, the aforementioned theme of the search for one's own identity serves as a bridge to the theme of updating works of literature for a contemporary audience, which is opened up in a remarkable manner by the space of theatre productions. As the first example we can present a review of a production of Josef Jiří Kolár's patriotic play *Pražský žid* (The Prague Jew). The reviewer writes that Kolár's play takes on a new topicality precisely due to the revival of the theme of 'one of the fundamental Jewish problems' (-vč- 1933a, p. 24). The author comments on the main motifs of the play, the rabbi's attempt to strike a balance between tradition and love for his country,¹⁴ which the reviewer nevertheless sees within a very contemporary context that lends them a new power.

Another interesting example is provided by the reviews of a production of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* in the National Theatre in 1931, and the same play in D35 in 1934, both of which were acclaimed in *Eva*. The reviewer of Karel Dostál's production in the National Theatre interprets Shakespeare's play as a 'drama of racial hatred and a tragedy of miserliness, interwoven with elements of love stories and placed within a framework of a crazed Venetian carnival,' in which the dominant element of the play has always been 'the hatred of the Jew towards the Christian, culminating in the demand for a fine of one pound of the debtor's flesh,' although according to the reviewer this is incomprehensible today. The main protagonist of the Jew Shylock is characterised by the 'Satan of the tribal pride of racial hatred and untamed love of money' (-vč- 1931, p. 22), and as a result the reviewer disagrees with the production, which downplays the characteristics of the main protagonist in order to make it more comprehensible for a contemporary audience. It therefore appears that the author of the review is above all hankering for a pronounced typification, and sees the intelligibility of Shakespeare's character as consisting in the stereotype of the grasping, hate-filled Jew, which he nonetheless does not explain by means of the polarity of the Jew and the Christian. Although the reviewer approves of the partial updating, this is only to the degree that this distinctive stereotype remains the essence of the chief protagonist.

13 As an example of such an approach, Čapková (2005, p. 19) presents the case of Franz Kafka, although we could also mention others, for example his source of inspiration Jiří Langer.

14 The rabbi, who 'can deny himself even the tribal thirst for money.' Again a typical schema comes to the forefront, in which the author of the review regards the quality of Jewishness as absolutely integral (*ibid.*).

Another problem of updating the play is illustrated by a review of the production in D35, which again demonstrates the puzzlement of the viewer who when watching the production is unable to decipher whether it is intended as a parody or the use of period motifs:

[...] All the topicality is simply interpreted, the Duke of Venice is Hitler, this figure is this, and that one is that, and now they play out simplified narratives entirely without humour. Suddenly Jews are persecuted and girls are betrothed. Everything that formed the character of the protagonists has been dissolved. None of them, with the exception of simplistic clichés such as the Duke of Venice or Shylock, has any personal qualities, they have nothing that could stimulate the interest and in which they differ from the others. As a result, the roles in which the characters are spokespersons for womanhood or Jewishness are the most tolerable (O. S. 1934b, p. 28).

Essentially, the author ultimately suggests that it is precisely the presentation of Jewishness or womanhood that is far more comprehensible, constant and in its way typified to the extent that the entire audience will understand it.

Of course, this production did not represent either the first or the last attempt to respond artistically to the current situation in Germany. One year earlier, in 1933, the author using the signature -vč- reviewed Olga Scheinflugová's play *Pan Grünfeld a strašidla* (Mr. Grünfeld and the Phantoms), with which he expressed considerable dissatisfaction. In his view, the play was constructed in such a manner as to appeal 'primarily to those who frequent the cafés and confectioneries of Wenceslas Square and Vodičkova street,' and thus does not make any more substantial demands of the audience. In its way the work is simple, and functions partially as a travesty of certain classic blueprints, which is all the more interesting because these blueprints, due to the topicality of the racial problem, now suddenly carry far greater weight:

[...] The Jewess is forced to marry against her will to a paralytic and indebted aristocrat. She pays off his debts with her dowry, thus enabling him to travel the world, and freeing herself of marital cohabitation with him. Her children are the fruit of her love affair with her father's Jewish accountant. However, the children live under the illusion that their father is the Count [...] (-vč- 1933b, p. 24).

The review also accuses the author of the play of making use of Jewish sayings, which function in the play more or less as clichés to amuse the audience and have no actual particular role, either in characterising the protagonists or the setting, 'although the audience is willing to laugh at them' (ibid.). It thus transpires that what was intended to best portray the Jewish environment functions only as a supplementary cliché, which is entertaining but vacuous, even if comprehensible to the audience.

A partially similar approach is found by the author signed O. S. in a play by the Polish author Antoni Słonimski, entitled *Čistá rasa* (Pure Race).¹⁵ He sees the main theme as consisting in the racial issue, which emerges from the perspective of Jewish

¹⁵ It is noteworthy that in this case the reviewer does not draw attention to the playwright's Jewish origin.

ethnicity at the moment when the Nazi, a 'gallant Jew-beater, blabbermouth and Hitlerite' discovers that his father is an Orthodox Jew. The author ultimately finds the play to be remarkable primarily for its wit and response to events in Germany (O. S. 1934a, p. 30).

Reviews of new books with a Jewish theme primarily reflect the current development of the problem of the search for a Jewish identity, which in fictional presentation transcend the boundaries of the Jewish community and appeal to readers through what in their own way is a kind of opening up of the romantically mysterious contexts of orthodox customs, which contrast with the problems of the modern world and face us with the dilemmas and feelings of uprootedness of the Jewish characters. On the other hand, in the reception given to these dramas we can see the need of the reviewers to retain a stereotypical portrayal of Jewish protagonists, as if the abolition of stereotyping elements, in an endeavour to update the work, or conversely the hyperbolic, exaggerated presentation of such stereotypes would, in the view of the reviewers, render the work incomprehensible.

REACTIONS TO CURRENT EVENTS

Indeed, the German context permeates *Eva* on several levels, which document how the issue of the oppression of the Jews was presented socially. The most serious form is represented by articles of a more or less news reporting or polemical character. For example, in September 1933, Míla Vegrová wrote an article with reportage elements on the conference of the International Council of Women, in which she commented that it was necessary to address the issue of Jewish and German refugees (Vegrová 1933, p. 24). In October the same year an article was published by the British feminist Sylvia Pankhurst entitled *Vraťte se ke svým kuchyním!* (Get Back in Your Kitchens!), where she warns of the danger of fascism in Italy and Germany, which was stripping people of their freedom and attacking not only Jews and Freemasons, but also attempting to threaten women's independence, or to deprive women of the freedoms they had won (Pankhurst 1933, p. 23).

The current situation in Germany is also reflected in a letter sent from Geneva by a member of the Women's League for Peace and Freedom. The author points to the numbers of people who were killed during the first year of Hitler's rule, and places the same emphasis on personal freedom as the previously mentioned article by Sylvia Pankhurst (Schustlerová 1934, p. 31).

On the other hand, other texts such as the report of the Women's League for Peace and Freedom from 1936 recall the work already performed for emigrants by various associations, including Jewish ones (H. V. 1936, p. 25). In these articles, care for Jews is most certainly not a primary theme, since the main emphasis consists in the defence of oppressed people in general, and assistance for them. Jews become merely one of the groups who are victims of oppression, even if this fact may take on noteworthy broader consequences. Let us recall the journalistic article by Emil Synek entitled *Jarmila Novotná u Maxe Reinhardta* (Jarmila Novotná at Max Reinhardt's) from 1933, in which Synek wrote:

[...] Originality, seemingly rendered obsolete over the course of the centuries, was brought by the racial prejudice of Hitler's fist, which struck not only upon the backs of brave warriors, but also ruffled the curly sidelocks of the Jewish comics Siegfried Arn and Felix Bressart, who have not had the opportunity to voice their political opinions publicly to this day except in the cafés on the Kurfürstendamm. We are now living through such delightful times in which playwrights are stripped naked and thrown in the Elbe, as took place in Dresden (God forbid that by reporting this I might frighten František Götz, who lives in dangerous proximity to the Vltava, and indeed he must envy the good location of Dr. Langer, whose residence in the Vinohrady district is higher up and further from the water), and even an excellent critic such as Alfred Kerr has fled abroad out of fear of the iron rods of the shock troops. In a time of these brutal atrocities, of which Germany will assuredly be ashamed for years to come, one cannot even be surprised if the victims of the Nazi terror should include in their number also Max Reinhardt (Synek 1933, p. 24).

Although the article mentions 'atrocities' and 'terror', at the same time it makes light of the persecution of the Jews and finds room for wisecracks, based not only on the selected linguistic media ('ruffled the curly sidelocks'), but also in the actual circumstances of the life of Czech Jewish intellectuals.

A somewhat more serious tone was struck six months later when returning to this theme by the short story feature *Americana*, the narrator of which by chance meets two Americans, a man and a woman, in Prague. The conversation also turns to the situation in Germany: 'They didn't want to believe that there were concentration camps and that they were treating the Jews so terribly, but instead countered that Hitler was himself a Jew, and they couldn't be persuaded, arguing that apparently pictures of his father and grandfather had been printed in American newspapers and that they were all Jews' (H. K. 1934, p. 24). It is difficult for us to judge the extent to which the article is realistic and to what extent fictional, but we nonetheless see an image of the awareness of foreign affairs as a reflection of how truly informed an educated woman was, and also how the issue of the Nazi terror once again receives a downplayed interpretation, this time in the form of hearsay. If the claim that Hitler was a Jew were true, the entire situation would thereby take on a new semantic framework: as something that, in its horror and monstrosity, defies comprehension (something against which the brain might rebel by downplaying), as a situation in which a Jew persecutes Jews, thus rendering it an exclusively Jewish matter. According to the established depictions of amoral behaviour, such deeds evoking horror could indeed pertain to Jews. A space would then be created for distance — simply speaking: let the Jews sort it out among themselves.

Let us further document the relationship of *Eva* to the Jewish question during the course of the 1930s with two more articles. The first is a text by Václav Rytina entitled *Klepy o francouzské ženě* (Rumours about a French Woman) from May 1933. In the French woman the author finds an honourable and abstemious lady, whose conduct is based on that of the entire French nation. The author praises this national character for its approach to Jewish refugees (Rytina 1933, p. 18), which in this case becomes one of the measures of human qualities.

A similar idea in its way, thus a study of a woman of another nation, is developed by the serial *Cesta za evropskými ženami* (A Journey in Search of European Women) by

the author Ivan Bjarn. This serial is devoted for example to a Danish lady, an Englishwoman, a Dutchwoman and a Lithuanian lady, whom he always reprimands slightly for something, but usually also admires, attempting to capture their character and define them in opposition to any applicable stereotype, while occasionally also incorporating the contexts of the political situation into his reflections.

The episode devoted to a German woman is a fictional letter to a young lady named Gretchen. It begins more or less with small talk such as discussions about food, before reproaching the young lady that she did not speak of love during a meeting with him, and that flirtation is entirely alien to her. This imaginary woman enters into a dialogue with him, and it transpires that she fully believes in the greatness of Germany and agrees with the notion of German superiority. Her sense of obligation and absolute devotion to Hitler, which the young lady in question feels to be a part of her honour, is then thrown into contrast by the narrator, when he asks her the question that we use as the title of this study:

'Tell me, Gretchen, wouldn't you like to be a Jewess — so that a man might steal out of love for you? Nobody has ever spoken to you tenderly — perhaps only your mother, when you were small. But you told me that you don't remember it' (Bjarne 1937, p. 8).

At this moment a number of contexts come to the forefront. First of all, the diminutive use of the female protagonist's name Gretchen stands in sharp opposition to the woman's hardness, and suddenly places her in a different light, as a defenceless woman. A second interesting moment in the above scene is the use of the example of the Jewess, thus a woman of a nation despised and liquidated by the Germans, which becomes a device for revealing the emptiness of the woman's heart. The motif of the Jewess in the position used by the author also serves as a metaphor of romantic love. The Jewess here is an admirable woman, worthy of courtship, for whom a man is prepared to do almost anything out of love. At the same time, with the phrase 'steal out of love', thus an act which transgresses social norms, the Jewess finds herself beyond the boundaries of regular society, thus in a notional space where different rules apply.

If at the end we return to the quote of our title with an awareness of the preceding analysis of the other texts presenting Jewish contexts, we find that this provides a relatively apposite summation of the way in which *Eva* deals with the theme of Jewishness. On one hand there remains the romantic image of the Jewess, a little exotic and mysterious, while on the other there is the ubiquitous topicality and endeavour to present a realistic view of events primarily in Germany, which are threatening to take on greater dimensions.

CONCLUSION

The portrayal of Jews and Jewishness in *Eva* is a multi-layered set of contexts, emerging as seemingly inadvertent references, frequently based on established typifications which nevertheless complement the reality of the depicted inter-war world.

If we regard the collection of texts opening up the theme of Jewishness that *Eva* presents to its readers, we have before us a blend of various themes which document the pluralised form of the established type of the Jew. Here we find the romanticising form of the Jew as a figure with mystery, a person from the edge of society, a peculiar, perhaps dangerous, or by contrast weak or oppressed individual. Another type presents a man who is extraordinarily adaptable and capable of orienting himself within any kind of conditions, but who on the other hand is often unscrupulous, a man for whom property and profit are an absolute priority. This links together also with the type of the Jew as money lender and miser, who on a broader scale takes on the form of a generally amoral individual. The individual schematic depictions frequently border on a comical presentation of the character. However, this view, which renders the figure of the Jew intelligible within the broadest international context, at the same time clashes with the interest in Jewish culture as a culture of tradition and firmly established rules. Such a culture is very well represented in many respects by Subcarpathian Ruthenia and its orthodox population, which by its specific nature creates a framework of a kind of exotica within close geographical proximity.

Throughout all of this, the reader of *Eva* remains a modern and educated woman, for whom the theme of Jewishness also becomes an issue of the search for a Jewish identity by the Jews themselves, a question of awareness of the Jewish problem of uprooting, which subsequently encounters the contexts of racial and nationalist politics.

The overall image which we find on the pages of *Eva* is not only an image of the writing of the magazine editors themselves, as well as their collaborating circle of authors, but at the same time also an image of how the themes of the Jewish minority itself penetrate beyond its limits and become comprehensible to the wider society.

Although in *Eva* the image remains partially based on a stereotypical view, which is intertwined with an interest in Jewish orthodox culture as an exotic, thus foreign culture, it nevertheless understands Jews as an integrated component of modern international society.

Despite the fact that there are only few explicit statements in the texts that could document concrete positions of the authors in relation to the Jewish issue, a large part of the context remains clear. For example, we can infer from the context of the reports that the modern and educated woman does not advocate racial oppression, and on the contrary will focus on helping refugees because she empathises strongly with human rights and issues of emancipation.

In the introduction to our text we outlined the fact that the Czechoslovak Jewish community is a minority which is difficult to define, distinguished by a pluralism of identity and manifestations. Its representation in *Eva* is similarly diverse, although this concerns a mostly implicit image, since it usually reflects the self-evident reality of First Republic society, for which readers required no explanation.

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