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# Ahasuerus at the Easel

## Jewish Art and Jewish Artists in Central and Eastern European Modernism at the Turn of the Last Century


PL ACADEMIC RESEARCH

# I. Introduction

## The Narrow Horizon

Rooted in German Jewry and undoubtedly most well-known for his extensive monograph on Sigmund Freud published in 1988, the American historian Peter Gay has replied to the widespread conception of the exceptionally large Jewish participation in Modernist art, literature and ground-breaking sciences of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Already ten years before his biography, Gay pointed in his study *Freud, Jews and Other Germans* at how modernity itself, within German anti-Semitic imagination at the beginning of the 20th century, was conceived as an ever growing threat against the arts, literature, philosophy, psychology, and the social sciences in explicit regard to the Jews and their supposed power. It became almost a ritual incantation to evoke the magic names of Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, and Albert Einstein when paying attention to the Jews' disproportional share and dramatic influence. Less sparkling names like the artist Max Liebermann, the director Max Reinhardt, or the philosopher and sociologist Georg Simmel only rounded off the picture of the Jews as being great innovators – and revolutionaries. Regarded as the emblem of modern man the Jews were considered the archetypal Modernists in art as well.[1]

However, according to Gay, this was not a correct way to interpret Modernism, since this gave the Jews more publicity than they actually deserved, having its good points and bad points. There were many Modernists not being Jews as well as there were many Jews not being Modernists. Many Jews were indeed Modernists, but not because they were Jewish. Similarly, according to Gay, the conception of the Jews' rootlessness is in many respects a myth as well as their supposed hunger for innovations and experiments, a myth partly cherished by the Jews themselves. Indeed, there were Jews working within, for instance, the German Avant-Garde, but they stayed in the back troops as well as in the forefront of the battle. Far less of the cultural revolutionaries and far more of the cultural conservatives were Jewish than the historians have been inclined to admit. The German Jews, for instance, were moving along with the cultural mainstream as much as they were allowed

1 Gay 1978, p. 21.

to do this. There was hardly nothing in the Jewish cultural heritage as there was hardly nothing either in their social situation which automatically would have transformed them into revolutionaries or Modernists by definition, Gay claims quoting Max Liebermann: "I am only a painter and what has painting to do with being a Jew?" It is true, Peter Gay pays proper attention to the process of Jewish assimilation or integration[2] during the 19th century and claims that this – at least in Germany – seemed logical and permanent round about the turn of the century, since this "emancipation" seemed to be part of the general human emancipation, that is, included in the general process of modernization focused on more freedom and more options. But then he does not link this process to how he himself in broad outlines defines Modernism as a highly complex phenomenon effective in all fields of human activity. According to Gay, we may summarize the dominating interpretation by defining Modernism as a confluence of anti-rational, experimental occurrences linked to alienation and the feeling of being an outsider. Indeed, but wasn't the process of Jewish assimilation itself defined by precisely this feeling of alienation and being existentially an outsider, at the same time this experience fostered by anti-Semitism guaranteed that the assimilated and assimilating Jews didn't feel being tied to academic rules and regulations. But free to try other, more explicitly "modern" solutions? Furthermore, cannot the Jewish heritage as such be defined as "anti-rational" in the sense of being outside the Western conception of the world characterized by Cartesian rationality?

Peter Gay's failure to problemize the Jewish process of integration and its specific characteristics in relation to Modernism or modernity seems to be – at least indirectly – caused by a circumstance that he shares with most of his colleagues and which may have contributed to his animosity against a broader horizon. Indeed, he may have his points, but like so many other historians he seems to be guilty of a cardinal error when not paying attention to other cultural contexts than only the Western European one. For instance, only the assimilation as such was much younger in Central and Eastern Europe than in the West, at the same time large parts of explicitly East Jewish culture stayed more or less intact well into the 20th century and at the same time as surprisingly many Jewish artists and other intellectuals participated actively in the process of modernization, artists

2 In this book both of these concept are being used interwoven into each other. David Sorkin, for instance, wants to use the concept of "integration" or "culturalization" instead of "assimilation". Sorkin 1990, p. 17–33. Most of the researchers referred to in this study prefer the latter concept.

who – moreover – to a great extent left their mark on Western European Modernist currents as well.

Among others, in his large survey *Centraleuropas historia* published in 1997[3] about the history of Central Europe, the Swedish historian Kristian Gerner has explicitly pointed at both the structural, basically anti-Semitic process of expulsion and at the same time at his own blindness as historian when it comes to the Jewish participation in those cultural, social, and political mechanisms once shaping Central and Eastern Europe. Historiography of the 19th century permeated by anti-Semitism and focused on the different peoples defined by their territorial and linguistic belongings excluded the Jews as an integrated part of European civilization and culture. The Holocaust did not only almost completely erase the Yiddish culture of Central and Eastern Europe, Stalin's anti-Semitic politics after the war completed the destruction. Along with the Jewish environments and the Jewish names the Jews altogether disappeared from European imagination in other capacities than only victims of anti-Semitism. According to Gerner, where Jews are mentioned in the surveys, they constitute either a differing minority within the majority cultures or their history is described as an isolated phenomenon with only superficial points of contact with society as a whole: in other words, the discrimination or the blindness is not an expression of personal prejudices, but a result of specific processes of socialization within the research disciplines in question. The blindness is purely structural.

## State of the Art and Methodological Reflections

Trying to avoid the pincers observed by Gerner and at the same time trying to establish at least a bit of respect for the Jewish participation in the different cultural contexts we have to pay in regard to, among other things, those statistical calculations reporting that only in Vienna, for instance, during the decades around the turn of the last century the number of Jewish artists, writers, and journalists was proportionally three times higher than the number of non-Jewish intellectuals working within the same fields, at the same time we must notice the fact that, for instance, more than 500 artists of Jewish birth were active only in the Polish art life during the interwar period.[4]

3 Gerner 1997.

4 See for instance Jacobs 1891, p. 29 and Brakoniecki 1987, p. 100–114.

Without any ambitions whatsoever to cover this vast field, mainly focusing on the visual arts in the Habsburg and the Russian empires respectively during the period between around the 1880's and the 1920's, *Ahasuerus at the Easel* aims – in its particular way – at contributing to the efforts to lessen precisely that blindness at which Gerner points by trying to shed light upon and at the same time analytically discuss the Jewish participation in the historical and cultural formations of the regions respectively. In relation to Gerner's striking observation it is hardly surprising either how meagre the available literature is in fact. With the exception of, for instance, Fredric Bedoire's *The Jewish Contribution to Modern Architecture* originally published in Swedish in 1998 about the emergence of modern architecture in Europe during 1830–1930, Susan Tumarkin-Goodman's survey *The Emergence of Jewish Artists in Nineteenth-Century Europe* published in 2001 and her *Russian Jewish Artists in a Century of Changes* (1995), Catherine Soussloff's *Jewish Identity in Modern Art History* (1999), Avram Kampf's *Jewish Experience in the Art of the Twentieth Century* published in 1984, and perhaps also Kalman P. Bland's *The Artless Jew* published in 2000 together with stray studies dealing with Jewish Modernists in Paris during the 1910's and the 1920's beside surprisingly few more qualified studies and monographs, neither national nor international research have paid any special attention to the importance of Central or Eastern European Jewry in regard to Modernist art in general. This seems to be the case even though – when it comes to Hungary – William O. McCagg published his widely discussed *Jewish Nobles and Geniuses in Modern Hungary* already more than forty years ago dealing with the massive Jewish participation in Hungarian political, economical, and cultural life round about the turn of the last century, a study which ought to have had a special relevance also when studying the region's visual arts, but which apparently has not left any specifically permanent traces in the historiographical discourse regarding the visual arts of the regions respectively. In 2008, the Polish society for Oriental art, Polskie Stowarzyszenie Sztuki Orientum, arranged a big conference in Kazimierz in Kraków resulting two years later in a publication edited by Jerzy Malinowski, Renata Piatkowska, and Tamara Sztyma-Knasiecka and entitled *Jewish Artists and Central-Eastern Europe: Art Centers – Identity – Heritage from the 19th Century to the Second World War* despite the fact that most of the contributions were only about Polish Jewry and Polish Jewish artists. In the case of Russia there is a rare exception: Mirjam Rajner's *Russian Jewish Art, 1862–1912* (1990).

And precisely this – the flagrant exclusion of the Jewish contributions taken together in the region – seems to be brought to the fore even more often than on the national level respectively at that precise moment when the art historians

focus explicitly on Central and Eastern Europe as a whole. Significant enough is, for instance, the ambitious catalog *central european avant-gardes: exchange and transformation, 1910–1930* edited by Timothy O. Benson and published in connection with a big exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 2002, an exhibition totally concentrating on the different vanguard currents of the region during the first decades of the 20th century which also was presented later in both Munich and Hamburg. Of the total of 440 pages of text "Jewish art" is discussed only on nine pages, at the same time Steven A. Mansbach, for instance, refers to the Jewish contributions on only a few dozen of totally more than 300 pages in his magisterial *Modern Art in Eastern Europe: From the Baltic to the Balkans* published in 1999; only one and a half page is dedicated to the Polish, explicitly Jewish artists' group Jung Jidysz, which is, moreover, connected directly to German Expressionism. My own research too has touched upon these questions as they are discussed in my previous studies such as *Dada East* (2006), originally published in Swedish in 2005, and *The Sacred Cause* (2013), orginally published in Swedish in 2009, with thoughts on Central and Eastern European Modernism. Published only in Swedish in 2010 the study *Det andra könet i öst* was a kind of a follow-up focusing on the surprising number of women artists contributing to Central and Eastern European Modernism, precisely that part of European art and culture that our textbooks have "forgotten". The question was put like this: how significant was the fact that so many of these artists were born and grew up in Eastern European Jewish culture? What part did the continuous process of the Jewish integration play in this context? Additionally, special attention was also paid to Susan A. Handelman's epoch-making *The Slayers of Moses* published in 1982 as well as Shari Benstock's equally pioneering essay "Expatriate Modernism: Writing on the Cultural Rim" published in 1989 in the study *Women's Writing in Exile* edited by Mary Lynn Broe and Angela Ingram. The interdisciplinary, methodologically transgressing approach of these studies has also inspired this book.

In his essay "Methodology and Meaning in the Modern Art of Eastern Europe" published in 2002,[5] Steven A. Mansbach has indirectly noticed an interesting methodological problem when it comes to the relationship between Western European Modernism and contemporary Modernist discourses in East-Central Europe round about the turn of the last century, a problem also discussed in both *The Sacred Cause* and *Det andra könet i öst*. Mansbach's point of departure is the more or less unambiguous fact that most scholars in the West have presented

5 S. A. Mansbach.: "Methodology and Meaning in the Modern Art of Eastern Europe". Benson 2002, p. 289–306.

the European 20th century culture as almost totally and exclusively shaped and defined in terms of a successive progression of styles in Paris, Munich, New York, or Berlin, and that this has been made possible by art historians simply asserting the formalist style as the normative standard without observing other aspects than what Mansbach calls "the universality of Modernism". This is a concept revealing the "imperialist" grip of Western ethnocentrism on other parts of Europe, parts that are labeled as peripheral. By looking at classical modern art from a broader perspective than by defining its development only as a progressive series of aesthetically autonomous styles and at the same time by adopting a more modulated or nuanced method one is, according to Mansbach, not only able to better understand those unique forms of creativity which took place on Europe's periphery but also able to reclaim the rich foundation of modern art in general. And doesn't Mansbach also claim that, undeniably, much of Modernism was born on the Eastern margins of industrial Europe, Dadaism in royal Romania, Constructivism in the tsarist empire, and uniquely creative forms of Cubo-Expressionism in Habsburg Bohemia? The prevailing paradigm must simply be set aside; those few exceptions in the Western discourse when it comes to the demand for stylistic coherence, such as Picasso or Picabia, cannot justify the seemingly unshakable attachments of hitherto normative historiography. If, for instance, the classical Avant-Garde in the West recommended and fought for aesthetic uniformity aimed to transcend national borders and historical references, the Avant-Gardists of the East, on the contrary, embraced the multiplicity of progressive styles at the same time they, so to speak, gave shelter to exactly those literary, political, and historical connotations which their colleagues in France, Germany, and elsewhere in the West despised and repudiated as obsolete, non-universalistic, and out of date.

Simultaneously, Mansbach maintains, and this is worth while repeating once again,[6] the artists in the East chose "national individuality" instead of universality and enrolled more or less in full force in the national fight, whose fighters, still according to Manbach, urged the artists to redefine visually and verbally the neo-Romantic references into Modernist idioms. The references to historical myths, national heroes and stories, legends and artistic idioms passed down among the peasants became as common in the Eastern European Avant-Garde as they were uncommon in progressive Western European art. Consequently, the artists of the East also moved freely between and among Constructivist abstractions and folkloric patterns or between Cubist still lifes and glorified figures of national mythology. By this "reconciliation" of literary references and pure abstractions, between

6 Sandqvist 2013.

narration and non-figurative styles, Eastern European art once and for all departed from that "absolutist" purity which was embraced and urged in the West. Using the possibilities offered by Cubism, Futurism, and Constructivism as well as other abstract idioms alluding to indigenous themes and contemporary topical issues the artists were, according to Mansbach, able to create a considerable synthesis of local and universal, traditional and progressive. According to the Hungarian art historian Katalin Keserü, exactly this unification of the functional genres, grand art and minor arts, or fine art and applied arts, was the most characteristic phenomenon of Central European art of the turn of the century, a fact which can be applied to how literature inspired visual arts as well.[7] The artists had a "double vision", both inwards and outwards simultaneously, and exactly this is one of the reasons for our need of new ways and new methods of interpretation, Mansbach says, however, at the same time as he seems to play about with exactly those dichotomies he himself claims to be fighting against. In this context, Kazimir Malevich seems to be a first-rate example of the simultaneous presence of different artistic idioms within one and the same art production, because he was only following regional conventions by pursuing both Suprematism and figuration; and his constant shifts between abstraction and figuration, often criticized in the West as a "retreat", should therefore not be judged by Western expectations of consistency. Like legions of his contemporaries in Central and Eastern Europe, Malevich saw no contradiction in taking seriously primitive or native folk imagery and geometrical abstraction, as each addressed essential issues for which style served less as an index of universal meaning than it functioned as a strategy to signify locally and communicate internationally. In principle this seems to be the case in the entire region, especially when it comes to, for instance, the Czech Modernists and Avant-Gardists. Czech Cubism or rather Cubo-Expressionism has also been described as an amalgamation of Bohemian Baroque, El Greco's Spanish Baroque, Alfons Mucha's Art Nouveau, French Cubism, Edvard Munch's Expressionism, the German Die Brücke, Italian Futurism, French Symbolism, and indigenous folkloric Naivism.[8] The stylistic common features or affinities between art in the West and that of Central and Eastern Europe must therefore, according to Mansbach, not lead one to an assumption of parallel meaning or analogous reception. Moreover, these affinities should therefore not function as a methodological basis for understanding the latter. We need other kinds of methods, other kinds of analytic tools,

7 Katalin Keserü: "Changing Values in Central European Art at the Turn of the Century". Baranowa 2001, p. 25–28.

8 See for instance Vlcek 1990, p. 28–32.

and first of all more knowledge of the "local" historical and political conditions and prerequisites.

*The Sacred Cause* raised the question whether the patchwork quilt of nationalisms and imaginations concerning the nation and national belonging, including Jewish Zionism, whether this patchwork of definitions, cultural, linguistic, and ethnic identities didn't prevent that the dominating artistic attitude in Central and Eastern Europe at the turn of the last century became what might be called a kind of syntheticism or "integralism", from a Western point of view defined as eclecticism, where the competing ethnonationalisms respectively shaped the most important condition. Here the additional question was also raised whether this basic unit corresponded with the internal contradictions and paradoxes of the cultural field as a whole, a fact expressed by, for instance, what Timothy O. Benson defines as "the melancholic ambivalence" of most of the intellectuals in Central Europe by this time.[9]

The ethnonationalistic, both nostalgic and at the same time Messianic attitude towards the past was expressed as a more or less general distrust of progression and also modernity as such, at the same time as, for instance, the Polish Avant-Gardists doing everything possible to bridge the gap in regard to the modern West encountered the contemporary Western European Avant-Garde currents characterized by precisely the revolt against the past. The Polish art historian Andrzej Turowski[10] has pointed at the biography of the Central and Eastern European artist as a disintegrated one transcending more or less every available category regarding both space and time. Here Turowski refers to artists such as Malevich, Władysław Strzemiński, Katarzyna Kobro, János Mattis-Teutsch, and Ljubomir Micić. Malevich was born in Kiev in Ukraine into a Polish family from Lithuania who had moved to Polesia, an area ethnically belonging to Belarus but nevertheless part of the Polish cultural sphere; according to Turowski, Malevich was also of Jewish descent.[11] Strzemiński in turn was born in Minsk in Belarus, trained to become an officer in the Russian army and working as a Russian artist in Smolensk, while Kobro was the daughter of German immigrants in Riga who moved to Moscow; both Strzemiński and Kobro became eventually prominent figures of Polish Constructivism in spite of the fact that none of them reached a proper command of Polish. Being one of the leading figures of the Activist group in Budapest

9 Benson 2002, p. 50.

10 Andrzej Turowski: "The Phenomenon of Blurring". Benson 2002, p. 362–373.

11 Turowski 2004, p. 35 and Turowski 2010, but in a letter to Tom Sandqvist he is unclear regarding Malevich and his possible Jewish lineage. Turowski 2012, unpubl.

but also one of the most well-known artists in the Romanian Avant-Garde circles in Bucharest, Mattis-Teutsch was born in Hungarian Transylvania, speaking and writing in both German, Hungarian and Romanian, educated in Munich and active in Berlin, while Micić was a Croatian born in Zagreb who became the leading Avant-Gardist in Serbian Belgrade. At the same time there were artists such as Marc Chagall, Victor Brauner, Jankiel Adler, El Lissitzky, and Henryk Berlewi having supreme command of Yiddish and several other languages who were born and grew up in today's Ukraine, Romania, Belarus, Lithuania, and Poland respectively. The examples are legion when it comes to literary transgressions and simultaneous national and cultural identities within a gigantic patchwork of paradoxes and deviations in all possible directions.

The contradictions were not conceived as binary oppositions, but more as a kind of diagonal cuts or parallelisms making it difficult, for instance, to separate conservative artistic or political attitudes from Modernist idioms at the same time one could embrace both social progression and disastrous potentialities. Simultaneously the towns and cities along the chain from Gdansk or Danzig in the North to Trieste in the South were characterized by their exceptionally miscellaneous multilingualism, their religious multiplicity together with their national and cultural variations in a way corresponding to their literary topographies defined by their winding alleys and suddenly appearing small squares or broad boulevards at which modern "skyscrapers" grew up like mushrooms at the same time as big industrial plants and endless tenements were scattered around the old downtowns. These cities or towns became also a kind of points of focus for both those who embraced urbanization and urban building in their capacities of being a promising signs of modern utopia as well as for those who considered urbanization as the most impending threat against traditional values and the feeling of belonging to an ethnically homogeneous peasant society. Thus, the Central European Avant-Garde as well was characterized by its nihilistic attitude, an attitude not unambiguously referring to some specific political opinion but freely combining Expressionist pacifism and Dadaist anarchism with Futurist and Constructivist critique of civilization. The Central European topography was a topography of diffusion and dispersion.

Seven years after Mansbach having launched his credo regarding the importance of approaching Central and Eastern European art and especially its disloyal attitude towards the demands for stylistic coherence in a new way he was accompanied by the Polish art historian Piotr Piotrowski publishing his already classical essay "How to Write A History of Central East-European Art?" Like Mansbach Piotrowski as well emphasizes the difficulties of Western historiography to

understand the multiple meanings of the arts in the Central and Eastern European countries, in which the different artistic idioms emerged within the local networks conditioned by particular "ideological pieces of state apparatus", a concept borrowed from Louis Althusser, instead of being conditioned by an universal ideological perspective like in the West. The classical concept of ideology did not play any prominent role in the local political contexts and therefore Eastern European art history must be considered much more heterogeneous than the Western one. Eastern European art has in fact never reflected the successive "chronological" order of styles so common in the West, instead the history of Modernism defined in terms of styles has always been translated into heterogeneous mutations both at the beginning of the 20th century and later. If the mainstreams of Western art have always emerged with references to canonical works of some kind, then the history of Central and Eastern European art must repudiate this canonical system of values, since it does not reflect the real historically anchored local values and meanings. Within analytical practice it simply seems to be more fruitful to emphasize the tensions between the local experiences and the canonical system than to mechanically take for granted those canonical frameworks found in the textbooks and thus enlist Eastern European art in the Western canon instead of trying to deconstruct both of them. In other words, we should focus on how this canon was used and exploited instead of pointing at the influences only. At the same time one must observe the fact that the arts in the countries concerned showed a much more obvious heterogeneity when it comes to the narrative dimensions too than the arts in the West: the multiplicity of different stories is typical of Central and Eastern European art characterized by its pluralistic and polycentric idioms.

## Assimilation and Integration

As mentioned in both *The Sacred Cause* and *Det andra könet i öst* the Jews had already at the end of the 19th century become an important part of the "Bildungsbürgertum" in most of the countries concerned playing a decisive role within this particular social class in promoting different modern movements and currents. In the background there were regularly Jewish intellectual and economical resources. The level of education among the Central and Eastern European Jews was also definitely higher than the average, which also must have been one of the most prominent social and "technical" preconditions of precisely that intellectual energy which marked the sociological framework for the process of assimilation and modernization getting more and more rapid towards the end of the century.

The assimilation – or rather, as mentioned, the integration as such – signified a kind of an endless and "forced" quotation of the surrounding model, according to the Hungarian social historian Victor Karády,[12] a complex creative act already on the individual level. The feeling of existential homelessness too must have contributed to the intellectual curiosity giving birth to new art and literature – born in Kalischt in Bohemia, today's Kaliště, spending his childhood in Iglau in Moravia, today's Jihlava, the composer Gustav Mahler declared himself a threefold homeless: a Bohemian in Austria, an Austrian among Germans, and a Jew among all other nations.[13]

Thus, the Hungarian-Jewish writer, librettist and film critic Béla Balázs too did everything possible to find a place in the Hungarian cultural context, since he, according to himself, thought that there was a big community waiting for him – "But this feeling was lost rapidly". And thus it was surely no coincidence either that he evidently alluded to the conception of the endlessly "wandering Jew" when entitling his first collection of poems in 1911 *A vándor énekel*[14] as well as he about ten years later declared that there is something one cannot experience without going away: homesickness, "the most deepest and most tender of all feelings."

One had to acquire the language of the majority as well as, among other things, its cuisine, clothing, way of life, and education in terms of a process offering a kind of double belonging, an experience by no means weakened by surrounding anti-Semitism or by the distancing gaze of "the other". This doubleness unfaithful to the "stylistic" standard model contained a decisive intellectual element conditioned by, among other things, bi- or multilingualism, an element also characterized by the need for "keeping the door open" back to one's own Jewish origin, that is to somehow preserve one's contact with the past identity as part of the current one. In turn, this offered a specific competence and a system of values promoting multilingualism as well as a multicultural approach. And as the assimilated identity comprised important cultural elements in the anthropological sense coming from that environment which was seen as exemplary, in many cases even as superior, then this identity was constituted according to a model characterized by being much more "modern" than the "officially" recognized social model.

Here – at the core of the process of assimilation or integration – European artistic and literary Modernism was born and spread out. It was no coincidence that such many of those who eventually carried off the Czech, Hungarian and

12 Karády 2004, p. 2004.
13 Hanák 1998, p. 175.
14 *The Wanderer Sings*.

Polish Avant-Gardes grew up in more or less acculturated Jewish families. A less observed fact is that many of their gentile precursors too were in close touch with the assimilated Jewish intelligentsia and thus contributed by bringing with them important elements of the Jewish culture into Modernism. In other words, we have to ask ourselves whether precisely this double identity of dwelling both inside and at the same time outside the majority cultures respectively, to which so many assimilated Jews testified, among them Franz Kafka, might have contributed to the specific Central and Eastern European mixture of styles in both the arts, architecture, as well as literature, at least to a certain extent.

Of course, in such a book as this one it's impossible to give a fully exhaustive answer to the question above already due to the degree of complexity in regard to the precisely equally complicated as manifold cultural contexts which constituted the Central and Eastern European political and cultural reality round about the turn of the last century. Nevetheless, this doesn't prevent us discussing the Jewish participation in the art development of the countries and regions concerned in relation to this "sound box" in its capacity of being the ultimate prerequisite of the more or less all-embracing artistic syntheticism. Simultaneously there doesn't seem to be any good reasons not to repeat certain ideas, thoughts, formulations, and in some cases even certain passages already presented in *The Sacred Cause* and *Det andra könet i öst*, since these will here be put into other contexts as well as in relation to more comprehensive issues, therefore also getting another kind of relevance than in the previous studies.

Like in the case of both *The Sacred Cause* and *Det andra könet i öst,* my deepest gratitude goes to the librarians at the city library of Nyköping, Sweden, for their enthusiastic collaboration. Many thanks also to Eszter Losonczi for her assisting contributions in Budapest as well as to Tania Goryushina in Kiev for her collaborative curiosity regarding Kazimir Malevich and his possible Jewish lineage. Moreover, there had been no book without the translators Tomas Håkanson, Tove Isaksson, and Rikard Wennerholm, neither without the discussions with, among others, Krisztina Passuth in Budapest and Ziva Amishai-Maisels in Jerusalem.

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