



the London School of **Economics**
and **Political Science**



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Master Thesis

Was Mennonite and Jewish emigration from Eastern Europe at the end of the nineteenth century driven by non-economic factors?

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Academic degree aspired
Master (MA)

Wien, 2010

Studienkennzahl :

A 067 805

Studienrichtung:

Individuelles Masterstudium:
Global Studies – a European Perspective

Supervisor:

a.o. Univ. Prof. Mag. Dr. Christoph Augustynowicz

Table of Contents

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Introduction | 4 |
| 1. Framework | 12 |
| 2. Mennonite Emigration | 18 |
| a. Anabaptist movement | 18 |
| b. Geographical distinction | 19 |
| c. Mennonite movement | 20 |
| i. Push factors | 21 |
| ii. Pull factors | 29 |
| 3. Jewish emigration | 35 |
| a. Geographical distinction | 35 |
| i. Push factors Russian Empire | 37 |
| ii. Push factors Galicia | 44 |
| iii. Pull factors Palestine | 49 |
| iv. Pull factors USA | 54 |
| Conclusion | 57 |
| References | 63 |

Abstract

This thesis addresses the emigration of Mennonites to Canada and the USA and the emigration of Jews to Palestine and the USA. These groups emigrated from Eastern Europe, namely from the Russian and the Austro-Hungarian Empires respectively, at the end of the nineteenth century. By comparing both groups to each other, the thesis clarifies that the emigration of both Mennonites and Jews was mostly driven by economic factors. It also argues that other factors, such as political and social changes, played a role in both emigration processes. Both groups were religious minorities and were partly affected by religious and political persecution. Due to changes in the legislation, Mennonites found themselves having fewer rights than they used to have before. They were about to lose their political and religious privileges. So, by immigrating to Canada or the USA, Mennonites were given a certain amount of land for agricultural purposes. This proved to be an important pull factor especially to landless Mennonite farmers. Jews emigrated out of political and economic reasons. They were also affected by new law regulations which prevented them from seeking certain occupations and restricted them in a free choice of residence. The emergence of the Zionist movement also influenced them in their decision to immigrate to Palestine. The data being used in this thesis derives from secondary sources. The thesis explores the different views of various scholars on the reasons for both emigration movements and comes to the conclusion that economic reasons were crucial. Additionally, non-economic factors of religious, social and political importance had influence on both groups' decisions to emigrate.

Diese Magisterarbeit handelt von der Emigration von Mennoniten nach Kanada und in die USA und der Emigration von Juden nach Palästina und in die USA. Diese Gruppen emigrierten Ende des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts aus Osteuropa, und zwar aus dem Russischen bzw. dem Österreich-Ungarischen Reich. Ein Vergleich der beiden untersuchten Gruppen zeigt auf, dass ihre Emigration von ökonomischen Faktoren beeinflusst wurde. Es werden aber auch politische und soziale Veränderungen als mitverantwortliche Gründe genannt. Beide Gruppen waren religiöse Minderheiten und zum Teil Opfer von religiöser und politischer Verfolgung. Aufgrund von sich ändernden Gesetzgebungen im neunzehnten Jahrhundert hatten Mennoniten weniger Rechte und politische und religiöse Privilegien im Russischen Reich. Aus diesem Grund emigrierten sie nach Kanada und in die USA, wo ihnen Land zur Landwirtschaft zur Verfügung gestellt wurde, was zu einem sehr wichtiger Pull Faktor für landlose Mennoniten wurde. Juden emigrierten aus Osteuropa aus politischen und ökonomischen Gründen. Auch sie wurden von Gesetzgebungen beeinträchtigt, welche es ihnen verboten bestimmte Berufe zu ergreifen und ihren Wohnort frei zu bestimmen. Auch das Aufkommen des Zionismus und des Antisemitismus als Push Faktoren hatte einen Einfluss auf ihre Entscheidung zu emigrieren. Das Datenmaterial stammt aus Sekundärquellen. Diese Dissertation erforscht verschiedene Standpunkte über die Emigrationsgründe beider Gruppen und gelangt zu der Erkenntnis, dass ökonomische Gründe ausschlaggebend waren. Darüber hinaus haben auch religiöse, soziale und politische Faktoren eine Rolle in der Auswanderung der Juden und Mennoniten gespielt.

Introduction

This thesis deals with the migration of Mennonites, a German religious minority group, and Jews from Eastern Europe to overseas' destinations at the end of the nineteenth century. It examines the reasons, especially the push and pull factors that led to their decision to emigrate. Hereby, Canada and the USA will be looked at as the destination country in the case of the Mennonites, and Canada, the USA, and Palestine as the destination of the Jews. It is clear that both groups also migrated to other destinations, such as regions in South America,¹ but this will not be the focus here since emigration to, e. g. Argentina was a minor endeavour. The decision fell on the US as a case study in both Mennonite and Jewish immigration because it was by far the main country of immigration at that time and it accommodated a considerable amount of both emigrant groups. Canada was chosen because it was a major destination country for Mennonites. And Palestine was selected regarding Jewish immigration because of its traditional and historic importance to Jewish people in general and most importantly because it took in the migrants of the *First Aliyah*, which will be disclosed in this thesis.² These two mutually independent migration movements at the regional level in the same time period³ will be comparatively analysed and contrasted with each other. As mentioned before, I will focus on Mennonites and position their migratory stream into the framework of the Anabaptist movement which they originate from.

¹ Teresa Andlauer, *Die jüdische Bevölkerung im Modernisierungsprozess Galiziens (1867-1914)*, Ed. by Heiko Haumann, Vol. 11, Menschen und Strukturen. Historisch-sozialwissenschaftliche Studien (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2001), 289.

² The term *Aliyah* (*Aliyot* in plural) refers to Jewish migration waves to Palestine.

³ Ludger Pries, Ed., *New Transnational Social Spaces. International Migration and transnational companies in the early twenty-first century* (London: Routledge, 2001), 37.

The timeframes that will be used are the years 1872 to 1880, in the case of the emigration of the Mennonites,⁴ and the years 1881-1903/10, in the case of the Jewish emigration.⁵ Thus, generally speaking, the main focus will be on the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century which is considered to have been the time of a mass emigration wave.⁶

The areas that will be examined are the Russian and the Austro-Hungarian Empires. Both groups resided in the Russian Empire: Mennonites in the south of Russia, especially in today's Ukraine;⁷ and Jews in the Pale of Settlement, an area which comprised large parts of Eastern Europe and Russia⁸ and which remained a remnant of the Polish-Lithuanian territorial legacy within the Russian Empire.⁹ Regarding the Jewish population in Eastern Europe, I will also incorporate the territory of Galicia in the Austro-Hungarian Empire because of its large Jewish population and proximity to the Pale of Settlement. I chose both Empires because of their geographic location, clearly being situated in the Eastern part of Europe, and because of their multi-national, multi-lingual, multi-religious, and multi-ethnic character.¹⁰ Additionally, Eastern Europe was not as economically advanced and developed as Western Europe at the turn of the century. It was still undergoing a period of economic and political transformations. Thus I will look at the region of Eastern Europe, especially Galicia, the Pale of Settlement, and Southern Ukraine as a separate entity. Furthermore, the appearance of Jewish nationalist sentiments, which influenced the Jewish emigration

⁴ Peter M. Hamm, *Continuity and Change. Among Canadian Mennonite Brethren* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1987), 50.

⁵ Martin Sicker, *Reshaping Palestine. From Muhammad Ali to the British Mandate, 1831-1922* (Westport: Praeger, 1999), 52; Klaus Hödl, "Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna," in Polin. *Focusing on Galicia: Jews, Poles, and Ukrainians 1772-1918*, Vol. 12 (London: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1999), 147.

⁶ Baines, "European migration, 1815-1930: looking at the migration decision again."

⁷ Frank H. Epp, *Mennonites in Canada, 1786-1920, The History of a Separate People* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1974), 162.

⁸ Lloyd P. Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England 1870-1914*, 3rd edition (Portland: Vallentine Mitchell & Co Ltd, 2001), 22.

⁹ Gershon David Hundert, *Jews in Poland-Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century. A Genealogy of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 26.

¹⁰ Laura Quercioli Mincer, "A Voice from the Diaspora: Julian Strykowski," in Polin. *A Journal of Polish-Jewish Studies. Volume 5*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1990), 273.

movement, can be mostly attributed to Jews residing in Eastern European making it an exceedingly interesting region to look at.¹¹ And by concentrating solely on an Eastern European territory I want to examine the period of mass migration from an Eastern European perspective.

The question for focus in this examination is whether Mennonite and Jewish migration from Russia was driven by non-economic factors. Additionally, I will concentrate on the general reasons that both groups had for an emigration abroad and whether these reasons were similar in each case. By comparing and contrasting both groups' reasons I will detect whether there have been different push factors influencing the emigration of both groups. Further, I will emphasise the pull factors of the respective destination countries. By asking what the reasons for emigration were I want to find out what key features determined the decision to emigrate and if there were any similarities between them for the particular groups. How much did the reasons to emigrate differ from each other? What were the economic benefits of an emigration? How did the pre-migration conditions change to create the potential for a new emigration?¹² It is important to ask these questions because it helps us to understand the reasons why certain groups emigrated. But to focus exclusively on economic criteria would be too single-edged since numerous factors in migration patterns are connected and interdependent. In order to understand why both these religious minority groups have decided to emigrate from Eastern Europe it is necessary to look beyond economic reasons and incorporate other factors, such as the state and its legislature as contributing factors for emigration.

The reasons for choosing these particular minority groups are the following: Mennonites and Jews showed certain similarities, i. e. they were both religious minorities in

¹¹ Bruce F. Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution: A History of Austrian Anti-Semitism* (UNC Press, 1998), 54.

¹² Pries, *New Transnational Social Spaces. International Migration and transnational companies in the early twenty-first century*, 39.

Eastern Europe, a territory which was strictly dominated mostly by both the Catholic and Orthodox Churches and to a lesser extent by the Protestant Church.¹³ To a certain extent, Mennonites and Jews can be seen as religious and ethnic entities that started to emigrate from Eastern European regions at approximately the same period, the end of the nineteenth century. Migration, in general, can be regarded as a distinct feature of these two groups¹⁴ influencing their respective self-perception and consciousness. Both Mennonites and Jews experienced a special status in the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires, respectively, and were not considered to be equal to the ordinary population. Furthermore, both groups were partly affected by religious and political persecution and segregations throughout the course of time, each group to a different extent and for different reasons which will be explored in this dissertation.

There are also differences, however. One difference between these two groups is that their emigration waves were not directly connected or related to each other. There was no documented contact between Jews and Mennonites in Russia due to the self-imposed seclusion of the Mennonites and the restricted living conditions of the Jews, especially of those who lived in the Pale of Settlement. Also, the majority of the Jewish population lived in urban areas,¹⁵ whereas the Mennonites belonged to a rural class being predominantly agriculturists.¹⁶

In my research I have relied mostly on secondary sources. To back up my choice of only using secondary sources I refer to André Gunder Frank¹⁷ who cites the historian William McNeill as follows:

¹³ Samuel Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United States, from 1881 to 1910* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1914), 31.

¹⁴ Llyod P. Gartner, *History of the Jews in Modern Times* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 214.

¹⁵ Noah Lucas, *The Modern History of Israel* (London: Weidenfeld Nicolson, 1974), 5.

¹⁶ Hamm, *Continuity and Change. Among Canadian Mennonite Brethren*, 172.

¹⁷ André Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: global economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 39-40.

“[...]Good history results from a process of selection and criticism, picking out information from available sources that is relevant to whatever questions the historian asks – no more, no less.”¹⁸

Jewish and Mennonite migration movements are fairly thoroughly scholarly-researched areas. And I am confident that depending on scholars who have already used and evaluated primary sources won't abate this thesis. Thus, relying on secondary sources is a sufficient undertaking for tackling the previously asked questions. I understand that not using primary sources can limit this thesis to a certain extent because it restricts the scope of the research. But it was impossible to gather primary sources on this topic as they are widely scattered all over the world. But since both emigration waves from Eastern Europe are fairly well researched topics, I am confident that using secondary sources only will not be a hindrance to my research.

In this thesis I will carry out a literature review and compile the common ideas and research results on both topics. Hence, a collection of potential reasons, or push and pull factors, for both emigration movements will be presented. I have chosen to do a comparison between the two in order to point out how each group was affected by certain developments in the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires and by regulations imposed by the respective governments. I refrained from using literature by Soviet Russian historians in order to avoid ideological infliction and Marxist or Leninist theories on migration patterns. But this was certainly not a difficult undertaking because there was enough literature that was not inflicted by the mentioned ideologies. Regarding sources on the history of Mennonites I was able to implement a large amount of secondary sources from the Mennonites Studies Institute at the University of Winnipeg, Canada. Additionally, I rely slightly on the *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online (GAMEO)*, an online database on the history of Anabaptists and Mennonites created as a joint project by the

¹⁸ Ibid.

*Mennonite Historical Society of Canada, the Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission, the Mennonite Central Committee, the Mennonite World Conference, and the Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee.*¹⁹ By relying on scholars who have worked on these topics for years and decades, and by analysing their research, I consider a sufficient and worthwhile series of sources for this comparison has been selected. Since the majority of the sources on Mennonite migration were penned by authors and scholars of a Mennonite background, judging from their last names, it is unavoidable that some of their personal opinion and perception was implemented into their work. The same problem also applies to the sources on Jewish migration. Many scholars researching Jewish diaspora have a Jewish background themselves. Thus, I would like to note at this point that the work of both Mennonite and Jewish migration scholars might not be totally objective and value-free. But this matter of fact can be alluded to most scholars and researchers. Therefore, it is in the eye of the beholder to assess the given information as objective and critical as possible, which I will try to accomplish in this dissertation.

The questions why people have emigrated at the turn of the nineteenth century have already been answered in many ways and with different results. The factors that my thesis will add to the research are a compilation of influential emigration reasons and most importantly an analysis of two independent emigration groups. Thus I will draw a comparison in order to demonstrate dominant aspects of the emigration decision of both groups. The motivation for engaging in this research lies in my personal interest in migration studies. The research of migration and the impact that it has on the respective migration groups and the countries of origin and destination is extremely remunerative and valuable because it transforms peoples, societies, and history itself. Migration is eminent for regional, national, international, transnational, and global impacts. Thus it can be easily

¹⁹ Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online, "Who We Are" (revised 2010), <http://www.gameo.org/who-we-are> (accessed July 15, 2010).

assessed within a global context and from interdisciplinary angles. This makes it an exceptionally appealing topic to study and research.

The point of view, or more explicitly my hypothesis, that I will be representing in my dissertation is that both groups were driven out of Russia due to a few crucial decisions imposed on them by the Russian government. This will show how the government in general has a major influence in peoples' and groups' decision-making to emigrate. Concerning Jews emigrating from Galicia, I will advance the view that the government had an indirect impact on their decision to emigrate and that the economic underdevelopment of the region had a prominent influence.²⁰ My argument is that Mennonite and Jewish migration was partly driven by non-economic reasons, such as principles of faith in the case of the Mennonites, and an escape from persecution in the case of the Jews. My main argument is that both groups emigrated due to economic reasons, with Mennonites wanting more access to land in order to lead a self-sufficient life, and Jews escaping economic restrictions, poverty and general anti-Semitism. Thus, I will try to negate the question of this dissertation. Also, I want to point out how both the Russian and the Austro-Hungarian Empires dealt with minority groups. In doing so, I will follow Green's notion which states that "[...] comparisons necessarily imply a more general level of analysis in interpreting migration patterns."²¹ Hence my focus will also be on migration patterns. Furthermore, by concentrating first and foremost on push factors, I want to elucidate the respective governments' influence in both emigration streams. I argue that both governments failed to provide enough social, political, and economic security and support for its citizens. Therefore, they both can be partially held responsible for the emigration of the two minority groups.

²⁰ Anita J. Prazmowska, *A History of Poland* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 154.

²¹ N. L. Green, "The Comparative Method and Poststructural Structuralism – New Perspectives for Migration." *Studies Journal of American Ethnic History* 13, no. 4 (1994): 3.

In the following, I will provide a framework about migration and a complementary historical framework. Then, I will focus on both migration groups, first on the Mennonites, their origins in the Anabaptist movement, and their emigration motives; and then on the Jews and the push and pull factors that influenced them in their decision to emigrate. Lastly, I will conclude with an evaluation and an answer to the question “Was Mennonite and Jewish migration driven by non-economic factors?”

1. Framework

Further, the framework of this thesis will be discussed. Summarised, it deals with migration theories, patterns, and behaviour and integrates the evaluated migration streams into a general timeframe and context. Beyond that the problem of diaspora will be touched on in order to establish a better understanding of both migrant groups.

Migration flows of particular groups of people have occurred constantly throughout space and time. Migration itself is considered to be a fundamental human activity.²² Individuals and religious, political and ethnic groups choose to relocate to certain places due to a variety of reasons. Such reasons or 'pull factors' in modern times include better job opportunities and potentially better earnings, higher living standards, an escape from poverty, better health prospects, greater safety, education, or the anticipation of a higher level of tolerance towards religious and ethnic minorities.

The years between 1870 and 1914 can be described as a time when borders were more easily crossed, transportation became safer, and fares became more affordable due to technological advancements.²³ Before that time, migration was mostly driven by the slave trade to the New World, especially the Americas and the Caribbean. Only after the 1840s was this forced African migration outrun by European migration.²⁴

Baines²⁵ claims that about 50 million people emigrated from Europe to the New World and other destinations from 1815-1930. The reasons why the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century are considered as the age of mass migration are manifold. Scholars argue that the urbanisation process played an important role in the

²² Roger Daniels, *Coming to America. A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life* (New York: First Harper Perennial, 1991), 3.

²³ Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England 1870-1914*, 15.

²⁴ T. J. Hatton and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *The age of mass migration: causes and economic impact* (Oxford: Oxford University Press US, 1998), 7.

²⁵ Baines, "European emigration, 1815-1930," 525.

migration movement. It often occurred that migration from rural to urban areas was the first step towards an emigration to another country, and that urban classes had a higher probability to emigrate.²⁶ Besides, population growth can be regarded as an indicator for a later migration movement.²⁷ Other reasons influencing people's decisions to emigrate are famines, pogroms, economic development accompanying the industrialisation process, a high unemployment rate, political or religious persecution, and economic restrictions.²⁸ The emigration process was also fuelled by falling transportation costs and easier access to transport systems.²⁹ I will refer to these reasons in more detail shortly.

At first view, human migration studies are easy to define. They deal with and analyse the movement of an individual or a group of people from one place to another. Usually, this movement results in permanent residence in the new place. Some of the first questions that are raised while looking at human migration are the reasons for moving. Since migration is considered to be an aim-directed behaviour, it is important to find out what these aims and goals are. In other words, what are the reasons for emigrating from one's home country and immigrating into a new unfamiliar place?³⁰ And what is gained from this migration? Presently there is also a distinction between the migration movement itself, which means moving; and immigration, which means moving across a national frontier into another country.³¹

Now I would like to establish the theoretical framework of this dissertation which consists, to a paramount extent, of E. G. Ravenstein's *Laus of Migration* as analysed by

²⁶ Hatton and Williamson, *The age of mass migration*, 17.

²⁷ Richard A. Easterlin, „Influences in European Overseas Emigration before World War I.“ *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 9 (1961): 332.

²⁸ Timothy J. Hatton and Jeffrey G. Williamson, „What Drove the Mass Migrations in Europe in the Late Nineteenth Century?“ *Population and Development Review* 20, no. 3(1994): 534, 544-545.

²⁹ Baines, „European emigration, 1815-1939,“ 536.

³⁰ Paul Boyle and Keith Halfacree, *Migration into Rural Areas. Theories and Issues* (West Sussex: John Wiley and Sons, 1998), 1-2.

³¹ Daniels, *Coming to America. A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 3.

Lee.³² According to him, Ravenstein has established three categories of migration: the characteristics of migrants, the patterns of migration and its volume. First of all, migration is selective. Not everybody emigrates from their home country. Compared to the total population it is always a small number of people who choose to leave their home country.³³ Thus, migration is selective because people respond differently to the circumstances surrounding them which means that migrants are not a random sample from their population.³⁴ Ravenstein makes a distinction between pull migrants and push migrants. Whereas pull migrants have positive incentives for an emigration, push migrants are “pushed” out of their country and can be negatively selected. Push factors function as mechanisms of encouragement for a migration. These influences can be of natural/ catastrophic, political, social, religious, and/ or economic nature.³⁵ Therefore we can make a distinction between voluntary and forced migration. Forced migration describes the situation when certain groups of people are obliged or forced to move against their own choices. They can be forced directly, in an open and focused manner; or indirectly, hidden and diffuse. Mass expulsion involves forced migration that is either initiated by the state and its authorities or by individual parties.³⁶ Migration orders result in decisions made by a group of people. Such decisions can be cost-benefit judgements, raising the question of whether the costs of emigrating undercut the benefits of emigrating.³⁷ Hence, a migration transition may be generated by shifts in the structural and neighbouring domains of the legislature.³⁸ Other general push factors include oppressive laws, an aggravating social environment and heavy taxation. One can also add compulsion, such as slavery, to this

³² Everett S. Lee, “A Theory of Migration,” *Demography* 3, no. 1 (1966): 48.

³³ Daniels, *Coming to America. A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 18.

³⁴ Lee, “A Theory of Migration,” 56.

³⁵ Daniels, *Coming to America. A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 18.

³⁶ Nicholas Van Hear, *New Diasporas. The mass exodus, dispersal and regrouping of migrant communities*. (London: UCL Press, 1998), 10.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 14.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

equation.³⁹ But this does not apply in the chosen case studies of this thesis. Furthermore, population growth can be regarded as an indicator for a later migration movement.⁴⁰ Other reasons influencing people's decisions to emigrate are famines, pogroms, and the implications of economic development accompanying the industrialisation process.⁴¹ Other important aspects correlating with migration are urbanisation, better infrastructure and advancements in technology.⁴² Pull factors describe the positive amenities and attractions of the future destination country (meaning pulling the immigrants), such attractions may be the promise of political, economic, and religious freedom, family reunion/ chain migration, a prospect of employment, better living conditions, and so forth.⁴³ Ravenstein also states that the majority of all migrants only travels a short distance, such as rural to urban migration within a region. Thus, migration patterns are conducted step by step.⁴⁴ Long distance migration generally takes the migrants to important industry and commerce centres. So development of and advancements in industry and commerce and an improvement of means of transportation contributes to migration to industrial and commercial centres, mostly because commercial urban centres offer diverse opportunities, such as abundant employment and education prospects, security, and networks. Ravenstein points out that the most severe reasons for migration are of economic nature.⁴⁵ Obviously, there is a high amount of factors which can influence the decision to migrate. These factors can be connected with the area of origin, the area of destination, personal reasons, and intervening obstacles, such as distance, or immigration laws.⁴⁶

³⁹ Lee, "A Theory of Migration," 48.

⁴⁰ Easterlin, "Influences in European Overseas Emigration before World War I," 332.

⁴¹ Hatton and Williamson, "What Drove the Mass Migrations in Europe in the Late Nineteenth Century?," 534, 544-545.

⁴² Vaughan Robinson, *Geography and migration* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 1996), 109.

⁴³ Daniels, *Coming to America. A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 18.

⁴⁴ Robinson, *Geography and migration*, 106.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 107.

⁴⁶ Lee, "A Theory of Migration," 50-51.

Places that embody a high degree of diversity are supposed to have high levels of migration. Another influential factor is the diversity of an area, meaning the more diverse an area is, the more it is prone to emigration, which definitely applies to Eastern Europe. Diversity implies diverse social statuses of people adding people of lower status, inequality, and discrimination to the equation (speaking from a pessimistic point of view).⁴⁷

In this thesis I will be addressing the push factors that have led religious/ ethnic groups, in this case Mennonites and Jews, to emigrate from Eastern European territories. Both, Mennonites and Jews can be considered as living in a diaspora in Eastern Europe. Van Hear⁴⁸ talks in his 1998 book *New Diasporas. The mass exodus, dispersal and regrouping of migrant communities* about diaspora and mentions so-called “special status groups.”⁴⁹ He quotes William Safran by pointing out that Diaspora is the

1. “[...]dispersal from an original centre to two or more peripheral regions;”
2. “retention of collective memory of the homeland;”
3. “partial alienation from the host society;”
4. “aspiration to return to an ancestral homeland;”
5. “commitment to the maintenance or restoration of that homeland;”
6. “and derivation of collective consciousness and solidarity from a relationship with the homeland.”⁵⁰

The first three points apply to the Mennonites; they had left the area of their origin and became dispersed over different regions in the course of time and in the course of their migration movement when they moved from country to country all over Europe searching

⁴⁷ Ibid., 52-53.

⁴⁸ Van Hear, *New Diasporas. The mass exodus, dispersal and regrouping of migrant communities*, 5.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

for a religious sanctuary.⁵¹ An additional feature is that the Anabaptist movement, where the Mennonite faith derives from, had also to endure several far-reaching schisms concerning its split into different religious groups.

The Jewish case is much clearer because the whole definition of a diaspora applies to them. They look back on a history of constant migratory movements, with a common religion, traditions, heritage and collective memory and a later emerging wish of a restoration of a Jewish homeland in Palestine which went along with the Zionist movement.⁵²

All in all, basing the analysis of the two migration groups on the previously mentioned migration theory is useful in the sense that it helps us to understand how and why people migrate.

⁵¹ John Warkentin, "Mennonite Agricultural Settlements of Southern Manitoba," *Geographical Review*, 1959, 342.

⁵² Ahron Bregman, *A history of Israel* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 1-10.

2. Mennonite Emigration

The next chapter will focus on Mennonite emigration from the Russian Empire. A historical and geographical context will be provided and push and pull factors will be assessed.

a. Anabaptist movement

In 1517, in the wake of the Reformation, the Anabaptist movement emerged with young radicals pleading for religious reforms and wanting to break down Catholic patterns.⁵³ The name of this movement derives from the term rebaptising because Anabaptists started baptising their adult members. Since they had already been baptised by the Catholic Church as infants this conduct was a capital offense towards the Catholic authority. At that time, infant baptism was both carried out by the Catholic and Protestant Churches, respectively, and was regarded as a Holy Sacrament. This infant baptism was not only a sign of religious belonging, but it also granted people citizenship, giving the authorities the power to tax and enlist them for military service. By conducting adult baptism, the Anabaptists overtly dismissed institutional religious power and placed only the Bible as their highest authority.⁵⁴ Therefore, the Anabaptist movement can be described as a rebellion against organised and constituted religious and political authority, especially from the point of view of Martin Luther, the initiator of the Reformation, and Ulrich

⁵³ Donald B. Kraybill and Carl Desportes Bowman, *On the Backroad to Heaven: Old Order Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren* (Baltimore: JHU Press, 2002), 1.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 1-2.

Zwingli and John Calvin, joint founders of the Anabaptist movement.⁵⁵ In its early days, there were two groups of Anabaptists: Anabaptists who were oriented towards the Old Testament and who considered themselves revolutionaries and whose movement originated in Saxony, and Anabaptists who were oriented towards the New Testament and who saw themselves as pacifists, having their origins in Switzerland. The latter expanded all over Europe and found a leader in Menno Simons in the Netherlands, eventually leading to the founding of the Mennonites.⁵⁶ So the history of Mennonites is closely linked to the history of Anabaptists.⁵⁷

b. Geographical distinction

From the sixteenth century on, Mennonites became a migrating group, first residing in Dutch, Swiss, and German territories, and after some centuries, moving eastward to regions in Prussia, Poland, Ukraine, and Russia, and eventually to the USA, Canada, and Latin America.⁵⁸ Initially, the movement originated in the Netherlands. But due to their religious tenets, which I will explain in more detail later on, they were exposed to severe persecution and rejection of their religion. Thus, Mennonites saw migration to other places as their only possibility to primarily survive, and also to sustain their religious way of life.⁵⁹ At the time period that is being investigated in this dissertation (the end of the nineteenth

⁵⁵ John A. Hostetler, *Hutterite Society* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 6.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 5-6.

⁵⁷ Cornelius Krahn, Harold S. Bender, and John S. Friesen, "Migrations," in *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, 1989, <http://www.gameo.org/encyclopedia/contents/M542ME.html> (accessed July 15, 2010).

⁵⁸ Adolf Ens, *Subjects or citizens?: the Mennonite experience in Canada, 1870-1925* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1994), 2.

⁵⁹ Krahn, Bender, and Friesen, "Migrations."

century) Mennonites in Eastern Europe resided near the Black Sea and the Volga River in a territory that comprises present-day Ukraine.⁶⁰

c. Mennonite movement

As previously mentioned, Menno Simons was the founder of the protestant movement of the Mennonites in 1536. One of their main characteristics and distinctions from other protestant congregations was their refusal to engage in military service, to take an oath, and to participate in 'worldly affairs' as they called it, i. e. in politics.⁶¹ Thus, they sought a separation from secular affairs.⁶² Mennonites trace their principles of faith back to the Schleithem Confession. It is the earliest Anabaptist confession of faith which was recorded in 1527.⁶³ It partly deals with the relationship between the believer and the state. It starts with the declaration that government office can only be appointed by God. This article claims that the state could have been established only by God and that true believers should only follow a secular power if it does not disobey God's will.⁶⁴ The confessors stated that they would separate themselves from worldly features such as violence (and thus from any form of violent rebellion against the authorities), pleasures that were regarded as sinful, and an entry into politics.⁶⁵ This chosen separation from the state was not a compulsory feature of the Mennonite religion, but it was followed voluntarily by all

⁶⁰ Terry Martin, *The Mennonites and the Russian State Duma, 1905-1914* (Seattle: The Donald W. Treadgold Papers, 1996), 8.

⁶¹ Harry Leonard Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine Heimat: deutsch-mennonitische Kolonisierung in Mexiko, 1922-1984* (Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 1986), 7.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ James Urry, *Mennonites, politics, and peoplehood: Europe-Russia-Canada, 1525-1980* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2006).

⁶⁴ Ens, *Subjects or citizens?*, 3.

⁶⁵ Urry, *Mennonites, politics, and peoplehood*.

members of the congregations.⁶⁶ Thus, Herberg⁶⁷ describes Mennonites living in a “voluntary ethnic-group separation”.⁶⁸

i. Push factors

In order to assess the push factors that have led to a Mennonite emigration from the Russian Empire, it is important to further explain the way Mennonites thought and lived. The ideal of living in a community that is detached from the outside world is deeply rooted in the history of the Mennonites. As mentioned before, an important reason for this way of life was their wish to separate themselves from the institutions, certain obligations and values of the societies they lived in. But they only rejected governmental institutions that directly affected their way of life and the principles of their faith.⁶⁹ Having experienced religious persecution in Europe and Prussia in earlier centuries, Mennonites in Russia had learned to remove themselves from mainstream society as an attempt of protection.⁷⁰ And since they were not willing to obey the orderly rule and refused to participate in military services, they soon became victims of religious persecution.⁷¹

Since Mennonites had a history of migration and were particularly shaped by it, this thesis will further continue with their immigration to Russia in order to explain what drove them to settle down in the Russian Empire in the first place and to create a framework of their migration patterns. Mennonites were quite new to the Russian Empire in that they

⁶⁶ Peter Martin Hamm, *Continuity & change among Canadian Mennonite Brethren* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Univ. Press, 1987), 38.

⁶⁷ Edward Norman Herberg, *Ethnic groups in Canada: adaptations and transitions* (Scarborough: Nelson Canada, 1989), 8.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Janzen, *Limits on Liberty. The Experience of Mennonite, Hutterite, and Doukhobor Communities in Canada*, 5-6.

⁷⁰ Frank H. Epp, *Mennonite Exodus. The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites Since the Communist Revolution* (Altona: D. W. Friesen & Sons LTD., 1962), 24.

⁷¹ Janzen, *Limits on Liberty. The Experience of Mennonite, Hutterite, and Doukhobor Communities in Canada*, 5.

arrived there only at the end of the eighteenth century. Their immigration to Russia began in 1789 under Catherine II.⁷² 462 Mennonite families migrated from Prussia to the South of Russia in that year.⁷³ The foreign colonists settled down in the area near the Volga River and the Black Sea in today's Ukraine⁷⁴ where they formed the Molotschna and Chortitza settlements.⁷⁵ They chose Russia as their destination because they were granted certain privileges by Empress Catherine II, who was German herself. These privileges were exemption from military service, autonomy over communal affairs, religious freedom and the freedom to educate their children independently.⁷⁶ Being immigrants in the Russian Empire, Mennonites were under control of the regulations of the Russian Colonial Law from 1763 which regulated immigration to Russia. Upon their arrival each family was promised to receive approximately 170 acres and certain economic and religious freedoms. The only conditions were that they were not allowed to convert the rest of the Russian population to their faith, and that they had to administrate their colonies on their own. These conditions were easily accepted by the Mennonites.⁷⁷ Thus their decision to settle down in Russia was effectively influenced by the incentive of receiving free land finally resulting in economic independence and self-sufficiency. So their migration to Russia can be described as a decision that was dominated by primarily economic and religious reasons which anticipated their emigration to North America more than one hundred years later. One thing that the Mennonites were not willing to do was to integrate into Russian society and the Russian way of life. They refused to identify with Russian peasants and with the Russian society overall.⁷⁸ They chose to live in rural settings in order to find security from intruders and support their own community-building. Mennonites even favoured living in

⁷² Martin, *The Mennonites and the Russian State Duma, 1905-1914*, 8.

⁷³ Calvin Wall Redekop, *The Old Colony Mennonites. Dilemmas of Ethnic Minority Life* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), 5.

⁷⁴ Martin, *The Mennonites and the Russian State Duma, 1905-1914*, 8.

⁷⁵ Leo Driedger, *Mennonites in the Global Village* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 30.

⁷⁶ Janzen, *Limits on Liberty. The Experience of Mennonite, Hutterite, and Doukhobor Communities in Canada*, 7.

⁷⁷ Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine neue Heimat. Deutsch-Mennonitische Kolonisierung in Mexiko 1922-1984*, 8.

⁷⁸ Epp, *Mennonite Exodus. The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites Since the Communist Revolution*, 24.

separate communities which they called colonies because they wanted to seclude themselves as much as they could from the rest of the population who did not share their faith.⁷⁹ Thus they are often referred to as “Die Stillen im Lande.” This translates as “The Silent in the Land”⁸⁰ which basically means that they did not voice their opinion on public and worldly affairs and wanted to stay out of the mainstream society because one of their main goals was to preserve their faith and keep it as pure and traditional as possible.⁸¹

Living in Prussia and Russia, Mennonites soon established themselves in the areas of agriculture and industry.⁸² It was mostly due to religious persecution that they chose to reside in rural areas where they remained for some 400 years since their foundation.⁸³ The Russian Empire even started to use them as model farmers to work fallow land in Southern Russia.⁸⁴ They not only developed a solid agrarian tradition,⁸⁵ but also engaged in industry, as craftsmen and homesteaders, in the production of farm implements, wool and livestock, contributing to Russia’s internal and external markets. This led to their growing prosperity and supported their ever-growing communities.⁸⁶ Hamm⁸⁷ supports this view and maintains that the Mennonites gained a powerful reputation and became successful farmers. The positive effects on their surrounding area were that the agrarian economy and Russian peasants residing near Mennonite colonies benefited from the prosperity of the Mennonites.⁸⁸ The factors that kept Mennonites in Russia were: well developed institutions;

⁷⁹ Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine neue Heimat. Deutsch-Mennonitische Kolonisierung in Mexiko 1922-1984*, 7.

⁸⁰ Hamm, *Continuity and change. Among Canadian Mennonite Brethren*, 43.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., 42.

⁸³ Ibid., 172.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 42.

⁸⁵ Royden Loewen, *Family, church, and market: a Mennonite community in the Old and New Worlds, 1850-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 263.

⁸⁶ E. K. Francis, *In Search of Utopia. The Mennonites in Manitoba* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1955), 28.

⁸⁷ Hamm, *Continuity and change. Among Canadian Mennonite Brethren*, 44.

⁸⁸ Epp, *Mennonite Exodus. The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites Since the Communist Revolution*, 25.

protection by law; their special status under authorities; a self-sufficient living; a thriving industry; and their engagement in agriculture.⁸⁹

Although they tried to be as uninvolved in external politics as possible, they had a system of government themselves which they had adapted from their time in Gdansk and West Prussia and which helped them to deal with their own administration. They elected their own officials in the village and were responsible for the internal affairs in their colonies.⁹⁰ They created their own institutions of control and discipline in order not to be dependent on authorities from the outside.⁹¹ But when it came to activities that had anything to do with power and violence, they removed themselves from such positions. Mennonites, for example, turned down the position of the village constable because they wanted to refrain from possible future violent actions.⁹²

It is apparent that Mennonites have not been an apolitical people who relied only on informal institutions such as family ties, networks, their church, etc.,⁹³ but who also involved themselves in politics in order to gain the privileges they were looking for. This becomes evident when it is seen that they started to negotiate with rulers during their migration process.⁹⁴ Mennonites have a history of forming alliances with their rulers in order to receive protection and privileges.⁹⁵ Therefore it is important not to consider Mennonites as solely a religious group that is only interested in keeping up their religious values, but also as an economic and political entity. Sawatzky⁹⁶ argues that the Mennonite settlement in Russia resulted in the building of a people. Whereas in Prussia, the Mennonites had been a simple denomination, they transformed into their own

⁸⁹ Francis, *In Search of Utopia. The Mennonites in Manitoba*, 28.

⁹⁰ Ens, *Subjects or citizens? The Mennonite Experience in Canada, 1870-1925*, 5-6.

⁹¹ Urry, *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood. Europe – Russia – Canada 1525-1980*, 6.

⁹² Hamm, *Continuity and change. Among Canadian Mennonite Brethren*, 43.

⁹³ Urry, *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood. Europe – Russia – Canada 1525-1980*, x-3.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ T. D. Regehr, *Peace, Order and Good Government. Mennonites and Politics in Canada* (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 2000), 16.

⁹⁶ Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine neue Heimat. Deutsch-Mennonitische Kolonisierung in Mexiko 1922-1984*, 9.

commonality in Russia. The fact that they were a closed sociological group led to growing tension with the Russian people, some interest groups, and the government, which will be elaborated later on.⁹⁷

Since the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were a tumultuous time in Europe due to warfare and the connected shifting of borders, many countries put emphasis on compulsory military service. When Mennonites refused to offer their military service, they became an obstacle in the rulers' eyes.⁹⁸ This resulted in a continuing emigration of Mennonites throughout Europe and finally the Americas, in acts of conscience regarding their refusal to join the military.⁹⁹

Given that Mennonites engaged mostly in agriculture, owning land and having the possibility to work on this land was of prime importance to them. Around the year 1800, 30 percent of the land that belonged to Mennonites was in the hands of three percent of the Mennonite group. And these three percent also had 22 percent of the Mennonites working for them.¹⁰⁰ Around the 1860s about 60 percent of the people who lived in the Molotschna colony did not own any land. This circumstance can be attributed to a rapid increase of the Mennonite population and not enough correspondingly available land for an expanding agriculture.¹⁰¹ So, although farming was quite profitable for the Mennonite community, there was an internal problem with landless farmers. Thus, with a lack of suitable land and a lack of other economic possibilities, many Mennonites regarded an emigration as a safety valve. And it was the ones who did not own any land at all and thus

⁹⁷ Epp, *Mennonite Exodus. The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites Since the Communist Revolution*, 23-24.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 160-161.

¹⁰⁰ Hamm, *Continuity and Change. Among Canadian Mennonite Brethren*, 44.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

were not able to acquire sufficient wealth, who wanted to emigrate the most.¹⁰² Francis¹⁰³ supports this view when he uses the example of the Bergthal colony. This colony, which had been founded between 1836 and 1852, proved to be unsuccessful and economically inefficient. A majority of the inhabitants stayed poor. And in order to escape impoverishment they were in favour of an emigration and thus for ameliorating their living conditions.¹⁰⁴

In the mid-nineteenth century Russia and the rest of Europe were strongly influenced by liberal ideas of equality and individual rights. These new ideas were soon implemented in law. In the course of this development, Russia passed the Great Reforms in the 1860s liberating the peasantry and emancipating them from compulsory labour (with the abolishment of serfdom) and developing a modern judicial system and a regional self-government system under Tsar Alexander II. This proved to be a turning point which indicated a future Mennonite emigration. Since Mennonites already enjoyed a great amount of local self-governance and religious freedom, they feared that they could lose their special status and get degraded to the same level as the Russian peasantry.¹⁰⁵ This apprehension eventually came true in the 1870s when Tsar Alexander II was no longer willing to grant Mennonites their privileges.¹⁰⁶ While Mennonites had gained a new status of being free citizens in Russia, they lost their privilege of military exemption.¹⁰⁷ The Russian government had introduced new laws that would include Mennonites into the universal military service.¹⁰⁸ Loewen¹⁰⁹ argues that the government planned a political modernisation

¹⁰² Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine neue Heimat. Deutsch-Mennonitische Kolonisierung in Mexiko 1922-1984*, 10.

¹⁰³ Francis, *In Search of Utopia. The Mennonites in Manitoba*, 39.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Martin, *The Mennonites and the Russian State Duma, 1905-1914*, 9.

¹⁰⁶ Epp, *Mennonite Exodus. The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites Since the Communist Revolution*, 183.

¹⁰⁷ Francis, *In Search of Utopia. The Mennonites in Manitoba*, 34.

¹⁰⁸ Epp, *Mennonite Exodus. The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites Since the Communist Revolution*, 26.

¹⁰⁹ Loewen, *Family, church, and market: a Mennonite community in the Old and New Worlds, 1850-1930*, 263.

where special treatment of certain minority groups was no longer welcomed. Hamm¹¹⁰ also claims that one of the main reasons why some Mennonites started to leave Russia was the Imperial Decree of 1870 which declared an obligatory universal military service for all Russian citizens. With the structural changes, Mennonite colonies were transformed into regular administrative divisions by the Council of State. The settlers were obliged to pay the ordinary provincial and state taxes. Official records and documents were required to be written in the Russian language. These regulations interfered with the Mennonites' aim to stay separated from the political sphere.¹¹¹

From 1871 to 1873 five delegations of Mennonites were sent to St. Petersburg in order to reach an agreement in the question concerning the military service.¹¹² They had decided to contact the officials in St. Petersburg because local administrators had not been willing to grant them legal protection, civil rights and religious freedom.¹¹³ Although the Law of 1874 granted Mennonites the possibility of engaging in non-combatant service, the developments and the fear of newly arising laws cancelling out their special status had led to the decision of a significant part of the Mennonite population to immigrate to the New World.¹¹⁴ What is striking about this development is the Mennonites' attempt to actually change the new legislation in order to avoid taking the big step of emigration. The Russian government wanted to prevent a Mennonite emigration as well. Its new goal was not to banish the Mennonites – the authorities had recognised that their value to the Russian Empire was too high – but to nationalise them as Russian citizens. The government was not willing to let them go that easily because their colonies were economically extremely successful in the Empire. Thus, a delegate named General von Todtleben was sent to the

¹¹⁰ Hamm, *Continuity and Change. Among Canadian Mennonite Brethren*, 50.

¹¹¹ Francis, *In Search of Utopia. The Mennonites in Manitoba*, 33.

¹¹² Epp, *Mennonite Exodus. The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites Since the Communist Revolution*, 26.

¹¹³ Hamm, *Continuity and Change. Among Canadian Mennonite Brethren*, 49.

¹¹⁴ Epp, *Mennonite Exodus. The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites Since the Communist Revolution*, 26.

colonies in order to reach a compromise. In 1874, the before mentioned agreement was reached declaring that Mennonites did not have to complete military service anymore. Instead they were obliged to serve in the forestry for a certain amount of time. The restriction to just using Russian language in their schools was also modified; they were no longer forced to use only Russian in their schools, but were allowed to use German as a language of instruction.¹¹⁵ Mennonites clearly identified themselves as Germans living outside of the mainstream society. Thus, their own language was very important to them because it was closely connected to their identity, heritage, traditions, religion and belonging and eventually they were able to keep Dutch German as their mother tongue when living in Russia.¹¹⁶ For this reason they should not only be seen as a religious group, but also as a cultural and, as noted before, a political, practical and materialistic group. So the connection to their original language and the practice of their religion, among other things, made them into their separate group.¹¹⁷ And it was in 1866 when Russian officials demanded the teaching of the Russian language in Mennonite schools.¹¹⁸ But this request was withdrawn, as mentioned before.

Approximately two thirds of the Mennonites agreed to the governments' conditions and decided not to leave Russia. The rest, on the other hand, were not satisfied and feared more losses of the freedoms that had attracted them to immigrate to Russia in the first place.¹¹⁹ Most importantly, the group that was willing to emigrate was assured by the anticipation of owning their own land in Canada/ the US which indicates that their decision was mainly economic-based. This will be analysed in detail later on.

¹¹⁵ Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine neue Heimat. Deutsch-Mennonitische Kolonisierung in Mexiko 1922-1984*, 9.

¹¹⁶ Hamm, *Continuity and Change. Among Canadian Mennonite Brethren*, 42.

¹¹⁷ Urry, *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood. Europe – Russia – Canada 1525-1980*, x.

¹¹⁸ Epp, *Mennonite Exodus. The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites Since the Communist Revolution*, 25.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

Later, after 1881, Tsar Alexander III placed Mennonite schools under the State Department of Public Instruction following the Russification policy.¹²⁰ During this so-called Russification process German had to be abandoned as a language of instruction in the colonies' schools and was replaced by Russian. The Mennonites who had remained in Russia regarded this as a loss of their self-determination which had become so important in their faith and culture over the years.¹²¹ By emigrating in the earlier years, the smaller group of Mennonites who had left avoided confrontation with this new development.

ii. Pull factors

The reasons why Mennonites chose Canada and the USA as their destination country were manifold. First of all, the Dominion Government of Canada had the intention to colonise their Western plains in as efficient and organised a way as possible. Thus, it was seriously interested in recruiting Mennonite farmers from Russia.¹²² Since the Hudson Bay Company had released Canada's sparsely populated Western territories to the government in 1869, it was eager to populate the region with new settlers.¹²³ The industrial development in the Saint Lawrence region depended on an extensive agrarian hinterland contributing to intercontinental trade and the building of a transcontinental railroad.¹²⁴ The area needed to be colonised and industrialised in order to promote economic development and to link both parts of the country together.¹²⁵ This destination for the intended settlers was the new province Manitoba, which was only created in 1870.¹²⁶

¹²⁰ Ibid., 25.

¹²¹ Ibid., 178.

¹²² Francis, *In Search of Utopia. The Mennonites in Manitoba*, 37.

¹²³ Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine neue Heimat. Deutsch-Mennonitische Kolonisierung in Mexiko 1922-1984*, 10.

¹²⁴ Francis, *In Search of Utopia. The Mennonites in Manitoba*, 39-40.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 52.

¹²⁶ Warkentin, "Mennonite Agricultural Settlements of Southern Manitoba," 343.

A delegate named William Hespeler was sent from Canada to Russia in order to promote a successful Mennonite emigration.¹²⁷ Simply the fact that there was a middleman promoting the benefits of immigration to Canada can be seen as a positive incentive for the Mennonites. It was Baines¹²⁸ who argued that by receiving information about the destination country from relatives, friends, middlemen, and other networks, people who wanted to emigrate felt safer and more assured to do so. Having more information, emigrants felt a reduced risk to leave their country, so that the step to emigrate seemed to be less of a risk than it would have been without the information.¹²⁹ Hespeler developed a written proposal for a settlement in Manitoba with five reasons for an immigration of Mennonites. His proposal stated that Manitoba had plenty of land and timber, Mennonite settlers would have the possibility of receiving compact land near transportation sites and available water supplies, the building of a railway was promised, a certain amount of land was granted for free. They were promised that they would have the possibility to acquire further land at a low price. Furthermore they were assured that the winters in Manitoba were usually dry.¹³⁰ Besides, the Northern American continent was seen as a 'Promised Land' offering its citizens freedom and opportunities, and which already had attracted other religious groups fleeing from persecution.¹³¹

Both the Canadian and the US-American governments invited a Mennonite delegation to visit Canada in 1873 in order to explore some potential areas of settlement. Both countries bore the expenses for this journey.¹³² John Lowe, the Secretary of Agriculture in Canada, offered the delegates a list of privileges that the new Mennonite immigrants would enjoy in Canada. The privileges constituted the following: an exemption from military service; a considerable amount of land for their own use; the opportunity to

¹²⁷ Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine neue Heimat. Deutsch-Mennonitische Kolonisierung in Mexiko 1922-1984*, 10.

¹²⁸ Baines, "European emigration, 1815-1930," 527.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Epp, *Mennonite Exodus. The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites Since the Communist Revolution*, 189.

¹³¹ Francis, *In Search of Utopia. The Mennonites in Manitoba*, 36.

¹³² Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine neue Heimat. Deutsch-Mennonitische Kolonisierung in Mexiko 1922-1984*, 9-10.

purchase land for a very low price; an exemption from taking the oath; and, as mentioned before, transportation credits and some supplies for the voyage to Canada. Although some of these provisions were often granted to new immigrants, the offering of immense parcels of land was new.¹³³

Beyond that, the Russian Mennonites received a legal guarantee of religious freedom, exclusion from military service, legal permission to be able to use the German language, and local self-government such as they had experienced in Russia under Catherine II.¹³⁴

Hamm¹³⁵ claims that it was 8000 people who immigrated to Canada from 1874 to 1880. Sawatzky¹³⁶ argues that 7000 Mennonites settled down in Manitoba between 1874 and 1880. It is possible that the more accurate number may be Warkentins¹³⁷ calculation of 6930 Mennonites who emigrated from Russia between 1874 and 1880 because he directly bases this number on the Canada Sessional Papers of 1874 – 1880. Overall, it can be said that approximately 7000 to 8000 Mennonites emigrated from Russia to Canada between the years 1874 and 1880. At this point, it is important to point out that it was a collective migration process. Mennonites emigrated as a group, which made it a lot easier for them to build a new community and support each other in their new home country.¹³⁸ But not all Russian Mennonites had left for a new homeland, it is estimated that about 32000 Mennonites remained in the Russian Empire.¹³⁹

A very attractive 'pull factor' was that each family received 160 acres of land for their full use, and for free. This was not available in the United States, which were also interested in Mennonite immigrants, so that Mennonites who were not in possession of

¹³³ Epp, *Mennonite Exodus. The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites Since the Communist Revolution*, 192.

¹³⁴ Ens, *Subjects or Citizens? The Mennonite Experience in Canada, 1870-1925*, 20-21.

¹³⁵ Hamm, *Continuity and Change. Among Canadian Mennonite Brethren*, 50.

¹³⁶ Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine neue Heimat. Deutsch-Mennonitische Kolonisierung in Mexiko 1922-1984*, 11.

¹³⁷ Warkentin, "Mennonite Agricultural Settlements of Southern Manitoba," 342.

¹³⁸ Loewen, *Family, church, and market: a Mennonite community in the Old and New Worlds, 1850-1930*, 69.

¹³⁹ Epp, *Mennonites in Canada, 1786-1920, The History of a Separate People*, 185.

sufficient funds decided to stay in Canada instead of settling down in the country to their south. On the whole, the Canadian government arranged 184000 acres of land for the new settlers.¹⁴⁰ The promise to receive land was a very strong incentive, especially for landless and poor farmers.

When arriving in Canada, the Mennonite group brought some capital with them from Russia. They imported some farm tools, implements and livestock. In order to help out those who did not have enough wealth, the Canadian government agreed to contribute to the costs of the Mennonite settlement in Manitoba by providing long-term loans.¹⁴¹ In the end, the Canadian government also granted them their own education system, freedom from military service and freedom from taking an oath.¹⁴²

But the period of time that some of the newly arrived Mennonites stayed in Canada was fairly short. It was only 1922 when some members of the group started to immigrate to Mexico.¹⁴³

For the Russian, the Canadian, and the US governments the waves of settlement of Mennonites on their respective soil had an important advantage. Since Mennonites had the reputation to be good and diligent farmers they had to reclaim the virgin frontier lands in those three countries into abundant agricultural settlements – each settlement to a different degree – and this benefited the areas of their settlements in all cases.¹⁴⁴ At this point, it can be said that the promise of free/ cheap land and guaranteed rights were significant pull factors in the Mennonites' immigration to Canada and the USA.

¹⁴⁰ Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine neue Heimat. Deutsch-Mennonitische Kolonisierung in Mexiko 1922-1984*, 10-11.

¹⁴¹ Francis, *In Search of Utopia. The Mennonites in Manitoba*, 55-60.

¹⁴² Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine neue Heimat. Deutsch-Mennonitische Kolonisierung in Mexiko 1922-1984*, 11.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁴⁴ Regehr, *Peace, Order and Good Government. Mennonites and Politics in Canada*, 16.

Akin to Canada the United States of America offered the Mennonite immigrants the opportunity to pursue their agrarian way of life.¹⁴⁵ The US had advertised a Mennonite immigration because they too had vast abundant lands that needed to be reclaimed, preferably by skilled independent agricultural workers. Hence, Mennonites were perfect candidates for this undertaking.¹⁴⁶

The territory around Nebraska was economically more developed than the area of Manitoba in the north. Since 1854 Nebraska was in the process of developing infrastructure, networks, and railroads.¹⁴⁷ The already mentioned delegate trip to North America in 1873 was arbitative to the Mennonite immigration. A group of delegates was sent out to explore fallow land in Minnesota, Dakota, Wisconsin, and Iowa.¹⁴⁸ Cornelius Jansen and his son Peter, who were delegates on this trip, were even able to drop in on President Grant and petition for a military exemption for their group.¹⁴⁹ Although the American President was unwilling to grant them such a request which went against state legislatures, he still made it clear that in the foreseeable future, the US would not be involved in violent conflicts, thus military service would not be essential to the incoming religious group.¹⁵⁰ In the aftermath 10000 Mennonites decided to settle down in the USA, mostly in the states of Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, and Dakota. Similar to Canada, American agencies were very successful in convincing Mennonites to settle down on their territories.¹⁵¹ In the end, Mennonites immigrating to the USA were granted military exemption distributed by the state governments. Those Mennonites who chose to settle down in the US were thrown off by Canada's extreme and harsh climate and

¹⁴⁵ Loewen, *Family, church, and market: a Mennonite community in the Old and New World, 1850-1930*, 73.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 73-74.

¹⁴⁸ Charlotte Thausing, "Die Emigration der Mennoniten aus der Sowjetunion" (Diploma thesis, Vienna: University Vienna, 2010), 37-38.

¹⁴⁹ Loewen, *Family, church, and market: a Mennonite community in the Old and New World, 1850-1930*, 83.

¹⁵⁰ Hostetler, *Hutterite Society*, 114.

¹⁵¹ Thausing, "Die Emigration der Mennoniten aus der Sowjetunion," 37-38.

underdeveloped transportation networks.¹⁵² They preferred to settle down in areas which were already increasingly developed and which exhibited infrastructure.

Summing up, ideological and religious reasons were not the only factors accounting for the Mennonites' decision to emigrate. The economic sphere, especially the offer to receive a vast acreage of land, was a major contributor to their willingness to leave the Russian territory. Thus, Mennonites chose both the US and Canada as their destination primarily out of economic reasons.

¹⁵² Loewen, *Family, church, and market: a Mennonite community in the Old and New World, 1850-1930*, 74.

3. Jewish emigration

In this chapter the Jewish emigration from both the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires, will be examined by focusing on the particular areas of origin and destination and the respective push and pull factors.

Throughout the course of the nineteenth century Jewish emigration to overseas' countries increased significantly. Between 1800 and 1880 the total Jewish emigration from Europe to overseas' destinations amounted to 250000 emigrants, with about 3000 people emigrating each year on average. In the last two decades of the nineteenth century one million people left Europe at an average rate of 50000 people each year.¹⁵³ Palestine at this time is shown not to have had better pull factors than the USA or Canada. More Jewish people immigrated to the United States than to Palestine. In the years 1881 to 1899 an average of 30000 Jews immigrated annually to the US. The number increased to 100000 Jewish immigrants who arrived there annually from 1900-1914.¹⁵⁴ The Jewish immigration to Palestine was of a smaller dimension. Between 1881 and 1930, about 45000 people immigrated to Palestine (coming mostly from Russia).¹⁵⁵

a. Geographical distinction

The majority of Eastern European Jews resided in the Pale of Settlement which was situated in the regions of Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania and which was the home of Ashkenasic Jews since the 15th century. Formally, the Pale of Settlement was established in

¹⁵³ Arthur Ruppin, *The Jews in the Modern World* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1934), 45.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 62.

1791 by Catherine the Great,¹⁵⁶ when Russian officials registered 15 regions that were open to Jewish settlements. Although the Pale existed until World War I, it did not have its own jurisdiction. It was also not exclusively a Jewish settlement, but home to Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Belorussians, and other groups.¹⁵⁷ As mentioned before, it comprised large areas of present-day Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Belarus, and Lithuania.¹⁵⁸

Galicia was the province of the Dual Austro-Hungarian Empire.¹⁵⁹ Historically, the territory of Galicia dates back to 981.¹⁶⁰ It was, just like the Pale of Settlement, paramountly a multi-national, multi-religious, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual region, comprising Jews, Russians, Poles, Ukrainians, and other peoples.¹⁶¹ It was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It bordered the Russian Empire and was the largest and the poorest region of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Hence, it was somewhat forlorn in its location.¹⁶² Geographically, its territory lay between the Vistula, Zbruch, and Cheremosh rivers and the Carpathian Mountains.¹⁶³ The capital of Galicia was Lemberg.¹⁶⁴ Today, it belongs partly to Poland and the Ukraine.¹⁶⁵

¹⁵⁶ Michael Brenner, *Kleine jüdische Geschichte* (München: C.H.Beck, 2008), 217.

¹⁵⁷ Klaus J. Bade et. al., *Enzyklopädie Migration in Europa: Vom 17. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart*, (Fink (Wilhelm), 2007), 725.

¹⁵⁸ Alexander A. Ilyin, "Exodus and Exile: The Spaces of Diaspora. The Pale of Settlement," Osher Map Library. Smith Center for Cartographic Education (University of Southern Maine, 1860), <http://usm.maine.edu/maps/exhibition/10/5/sub-/the-eastern-european-jewish-diaspora> (accessed July 20, 2010).

¹⁵⁹ Christopher Hann and Paul Robert Magocsi, eds., *Galicia. A multicultural Land*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 3.

¹⁶⁰ Paul Robert Magocsi, *Galicia. A Historical Survey and Bibliographic Guide* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), 50.

¹⁶¹ Mincer, "A Voice from the Diaspora: Julian Strykowski," 273.

¹⁶² Ronald Sanders, *Shores of Refuge. A Hundred Years of Jewish Emigration*. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1988), 29.

¹⁶³ Hann and Magocsi, *Galicia. A multicultural Land*, 3-4.

¹⁶⁴ Sanders, *Shores of Refuge. A Hundred Years of Jewish Emigration*, 26.

¹⁶⁵ Hann and Magocsi, *Galicia. A multicultural Land*, 4.

i. Push factors Russian Empire

More than five million Jews lived in the Russian Empire in 1881. Most of the European Jews lived across the borders of Poland, Western Russia, Moldavia, and Galicia. These places had the highest relative density of the Jewish population.¹⁶⁶

In general, the social structure in Russia was composed of class distinctions that were consolidated by law dividing the Russian society into different classes. The Russian Orthodox Church, with a particular firm position in the Russian society, declared that only people of Russian Orthodox faith could be considered as true Russians.¹⁶⁷ This perception put Jews in the position of outsiders on Russian soil. They also differed from the rest of the Russian population through a different language – Yiddish; religion – Judaism; and history and tradition.¹⁶⁸

During the reign of Alexander II a distinction was made between ‘useful’ and ‘not useful’ Jews, where the so-called useful Jews enjoyed more rights than Jews categorised as not useful. The privileged Jews, mostly merchants and the highly educated were allowed to leave and reside outside the Pale of Settlement. But this privilege was found to be notional only – in reality Jews were not accepted to live outside the Pale. So, although theoretically they had some rights, they could never be sure that those rights would be honoured by the officials.¹⁶⁹ Given the fact that territorially the Russian Empire was an immense country, the Russian Jews were excluded from 95 percent of the total territory of the Empire.¹⁷⁰

In the 1860s, a group of educated and emancipated Jews in Russia were eager to become fully integrated into Russian society, partly through abandoning Yiddish as their

¹⁶⁶ Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United States, from 1881 to 1910*, 22.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁶⁸ N. S. Leskov, *The Jews in Russia. Some Notes on the Jewish Question* (Princeton: The Kingston Press, 1986), x.

¹⁶⁹ Lloyd P. Gartner, *History of the Jews in Modern Times*, 186.

¹⁷⁰ Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United States, from 1881 to 1910*, 56-57.

common language. By doing so they anticipated that they would be able to open the door to an integration and modernisation of the Jewish people in Russia. But one dramatic development that changed the views of the intellectuals was the pogroms of 1881 and 1882 and the repressive laws from May 1882 which rejected the Jewry free access and contact with the Russian society. These factors led the Jewish intelligentsia to sympathise with the Jewish masses and refrain from an idea of Jewish integration into the Russian society which was one of the triggers for a future emigration.¹⁷¹

There were both external and internal causes for a Jewish emigration from Eastern Europe.¹⁷² The nineteenth century was extremely tumultuous for Jews, especially in regard to government regulations. They were either required to assimilate and become full Russian citizens with a conversion to the Russian Orthodox faith or they were repressed and forbidden to have any contact with the rest of the Russian population.¹⁷³ Since the eighteenth century the tsars of the Russian Empire followed a continuous correction and education of Jews even with attempts to Christianise them.¹⁷⁴

The beginning of the 1880s can be described as a turning point in the history of the Jews in Eastern Europe.¹⁷⁵ Some significant push factors were the pogroms that followed the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881.¹⁷⁶ Between 1881 and 1882, approximately 250 pogroms occurred in the Pale of Settlement.¹⁷⁷ Most scholars agree that it was the pogroms of the year 1881 which generated extreme anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic behaviour and which influenced the Jews' decision to emigrate to either the New World or

¹⁷¹ B. Horowitz, "The Image of Russian Jews in Russian-Jewish Historiography, 1860-1914," in *Studies in Jewish Civilisation. The Jews of Eastern Europe*, ed. L. Greenspoon, and others (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 9-10.

¹⁷² Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England 1870-1914*, 21.

¹⁷³ Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United States, from 1881 to 1910*, 57-58.

¹⁷⁴ Simon M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland. From the earliest times until the present day, Volume I* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1916), 391.

¹⁷⁵ Leskov, *The Jews in Russia. Some Notes on the Jewish Question.*

¹⁷⁶ Charlotte Erickson, "Jewish People in the Atlantic Migration, 1850-1914," in *Patterns of Migration, 1850-1914*, ed. Aubrey Newmann and Steven W. Massil (London: University College London Press, 1996), 5.

¹⁷⁷ John Doyle Klier, "Emigration Mania in Late-Imperial Russia: Legend and Reality," in *Patterns of Migration, 1850-1914*, ed. Aubrey Newmann and Steven W. Massil (London: University College London Press, 1996), 22.

Palestine. But Erickson¹⁷⁸ challenges this generalised view. She argues, with acknowledgement to Gartner, that those persecutions cannot have been the only and most important reasons for a Jewish emigration. Some indications for this argument are that Jews also emigrated from areas that were not directly affected by these pogroms, such as Galicia for example.¹⁷⁹ This means that anti-Semitism cannot have been the only reason for a Jewish emigration from Eastern Europe.

After the introduction of the May Laws, further restrictions were imposed on Russian Jews. The May Laws of 1882 were designed by Tsar Alexander III in order to restrict the Russian Jewry politically and economically which created a hostile environment. Jews were not allowed to settle outside the Pale of Settlement. They did not have permission to own or maintain agricultural property outside the Pale.¹⁸⁰ According to Joseph¹⁸¹ the May Laws forbade the Jews from moving even within the Pale, which constituted an enormous restriction of movement on them. This development led to a series of expulsions of Jews from their lands and of those who were apparently living 'illegally' outside the Pale.¹⁸² The most damaging restriction were these "limitations on domicile" as Gartner¹⁸³ argues, since most of the Russian Jewry had to reside inside the Pale on the territory of Eastern Europe and Russia. Their residency in the Pale resulted in exclusion both from land and from big cities where they could have had better job opportunities.¹⁸⁴ Thus, with the May Laws the territorial isolation of the Jews in Russia was finalised.¹⁸⁵

¹⁷⁸ Erickson, "Jewish People in the Atlantic Migration, 1850-1914," 5-6.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.5-6.

¹⁸⁰ Louis Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia, Volume II, The Struggle for Emancipation, 1881-1917* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951), 26-30.

¹⁸¹ Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United States, from 1881 to 1910*, 61.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England 1870-1914*, 22.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Leskov, *The Jews in Russia: Some Notes on the Jewish Question*.

The pogroms and the May Laws were not only driven by anti-Semitism. Revusky¹⁸⁶ argues that the government and some interest groups had the intention to drive Jews from their positions in the industry, commerce and trade in order to take over these jobs. Additionally, the death rate of the Jewish population was twice as high as that among the Russian Orthodox population due to an unhealthy diet, which was related to their restriction from certain occupations resulting in lesser payments and impoverishment.¹⁸⁷ The restrictions also had negative effects on the Russian economic development and the population. The prices on the real estate market dropped since the Jewish competition was eliminated. Since Jews were not allowed to function as middlemen, peasants had to point their interests to other middlemen for a higher price.¹⁸⁸

In the course of the nineteenth century, Jews experienced an enormous population growth with an increase from two and a half million to ten million people all over Europe.¹⁸⁹ According to Gartner,¹⁹⁰ the Jewish population living on Russian soil amounted to about one million people in 1800. By the year 1897, this number rose significantly to more than five million people.¹⁹¹ Klier describes it as a “demographic explosion”¹⁹² among the Jewish population. So, in less than one hundred years, the Russian Jewish population increased immensely. Usually such a big population growth demands the necessary infrastructure, which was not provided by the Russian government. The economic structure did not expand proportionally to the rise of the population. This development resulted in internal difficulties such as rising poverty rates, higher competition on the job

¹⁸⁶ A. Revusky, *Jews in Palestine* (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1935), 5.

¹⁸⁷ Leskov, *The Jews in Russia: Some Notes on the Jewish Question*, xiv.

¹⁸⁸ Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia, Volume II, Struggle for Emancipation, 1881-1917*, 30-31.

¹⁸⁹ Joseph Goldstein, *Jewish History in Modern Times*, 6.

¹⁹⁰ Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England 1870-1914*, 21.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Klier, *Imperial Russia's Jewish Question, 1855-1881* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 453-454.

market, and so forth.¹⁹³ Erickson¹⁹⁴ also advances the view that population growth was an important factor in making the decision to emigrate because neither agriculture, nor industry were growing fast enough in order to keep up with the rising population. And since Jewish people did not possess the right to choose their residence and occupation freely, they were severely affected by the population growth and the economic changes.¹⁹⁵

Some Jewish people were able to work as entrepreneurs in the textile, tobacco, sugar and tea industries, but they were only a small minority. The majority of the Russian Jewry stayed poor.¹⁹⁶ According to Joseph,¹⁹⁷ 39 percent of the total Jewish population were working in manufacturing and mechanical occupations. 32 percent were employed in commerce. Although more than 70 percent of the Jewish population were engaged in profitable occupations there was still a big part that remained poor. As a contrast, only three percent worked in agriculture. Thus, Jews in Eastern Europe can be described as an urban class.¹⁹⁸ This argument is supported by an increased internal migration from rural to urban areas when Jews moved from small villages to small towns and from small towns to big cities. Between the years 1897 and 1910 the urban Jewish population grew from two and a half to three and a half million inhabitants. In 1897, for example, 52 percent of the whole urban population was comprised of Jews (this number is valid for the region of Belarus-Lithuania). In the Ukraine, their number amounted to 85 to 90 percent.¹⁹⁹ Comparing all these numbers to the rest of the Russian population it becomes evident how strongly Jews stood out from the general population. More than 60 percent of Russia's non-Jewish population was employed in the agricultural field, with fifteen percent in manufacturing and mechanics and only three percent in commerce. So it is quite obvious

¹⁹³ Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England 1870-1914*, 21-22.

¹⁹⁴ Erickson, "Jewish People in the Atlantic Migration, 1850-1914," 22. 3.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 6.

¹⁹⁶ Gartner, *History of the Jews in Modern Times*, 187.

¹⁹⁷ Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United States, from 1881 to 1910*, 42.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 42-43.

¹⁹⁹ Slezkine, *Das jüdische Jahrhundert* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 131.

that Jews formed a significant proportion of the commercial and industrial classes.²⁰⁰ Joseph²⁰¹ also argues that a significant number of Eastern European Jews belonged to the middle class, including the educated classes and urban industrial workers. These findings support Revusky's opinion that the restrictions imposed on the Russian Jews had economic reasons.

The intentions for an emigration that Erickson²⁰² mentions were growing poverty and hardship, but also economic causes such as the industrialisation process. Given that Jews were not granted civic equality, they were transformed into outsiders who definitely eased their decision to leave Russia for good.²⁰³ Since they were unable to acquire land or move to larger cities²⁰⁴ where they could have engaged in trade and mercantile activities, they did not get the possibility to sustain and to support themselves freely and sufficiently. Also, they were not able to gain any legal or social emancipation which restricted them in possible courses of action.²⁰⁵ Considering the previous arguments, it is possible to state that when Jews felt the need to emigrate from Russia, the considerations for doing so lay, among other things, in the economic sphere.

An additional push factor was that Russian Jews were not accepted or respected by several groups. The Russian Orthodox Church, as much as other Christian denominations, regarded Jews as the complete opposite of their own ideal and therefore a threat to their existence. Nationalists were opposed to an assimilation of Jews in the Russification process, considering them as aliens.²⁰⁶ Russification was a term used by the Russian government

²⁰⁰ Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United States, from 1881 to 1910*, 42-43.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 41.

²⁰² Erickson, "Jewish People in the Atlantic Migration, 1850-1914," 3.

²⁰³ Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia. The Struggle for Emancipation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), 91.

²⁰⁴ Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England 1870-1914*, 22.

²⁰⁵ Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia. The Struggle for Emancipation*, 89.

²⁰⁶ Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United States, from 1881 to 1910*, 59.

when referring to the assimilation of a group of people to Russian society. Hereby, the recipients of this Russification process were forced to abandon their own cultural distinctions and traditions.²⁰⁷ And the bureaucracy and autocracy feared an “intellectual superiority” and the modernising and liberalising influences of some parts of the Jewish population.²⁰⁸ All of these negative sentiments contributed to their decision to emigrate.

In a nutshell the Jewry was confronted with important commercial and industrial developments which changed their role in commerce and society. With a rising Russian middle class, trying to establish themselves in the industry, Jewish industrial workers faced a competition that they had not known before. The impoverishment of the peasantry and agricultural crises added to a weaker economic standing of Jewish merchants and traders in society and on the market. A rise of economic anti-Semitism took place which even led to economic boycotts and, in extremely brutal cases, to massacres of Jewish citizens.²⁰⁹ Rising population growth did not bring about a faster development of infrastructure and employment opportunities, but resulted in more internal conflicts. But although the Russian government discriminated against the Russian Jewry, it was still opposed to a big Jewish emigration movement because it did not want to lose more tax-payers or prospective military recruits.²¹⁰

²⁰⁷ Adam Horton Altman, “A Place to fit in: Russian Jewish Radicalism and its Migration to America” (Baltimore: University of Maryland, 2009), 3.

²⁰⁸ Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United States, from 1881 to 1910*, 59.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 81-84.

²¹⁰ Klier, “Emigration Mania in Late-Imperial Russia: Legend and Reality,” 23.

ii. Push factors Galicia

The situation in Galicia differed substantially from the developments in the Russian Empire. Galicia was the primary territory of Jewish emigration in the Habsburg Monarchy.²¹¹ Similar to Russia the region of Galicia underwent some significant transformations, such as economic changes, nationalisation, and modernisation at the end of the nineteenth century. These transformations had a direct impact on the Galician Jewish population.²¹² Initially, Galicia was one of the most underdeveloped regions of the Habsburg Empire dealing with problems such as industrial backwardness and overpopulation.²¹³ Its underdeveloped status arose from a dilatory implementation of new agricultural methods. Although the nobility had the permission from the Austrian authorities to keep old monopolies, such as beer and vodka production, this privilege kept contributing to the backwardness due to a lack of incentives to change their economic behaviour and to adopt new crops and new technologies. Thus, without having a predominant incentive to stay in Galicia many peasants chose an emigration overseas as a valid escape from poverty.²¹⁴ Hence it can be argued that Galicia was as much a region of emigration as the Pale of Settlement and that Galician Jewish emigration occurred within the context of a general emigration wave from Galicia.

According to Hödl²¹⁵ the number of Jews living in Galicia in 1880 amounted to almost 750000 people which added up to about ten to eleven percent of the Galician population. Both capitals, Krakow and Lviv, had a Jewish population of about 30 percent and were main Jewish centres.²¹⁶ In this connection it is of importance to note that the

²¹¹ Sanders, *Shores of Refuge. A Hundred Years of Jewish Emigration*, 30.

²¹² Hödl, "Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna," 147.

²¹³ Prazmowska, *A History of Poland*, 154.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Hödl, *Vom Shtetl an die Lower East Side. Galizische Juden in New York*, 19:11.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 33.

government might have, intentionally or not, manipulated some of these and the following census data in order to adjust it to its own purposes.²¹⁷ Thus, the above mentioned numbers can only be regarded as rough estimates. Nevertheless, they are still significant and help us to understand some of the demographic characteristics of the regions that are being examined.

75 percent of Galician Jews resided in the eastern cities of the province, such as Brody and Lviv. Hence, just like Russian Jews they were an urban class that was dominating trade and commerce.²¹⁸ For instance, in 1900, 24.4 percent of all working Jews were involved in commerce and 26.4 percent worked in the textile industry, as opposed to only one percent of employed Christians working in the area of commerce and 4.2 percent of the non-Jewish population working in the textile industry. Thus, Jews were mostly concentrated in the commercial sector.²¹⁹ Although, they had a prominent position in economic life, a comprehensive majority still struggled with poverty due to, among other things, government-imposed restrictions on their choice of occupation.²²⁰ The agrarian sector, on the other hand, was dominated by 86.3 percent by Christians, whereas only 17.9 percent of the Jews were employed in that area. 91.2 percent of the Jewish population were employed in the trade sector which demonstrates their professional confinement. The Galician Jewish population also experienced a severe demographic increase between 1895 and 1900 (with an increase rate of 19.6 percent).²²¹ Within 30 years (1880-1910) the demographic increase amounted to 37.2 percent.²²² One reason for this demographic growth is that Jews from the Russian Empire sought refuge in Galicia trying to escape the

²¹⁷ Hann and Magocsi, *Galicia. A multicultural Land*, 7.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 4.

²¹⁹ Hödl, "Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna," 147.

²²⁰ Hann and Magocsi, *Galicia. A multicultural Land*, 4.

²²¹ Hödl, "Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna," 147-149.

²²² Hödl, *Vom Shtetl an die Lower East Side. Galizische Juden in New York*, 19:31.

pogroms of the 1880s.²²³ So a migration process within the Eastern European region, from the Russian Empire to Galicia, predated a possible emigration overseas which means that there were Jews coming originally from the Russian Empire who emigrated from the Galician territory. Jewish refugees were able to enter Galicia because of its unsecured borders and its proximity to the Russian Empire. Additionally, it was historically and geographically connected to Russia and already accommodated a large Yiddish-speaking community.²²⁴ These circumstances ignited the fear in Galician Jewry that they might experience a similar anti-Semitism in the near future. This fear was, quite frankly to a very little extent, conducive to their emigration.²²⁵ In Galicia, being restricted to mostly one professional area, they were in desperate need of other more diverse employment opportunities outside of the trade sector. Hödl²²⁶ argues that with rising nationalism new employment opportunities were even more difficult to establish which created a polarised situation. In addition, with the expansion of the railway network cities became more connected; long-distance travel became easier and positively influenced trade. Due to this increased mobility people were not as dependent on the weekly markets in the shtetls conducted by Jewish merchants. But exactly these markets were a major source of income for a large part of the Jewish population.²²⁷ So slowly but surely they were blocked out from their businesses. Inevitably, the economic reorganisation demanded some occupational restructuring. In order to find alternative employment opportunities many Jews started to move to bigger cities, e. g. Vienna. But the situation on the job market in the cities was not very favourable either. There were only few jobs available and they did not increase in number with the arrival of Jews from rural areas. Eventually, this rural to

²²³ Rudolf A. Mark, *Galizien unter österreichischer Herrschaft. Verwaltung - Kirche - Bevölkerung*, ed. by Hans-Werner Rautenberg, Historische und landeskundliche Ostmitteleuropa-Studien 13 (Marburg: Herder-Institut, 1994), 81.

²²⁴ Sanders, *Shores of Refuge. A Hundred Years of Jewish Emigration*, 26.

²²⁵ Andlauer, *Die jüdische Bevölkerung im Modernisierungsprozess Galiziens (1867-1914)*, 11: 297.

²²⁶ Hödl, "Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna," 147-149.

²²⁷ Ibid.

urban migration has lead to a further migration overseas,²²⁸ especially when the incoming migrants were unable to find an occupation in urban centres. Thus migration overseas seemed inevitable. Summing up internal migration preceded external migration overseas, especially after unsatisfying experiences of internal migration. But some Jewish migrants actually selected the capital of the Habsburg Empire as their new permanent home.²²⁹ Vienna was chosen as a destination point because of its location – it was situated within the Empire – and was not some vague mythical land. It had a good reputation regarding education and was considered to be a cultural, social, economic, and political centre. Thus, it provided the migrants with a hope of social improvement.²³⁰ Moreover, with the establishment of the Austro-Hungarian constitution in 1867, Jews had obtained civil rights and were equal and free citizens of the Monarchy. They were permitted to acquire land without restrictions and to move freely.²³¹ Hence, they were no longer bound to reside in the Pale, so that a large number of people was actually able to relocate to urban centres.²³² The city also offered a network of organisations dealing with incoming Jewish migrants, such organisations were *Bikur Holim* and *Israelitischer Wohltätigkeits- und Krankenunterstützungsverein*.²³³ One of their main efforts was not just to provide relief and assistance, but also to minimise differences and the poverty of the newly arrived migrants.²³⁴ It can be said that this poor-relief and assistance was an incentive for the Galician Jews, but from the charities' and the Viennese Jews' perspectives it was more intended to promote acculturation and the adaptation of cultural standards.²³⁵

²²⁸ Hödl, *Vom Shtetl an die Lower East Side. Galizische Juden in New York*, 19:33.

²²⁹ Hödl, "Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna," 147-150.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 148.

²³¹ Sanders, *Shores of Refuge. A Hundred Years of Jewish Emigration*, 29.

²³² *Ibid.*, 30.

²³³ The author, Klaus Hödl, translates *Bikur Holim* as "Visits for the Sick" and the *Israelitischer Wohltätigkeits- und Krankenunterstützungsverein* as "Relief Association for Poor Sick Israelites".

²³⁴ Hödl, "Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna," 154.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 156.

One major reason for Jews to emigrate from Galicia was the lack of expectations for economic and social improvements. Although they had acquired civic rights, their earning potential was still lowered by the nationalist economic policy in Galicia. Jews felt subjugated by professional repression resulting in frustration which again contributed to a decision to emigrate. These additional reasons for an emigration cannot be described by quantitative figures, but they did most certainly contribute to a growing feeling of hopelessness, frustration and a feeling of detachment.²³⁶ Furthermore, cultural differences between the Jewish and the Christian populations of Galicia added to the feeling of separateness and “otherness” of the Jews.²³⁷ Thus, economic causes cannot be seen as the sole deciding factor. But it is undeniable that the already mentioned reorganisation of Galicia’s economy had major influences on its Jewish population.²³⁸ Beyond that there were also anti-Semitic sentiments and upheavals in Galicia, but they were less severe and less influential in the emigrants’ decision to leave the country.²³⁹ The choice to pursue this long-distance migration can be regarded not only as a means of improving ones’ economic and professional potentials, but also as an escape of tradition, insularity, and restrictions.

The choice of their destination country, whether it was Vienna, the US or Palestine, depended on various factors. Jews migrating to Vienna did not need to cross a border, or an ocean as it was the case with America. Vienna was known to be the political and cultural centre of the area and was thus a major centre of attraction. Its way of life was well-known to the arriving migrants and was definitely not as unfamiliar as the habitus in the USA which presented a new culture and language. A migration to Vienna was more reversible and inexpensive than a voyage over the Atlantic Ocean.²⁴⁰ The US, on the other hand, were perceived as a place of new hope, freedom, and economic opportunities and as being

²³⁶ Ibid., 148.

²³⁷ Keely Stauter-Halsted, *The Nation in the Village. The Genesis of Peasant National Identity in Austrian Poland, 1848-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 42.

²³⁸ Hödl, “Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna,” 148.

²³⁹ Andlauer, *Die jüdische Bevölkerung im Modernisierungsprozess Galiziens (1867-1914)*, 11:298.

²⁴⁰ Hödl, “Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna,” 147.

extremely hospitable to incoming migrants. And immigration to Palestine emerged from the Zionist movement and was regarded as a return to the homeland.

To sum up, Galician-Jewish emigration was patently influenced by economic factors, whereas Russian-Jewish emigration was primarily dominated by political reasons which nevertheless were intertwined with the economic sphere.²⁴¹ However, Galician Jews had a better political position than Russian Jews since they had received civil rights in 1867.²⁴²

iii. Pull factors Palestine

Although 90 percent of the Jewish emigrants from Eastern Europe chose the United States as their destination country,²⁴³ there was also a minority that wanted to immigrate to other destinations such as Argentina and Palestine. In this section the focus will be on the Jewish immigration to Palestine in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Argentina will not be looked at as a destination country because it had a minor and less significant Jewish immigrant inflow.

Palestine functioned as a destination country because of “its sentimental historical appeal [...]”.²⁴⁴ Zionists wanted to constitute Palestine as their new national homeland.²⁴⁵ The Zionist ideology, emerging all over Europe in the nineteenth century, implies the

²⁴¹ Andlauer, *Die jüdische Bevölkerung im Modernisierungsprozess Galiziens (1867-1914)*, 11:298.

²⁴² Andlauer, *Die jüdische Bevölkerung im Modernisierungsprozess Galiziens (1867-1914)*, 11:298.

²⁴³ Erickson, “Jewish People in the Atlantic Migration, 1850-1914,” 2.

²⁴⁴ Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia. Volume II, The Struggle for Emancipation, 1881-1917*, 65.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

pursuit of a return back to Palestine as the land of the Jews' ancestors and history.²⁴⁶ The Zionist movement has been described as a "renationalisation of the Jewish people"²⁴⁷ and as a "movement for national unity."²⁴⁸ Along with the emergence of Zionism questions about Jewish identity and the belonging of Jewish people were being raised in public discourse. A dispute was under way as to whether the Jews in Europe should assimilate fully or whether they should emigrate and leave Europe for good.²⁴⁹

A larger Jewish emigration movement to Palestine started in 1881.²⁵⁰ Groups emerged and promoted a Jewish settlement in Palestine. One of the several groups and societies that campaigned for immigration to Palestine was a group called *Bilu*. The word *Bilu* is an abbreviation of the Hebrew saying *Bet Yaakov Ledu Venelcha* and means: "O House of Jacob, come, and let us go forth."²⁵¹ The group's main plan was to recruit as many people as possible to settle down in Palestine, so that they could function as pioneers and facilitate a renaissance of the Jewish people in their homeland. But in the end, they were rather unsuccessful due to insufficient funding and a too small membership.²⁵² One of the considerations that are pointed out for a Jewish emigration towards Palestine is that the new settlers wanted to "pave the way for settling (our) brethren in the Holy land so that they may work the land and fulfil the *mitzot ha-teluyot ba-aretz* ('precepts peculiar to the Land of Israel'), thus exalting the people of Israel with honour and so that they will no longer be a mockery among the nations."²⁵³ This means that they wanted to live on a land that they could finally call their own without being strangers any longer, and finally gain

²⁴⁶ Lucas, *The Modern History of Israel*, 21.

²⁴⁷ Martin Sicker, *Judaism, Nationalism, and the Land of Israel* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 97.

²⁴⁸ Revusky, *Jews in Palestine*, 6.

²⁴⁹ Sicker, *Judaism, Nationalism, and the Land of Israel*, 39-41.

²⁵⁰ Ruppin, *The Jews in the Modern World*, 55.

²⁵¹ Mordecai Schreiber, Alvin I. Schiff, and Leon Klenicki, Eds., *The Shengold Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. 3 (Rockville: Schreiber Pub., 2003), 50.

²⁵² Sicker, *Reshaping Palestine. From Muhammad Ali to the British Mandate, 1831-1922*, 43-45.

²⁵³ Goldstein, *Jewish History in Modern Times*, 12.

acceptance and respect. And by calling their emigration movement *Aliyah*, which refers to the Jewish emigration waves to Palestine and translates to “ascent”,²⁵⁴ they gave it a special meaning because they were partly emigrating out of a nationalist feeling.²⁵⁵ Immigration was considered an opportunity to maintain and improve Jewish life, its language, culture and history.²⁵⁶ The push factors that were being used were rather ideology, identity and traditions.²⁵⁷

The Zionist movement that emerged in the nineteenth century was a very important push factor for Jews to finally settle down in a land of their own. Most of the new settlers were young and secular and approached their emigration to Palestine in the context of this movement. The majority considered themselves as pioneers. Also, they were interested in setting up agricultural colonies in order to sustain themselves independently.²⁵⁸ Parfitt²⁵⁹ also advances the view that the immigration to Palestine in the course of the First *Aliyah* consisted of mostly young pioneers who were eager to engage themselves in agricultural activities. The term ‘First *Aliyah*’ refers to the Jewish immigration to Palestine from 1882-1903.²⁶⁰ In 1855, only 11000 Jews lived in Palestine, whereas this number increased to 55000 in 1900.²⁶¹

At that time, Palestine was not a sovereign state; it was under the control of the Ottoman Empire.²⁶² In the 1880s, the Ottoman authorities voiced their opinion against a Jewish immigration to Palestine. But they gave their permission to Jewish immigrants to

²⁵⁴ Marie Price und Lisa Benton-Short, Eds., *Migrants to the Metropolis. The Rise of Immigrant Gateway Cities* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2008), 304.

²⁵⁵ Goldstein, *Jewish History in Modern Times*, 12-13.

²⁵⁶ Sicker, *Reshaping Palestine. From Muhammad Ali to the British Mandate, 1831-1922*, 40.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 44.

²⁵⁸ Bregman, *A History of Israel*, 8.

²⁵⁹ Tudor Parfitt, *The Jews in Palestine, 1800-1882* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1987), 123.

²⁶⁰ Bregman, *A History of Israel*, 7.

²⁶¹ Ruppin, *The Jews in the Modern World*, 55.

²⁶² Gideon Biger, *The Boundaries of Modern Palestine, 1840-1947* (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), 13.

settle down in other regions of the Ottoman Empire.²⁶³ The reasoning for such a standpoint was the Empire's internal struggle with minorities who were already residing in the Empire and the wish of trying to avoid as many difficulties as possible.²⁶⁴ The fact that the Ottoman Empire officials did not wish for a Jewish settlement in their Palestinian premises was widely ignored by the Jews who were willing and eager to immigrate to Palestine from Europe and Russia.²⁶⁵ They found many loopholes, especially because the Ottoman government did not pursue this restriction rigorously, so that the limitation on immigrants did not have an important impact.²⁶⁶

The new settlers were mainly unprepared when they arrived in Palestine. They had not been farmers before that point, so that engaging in agriculture was a completely new task for them. Without having additional agricultural skills or much preparation before immigrating to Palestine,²⁶⁷ they were confronted with different problems, such as illnesses, lack of good soil and farming know-how and opposition from Ottoman officials.²⁶⁸ Despite this, their becoming agriculturalists in Palestine meant the immigrants got the opportunity to live more independently and under better conditions than before, even with their inexperience in the area of farming.²⁶⁹ So, in the course of only a couple of years and with financial help from wealthy supporters such as Baron de Rothschild²⁷⁰ they were able to build agricultural settlements over an area of 62500 acres.²⁷¹ Nonetheless, the First *Aliyah* was not as important as the following *Aliyah* because the first settlers did not establish any institutions, important organisations or a sufficient infrastructure.²⁷² Most people

²⁶³ Ibid., 15.

²⁶⁴ Sicker, *Reshaping Palestine. From Muhammad Ali to the British Mandate, 1831-1922*, 53.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 42.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 57.

²⁶⁷ Yossi Ben-Artzi, *Early Jewish Settlement Patterns in Palestine, 1882-1914* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1997), 17.

²⁶⁸ Bregman, *A History of Israel*, 7-10.

²⁶⁹ Sicker, *Reshaping Palestine. From Muhammad Ali to the British Mandate, 1831-1922*, 31-32.

²⁷⁰ Lucas, *The Modern History of Israel*, 25.

²⁷¹ Bregman, *A History of Israel*, 7-10.

²⁷² Ibid., 9-10.

eventually settled down in cities where they could obtain the best living conditions.²⁷³ The majority chose Jerusalem as their new home because it already had a good infrastructure with ports and railroads and an economic market. The other cities where the new immigrants settled down were Hebron, Tiberias and Safed.²⁷⁴ Goldstein²⁷⁵ claims that the net number of the new settlers of the First and Second *Aliyah* in Palestine was around 20500 whereas the total number amounted to about 60000. This means that the majority of the new immigrants had left the territory in the course of the First and Second *Aliyah* (the Second *Aliyah* occurred from 1904-1914).²⁷⁶

So there were several reasons for Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe to Palestine. For some it was the hope of finally having a solution to the persecution that they had suffered most recently in the Russian Empire. On the other hand, some immigrants had the idea of creating a new type of Jew who would be a farmer, and transforming the lands of Palestine into an agricultural region.²⁷⁷ Intrinsically they were trying to escape social, economic, political and cultural problems, but in Palestine they were once again confronted with similar problems, where they did not find a sufficient economic base or an adequate infrastructure.²⁷⁸ Thus, while the First *Aliyah* did not have a very strong impact on Palestine and its Jewish settlements, it opened an opportunity for the Jewry to seriously consider choosing Palestine as their destination country.²⁷⁹

²⁷³ Ibid., 24.

²⁷⁴ Ruppin, *Der Aufbau des Landes Israel* (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1919), 11-14.

²⁷⁵ Goldstein, *Jewish History in Modern Times*, 13.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Ben-Artzi, *Early Jewish Settlement Patterns in Palestine, 1882-1914*, 18.

²⁷⁸ Goldstein, *Jewish History in Modern Times*, 13.

²⁷⁹ Lucas, *The Modern History of Israel*, 27.

iv. Pull factors USA

The main incentives of the United States differed from the incentives offered by Palestine. As we already know, the USA were an extremely attractive destination country for migrants from Europe at the turn of the nineteenth century. The majority of the European, and especially of the Russian Jews, immigrated to the US. Between 1897 and 1915 more than 1.25 million Jews had left the Russian Empire. About 80 percent of the emigrating Jewish community chose the US as their primary destination country. More than 70 percent of the Jewish immigrants in the US came originally from the Russian Empire.²⁸⁰

The return rate of Russian Jews was one of the smallest of all immigrant groups in the US, which is even more imposing considering the high number of Russian Jewish immigrants.²⁸¹ This proves that they were extremely determined to leave Russia and that the incentives which the US provided were sufficient. These inducements were a free economic market, the promise and the idea of freedom and equality, freedom of movement, religious freedom, a society coined by individuality, and existing networks. Many emigrants had already some family members in the US who could support them with information and financial assistance. These factors were important ideological pull factors for Jewish people to settle in the US.²⁸² Besides, the USA were seen as a country that could actually guarantee religious and political equality.²⁸³ And compared to Palestine, which was a symbol for a territorial and, to a certain extent, secular Jewish nationalism, emigration into the US was considered to be the least political and radical option²⁸⁴ and was not coined by socialist and Zionist sentiments. Other influencing factors were the immigrants'

²⁸⁰ Yuri Slezkine, *Das jüdische Jahrhundert*, 131.

²⁸¹ Ibid., 131.

²⁸² Ibid., 211.

²⁸³ Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia. The Struggle for Emancipation*, 74.

²⁸⁴ Slezkine, *Das jüdische Jahrhundert*, 214.

desire to create a regular economic situation for themselves²⁸⁵ and various possibilities and opportunities to find employment.²⁸⁶ Furthermore, the prospect of being able to settle down in large cities, such as New York and Chicago, was important to emigrants who had been members of an urban class in the Austro-Hungarian and the Russian Empire²⁸⁷ (with about 80 percent of all Jews living in urban areas in Russia²⁸⁸ and 75 percent in Galicia).²⁸⁹ The majority of Jewish immigrants chose large cities as their destination in the US because of their vast economic, cultural, and social opportunities.²⁹⁰ The US offered abundant and cheap labour for arriving settlers, a liberal government that was actually, in contrast to the Ottoman Empire, in favour of immigration, and an already existing American Jewish community.²⁹¹

A significant pull factor of the USA, especially New York, was its textile industry which was an industry the Jews had work experiences in. Thus, many skilled workers, such as tailors, chose particularly New York as their destination.²⁹² The largest number of Jews from Galicia relocated to New York with about 200000 emigrants leaving for that destination between 1881 and 1910. Jews were the largest emigrant group from Galicia – they amounted to 80 percent of all emigrants from the Habsburg Empire²⁹³ – exceeding Poles and Ukrainians by a significant number.²⁹⁴

Jewish immigration to the USA, just like the immigration to Palestine, had its own advocates, such as the agency *Am Olam* which translates to “the eternal people”.²⁹⁵ It was

²⁸⁵ Gur Alroey, “Aliya to America? A Comparative Look at Jewish Mass Migration, 1881-1914,” *Modern Judaism* 28, no. 2 (Mai 1, 2008): 114.

²⁸⁶ Altman, “A Place to fit in: Russian Jewish Radicalism and its Migration to America,” 4.

²⁸⁷ Rita James Simon, *In the golden land: a century of Russian and Soviet Jewish immigration in America* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1997), 23.

²⁸⁸ Gur Alroey, ““And I Remained Alone in a Vast Land”: Women in the Jewish Migration from Eastern Europe,” *Jewish Social Studies* 12, no. 3 (2006): 42.

²⁸⁹ Hann and Magocsi, *Galicia. A multicultural Land*, 4.

²⁹⁰ Gartner, *History of the Jews in Modern Times*, 216.

²⁹¹ Alroey, “Aliya to America?,” 117.

²⁹² Hödl, “Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna,” 147.

²⁹³ Andlauer, *Die jüdische Bevölkerung im Modernisierungsprozess Galiziens (1867-1914)*, 11:289.

²⁹⁴ Hödl, “Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna,” 147-151.

²⁹⁵ Yaacov Oved, *Two hundred years of American communes* (Transaction Publishers, 1993), 223.

founded in 1881 in the turmoil of anti-Semitic upheavals in Russia and was rather a social movement than an emigration organisation. The tenets of *Am Olam* were the belief that the creation of agricultural colonies in America would help the Jewish people in their recovery (a recovery from diaspora, aggression, and so forth). In the end, *Am Olam* supported about 1000 Jews in their decision to immigrate to the US.²⁹⁶ It played only a minor role in Jewish US-immigration, but its similarity to Jewish Palestinian-immigration is striking. The main characteristic of this group was an aim to establish farming colonies in the US, which is akin to the group that chose Palestine as their destination with the support of *Bilu*. But in the long run Jewish immigrants were not able to sustain farming colonies in the US.²⁹⁷

Ultimately both Jews from Russia and Galicia demonstrated an extremely high immigration rate to the US which indicates that firstly, immigration to the US was not dominated by imposing obstacles; and secondly, the living and economic conditions, and security in both the Russian and the Austro-Hungarian Empires changed severely during the years of immigration reflecting their challenging situation and leading to a decision to abandon Eastern Europe for a new destination.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁶ Alroey, "Aliya to America?," 114.

²⁹⁷ Alroey, "Aliya to America?," 112-118.

²⁹⁸ Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United States, from 1881 to 1910*, 104.

Conclusion

In sum then, I have started with a theoretical outline of migration theories and patterns in order to connect them to the two migration groups that I have investigated. Continuing, I have focused on the end of the nineteenth century as an age of mass migration and put the analysed migration movements into this context. Finally, I have distinguished the reasons and causes which facilitated an emigration of both groups. At this point, it is possible to argue that both Mennonites and Jews emigrated due to a combination of political, religious, social, and most importantly economic reasons. But what factors can be seen as the initial cause? Why did both groups choose to emigrate at that particular time?

Mennonites developed a strategy regarding how to benefit from their positive amenities and use them in negotiations with governments. Although it went against their principles of faith, they still tried to build alliances with rulers and authorities in order to receive the privileges they desired.²⁹⁹ As soon as they started to refuse military service or any other participation in warfare, they started to act politically. Even when they agreed to move to Tsarist Russia under Catherine II and agreed on receiving certain privileges, they became solidly involved in worldly activities. They needed to contact local leaders and negotiate their position in order not to lose their personal, religious and cultural freedom. They wanted and needed to stay socially stable and separate.³⁰⁰ In order to do so, they developed a policy of trading economic services and exemplary citizenship for religious

²⁹⁹ Urry, *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood. Russia – Europe – Canada 1525-1980*.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

acknowledgments.³⁰¹ So the wish to be independent economically, politically, and religiously was distinctive to the Mennonites.

It is important to understand that the German Mennonites were a religious group that clung together by its faith and its common culture and history. Having experienced a threat to its own community by religious persecution, they removed themselves from mainstream society³⁰² and started moving eastward and later westward overseas in order to find better living conditions and a place where they were able to follow their religious beliefs without any constraints.

The notion that Mennonites were strict pacifists³⁰³ and that this characteristic strongly influenced them in their decision to emigrate is only partly true. The reason for this conclusion is that only one part of the Mennonite community emigrated. The rest aligned themselves with the Russian government and accepted the forestry service alternative to military service that was offered as a compromise.³⁰⁴ Thus, there were a lot of divisions in the Mennonite group because they did not emigrate as a whole group, but only in a smaller subset group.

Although emigration of Mennonites and Jews respectively had some characteristics in common, they still varied in detail. Akin to the Mennonites the Jews sought to be independent economically, politically, and religiously. Another similarity between the two groups is that both groups had leaders or organisations promoting an emigration overseas. This was especially the case for the Mennonites, who emigrated as “an organised community”.³⁰⁵ Other similarities are that the emigration was instigated by political, social,

³⁰¹ Regehr, *Peace, Order and Good Government. Mennonites and Politics in Canada*, 17.

³⁰² Epp, *Mennonite Exodus. The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites Since the Communist Revolution*, 24.

³⁰³ Loewen, *Family, church, and market: a Mennonite community in the Old and New Worlds, 1850-1930*, 1.

³⁰⁴ Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine neue Heimat. Deutsch-Mennonitische Kolonialisierung in Mexiko 1922-1984*, 9.

³⁰⁵ Loewen, *Family, church, and market: a Mennonite community in the Old and New Worlds, 1850-1930*, 263.

and demographic changes. Mennonites experienced a population increase;³⁰⁶ so did the Jews.³⁰⁷ Most importantly, both emigrant movements were influenced by economic changes. In the case of the Mennonites, I have come to the conclusion that the main reason to emigrate lay in the economic sphere. Since each family was promised to receive land from the Dominion of Canada and the government of the United States of America and since it was mostly landless farmers who emigrated, this free land was a great incentive and a very important pull factor. So, by immigrating to Canada and the USA Mennonites had the opportunity to finally acquire some land and become sustainable farmers.³⁰⁸ Also, the loss of their privileges and their secure special status in Russia made it more difficult for them to stay independently and to continue growing economically as they had before the changes. I conclude with the argument that Mennonites were push migrants since they were pushed out of the Russian Empire by legal and economic changes.

Contrary to the Mennonites, Jews in the Russian Empire were more fragmented. They were either religious or secular. They either valued their heritage and background by speaking their own language, Yiddish, or did not put any emphasis on it and tried to assimilate, which was the case for some groups such as the intellectuals.³⁰⁹ Hence, their reasons to emigrate were also diverse. One important push factor were anti-Semitic sentiments and arising nationalism in Eastern Europe at the end of the nineteenth century. There are also indications that economic reasons played a role in the persecution of Jews in Russia. Concerning the Jewish population the restrictions instigated by the May Laws made it a lot more difficult for them to change their place of residency, to choose their occupation and to support themselves financially within the Empire.³¹⁰ Jews were

³⁰⁶ Francis, *In Search of Utopia. The Mennonites in Manitoba*, 29.

³⁰⁷ Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England 1870-1914*, 21-22.

³⁰⁸ Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine neue Heimat. Deutsch-Mennonitische Kolonialisierung in Mexiko 1922-1984*, 11.

³⁰⁹ Horowitz, "The Image of Russian Jews in Russian-Jewish Historiography, 1860-1914," 9.

³¹⁰ Erickson, "Jewish People in the Atlantic Migration, 1850-1914," 6.

confronted with economic anti-Semitism.³¹¹ Thus, an emigration was seen as a safety valve; an opportunity to escape poverty and discrimination.³¹² Galician Jews on the other hand were less affected by religious and political persecution. They also had to struggle with anti-Semitism, but it was less influential in their decision to emigrate. But in the case of Galician emigration most of the scholars agree that it was rather driven by unfortunate economic circumstances. These circumstances included an increase in population growth, just like in Russia, and a lack of employment opportunities for the Jewish population. Galician Jewish emigrants were willing to move because they did not see any prospects of immediate economic improvements since they were restricted to work only in one professional area. Besides, they were driven out of their professions due to structural and technological changes, as analysed before. An additional factor was the problem of Russian and Galician Jews, as well as Mennonites, being considered as aliens in a society that did not share their faith, belief system and traditions. They distinguished themselves from the rest of the Russian population which can be considered as a contributing factor to their decision to emigrate. Therefore, emigration turned out to be the next reasonable step.

Overall, I have come to the conclusion that the emigration of both groups was driven by economic reasons firstly and by political and social reasons secondly. Both groups were strongly affected by Russia's modernisation process, each group to a different degree. Whereas Jews who were willing to emigrate saw themselves as unable to lead an economically sufficient life in the Russian Empire or Galicia and were also affected by restrictions on their daily life and by anti-Semitism, Mennonites feared the loss of their privileged status in the Empire and were drawn by the promises made to them by the two North American governments. The USA in general was seen by both groups as a region of dynamic economic opportunities. Those Mennonites who wanted to immigrate to Canada

³¹¹ Revusky, *Jews in Palestine*, 7.

³¹² Klier, "Emigration Mania in Late-Imperial Russia: Legend and Reality," 22.

or the USA had some knowledge about the conditions that they would encounter because of the delegation that was sent to Canada in 1873. Besides, both the Canadian and the US governments were in favour of their immigration.³¹³ Jewish emigrants received also sufficient information from immigration agencies, friends, relatives, and other networks and were able to make well-informed decisions. Immigration to Palestine, on the other hand, proved to be more difficult because the immigrants were confronted with an Ottoman Empire which was opposed to their immigration,³¹⁴ but nevertheless, they also had the opportunity to establish contact with Zionist groups to help them in the transition to Palestine. The similarities between both groups are that their emigration was instigated by the legal and economic developments of both Empires. Therefore, it is possible to argue that these emigration processes have been influenced by both governments' decisions in a short period of time. Basing my arguments on this observation I am able to advance the view that government regulations and legislations have a major impact on certain groups and their decision to emigrate. But most importantly economic reasons are a crucial push factor to leave a country for good.

The fact that each group chose a different location to immigrate to shows that they had different skills – Mennonites as farmers and Jews as an urban merchant class mostly settling down in cities, although they attempted, not extremely successfully though, to engage in agrarian activities – and brought different human capital with them.

All of these observations lead to the conclusion that economic factors were the deciding factor in both minority groups' decision to emigrate. Another crucial point that stands out is the extreme force and influence of the push factors. Push factors were the instigating determinant for the emigration of the assessed groups. So, the migration of both Mennonites and Jews can be considered as partially forced migration. The respective

³¹³ Sawatzky, *Sie suchten eine neue Heimat. Deutsch-Mennonitische Kolonialisierung in Mexiko 1922-1984*, 9-10.

³¹⁴ Lucas, *The Modern History of Israel*, 24.

governments did not demand them directly to leave. But they were rather pushed out of the country by unfavourable economic, political and legislative developments. It is important to note that there may have been other reasons that influenced both migration streams. But these reasons have not been investigated broadly in the literature.

So the question put forward at the beginning of this exploration is answered in the conditional affirmative. While economic factors were the most important influences in the decision of both the Mennonites and the Jews to emigrate from Eastern European territories at the end of the nineteenth century, other non-economic factors of social, political and religious importance also held sway.

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Education

MA Global Studies, University Vienna, Austria, 2009-2010

Studied International Relations as an Exchange Student at Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia, 2009. Finishing the Masters degree at the University of Vienna with a Masters thesis in 2010.

MSc Global History, Department of Economic History, LSE, UK, 2008-2009

Studied Global and Economic History. Emphasis on the Integration and Development of the World Economies; History of Material Progress and Stasis; Comparisons and Connections between the Histories of different Regions in the World. Wrote Dissertation about Migration of Minority Groups.

BA Integrated European Studies, University Bremen, Germany, 2005-2008

Studied European Studies with an Integrated Semester at the State University St. Petersburg, Russia. Cultural History of Eastern Europe and Russia; Policy and Integration of the European Union; Russian language classes. Wrote Dissertation on Press Freedom in Russia.

Work Experience

Intern, UNHCR Liaison Office to the OSCE, Vienna, 2010

Worked as an intern at the UNHCR Liaison Office to the OSCE in Vienna. Evaluated reports of the OSCE for UNHCR field offices.

Intern, Donetsk Youth Debate Center, NGO, Ukraine, 2007

Organised and Arranged Statistics. Translated Documents from Russian to English. Organised an Educational Youth Camp sponsored by the OSCE and a Youth Exchange sponsored by the EU.

Program Coordinator, Camp Fire USA, Omaha, USA, 2004-2005

Academic mentoring of children from socially unstable families in schools and homeless shelters. Preparation of curricula, nutrition and career advice, and violence prevention. Statistical work. Employee of the month.

Supervising Tutor, Malteser Service, Dueren, Germany, 2004

Supervised physically and mentally handicapped children.

Extra Curricular Activities

Global Leadership Certificate, Macquarie University, 2009

Participated in Global Leadership Workshops.

Youth in Action Program, 2007

Organised and participated in a Youth Exchange sponsored by the European Union in Borås, Sweden, 2007. Participated in Workshop in Intercultural Communication in Sibiu, Romania, 2007.

Voluntary Work

Helped building housing in Uruguay, 2003. Assisted Sales of Fair Traded Products, Düren, Germany, 2003-2004. Supervised a disabled person, Düren, Germany, 2003-2004.

IT Skills

Has Knowledge of the Ten-Finger-Typing System. Proficient in Word MS, Excel and PowerPoint.

Languages

Speaks fluent English, German, and Russian. Is intermediate in French and has basic knowledge of Spanish.

Awards

Received a GoEast-Scholarship for Summer School in Belgorod, Russia, 2006, and for a Semester Abroad at the State University St. Petersburg, Russia, 2007; a tuition fee waiver by the European Commission for the Erasmus Mundus Global Studies Master Programme 2008-2010; and a European Commission grant for a one-semester enrolment at the Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, 2009.
