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ORTHODOX JEWISH PILGRIMAGES BY TRAIN BEFORE 1944 IN HUNGARY

Abstract: The railways were gradually built into a network covering the whole of Hungary and affecting all citizens. The influence they had in changing everyday life must be taken into account for an understanding of the processes of modernisation in the 19th century. The study examined how one denominational group within the diverse society of the Carpathian Basin, the Orthodox Jews living mainly in rural environments and making up more than half the Jewish population of the Kingdom of Hungary before 1920, made the railways religiously acceptable. It analyses the cultural practices of railway travel: the use of the railway spaces, the services provided for travellers, and the responses of the operators to the special demands of Orthodox Jews. The railways brought new possibilities for geographical mobility in the everyday lives of Jews, but religiously accepted reasons were needed for travel. Making a living, study, medical treatment and pilgrimage as reasons approved by the community for travel were found not only among Jews but were much rather a general characteristic of the premodern world. In the case of Orthodox and Hasidic Jews, the railways became not only a new invention overstepping the bounds of a community, they also constantly reshaped the religious conditions for railway travel beyond the regulation of time by religious law.

Keywords: Hasidism, Orthodox Jewry, everyday life, travel literature, train, kosher food, Hungary

Orthodox Jews in Hungary received the trends of modernity with reservation. They subjected the phenomena seeping in to the urbanising, modernising communities to strict community control. Nevertheless, they adopted many customs of bourgeois society and later of mass society. The question of train travel was a special case of this alternative integration. How did one denominational group within the diverse society of the Carpathian Basin, the Orthodox Jews living mainly in rural environments and making up more than half the Jewish population of the Kingdom of Hungary before 1920, make the railways religiously acceptable? How did the East European Jews fit into the interpretations of the railways offered by the *Ostjuden*? What cultural practices arose to provide the Orthodox travellers with kosher food? How did the operators of the railways respond to the particular, special demands?

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The railways became a network covering the whole country and affecting all citizens. For an understanding of the modernisation processes of the 19th century we need to take into account the effect the railways had in changing everyday life.¹ At the same time embourgeoisement took place in different ways – in time and space – within the different groups of society. The influence of the railways on everyday life became important for Jews in adapting their earlier geographical mobility to the new possibilities. The railways became part of the everyday life of Orthodox Jews in the economic sphere, but how did they affect religious life? To understand the phenomenon we need to examine three questions: the legitimate occasions for travel in the Orthodox Jewish communities, the incorporation of the railways into religious life, and the response given by the Hungarian Royal Railways or other locally-owned railways to Orthodox Jewish needs.

Before the First World War Hungary had one of the densest railway networks in Europe (more than 22,000 km of tracks). The railways brought new influences, values, lifestyle customs to the population, even if few people travelled by train up to the 1890s. The supply of goods changed in settlements along the main lines. The dense railway network resulted in the rapid spread of the bourgeois way of life by the turn of the century. People in small settlements could buy the same things in their shops as the residents of big cities. This could be seen on the one hand in imported groceries and on the other in home furnishing. After the branch lines were opened, new buildings, jobs and customs appeared throughout the country and became part of everyday life in the space of a single generation.² The change in community perceptions of the railways – seen from the angle of modern popular urban culture at the turn of the century and in the decades after the First World War – can be observed mainly in columns of the Jewish press devoted to nostalgic Jewish writings, feuilletons and Jewish wisdom. While Jewish publicists who had left behind the rural Jewish world characterised the attitude of their parents' generation to the arrival of the railways with commonplace expressions of aversion, later journalists wrote about how the railways became part of religious life. The use of the railways as an example also appeared among the wisdom of East European Jewish piety that could be adapted for the urban Orthodox bourgeoisie.

“The fame of the tsadik of Szanc spread throughout the world in the middle of the last century. – wrote the Orthodox Jewish Paper – He exhorted his believers to draw moral conclusions from the contemplation of the latest achievements of human technology. He said that the telegraph teaches us to take care of every word because we will have to pay for every superfluous word – up there, the rushing train teaches us to change our ways, for sometimes because of a

1 MAJDÁN 2001. 137; FRISNYÁK 2013.

2 MAJDÁN 2001. 137, 140-141, 151.

minute we can be fatally late, the telephone reminds us that we are speaking here, but in the heavenly receiver they hear everything.”³

Setting out on a journey

A religiously accepted reason was needed for travel. Making a living, study, health treatment and pilgrimages, as reasons for setting out on a journey approved by the community were found not only in Judaism, they were rather a characteristic of the premodern world. Over the course of its history European culture legitimated travel in different ways. This also differed greatly in the case of different groups within society.⁴ In the centuries before modernity the pilgrimage was the only legitimate form of travel for broad masses of Christian society. In the case of Jews, up to the 11th-12th centuries long-distance trade was also allowed, in ways that varied from country to country.⁵ In the new age and in the early days of modernity, travel to spas for health reasons became an important occasion for travel. This was especially true in the case of women, for whom it was the only accepted form of travel for other than religious purposes.⁶ Surplus capital, free time and independent disposal over it, as well as social acceptance of the demand for travel were all indispensable for the modern bourgeois desire to travel.⁷

A number of written records have survived of earlier forms of travel among Jews.⁸ The memoirs in Hebrew of Dov Ber Bolechów (1723-1805), for example, have preserved the memory of the activity in Hungary of Jewish linen, leather, brandy and wine merchants from Little Poland in the mid-third of the 18th century. He had a thorough knowledge of viticulture and wine-making in the Hungarian rural areas. His clients were prosperous Jewish merchants and rabbis, but he also did business with the Hungarian and Polish aristocracy. Dov Ber crossed the Carpathians at least six times to buy wine in the Hegyalja region. He travelled on horseback or in a four-horse carriage, and the goods were transported by his employees in carts.⁹ When railway transport reached a mass scale at the end of the 19th century what had been weary travel and transport on dirt roads, dependent on the seasons and exposed to the weather, became easier and quicker. In the first half of the 1890s masses who had never previously travelled by train or only very occasionally became regular users.¹⁰ The appearance of the Hungarian Orthodox Jewish press in Hungarian coincided in time with the great increase in

3 *Orthodox Zsidó Újság* 10 May 1942 / 5. A rebbek világából [From the World of the Rebbes]

4 BAUSINGER et al 1991.

5 Cf. BEN-SASSON 1985. 466, 468, 470, 475-476.

6 GYÖMREI 1934. 92, 125, 138.

7 GYÖMREI 1934. 92, 125, 138; GRANASZTÓI 2000. 106-108.

8 SPITZER – KOMORÓCZY 2003. 116-121, 145-148, 573-584, 691-692.

9 KOMORÓCZY 2013. 38-40.

10 FRISNYÁK 2013. 7-8, 10.

train travel, but it was in the interwar years that it carried many indirect references to use of the railways on a mass scale.

Travelling in various forms – from travel for business and private purposes to entirely modern tourism as a leisure activity and search for the exotic – was present among the Orthodox too. By the turn of the century kosher kitchens and canteens serving travellers opened not only in the capital but also in Makó, Szeged and other small and large settlements in Hungary. They ranged from country businesses run by Orthodox women offering home cooking, through canteens opened in regional centres aimed at serving travelling Orthodox men, to restaurants in Budapest. At the same time, helping travellers is also considered to be a good deed earning merit. In Berettyóújfalu in 1927 the children of a deceased, devout father built the ‘Orajch’ hotel for the poor in his memory. It was also the custom in other Orthodox communities to provide hospitality for travelling co-religionists or the needy.¹¹ Travelling to the Holy Land was also regarded as a pious deed, but travel to the Holy Land in its modern form was also a special demonstration of status by the European Christian and Jewish haute bourgeoisie. It was generally rabbis who in the Orthodox press published as travel writings the impressions and experiences acquired on their journeys.¹²



Kosher railway restaurant, Máramarossziget (from private collection)

11 Cf. GLÄSSER 2008.

12 Cf. GLÄSSER – ZIMA 2015.

By the first half of the 20th century Orthodox Jews living from trade or small-scale industry in rural areas travelled by train to the fairs that provided them with a livelihood. This is also reflected in various reports in the press. An innkeeper who was also a kosher butcher was travelling in 1915 on a train on his way to Transylvania to buy sheep at the Karánsebes fair when all his money was stolen just before Szolnok on the Great Plain. After unsuccessful approaches to the authorities in Szolnok and then in Pest, on the advice of an innkeeper he knew in Szombathely he turned to Reb Shayelev, Yeshaya Steiner (1851-1926), Rebbe of Bodrogkeresztúr.

“An innkeeper acquaintance suggested that I should turn with confidence to *Reb Shayelev*, in Kerestir. – wrote the Orthodox Jewish press – In my despair I protested, but my friend was insistent. I counted out how much it would cost to return home, I still had 3 crowns left, I sent them to Reb Shayelev. I arrived home without a penny. Three days later I received a letter from the rebbe ל"ט, that I should stay at home, *toyv vochesed yirdefücho* (good and mercy will follow me). This angered me greatly: why did I allow myself to be tempted to write a postcard. If the rebbe had written telling me to go somewhere, that would have made sense, because perhaps I could start some kind of business, but at home? I would have travelled to look for some way of earning a livelihood, if I had not been in such a bad state financially and spiritually. A few hours after Reb Shayelev's letter, the village's "trousers" appeared for a little beer-drinking. As they were drinking, the estate manager said: 'Neighbour, the company has allocated me 500 litres of spirits for the harvesters, but I don't want to start measuring out brandy, take it over from me.' The deal was done. I took delivery of the goods, stored them in the cellar and hastened to sell them on. The profit I made amounted to exactly 20,500 crowns.¹³ Since then I have visited Reb Shayelev several times. And the reason I have not fallen into despair over the present difficult conditions is that I have seen from my own case: *hayad Hashem tikcor?* Is the hand of G-d powerless? Can he not help the simplest, even in the most miraculous way?"¹⁴

The Rebbe of Kerestir appeared in Hasidic stories and in Neolog travel writings as a heavenly intercessor in matters related to livelihood.¹⁵ As the spiritual descendant of the Rebbe of Lizhensk, he placed great emphasis on hospitality in his court. Whenever a *melave demalka* feast was held he had an ox slaughtered for the guests staying with him on the Sabbath. The Hasidim believed that the

¹³ Exactly the sum that was stolen from him on the train.

¹⁴ *Zsidó Újság* 30 November 1928 / 7. Aki Reb Sájele tanácsára hallgatott [The man who listened to the advice of Reb Sájele].

¹⁵ *Egyenlőség* 14 August 1910 / 5-9. Látogatásom a bodrogkeresztúri csodarabbinál. [My visit to the miracle-working rabbi of Bodrogkeresztúr]. [Written by:] Miksa Szabolcsi

blessing said for a livelihood was in the hands of the Rebbe of Kerestir. The Ruf of Belz, Rabbi Yissachar Dov Rokeach (1894-1926) sent believers to Reb Shayele in such matters. The saying that the key to the *parnose* (livelihood) is placed in Kerestir is attributed to the chief rabbi of Belz. The rebbes and their followers incorporated the new phenomena into their lives within religious frames. The railways made it easier to meet the Hasidic rebbes. Among the new ways and means of maintaining contact, the telegraph and post also appeared beside the railways.

To meet the rebbe...

The Torah (5Mos. 16:16) prescribes that all men must make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem on the three pilgrimage feasts. "Three times a year all your men must appear before the Lord your God at the place he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Tabernacles [...]". As an analogy one of the important forms of Hasidic pilgrimages became a custom: travelling to the rebbe for the feasts, to pray and study there, to spend the feast "in the shadow" of the rebbe.¹⁶ What led them to travel was the wish to meet: to see the tzadik, to meet the just man. The travellers asked the rebbe for guidance and blessing. The rebbe's merits protected the community of believers. This sense of belonging together appeared in 1932 in the case of visitors arriving on a special train from Sátoraljaújhely to Nyíregyháza to see the Chief Rabbi of Nagykaroly Reb Jajlis, Joel Teitelbaum (1888-1979) who was a guest there for the Sabbath. "They placed a flag on the train with the inscription: "Degel machne Króle" (banner of the general of Nagykaroly). Around a thousand people came to receive their beloved Rebbe."¹⁷

The Orthodox press interviewed the renowned Hasidic rebbes on the train. The railway figured only as the place of the collective travel, the conversations were about issues of current concern to Jews and Orthodoxy.

Pilgrimages, local trains and pilgrim trains

The railways in Europe and Hungary became an integral part of Christian pilgrimages.¹⁸ Travel writings record the pilgrimages made by train to distant shrines by the middle classes.¹⁹ The new form of transport also found a place

¹⁶ GLÄSSER 2014. 234. 69.

¹⁷ *Zsidó Ujság* 9 December 1932 / 5. A nagykarolyi főrabbi Nyíregyházán. [The chief rabbi of Nagykaroly in Nyíregyháza]. The Hebrew expression is a paraphrase of the biblical expressions applied to the tribes wandering under their own banners in the wilderness (see: 4Mos 2:1-31): e.g. "On the east: the divisions of the camp of Judah [degel machne jehudo], under their standard [...]" (4Mos 2:3).

¹⁸ See the articles of John Eade and Gábor Barna published in this book.

¹⁹ For a few examples, see: Eck 1915.

in the national and dynastic rites of civil religion. The special trains arriving in the stations became places for meeting the admired or revered person.²⁰ Railway stations became an important place for mass meetings in honour of Hasidic rebbes. Journeys made by rebbes were accompanied by meetings with them and the wish to stay in their environment. In 1927 the Rebbe of Vizhnitz, Reb *Yisroel Hager* (1860-1936) travelled from Nagyvárad to Debrecen at the invitation of his followers. His journey was accompanied by the rites and routines of official and spontaneously organised meetings.

“On the way in Biharkeresztes a delegation from the local community under the leadership of Chief Rabbi Lipót Fuchs paid their respects to the Rebbe. At the railway station in Berettyóujfalu an enormous crowd demonstrated their veneration and respect for the Rebbe. A deputation from Debrecen also travelled to Ujfalu to meet the Rebbe, and from there he continued his journey through Derecske to Debrecen by car. Many people arrived here from the countryside to spend the Sabbath in the vicinity of the famous Rebbe.”²¹

The hospitality on the Sabbath in Nagyvárad before the visit by Reb Jajlis to Nyíregyháza in 1932 already mentioned became a mass pilgrimage.

“He arrived on Thursday, hundreds of the faithful were already waiting for him at the station, the following day guests poured in from the country, from Hungary, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. The procession of 72 buchers²² from the yeshiva in Székelyhid attracted much attention.”²³

It was reported of the Chief Rabbi of Munkács Chaim Eleazar Spira (1868-1937) during his stay in Torna:

“The rebbe is still deep in the mystery of the ‘heiliger Schaboss’²⁴, [but – since it is late in the evening] the latest guests appeared who had come from nearby villages to visit the rebbe.”²⁵

20 On the 19th century cult of Ferenc Rákóczi, regarded as the last Hungarian “national ruler”, see GLÁSSER 2009; on the Habsburg emperor-kings, see: FRISNYÁK 1994; UNOWSKY 2006. 48, 53, 55, 57, 60, 61, 64, 69, 73, 89, 91, 206.

21 *Zsidó Újság* 27 May 1927/ 12. Hírek – A wizensitzi rebbe Debrecenben [News – The Rebbe of Wiznitz in Debrecen]

22 72 students from the Talmudic school in Székelyhid.

23 *Zsidó Újság* 8 July 1932/ 4. R. Jajlis Váradon. [R. Jajlis in Várad]. [Written by:] Dávid Rosenberg

24 sacred Sabbath

25 *Zsidó Újság* 4 October 1929/ 12. A munkácsi főrabbi kedvéért visszarendelték Kassára az elindult tornai vicinálíst [The local train to Torna ordered back to Kassa for the sake of the Chief Rabbi of Munkács]. [Written by:] József Guttmann

At the same time the rebbes awaited their followers and the press also encouraged these visits. The same motivations appeared in the Orthodox press when reporting on mass visits to tsadiks visiting the region. The visit made to Nyírbátor by Reb Jajlis in 1928 became a pilgrimage for the faithful.

“Hundreds of followers and students already waited for him at the border, at Nagyecsed. His entry into Nyírbátor was nothing less than ‘üsruas melech baj’,²⁶ princely. Whole convoys of buses came down the wide streets of Bátor bringing the faithful from Nyíregyháza, Vásárosnamény, Kisvárdá, Fehérgyarmat, Büdösköves, Tiszapolgár and distant Kovácsháza. The trains also brought guests from Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. [...] they came selflessly, with warm hearts, enthusiasm, with souls thirsting for devotion, to see the 43-year-old priest of the revelation made thousands of years ago, to welcome him and draw strength from his presence for the struggles of life. 1500 guests came to Nyírbátor.”²⁷

The visit by the Rebbe of Munkács affected the whole of Torna.

“By the afternoon the streets are crowded with the many guests. Since homes were unable to take in all the over 300 guests, they were obliged to make use of non-Jewish homes as well, that were willingly placed at their disposal.”²⁸

After the Sabbath was over during the visit mentioned made by Reb Jajlis to Nyírbátor:

“people came all through the night to seek the advice of the Rebbe. And he gave them guidance, raised up the downcast, consoled the sad.”²⁹

“On Sunday a great crowd, numbering thousands visited the learned rabbi, to make complaints or seek advice, [wrote the press about the visit by the Rebbe of Ottynia to Máramarossziget] All over the town people spoke of the miracles around the life of the rabbi.”³⁰

Those who were unable to travel to the settlement visited by the rabbi accompanied him on a part of the journey in the hope of an audience.

26 “utruat melech bo” = “[the Lord their God is with them] the shout of the King is among them.” 4Mos. 23:21.

27 *Zsidó Újság* 24 August 1928 / 4-5. Reb Jajlisnál Nyírbátorban [Visiting Reb Jajlis in Nyírbátor]
28 *Zsidó Újság* 4 October 1929 / 11-12. A munkácsi főrabbi kedvéért visszarendelték Kassára az elindult tornai vicinálíst [The local train to Torna ordered back to Kassa for the sake of the Chief Rabbi of Munkács]. [Written by:] GUTTMANN, József

29 *Zsidó Újság* 24 August 1928 / 4-5. Reb Jajlisnál Nyírbátorban [Reb Jajlis in Nyírbátor]

30 *Zsidó Újság* 26 September 1927 / 10. A szigeti templom-barakk [The temple barracks in Sziget]

“The Rebbe of Belz with his entourage set out on Tuesday afternoon from Homonna, where a special railway carriage was placed at his disposal. – wrote the press in 1931. In Kassa the carriage was connected to the express train from Prague. Hundreds of people were waiting for the rebbe at the Kassa railway station; many of them accompanied him as far as Abos, so that they could submit their requests to him.”³¹



Miklós Müller: Hasidim on a train
(Csongrád County Museum)

31 *Zsidó Újság* 10 July 1931 / 9. Hírek – A váci Jahrzeit [...] [News – The Vác Jahrzeit]

In 1929 the train on the side line to Torna was ordered back to Kassa for the sake of the Rebbe of Munkács. The chief rabbi had arrived from Marienbad and was to change to the connection to Torna but

“the faithful in Kassa who were waiting impatiently in the railway station rushed up and greeted him with such enthusiasm and admiration that the local train to Torna departed leaving the whole company behind.”³²

The faithful in Torna also welcomed the train as it pulled into the station with

“cries of joy and shouts of ‘Yechi’³³.
“The famous guest was welcomed eloquently by Dávid Róth, president of the community, and the victory procession set out towards the town.”³⁴

In places where Hasidic rebbes were active, kosher hospitality businesses could appear in railway stations. In 1929 the Josefovits Orthodox kosher bodega operated next to the Szerencs railway station serving meat and milk dishes at all times of day to travellers in the region famed for its Hasidic rebbes and kosher wines.³⁵ According to the evidence of a postcard from the turn of the century there was a kosher restaurant at the MÁV railway station in Máramarossziget, another important Hasidic centre. Miklós Müller’s (1913-2000) sociophotos have recorded Hasidim from the south of the Great Plain travelling by train in this period.³⁶

Jews from Budapest, rural areas and Eastern Europe visited the Monarchy’s famous spas, and these visits continued after the disintegration of the Monarchy.³⁷ Large numbers of people from the region also visited the rebbes when they came to the popular spas for rest or treatment.

“Everywhere we go we come across our co-religionists with their beards and kaftans. In recent years this spa [Luhashowitz – G.N.] has become very popular among religious Jews, where they are welcomed. Now there are even more than usual because many of them came for holidays for the sake of the Chief Rabbi of Munkács Lázár

32 *Zsidó Újság* 4 October 1929 / 11-14. A munkácsi főrabbi kedvéért visszarendelték Kassára az elindult tornai vicinálist [The local train to Torna ordered back to Kassa for the sake of the Chief Rabbi of Munkács]. [Written by:] GUTTMANN, József.

33 Viva!

34 *Zsidó Újság* 4 October 1929 / 11-14. A munkácsi főrabbi kedvéért visszarendelték Kassára az elindult tornai vicinálist [The local train to Torna ordered back to Kassa for the sake of the Chief Rabbi of Munkács]. [Written by:] GUTTMANN, József.

35 Advertisement: *Zsidó Újság* 23 August 1929 / 9.

36 Csongrád County Museum, legacy of Miklós Müller (Nicolas Muller).

37 See: GLÄSSER 2008.

[Eleazar] Spira and even more for just a few days, to visit the rabbi on the Sabbath."³⁸

Similar reports appeared in connection with the suddenly deceased rabbi Yaakov Moshe Safrin (1861-1929) Rebbe of Komárom.

"Since he was on holidays in Tarcsafürdő, a constant stream of visitors came from the neighbouring Hungarian towns, Szombathegy, Sopron, Pápa, etc. as well as from Vienna, to seek his advice and guidance."³⁹

The final journey of other *tsadiks* who died on a journey and had expressed the wish to be buried at home⁴⁰ took on the nature of a pilgrimage. When the remains of the Rebbe of Sziget who died on a visit to his followers in Kisvárdá were returned home:

"Many thousands from Kisvárdá and the vicinity accompanied the deceased to the railway station, after a funeral oration by the Chief Rabbi of Kisvárdá. Many also accompanied him to the present border of the country. Hundreds of people came across from Sziget to travel back on the same train as the deceased. The train rushed past in pitch darkness and ghostly candlelight could be seen from the carriage transporting the coffin, the flickering candles of the army of admirers paying their last respects – it was an unforgettable sight."⁴¹

– wrote the Orthodox weekly.

A large crowd made the pilgrimage to Nagysurány, to accompany Chief Rabbi Feivel Plaust (1818-1895) on his last journey, a deed that earned merit in the case of any deceased.

"The train from Nyitra brought a large number of people and the *levayah* began last Thursday morning at 10 a.m." – reported the community in the Orthodox press.⁴²

38 *Zsidó Újság* 4 August 1931 / 6. A munkácsi főrabbi körében Luhaschowitzon [With the Chief Rabbi of Munkács in Luhaschowitz]. [Written by:] HERMANN, Ignác.

39 *Zsidó Újság* 26 July 1929 / 4. A nagy „Komarner Rebbe” לוי סאפרין הירטלען elhunyt [Sudden death of the great Rebbe of Komárom]

40 Cf.: *Kicur sulchan aruch* CXCX. 11.

41 *Zsidó Újság* 29 January 1926 / 1-3. A máramarosszigeti főrabbi halála [Death of the Chief Rabbi of Máramarossziget]

42 *Zsidó Híradó* 4 January 1895 / 2-4. A nagy-surányi főrabbi. [The Chief Rabbi of Nagysurány]. [Written by:] STRASSER, Jónás.

The inauguration of the gravestone of the tsadik of Vác (Veitzen), Rabbi Yesh-aye Silberstein (1884-1930) was listed among the pilgrimages by the representative of the Orthodox office as well as by the editor-in-chief of the weekly paper.

“The train that departed from Budapest at 12.20 was crowded with people travelling to the inauguration of the gravestone. *Adolf Frankl* president of the office accompanied by *Dr. Imre Reiner*, *Winkler* chief rabbi of Györszentmárton, *Mayer*, *Braun* and *Welcz* rabbis of the Pest society, *Leichtag* dayan of Ujpest, *Wollner* and *Schwarcz* respectively presidents of the Ujpest and Kunszentmiklós communities, *Dr. Adolf Deutsch* director, *Jenő Groszberg* editor-in-chief, and countless students and admirers of the great gaon all travelled on this train.”⁴³

The anniversaries of the deaths of Orthodox rabbis and Hasidic rebbes were commemorated regionally and also at the national level.⁴⁴ Considerable masses travelled by train for the anniversary pilgrimages. The changes that had occurred in travel were reflected here too. From the second half of the 19th century pilgrims came to the grave of the Rebbe of Sátoraljaújhely, Moshe Teitelbaum (1759-1841) on the day of the *Jahrzeit* not only from the neighbouring counties but also from Galicia and Russia.⁴⁵ The Hasidic pilgrimage practice of the early 20th century was close to the forms of pilgrimage in Hungary at that time. Besides those who arrived in carts, pilgrims also came on trains and in buses.

“The Nyíregyháza Local Railways added six bus services, [reported the press in 1930] from Thursday afternoon to Friday afternoon that brought travellers to Nagykálló for the Jewish pilgrimage on the anniversary of the death of Jicchák Eizik Taub.⁴⁶ Many came from beyond the border, even from as far away as Poland and Romania, etc.”⁴⁷

In 1933 the Orthodox press also wrote about the form issued by the Hungarian Royal Railways in connection with the anniversary of the tsadik of Kálló.⁴⁸ The text on the form stated that those who use it

“are entitled to travel with a half-price return ticket to Nagykálló between the 2nd and 7th of March of the current year on the pilgrimage to the grave of the former Chief Rabbi Taub Eisig.”⁴⁹

43 *Zsidó Újság* 15 May 1931 / 4. A váci gaon שׂוֹרֵר סירקֹאֵוֹאָטָא [Inauguration of the gravestone of the gaon of Vác]. [Written by:] HERMANN, Ignác.

44 GLÄSSER 2014. 254-283.

45 GOLDBERGER 1908. 253.

46 Rabbi Yitzchak Eisik Taub (1751-1821)

47 *Zsidó Újság* 14 March 1930 / 2-3. A kállói Jahrzeit [The Jahrzeit in Kálló]

48 *Zsidó Újság* 12 March 1933 / 4. Zarándoklás Kállóra... [Pilgrimage to Kálló]

49 From the text of the form, published in *Zsidó Újság* 12 March 1933 / 4.

According to reports in the press large numbers used the services of the railways for these anniversaries. On the anniversary of the death of the gaon of Vác (Veitzen), Rabbi Yeshaye Silberstein, the association of students informed travellers through the press

“that substantial concessions can be obtained by travelling in groups.”⁵⁰

On occasion Budapest representatives of the Orthodox organisation were also among the travellers. The picture painted by the press evokes the atmosphere of Miklós Müller’s contemporary photo of Hasidim travelling on a train mentioned above.

“Passengers travelling to the Jahrzeit filled whole carriages on the morning trains, where they were able to perform their morning devotions openly in tallit and tefillin. The roads are loud with the horns of cars and buses.”

– wrote the *Zsidó Újság* about the Jahrzeit of the tsadik of Olaszliszka, C’vi Hirsch Friedmann (1808-1874).⁵¹



Advertisement for Orthodox canned food (1928)
(Jewish Theological Seminary – University of Jewish Studies, Budapest)

50 *Orthodox Zsidó Újság* 10 July 1939 / 10. Hírek – A váci Jahrzeit. [News – The Jahrzeit in Vác]

51 *Zsidó Újság* 23 August 1929 / 1. A lizskai Jahrzeit [The Jahrzeit in Liszka]

Thoughts on the history of the particular adaptation of the railways

The particular receptions and practices can give a deep insight into the impacts of the big systems and social innovations. The Central European Catholic and Jewish pilgrimages form one small segment of particular use. While the former throw light on ways in which the bourgeoisie used the railways, the latter reveal a much more complex adaptation of the railways by Jews in rural areas striving to preserve traditions. In the case of Orthodox and Hasidic Jews the railways were not simply a new invention overstepping the horizons of a community: beyond the religious laws regulating travel in time the religious conditions for travel by train were also continually changing. The innovations mentioned in this study were intertwined with the embourgeoisement of Orthodoxy, above all Orthodox Jews living in Budapest and country towns. The Orthodox kosher restaurants, coffee shops and pensions that appeared in the vicinity of railway stations reflected these new demands. And the Orthodox kosher tinned foods intertwined with excursions and bourgeois hiking in nature, could also offer, beyond the bourgeois frames, independence from the restrictions and uncertainties of the supply network belonging to reliable Orthodox communities and businesses.⁵² However, we have few and random sources on the travel habits of Orthodox Jews. Apart from reports in the press, a more nuanced picture can be obtained from recollections, documents on the issue of passports, the disordered archival materials of rural Talmudic schools and Orthodox communities in Budapest, as well as the later Memorbuchs and published responses.

52 Cf. GLÄSSER 2008.

MAGYAR KIRÁLYI ÁLLAMVASUTAK	
Gy. 100004/32 933. Ker. Min. 9736/933.	igazolványo. (Egy személy részére.)
00055. sz.	
..... lakik, s aki a folyó évi március hó 2-től 7-ig Nagykállóba, Taub Eisig volt főrabbi sírjához zárandokol, feljogosítottatik arra, hogy 1933. évi március hó 2-től 7-ig terjedő időben a Nagykállóból való visszautazásnál a kiindulási állomásig, de csak az odautazásra használt útirányon, a magyar királyi államvasutakon, a gyors-, személy- és vegyesvonatokon a használható vonatnemnek megfelelően váltott	
f é l á r ú m e n e t j e g g y e l	
utazhassék. Budapest, 1933. évi március hó 2-án.	
A nagykállói Sevre Kadisa:	P.H.
A m. kir. államvasutak igazgatóága	
Az igazolvány hátlapja:	
Ervényes a visszautazásra bezárólag 1933. évi március hó 2-től, március hó 7-ig.	
Lebélyegzés a visszautazásnál.	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 200px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>	
Az igazolvány a zárandoklásra való odautazás alkalmával menetkedvezményre nem jogosít.	
Az igazolvány a jegyváltás alkalmával a visszautazásnál az állomási pénztárnál lebélyegezendő. Az igazolvánnyal az utat megszakítani nem lehet.	
Ez az utazási igazolvány csak akkor jogosít menetkedvezmény igénybevételére a visszautazásnál, ha a nagykállói Sevre Kadisa a sírlátogatást az utalvány vonatkozó rovatában igazolja és az igényjogosult az odautazásnál váltott egész jegyet a jegyváltásnál és az ellenőrző közegeknek felmutatja.	
A nagykállói Sevre Kadisa igazolás a sírlátogatásról:	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 20px;"></div>	Jegykiállítási illeték személyenkint: 0 25 P

MÁV concession for the pilgrimage to Nagykálló
 (Jewish Theological Seminary – University of Jewish Studies, Budapest)

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