

Michael Eskin, Karen Leeder and Marko Pajević (Eds.)
Paul Celan Today

Companions to Contemporary German Culture



Edited by
Michael Eskin · Karen Leeder · Christopher Young

Volume 10

Paul Celan Today

A Companion

Edited by
Michael Eskin, Karen Leeder and Marko Pajević

DE GRUYTER

ISBN 978-3-11-065340-3

e-ISBN (PDF) 978-3-11-065833-0

e-ISBN (EPUB) 978-3-11-065861-3

ISSN 2193-9659

Library of Congress Control Number: 2021936048

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.dnb.de>.

© 2021 Walter de Gruyter GmbH, Berlin/Boston

Cover image: Paul Celan, 1938. Public domain / wikipedia / redesigned.

Printing and binding: CPI books GmbH, Leck

www.degruyter.com

Table of Contents

A Note on Translations — VII

Michael Eskin

Introduction — 1

Amy-Diana Colin and Andrei Corbea-Hoisie

Paul Celan's Bukovina-Meridians — 5

Helmut Böttiger

A 'Poet in Destitute Times'. Paul Celan and the West German Literary Scene of the 1950s and 1960s — 39

Thomas C. Connolly

Translating the Night. On Paul Celan and Fragment 178 of René Char's *Feuillets d'Hypnos* — 57

Camilla Miglio

Translating in a 'Wholly Other' German. 'Ricerca' — 79

Charlie Louth

Celan in English — 101

Áine McMurty

'Ruf's, das Schibboleth, hinaus | in die Fremde der Heimat'. *gebietscelan* in the Poetry of José F.A. Oliver — 121

Denis Thouard

Philosophical readings of Paul Celan in France. Three Steps — 143

Kristina Mendicino

Language, Barred. Paul Celan's Poetological Reduction — 159

Christine Ivanovic

Breath Turn, Linguistic Turn, Political Activism. Reading Celan's Poems of 1967 — 181

Chiara Caradonna

Beyond Poetry. Celan's Red Folder, May 1968 — 201

Sue Vice

Paul Celan's Successors. From Reverence to Transduction — 221

Cherilyn Elston

'almost | you would | have lived'. Reading Paul Celan in Colombia — 243

Eric Kligerman

Between Poetry and Prayer. A *Kaddish* for Paul Celan — 265

Marko Pajević

Celan's Correspondence and Correspondence with Celan. Transfer Processes of Life — 287

Anselm Kiefer

Four Images — 307

Peter Waterhouse

Memorial — 311

Edmund de Waal

Breath — 319

Ulrike Draesner

'Huhediblu' — 325

Michael Eskin and Durs Grünbein

We Are All Migrants of Language. A Conversation — 339

Paul Celan. A Select Bibliography — 349

Contributors — 363

Index — 365

A Note on Translations

Quotations are generally given only in English, except where a particular linguistic or formal point is being made, or when a reader who has German might particularly benefit from having the original. In the case of quotations from Paul Celan himself quotations are given in German and English. Contributors have given sources for published translations used or have provided new translations. These follow the relevant German in square brackets and the primary aim is to provide an accessible working translation. Unless otherwise specified, all other translations are by the author of the chapter.

To avoid unnecessary repetition, however, the titles of Paul Celan's poetry collections are given in the German only. The titles of individual poems are given both in German and English throughout. For ease of reference a list of translations of these main works is included here, and a fuller Select Bibliography is given at the end of the volume.

Poetry collections

Der Sand aus den Urnen (1948)	[The Sand from the Urns]
Mohn und Gedächtnis (1952)	[Poppy and Memory]
Von Schwelle zu Schwelle (1955)	[From Threshold to Threshold]
Sprachgitter (1959)	[Speechgrille]
Die Niemandrose (1963)	[The No-One's-Rose]
Atemwende (1967)	[Breathturn]
Fadensonnen (1968)	[Threadsunns]
Lichtzwang (1970)	[Lightduress]
Schneepart (1971)	[Snowpart]
Zeitgehöft (1976)	[Timestead]

Essays

Der Meridian (Rede anlässlich der Verleihung des Georg-Büchner Preises 1960)	[The Meridian]
Rede anlässlich der Entgegennahme des Literaturpreises der Hansestadt Bremen (1958)	[Bremen Speech]

Michael Eskin

Introduction

2020 marked the centennial of Paul Celan's birth and the semi-centennial of his death by suicide.

Paying tribute to the late poet in the 1970 commemorative issue of *Études germaniques*, renowned twentieth-century French Germanist Claude David famously called Celan 'le plus grand poète français de langue allemande' – the greatest French poet of the German language.¹ David's dual superlative assessment of Celan's stature as a poetic giant slyly obviates the pitfalls of having to measure his legacy against the achievements of his peers in the German and French languages, respectively, casting him as a bi-national, bi-cultural phenomenon *sui generis*, a literary-historical singularity. In a pinch, Rilke and Heine may come to mind as foils for David's characterization: the former having lived in France and written poetry in both French and German, and, arguably, the undisputed modern global superstar of German poetry, especially in the popular imagination (even Woody Allen quotes him at length in one of his movies); the latter, who spent the second half of his life in Paris, having been viewed by some in his adoptive country as 'the greatest German poet, and indeed one of the greatest French authors'.² Yet neither Rilke nor Heine, their ties to France and French culture notwithstanding, can 'officially' lay claim to the title of 'greatest French poet of the German language': for unlike Celan, neither ever became a *French* citizen; and Heine, for one, considered himself emphatically a *German* rather than French poet ('Ich bin ein deutscher Dichter'³).

What, then, does it mean to be 'the greatest French poet of the German language'?

A complex and perhaps unanswerable question – a question, in fact, that might be best left alone, in the abeyance of its own suggestiveness, the reflected glow of the ennobling aura and intuitive pathos of David's praise – but a question that implies, or contains, a handful of further, interrelated, questions that *are* worth pursuing in their own right, such as: what does it mean to be the 'greatest' poet *tout court*? The 'greatest' to and for whom? The 'greatest' in perpetuity or merely for a time – be it a historical period, a generation, the lifespan

1 Claude David, 'Préambule', *Études Germaniques* ('Hommage à Paul Celan') 25, no. 3 (1970), 239–241 (p. 239).

2 John A. Hess, 'Heine and the French', *The Modern Language Journal* 16, no. 3 (Dec. 1931), 193–203 (p. 193).

3 Heinrich Heine, *Buch der Lieder* (Hamburg: Hoffman und Campe, 1827), p. 192.

of a political system? Think of such ‘greatest’ authors – pardon the paradox of plurality here – as William Shakespeare, Friedrich Hölderlin or Maxim Gorky: the former two having gone through long periods of eclipse until the full-fledged rediscovery of their genius by the Romantics (especially, the German Romantics) in Shakespeare’s and by early twentieth-century German literary scholar Norbert von Hellingrath in Hölderlin’s case, respectively; the latter having been demoted until further notice from his empyreal status as the ‘greatest’ Soviet writer following the irreversible demise of *Realsozialismus* in the late 1980s.

Thus, being the ‘greatest’ poet (or artist of any kind) reveals itself as historically relative at best, and indicative, above all, of the critical attitude of the one(s) declaring ‘greatness’. This being the case, the real question can be said to be *not* what it is to be the ‘greatest’ poet or artist so much as what it *means* to be *dubbed* or *considered* such in a given historical situation or context. What is it about a poet’s or artist’s project or legacy that elicits such superlative praise? What is it about a poet’s or artist’s oeuvre that ostensibly meets certain aesthetic and socio-cultural needs, responds to certain pressing cultural-political questions and concerns, encapsulates and articulates ‘in a nutshell’ the spirit or zeitgeist of an epoch or historical moment, intimates possible, hitherto untrodden paths of addressing the present and conceiving of past and future in creative and novel ways – all of which might then warrant the moniker ‘greatest’?

Again, I don’t think that a clear-cut answer to these queries is feasible. But an approximation ought perhaps to be ventured, if only to better understand our desire ever so often to lavish the attribute ‘greatest’ on certain poets and artists, while withholding it from others.

To begin with, then, let us agree to rephrase ‘greatest’ in terms of the less exuberantly absolute and somewhat more sober and hands-on ‘most significant’, which I take to constitute its core meaning, especially when applied to art and its makers. We can now more concretely ask: ‘most significant’ in respect to what? And that is a question that, I believe, can indeed be plausibly answered on the basis of cultural-historical, thematic, socio-political and aesthetic argument, which may or may not be accepted by some and rejected by others, but which will, if seriously and cogently presented, have to be reckoned with beyond intuition, taste and pathos above all. If ‘greatest’ beckons towards the *absolute* and is *a fortiori* a function of a certain *je ne sais quoi*, then ‘most significant’ is decidedly *relative* and squarely a function of (ever-changing) consensus.

And such precisely is the goal of the volume you are about to embark on: thinking through the knotty question as to whether and, if so, why Paul Celan might *actually* and *justifiably* be considered if not *the* then at least *one of the* most significant poets not only of the modern and, in particular, post-war era, but of our budding twenty-first century and beyond.

The contributions gathered in this volume, ranging from scholarly articles to genuine artistic responses and meditations on Celan's life and poetry, probe and illuminate his legacy from as wide an array of perspectives as possible (pragmatic constraints permitting) – historical, biographical, cultural, political, philosophical, aesthetic, poetological, linguistic, visual-cinematic and personal – with a view to striking the balance, as it were, of what it *has singularly meant* and suggesting or intimating what it might *yet*, or ought to, *singularly mean* for current and future generations.

Eschewing, for reasons of nugatory redundancy, to summarize the individual chapters that follow – the chapter headings themselves eloquently indicate what each contribution is about – suffice it to highlight that in addition to expert scholarly treatments of the above-listed aspects of Celan's life and art (e.g., his multilingualism and multiculturalism, the politics of his aesthetics, his poetics' philosophical paradigmaticity, etc.) the reader will also be treated to a choice of more personal, emphatically subjective engagements with Celan by five outstanding contemporary artists: Peter Waterhouse, Edmund de Waal, Ulrike Draesner, Anselm Kiefer and Durs Grünbein (the latter in conversation), which testify to the poet's wider cultural-historical impact and import beyond the (permeable) walls of the academy, where the majority of his readers and critics have hitherto tended to congregate. Taken together, the editors hope that all of the contributions here gathered may enable you to form your own opinion on the continued significance of, arguably, one of the 'greatest poet[s] of the German language' – both today and for future generations...

Amy-Diana Colin and Andrei Corbea-Hoisie
Paul Celan's Bukovina-Meridians

In his seminal poetological text *Der Meridian* [*The Meridian*], Paul Celan invokes a journey in light of 'u-topia' but back in time. It is a search for both a historical and imaginary 'topos' (τόπος): a 'World of Yesterday':

From this point of 'comfort', but also in the light of utopia, let me now undertake a bit of topological research. I shall search for the region [...] for my own place of origin.

None of these places can be found. They do not exist. But I know where they ought to exist, especially now, and... I find something else.¹

Celan's place of origin, in both a literal and metaphorical sense, was Czernowitz, capital of the Bukovina, a region located between the Bessarabian steppe, the northern Carpathian Mountains and Moldavia (Romania). There, Romanians, Ruthenians, Germans, Austrians, Jews, Poles, Armenians, Hungarians, Slovenes, Turks, Greeks, Hutsuls, Lipovans, Roma and several different religious denominations coexisted relatively peacefully for centuries despite ethnic and religious prejudices and conflicts. Their interaction contributed to the development of a multifaceted culture that produced Romanian, Ukrainian, Austro-German, Austro-Jewish and Yiddish literature as well as authors fluent in many different languages. Jewish writers and poets had a seminal role in the flowering of Bukovina's culture, in particular its Austro-German literature. The latter emerged in the Habsburg Bukovina of the nineteenth century, paradoxically reaching its culmination in the 1920s and early 1930s when the region was part of the Romanian Kingdom. World War II and the Holocaust destroyed Bukovina's Austro-Jewish and Yiddish culture, while putting a temporary end to all other intellectual, literary and artistic activities. After 1944/1945, some aspects of Bukovina's culture were resuscitated but declined again during subsequent Soviet rule. Today, the Bukovina is split into two different predominantly monocultural worlds: the Ukrainian in the north and the Romanian in the south.

As the pre-World War II multi-ethnic sociotope Bukovina vanished, its memory and myths became increasingly powerful tropes in a variety of literary, his-

¹ Paul Celan, 'Der Meridian', in Celan, *Gesammelte Werke in fünf Bänden*, ed. by Beda Allemann and Stefan Reichert in collaboration with Rolf Bücher (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1983), henceforth abbreviated as GW5, vol. III, p. 202 (this edition corresponds to the first five volumes of *Gesammelte Werke in sieben Bänden*); Celan, *Collected Prose*, trans. by Rosmarie Waldrop (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1985), p. 54.

torical, ethnographic and theoretical writings, including Celan's *Der Meridian*. In this programmatic text, initially a speech held on the occasion of receiving the Georg Büchner Award (22 October 1960), Celan's imaginary return to his homeland leads him to a discovery: 'a meridian',² a key concept of his work. In its multiplicity of meanings, a 'meridian' indicates both the link and the distance between the places and poles that it connects: in Celan's case, his situation as a post-Holocaust Jewish poet writing in German and his distant Bukovina; his biographical itinerary and the genesis of his work; his early poems written in Czernowitz and his late, almost hermetic works.

This chapter explores the ways in which Celan's 'meridian' discloses itself in several nodal 'topoi' on the trajectory of his poetic development. The first part gives an insight into Celan's Bukovina and its impact upon the poet's education, experiences and poetic aspirations. The second part explores other 'meridians' connecting Celan's poetry to his Bukovina: the multilingual character of his poetic language; the mediation between cultures as a salient feature of both Bukovina's literature and Celan's own work; Celan's poetics of upheaval as a response to the Nazi abuse and destruction of the German language.

This chapter is based on the work of two scholars who have written about Celan and the Bukovina from different perspectives.³ By mapping out the intricate relationship between Celan's poetry and his native contextuality, we will provide an insight into the genesis of his work in its relationship to the Bukovina.

I Celan's Bukovina: A world of yesterday

An exceptional place

Time and again, authors from the Bukovina invoked their place of origin, imbuing the reminiscences of the past with new meanings that disclose the relevance of this multi-ethnic sociotope for later generations. Reflecting on the Bukovina

² Celan, *GW5*, vol. III, p. 202; Celan, *Collected Prose*, p. 54.

³ Publications include: Amy-Diana Colin, *Paul Celan. Holograms of Darkness* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991) and 'Czernowitz/Cernăuți/Chernovtsy/Chernivtsi/Czerniowce: A Testing Ground for Peaceful Coexistence in a Plural Society', in *Journal of Austrian Studies* 53, no. 3 (2020), 17–44, henceforth abbreviated as 'Czernowitz'; Andrei Corbea-Hoisie, *Czernowitzer Geschichten. Über eine städtische Kultur in Mittel(Ost)-Europa* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2002), pp. 29–42; and *La Bucovine. Éléments d'histoire politique et culturelle* (Paris: Institut d'Études Slaves, 2004).

as a 'haven of peace and mutual understanding', Rose Ausländer (1901–1988), in her series of numbered 'Bukowina' poems, writes: 'Vier Sprachen | Viersprachenlieder || Menschen | die sich verstehen' [Four languages | Fourlanguagesongs || people | understanding one another].⁴ By contrast, other authors such as Alfred Gong (1920–1981), Edgar Hilsenrath (1926–2018) and Gregor von Rezzori (1914–1998) showed that peaceful coexistence in the Bukovina was as much a myth as a reality. According to Gregor von Rezzori, Bukovina's main characteristic was a precarious balance between tolerance and intolerance, respect and hatred: 'A dozen different nationalities and half a dozen fiercely fighting religious denominations coexisted there in the cynical harmony of mutual animosity and business deals. Nowhere were the fanatics more tolerant and the tolerant people more dangerous'.⁵ For a long time, such balance safeguarded peace in the Bukovina.

Yet Celan had a different interpretation of his own 'world of yesterday'. In a speech held in Bremen (1958) on the occasion of receiving the Literary Award of the Hanseatic city, the poet referred to his homeland as 'a region, where people and books lived'.⁶ This image, both vivid and concise, became so famous that literary studies of Celan's work have cited it time and again. This excessive repetition has turned Celan's significant 'topos of memories' into a commonplace and a commemorative cliché. Still, despite the use and abuse, Celan's metaphor has retained its initial meaning and sense: it invokes the 'meridian' that links the power of literature to Celan's own life and to the 'people of the book' in his Bukovina. The spiritual force of books had nourished, motivated and inspired a community of Jewish intellectuals, writers and artists in his homeland. Many years after the war, in Paris, Celan still felt close to them.

In the same passage from his *Bremer Rede* [*Bremen Speech*], Celan associates his Bukovina with the 'Hassidic tales' collected and translated into German by Martin Buber. These stories about the wise 'Wunderrabbiner' [miracle rabbis] from Sadagora, a small town close to Czernowitz, disclose a belief in the magic power of the words cherished not only by Baal Shem Tov, the founder of Chasidism, but also by Jewish writers from the Bukovina as well as by European poets in the orphic tradition. The meridian connecting Celan's Bukovina to Chasidic storytelling lends his native contextuality a mystical aura, turning it into a source of fiction and poetry. At the same time, Celan points to three aspects of an

⁴ Rose Ausländer, 'Bukowina III', in Rose Ausländer: *Gesammelte Werke in 8 Bänden* (Frankfurt a. M.: S. Fischer, 1984), vol. IV, p. 130 (translation by Amy-Diana Colin).

⁵ Gregor von Rezzori, *Ein Hermelin in Tschernopol* (Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1958), p. 17 (translation by Amy-Diana Colin).

⁶ Celan, *GW5*, vol. III, p. 185; Celan, *Collected Prose*, p. 33.

important historical and biographical context: Buber's efforts to build bridges between Jews and Germans as well as between enlightened, orthodox and Chasidic German-speaking Jews by telling and retelling Hassidic stories; the Jewish belief in the fruitfulness of a 'German-Jewish symbiosis' as advocated by authors such as Rudolf Borchardt (1877–1944), an antimodernist and conservative German-Jewish author who was so fascinated by Mussolini's fascism that he visited the Duce;⁷ and, last but not least, German 'inner immigration' as a response to Nazi barbarism – a form of resistance practiced by poets such as Rudolf Alexander Schröder (1878–1962), co-founder of the *Bremer Presse* and member of the Confessing Church that opposed Hitler's regime.⁸ The adolescent Paul Antschel was quite familiar with the ideas of these different authors representing heterogeneous but interrelated traditions.

In *Der Meridian*, written two years after the *Bremer Rede*, Celan further develops the link between his reminiscences of the Bukovina and the allusion to the German-Jewish symbiosis, referring explicitly to another of its main advocates: Karl Emil Franzos (1848–1904), a Galician Jew educated at the Middle School of Czernowitz who became a well-known German novelist. Franzos, who regarded himself as a German national of Jewish faith,⁹ believed in the ideals of the Austrian Enlightenment in the tradition of Joseph II. It is from this perspective that the series of his 'Kulturbilder' from 'Halb-Asien' [half-Asia] describe Franzos's journey through Eastern Europe. These books combine essays on the history and socio-political situation in Galicia, Russia, Romania and the Bukovina with ironic sketches, presenting Eastern Europe as a 'mélange' between 'European' and 'Asiatic' civilization. Franzos held the latter responsible for all social, economic, and political problems. As a result, he labelled most Eastern-European regions 'half-Asia', meaning for him 'half-civilized'.¹⁰ According to Franzos,

7 The Nazis shattered his illusions, for the SS arrested him. He died heartbroken after his release. In his *Bremer Rede*, Celan mentions that he had read Borchardt's 'Ode with a Pomegranade', see: Celan, *GW5*, vol. III, p. 185; Celan, *Collected Prose*, p. 33.

8 *Ibid.*, pp. 33–34.

9 In the introduction to his novel *Der Pojaz*, Franzos mentions the source of his self-interpretation. It was his father's conviction that he was a German in terms of nationality and a Jew in terms of faith: 'Du bist deiner Nationalität nach kein Pole, kein Ruthene, kein Jude – du bist ein Deutscher, aber deinem Glauben nach bist du ein Jude.' Cited after: Karl Emil Franzos, *Der Pojaz. Eine Geschichte aus dem Osten* [Vorwort] (Berlin: J.G. Cotta, 1905), p. 6.

10 For detailed interpretations of 'Halb-Asien', see: Colin, *Paul Celan. Holograms*, p. 13, and 'Karl Emil Franzos, die Bukowina und Europa', in *Spuren eines Europäers. Karl Emil Franzos als Mittler zwischen den Kulturen*, ed. with E. V. Kotowski and A. D. Ludewig. (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2007), pp. 55–71; as well as Corbea-Hoisie, 'Halb-Asien', in *Habsburg neu*

there was only one radically different region: the Bukovina. The source of such difference was the Austro-German 'Geist' that had transformed the Bukovina into Franzos's ideal of a European cultural state: 'the German spirit [der deutsche Geist], the most benevolent and powerful wizard under the Sun turned the Bukovina into a flourishing piece of Europe'.¹¹

Many Bukovinians, regardless of their ethnicity, shared Franzos's understanding of their homeland as an example of 'exceptionalism': a *Kronland* [crownland] pursuing a 'Sonderweg' in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Like Franzos, Bukovinian representatives of the Jewish middle-class in the Haskala tradition believed in the benefits of a 'German-Jewish symbiosis' for the 'exceptionalism' of both their homeland and their own communities. Despite the rise of violent nationalism and anti-Semitism in the 1920s and 1930s, they continued to share these convictions. But Celan, a German-speaking European-Jewish poet deeply scarred by the Holocaust, rejected such views inscribing his criticism not only in *Der Meridian* but also in his late poem 'Eine Gauner- und Ganovenweise' ['A Rogues and Ganif's Ditty'],¹² which he reworked several times over the course of almost two years (from February 1961 to November 1962). The poem's subtitle introduces its author's identity-marker, thereby reversing a traditional hierarchy: 'sung [...] by Paul Celan of Czernowitz near Sadagora'.¹³ For Celan, Sadagora is no longer the shtetl in the vicinity of Bukovina's capital. Rather, Czernowitz, once regarded as the metropolis of Jewish assimilation or acculturation, acquired the status Sadagorian suburb. Despite the irony inherent in this poem, Czernowitz retains its significance for Celan, prompting readers to explore the uniqueness of his real and imaginary homeland.

The Bukovina: Historical and cultural aspects (1774 – 1919)

On 23 November 1920, when Paul Antschel was born in Czernowitz, the former Habsburg province had been part of the Kingdom of Romania for almost two years. Over the course of its tumultuous history, the Bukovina, located at the

denken. Vielfalt und Ambivalenz in Zentraleuropa. 30 kulturwissenschaftliche Stichworte, ed. by Johannes Feichtinger and Heidemarie Uhl (Vienna: Böhlau, 2016), pp. 73–81.

¹¹ Karl Emil Franzos, *Aus Halb-Asien. Culturbilder aus Galizien, der Bukowina, Südrussland und Rumänien* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1876), p. 113.

¹² Celan, 'Eine Gauner- und Ganovenweise gesungen zu Paris emprès Pontoise von Paul Celan aus Czernowitz bei Sadagora', in *GW5*, vol. I, pp. 229–30; Celan, *Selected Poems and Prose*, trans. by John Felstiner (New York: Norton, 2001), pp. 161–63.

¹³ *Ibid.*

crossroads of its neighbours' political interests, had become a target of their conquests: its territories, comprising about 10,500 km², belonged to the rulers of the Kiev Empire, the dukedom of Halicz and, finally, to the Moldavian duchy that was first part of the Kingdom of Hungary. After a short period of independence, the Principality of Moldavia (including the Bukovina) became a vassal state of Poland and in 1514 of the Ottoman Empire. During the Russian-Turkish War (1766–1774), as a result of peace negotiations between Sultan Abdul Hamid I and Joseph II of Austria, Russia's ally at that time, the Bukovina was integrated into the Habsburg Empire.

The Habsburg administration turned the region into a buffer zone in order to protect its Empire from Russian and Ottoman expansion, thereby changing Bukovina's ethnic and demographic composition. Prior to 1774, the scarce population of the region was predominantly of Romance origin. The Habsburg officials promoted the settlement of German colonists (both Catholics and Protestants) from Bohemia, Swabia and the Spiš (mostly farmers, craftsmen or miners) as well as Ukrainians from Galician villages. In the first decades of their rule, the profoundly anti-Jewish Habsburg military administrators forced Jews either to leave the region or face tough professional restrictions. Emperor Joseph II promoted more liberal policies towards religious minorities (by issuing the Patent of Toleration in 1782). Eventually Jews also benefited from it. As a result, many Jews settled in the Bukovina around 1800.

In 1857, the Austrian census recorded 455,800 inhabitants: 44.6% Romanians, 38% Ruthenians, 6.4% Germans, 6.4% Jews, 3% Poles, 1.6% Magyars and 0.57% Russians. By 1910, the Austrian census counted 794,945 inhabitants: 237,216 (34.4%) Romanians, 305,222 (38.4%) Ruthenians, 95,706 (12%) Jews, 73,073 (9.2%) Germans and 47,728 (6%) belonging to other ethnic groups (i. e. Lipovans, Poles, Hungarians, Slovaks and Armenians). In addition, several religious denominations coexisted in the Bukovina.¹⁴

The growth of Bukovina's population fostered the demographic development of its capital Czernowitz. In 1787, imperial officials documented 153 Romanians, 84 Germans, 76 Jews and a small number of other ethnicities. On 2 August 1786, Czernowitz received a new constitution that granted Christian inhabitants the opportunity to obtain citizenship by taking an oath of allegiance, as well as the right to elect the town's council. By 1848, the multi-ethnic population of Czernowitz increased to 20,000 inhabitants. By 1900, the size of Bukovina's cap-

14 The adherents of different religious communities included: Greek-Catholics, Armenian Catholics, Armenian Gregorians, Protestants, Old Believers (adherents of the Lipovan Orthodox Old-Rite Church) and Jews.

ital was comparable to that of other provincial cities in the Austro-Hungarian Empire such as Innsbruck or Brünn.

The Habsburg officials promoted the acculturation of Romanians and Ukrainians, the two largest ethnic groups, by admitting them into civil service and the administration. Jews were excluded, although they had to pay high taxes. In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Habsburg officials gradually changed their policy towards Bukovinian Jews. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the ethnic plurality was mirrored in the administration of the Bukovina and its capital, whose mayors included the Armenian Jacob Ritter von Petrowicz (mayor, 1864–1866), the Pole Anton Freiherr Kochanowski von Stawczan (mayor, 1866–1874, 1887–1905), the Austro-German Wilhelm von Klimesh (mayor, 1881–1887), and the Austro-Jews Eduard Reiß (mayor, 1905–1907) and Salo Weisselberger (mayor, 1912–1914).

The German language played a crucial part in the process of acculturation, for Habsburg officials turned the knowledge of German into a precondition for getting jobs, presenting it as people's entry ticket into society. In the case of Jews, Habsburg policies were more radical: in the eighteenth century, the Imperial administration required Jews who wished to marry and/or attend Talmud schools to provide a school certificate proving that they had learned German. Initially, only soldiers, public officials and Viennese teachers sent to Czernowitz mastered German. But over time, German became the *lingua franca* of the Bukovinians. According to the 1910 Austrian census, 20% of Bukovina's inhabitants (around 12% Jews and 9% ethnic Germans) declared German to be their mother tongue.¹⁵ But Ukrainians, Romanians and Poles were also fluent in German. The notion of a 'homo bucovinensis' became inextricably linked to the knowledge of the German language,¹⁶ acquiring a 'national' and 'supra-national' character.¹⁷

Some orthodox Jewish communities and the Bukovinian bastions of Chasidism in Sadagora, Bojan and Vizhnits resisted the process of acculturation and Germanization set in motion by the Imperial administration. After 1848, the *Haskalah* (Jewish Enlightenment) also gained increasing significance in the Bukovina, in particular in Czernowitz. It reinforced the process of acculturation into Austro-German society, especially affecting the Jewish middle class.

15 'Die Ergebnisse der Volks- und Viehzählung vom 31. Dezember 1910 im Herzogtum Bukowina', *Mitteilungen des statistischen Landesamtes des Herzogtums Bukowina* 17 (1913), 54, 80.

16 Andrei Corbea-Hoisie, *La Bucovine*; Corbea-Hoisie, 'Czernowitz. Modernisierung an der Schwelle zur Moderne', in *Laboratorien der Moderne. Orte und Räume des Wissens in Mittel- und Osteuropa*, ed. by Bernd Stiegler and Sylwia Werner (Paderborn: Fink, 2016), pp. 133–50.

17 Amy-Diana Colin, 'An den Schnittpunkten der Tradition – Deutsch in der Bukowina', *Neue Deutsche Hefte* 4 (1983), 739–69; and Colin, *Paul Celan. Holograms*, pp. 3–50.

Moreover, in 1867, a new constitution granted Jews full citizenship rights in Austria. The new political developments enabled Jews from the Bukovina, in particular representatives of the middle class, not only to gain civil rights but also to consolidate their economic position and to take an active part in a variety of political, administrative, governmental and educational institutions.¹⁸

At the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, Czernowitz had turned into a remarkable cultural metropolis.¹⁹ It had schools for different ethnic groups, hospitals, a major library (opened in 1851), theatres, including the impressive, City Theatre, which still exists today, built by the Viennese architects Hermann Helmer and Ferdinand Fellner in 1904–1905; a *Landesmuseum*; a *Musikverein*; printing and publishing houses; civic buildings in Vienna's Ringstrasse style; and the remarkable Greek Orthodox Episcopal residence designed by Joseph Hlavka from Prague and decorated by historicist painters from Vienna.²⁰ In 1875, the Franz-Josephs-Universität Czernowitz [University of Czernowitz] was inaugurated. Around 1900, the prosperous and cosmopolitan Czernowitz had electric streetlights (introduced in 1895), a canalization system with water pipes and drainage (begun in 1890), several well-kept parks, a *Kursalon* with a bath house in the Volkspark, beautiful Art Nouveau edifices such as the Savingsbank on the Ringplatz, the German House, a richly adorned train station, the elegant shopping street Herrengasse and residential areas with multilevel buildings in Biedermeier (historicist) and Art Nouveau style. Last but not least, Czernowitz had Viennese-style coffee houses such as Café Europe, described in the ads of the time as the '*rendez-vous place*' of the *haute volée*: high state officials, university professors, representatives of the arts, music and the press, members of the state theatre, physicians and lawyers. Its reading room displayed dozens of different national and international newspapers.

The development of Czernowitz as a city was inextricably linked to its cultural flowering after 1848. The liberalization of the Habsburg monarchy in the

18 Martin Broszat, 'Von der Kulturation zur Volksgruppe. Die nationale Stellung der Juden in der Bukowina im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert', *Historische Zeitschrift* 200 (1965), 572–605; Michael John and Albert Lichtblau, 'Mythos "deutsche Kultur". Jüdische Gemeinden in Galizien und der Bukowina. Zur unterschiedlichen Ausformung kultureller Identität', in *Studien zur Geschichte der Juden in Österreich*, ed. by Martha Keil and Eleonore Lappin-Eppel (Bodenheim: Philo, 1997), pp. 81–121; Andrei Corbea-Hoisie, *Czernowitzer Geschichten*, pp. 29–42; David Rechter, *Becoming Habsburg: The Jews of Austrian Bukovina 1774–1914* (London: Littman, 2013).

19 For detailed descriptions see: Colin, 'Czernowitz' and Corbea-Hoisie, *Czernowitzer Geschichten*.

20 The Greek Orthodox Episcopal residence was built between 1864 and 1882.

mid-nineteenth century and the relative political independence of the Bukovina enhanced the cultural activities of all ethnic groups and stimulated the flowering of Bukovina's Romanian, Ukrainian, Yiddish and Austro-German literature. Writers and artists gathered in literary societies such as the *Areopag über Schönheit, Kunst und Wissen* [Areopagus for Beauty, Art and Knowledge], the Ukrainian *Ruska Besida* [Ukrainian Tongue] and a Romanian reading circle. The first newspaper, *Bucovina* (1848–1850), published by the brothers Hurmuzachi²¹ in Romanian and German, featured articles on politics, religion and literature. A few years later, the Austro-German writer Ernst Rudolf Neubauer (1828–1890) started the German newspaper *Bukowina. Landes- und Amtszeitung* [*Bukovina. Official State Newspaper*] (1862–1868). It printed not only news but also literary, ethnographic and historical texts by Bukovinian writers, including the Romanian Iancu Lupul (1836–1922), the Rutheno-Romanian Ludwig Adolf Simiginowicz-Staufe (1831–1897) and the Ruthenian Osip Yurii Fed'kovich (1834–1888), as well as the Austrian-Jewish author Moritz Amster (1831–1903). Bukovinian journalists and writers could publish their texts in newspapers such as *Czernowitzer Zeitung* [*The Czernowitz Newspaper*] (1868–1914), *Bukowinaer Rundschau* [*The Bukovinian Review*] (1882–1907), *Bukowiner Nachrichten* [*Bukovinian News*] (1888–1914), *Bukowiner Post* (1893–1914), the *Buchenblätter* (1864, 1870, and 1871), *Czernowitzer Tagblatt* (1903–1919) and the *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung* (1903–1940).²² The Eckhardt publishing house printed the Babylonian Talmud (1839–1848), a Bible with standard commentaries (1839–1842), the *Mishnah* (1840–1846) and other rabbinical works.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, Bukovinian Jews who believed in their Austro-German cultural identity and the benefits of the 'German-Jewish cultural symbiosis' enhanced Austria's 'cultural mission' in Eastern Europe. Moreover, intellectuals from different ethnic groups in the Bukovina identified their notions of 'homo bucovinensis' with 'homo austriacus'. As the Rutheno-Romanian Konstantin Tomaszczuk, rector of the University of Czernowitz, pointed out, Bukovinian scholars and scientists, regardless of their ethnicity, felt deeply rooted in Austrian culture and German *Wissenschaft* because they believed that it had acquired a universal character:

²¹ Constantin (1811–1869), Eudoxiu (1812–1874), Gheorghe (1817–1882), Alexandru (1823–1871) and Nicolae (1826–1909) Hurmuzachi.

²² For more information, see: *Prolegomene la un dicționar al presei de limbă germană din Bucovina istorică. 1848–1940*, ed. by Andrei Corbea-Hoisie, Ion Lihaciu, Markus Winkler (Jassy: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza, 2012).

German *Wissenschaft* has universal validity. It is only because German culture has universal significance that the non-German sons of the Bukovina establish a German university. [...] We are not just Poles, Germans, Romanians, we are primarily human beings, who are rooted in the same soil, from which we derive our strength. I mean Austria.²³

The University of Czernowitz played a crucial part in the city's cultural flowering, being the first in the region to offer a programme in Eastern and South-Eastern European history. Among the prominent professors at this university were the historians Ion Nistor and Wladimir Milkowicz, the legal scholar Eugen Ehrlich, founder of the sociology of law, the criminologist Hans Gross, the leading economist Joseph Schumpeter, the mathematician Hans Hahn, member of the Vienna circle, the Slavist Stefan Smal-Stocki, the Germanist Wilhelm Kosch, as well as the philosophers Carl Siegel, who taught traditional idealistic philosophy, and the agnostic Richard Wahle, who opposed metaphysics. The university both motivated and justified interpretations of the Bukovina as an example of middle-European 'exceptionalism'.

Although Austro-German traditions played a crucial role in the Bukovina, in the beginning of the twentieth century, Czernowitz also became a centre of Yiddish education and culture promoted by the Yidisher Schul-Farayn [Yiddish School Union]. As a result, in 1908 the city was selected as the site of the first international Yiddish Language Congress initiated by the scholar Nathan Birnbaum and organized by a New York committee. The conference brought together many eminent Yiddish writers, including Schalom Asch, Hirsch David Nomberg, I. L. Peretz and Abraham Reisen.

World War I put a temporary end to all cultural endeavours in the Bukovina as the region became a battleground and as Russian soldiers occupied Czernowitz three times. During the 4 October 1918 session of the Viennese parliament, the Bukovinian Jewish delegate Benno Straucher (1854–1940) voted for his homeland to join Austria. Ukrainians and their political representatives sought the union of the Bukovina with the Ukraine. There was dissent among Romanian political figures: Constantin Isopescu-Grecul (1871–1938) pleaded for the preservation of Bukovina's bond to Austria, Aurel Onciul (1864–1921) wished to see the region divided along ethnic lines (Ukrainian in the north, Romanian in the south), but Iancu Flondor (1865–1924) and his supporters demanded a union with the Romanian Kingdom. As the tensions between different ethnic groups turned into riots, the Romanian 8th Division entered the Bukovina and incorpo-

²³ Cited in Franz H. Riedl, 'Die Universität Czernowitz als völkerverbindende Institution 1875–1919', *Der Donauraum* 15, nos. 3–4 (1970), 216–28; Colin, *Paul Celan. Holograms*, pp. 8–11, 174.

rated it into the Romanian Kingdom.²⁴ On 10 September 1919, the Treaty of Saint-Germain sanctioned this incorporation, but the Soviet Union rejected it.

Under Romanian rule from 1919 to 1940, the Bukovina and its capital Czernowitz underwent major transformations. Romanian officials occupied all key positions in the administration, and Romanian was declared the official language of the Bukovina. Czernowitz was now once again called Cernăuți, and its streets received either Romanian translations of their German names or new Romanian names. All emblems recalling the Habsburg era were destroyed. In the 1920s and early 1930s, the Romanian regime was relatively liberal. As a result, Romanian officials remained somewhat receptive to the needs of the various ethnic groups and tolerated existing German, Ukrainian and Jewish schools. Moreover, in 1923, the Romanian regime finally granted Jews citizenship. This new policy was a requirement of the Allied Powers for their acceptance of Romania's territorial expansion after World War I. But in 1924, the Romanian government passed additional laws which caused 80,000 Jews to become stateless. In subsequent years, in particular in the 1930s, the Romanian regime became increasingly nationalistic. In the name of the country's majority, meaning the Romanian 'nation',²⁵ the regime tried to transform the Bukovina into a monocultural province but did not manage to erase its receptivity to other cultures inherent in the mentality of the Bukovina's inhabitants.

Celan's Czernowitz in the roaring 1920s

In the 1920s and early 1930s, the Bukovina and Cernăuți re-established their reputation as centres of intense cultural activity.²⁶ The stars of the Viennese and Berlin theatres came on tour to Cernăuți. Famous Romanian actors such as Constantin Nottara and Ronald Bulfinski, the tragedians Paul Baratov and Rudolf Schildkraut, as well as the Vilna Troupe, all performed in the capital of the Bukovina. The eminent Jewish actors Hertz Grosbard, Jehuda Ehrenkranz and Leibu Levin gave readings of Yiddish literature. The sculptor Bernard Reder and the painters Oskar Laske and Arthur Kolnik created and exhibited their works in

²⁴ As a state Romania had emerged from the Union of the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, a union established in 1859–1862 and later turned into a kingdom. The Kingdom of Romania (proclaimed in 1881) therefore claimed its historical ownership of the territories belonging to the two principalities.

²⁵ Mariana Hausleitner, *Die Rumänisierung der Bukowina. Die Durchsetzung des nationalstaatlichen Anspruchs Grossrumäniens 1918–1944* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2001).

²⁶ For more information see: Colin, 'Czernowitz', and Corbea-Hoisie, *Czernowitzer Geschichten*.

the Bukovina. The Jewish philosopher Constantin Brunner had a deep impact on the Bukovinian intellectuals who gathered in the Ethisches Seminar Platonica [the Platonic Seminar on Ethics] for discussions.²⁷ After World War I, the Expressionist literary and political journal *Der Nerv* (1919)²⁸ became an organ of Bukovinian intellectuals. The journal's founder was Albert Maurüber, a friend of Martin Buber and an admirer of Karl Kraus, Kurt Hiller and Ludwig Rubiner. Like his models, Maurüber demanded moral integrity in politics, economics, culture, literature and journalism. His later, more radical journal, *Die Gemeinschaft* (1928–1930), fostered both social-democratic ideas and the avant-garde rejection of traditional aesthetics. At the same time, the Yiddish Workers' Cultural Union Morgenroth organized lectures and recitals. The famous fable writer Eliezer Stejnberg (1880–1932), who moved to the Bukovina in 1919, played a crucial part in promoting Yiddish language and culture. In addition, the Yiddish theatre Chameleon attracted the youth.

But the rise of nationalism and fascism also left its imprint upon Bukovina's literature of the inter-war period. Some of the main representatives of the new generation of Romanian writers – Mircea Streinul, Traian Chelariu and Iulian Vesper – became increasingly nationalistic; Streinul even supported the fascist Legion of Archangel Michael. German ethnic poets such Heinrich Kipper and Alfred Klug were attracted by the 'völkische' ideology, Klug later becoming a Nazi.

At the beginning of the century and during World War I, some Bukovinian writers, artists and scholars who had left the Bukovina became well-known to a broader public: Joseph Gregor, the last librettist of Richard Strauß and author of *Weltgeschichte des Theaters* [*World History of Theatre*] (1933), held key positions in Vienna, including the directorship of the National Library and a professorship at the University of Vienna. Rudolf Kommer, who lived in Vienna, London and later New York, made a name for himself as the author of *Stories from the Vienna Café* (1915) and *Der österreichische Staatsgedanke* [*The Austrian Conception of State*] (1917). Victor Wittner became the editor of the leading Viennese literary journal *Die Bühne* and of the Berlin-based *Der Querschnitt*; he authored collections of poems such as *Klüfte, Klagen, Klärungen* [*Fissures, Lamens-*

²⁷ Eli Rottner, *Das ethische Seminar in Czernowitz. Die Wiege des Internationalen Constantin-Brunner-Kreises* (Dortmund: Selbstverlag, 1973). Among his young 'admirers and followers' was Rose Ausländer, see: 'Erinnerungen an eine Stadt', in *Grüne Mutter Bukowina. Ausgewählte Gedichte und Prosa*, ed. by Helmut Braun (Aachen: Rimbaud, 2004), p. 115.

²⁸ *Der Nerv. Eine expressionistische Zeitschrift aus Czernowitz*, ed. by Ernest Wichner and Herbert Wiesner (Berlin: Literaturhaus, 1997). See also: Corbea-Hoisie, *Czernowitzer Geschichten*, pp. 149–84.

tations, Clarifications] (1914) and *Der Sprung auf die Straße* [*Leap onto the Street*] (1924) that anticipated the literary movement that would be called *Neue Sachlichkeit* [New Objectivity]. The poet Alfred Margul-Sperber (1898–1967) had moved to Vienna during World War I, and to Paris and then New York in the early 1920s, but he returned to the Bukovina in 1924. As the editor of the 'Feuilleton' [literary section] of the *Czernowitzer Morgenblatt*, he published Jean Cocteau, Max Jacob, Henri Michaux, Yvan Goll and Guillaume Apollinaire, introducing these and other avant-garde authors of the time to the broader Bukovinian public. Moreover, he promoted Alfred Kittner, Rose Ausländer and Moses Rosenkranz, as well as a much younger generation of poets that included Immanuel Weißglas and Paul Celan.

In the late 1920s and the 1930s, the political situation in Romania changed. The extreme nationalist and anti-Semite Alexandru Constantin Cuza (1857–1947),²⁹ a professor of economics at the University of Jassy, was spreading hate and anti-Semitism. He did not permit Jewish students to enrol in his classes, demanded a numerus clausus for all Jewish students and incited the anti-Jewish animosity of Christian students. One of Cuza's students, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu (1899–1938), helped spread the anti-Semitic ideology of his teacher. In 1927, Codreanu founded the Legion of the Archangel Michael and later also established its political and paramilitary arm: the notorious *Eiserner Garde* [Iron Guard] that attacked Jewish communities, assassinated Jews and organized the atrocious pogrom in Bucharest (January 1941). In December 1937, an anti-Semitic and nationalist government under the leadership of the political figure Octavian Goga (1881–1938) came to power in Romania. Goga appointed Cuza as a member of his cabinet. Although the Goga-Cuza government lasted only a few weeks (until 10 February 1938), it changed laws in order to launch a mass persecution of Jews. King Charles (Carol) II ousted this government and implemented his 'royal dictatorship' but did not abolish the anti-Semitic laws.

These political developments affected the Bukovina as well. In the late 1930s, the government tried to force the population of the Bukovina to speak only Romanian in public spaces but could not implement this policy and therefore had to change it within a few weeks. Yet high school teachers had to offer all courses in Romanian, for it had become the only official language of instruction. In 1940, Jewish students were forced out of Romanian public schools. Leftist newspapers published by German-speaking Jews were censored and required

²⁹ Together with the historian and writer Nicolae Iorga (1871–1940) he founded the anti-Semitic 'Partidul Naționalist-Democrat' [National Democratic Party] in 1910, but he left it a decade later. In 1923, he established the anti-Semitic 'Liga Apărării Național-Creștine' [League for the Christian National Defence].

to print the front page in Romanian. Moreover, the change in political climate found support among nationalist Romanian and German intellectuals but triggered opposition among the liberal Bukovinians. In reaction to the rise of fascism, Jewish intellectuals increasingly turned towards Zionism, Bundism³⁰ or Communism.

The political changes left their imprint on the German-Jewish literature of the Bukovina. The increasing isolation of German-speaking Jewish authors in Romanian society manifested itself in their emphasis on social, political, cultural and literary alienation.³¹ In addition, the developments also affected Alfred Margul-Sperber's planned publication of an anthology of poems written by Jewish poets from the Bukovina. In the mid-1930s, German publishing houses rejected this book.³² The Schocken Verlag offered to print it but was closed down prior to realizing the project.³³ By contrast, in 1939, Alfred Klug published his anthology of German poetry from the Bukovina in Nazi Germany. It included poems (with little or no artistic value) exclusively by ethnic German authors.³⁴

In 1938–1940, the windows of Norbert Niedermayer's Czernowitz bookstore *Literaria* were still displaying new poetry volumes by Alfred Kittner, Rose Ausländer, Alfred Margul-Sperber, Moses Rosenkranz and David Goldfeld. Their works illustrated an extraordinary flourishing lyrical production in German. Although they were aware of the political changes, Jewish intellectuals, including writers and poets, continued to believe in the Bukovina as a special creative space precisely because the region's Austro-German and Austro-Jewish literature reached its zenith precisely in the inter-war period. In a 1928 series of articles published in the *Czernowitzer Morgenblatt* under the title 'The Invisi-

30 Social democratic Jewish labour movement established in the Russian Empire in 1897: Allgemeiner Yidisher Arbeter Bund in Liteh, Poyln un Rusland.

31 For further information see: Amy-Diana Colin, 'Einleitung', in *Versunkene Dichtung der Bukowina. Eine Anthologie deutschsprachiger Lyrik*, ed. by Amy-Diana Colin and Alfred Kittner (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1994), pp. 13–24; Andrei Corbea-Hoisie, 'Das Fremde in der Fremde. Zur Typologie einer Literatur des Deutschtums im Ausland', in *Begegnung mit dem Fremden. Akten des VIII. Internationalen Germanisten-Kongresses Tokyo 1990*, ed. by Eijiro Iwasaki and Yoshinori Shichiji (Munich: Iudicium, 1991), pp. 171–78.

32 See: Margul-Sperber's correspondance with editors (1935/36) mentioned in Colin's 'Vorwort', in *Versunkene Dichtung der Bukowina*, pp. 10–11, and George Guțu and Peter Motzan, 'Nachwort', in *Die Buche. Eine Anthologie deutschsprachiger Judendichtung aus der Bukowina. Zusammenestellt von Alfred Margul-Sperber*, ed. by George Guțu, Peter Motzan and Stefan Sienerth (Munich: IKGS, 2009), pp. 425–69. Margul-Sperber's anthology included texts by thirty-two authors from the Bukovina.

33 Colin, 'Vorwort', in *Versunkene Dichtung der Bukowina*, p. 10.

34 *Bukowiner deutsches Dichterbuch*, ed. by Alfred Klug (Stuttgart: Wahl, 1939).

ble Choir³⁵ and in a later open letter dated 1930, Alfred Margul-Sperber underlined the *exceptional* flowering of German literature in the Bukovina in spite of its increasing isolation within Romanian surroundings.³⁶

Paul Antschel's world of people and books

This political turmoil overshadowed Paul Antschel's childhood and youth.³⁷ Born into an observant yet acculturated middle class Jewish family, he experienced some of the conflicts marking Jewish communities in the Bukovina even during his childhood. His father, Leo Antschel, a Zionist, insisted that his son leave the Meisler School, a primary school where German was the language of instruction, and enrolled him in the private Hebrew school Safa Ivria. His mother Friederike, whose maiden name was Schragger, taught him German and familiarized him with the Austro-German culture that she cherished. Paul disliked the Safa Ivria and gradually developed a rather ambivalent relationship towards his father. He felt close to his mother and shared her interest in German literature. He left the Safa Ivria after three years, but continued to take Hebrew lessons privately. In the public Romanian high school, Paul further advanced his knowledge of both Romanian and French, while deepening his insight into German literature on his own and in discussions with his friends, who included Edith Horowitz. Paul and Edith fell in love, and it was the very first love for both of them. They shared literary and artistic interests as well as political convictions. Paul was fifteen/sixteen years old when he wrote some of his early poems for Edith. Many years later, Edith Horowitz, later Edith Silbermann (1921–2008),

35 Alfred Margul-Sperber, 'Der unsichtbare Chor. Entwurf eines Grundrisses des deutschen Schrifttums in der Bukowina' ['The invisible choir. An Outline of German Writing in the Bukovina'], in *Czernowitzer Morgenblatt*, 2 August 1928, p. 6, and 3 August 1928, p. 2.

36 'In the Bukovina, it is precisely now that a branch of the German language becomes creative independently, without any connection to the territories of origin, and within the borders of a strongly assimilationist Greater Romania', wrote Alfred Margul-Sperber in 'Brief an einen Dichter', in *Czernowitzer Morgenblatt*, 21 December 1930, p. 13.

37 For more information see Celan's biographies: Israel Chalfen, *Paul Celan. Eine Biographie seiner Jugend* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1983); Chalfen, *Paul Celan. A Biography of His Youth*, trans. by Maximilian Bleyleben (New York: Persea Books, 1991); Wolfgang Emmerich, *Paul Celan* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1999); John Felstiner, *Paul Celan. Poet, Survivor, Jew* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Peter Rychlo, 'Neue Angaben zu Paul Celans Gymnasialjahren aus dem Czernowitzer Bezirksarchiv', in *Kulturlandschaft Bukowina. Studien zur deutschsprachigen Literatur des Buchenlandes nach 1918*, ed. Andrei Corbea, Michael Astner (Iași/Konstanz: Editura Universității/Hartung-Gorre 1990), pp. 205–210.

wrote about their life-long friendship and published their correspondence.³⁸ Paul and Edith's mutual friends included his classmate Gustav (called Gustl) Chomed, his cousin Erich Einhorn and Immanuel Weißglas, nicknamed Oniu, a talented poet and translator. Oniu was sixteen when he made a name for himself through his translation of Mihai Eminescu's poem 'Lucefărul'. In Czernowitz, Paul and Oniu were inseparable. They shared a passion for German literature and competed with one another by writing poems on similar themes.³⁹

Paul and the friends of his youth were avid readers. Edith's home with her father's fantastic private library became a magnet for the young poets and their friends. Karl Horowitz, Edith's father, was a bibliophile who had studied German, Greek and Latin at the University of Vienna and had brought his large book collection from Vienna to Czernowitz when he decided to resettle in his hometown in 1920. Edith described his library as a 'Fundgrube' [a treasure chest] for the young poet Antschel. He spent many hours in Karl's home in order to read and to discuss poetry with him and Edith. Many decades later, in October 1964, in his handwritten dedication for Karl Horowitz on the first page of the volume *Mohn und Gedächtnis*, Celan wrote: 'For Karl Horowitz, in grateful memory of his house, his books, and everything which is still present.'⁴⁰ Karl Horowitz had introduced him to works by Eduard Mörike, Theodor Storm, Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, Gottfried Keller, Jakob Wassermann and Leonhard Frank. He awakened Paul Antschel's enthusiasm for both Middle High German and Expressionist poetry. They spent hours reading poems together by Klambund, Georg Heym and Georg Trakl. He also sparked Paul's interest in Hermann Hesse, whose

38 *Paul Celan – Edith Silbermann. Zeugnisse einer Freundschaft. Gedichte, Briefwechsel, Erinnerungen*, ed. by Amy-Diana Colin and Edith Silbermann (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2010), henceforth abbreviated as *Paul Celan – Edith Silbermann*; Edith Silbermann, *Czernowitz – Stadt der Dichter. Geschichte einer jüdischen Familie aus der Bukowina (1900–1948)*, ed. by Amy-Diana Colin (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2015). From the early 1960s to almost the end of her life, Edith Silbermann, an acclaimed actress, gave numerous recitals of Celan's poetry, mostly in Germany and Austria, but also in The Netherlands, France, Israel and the United States. She also set his poem 'Eспенbaum' to music and performed it time and again.

39 Edith Silbermann, *Begegnung mit Paul Celan. Erinnerung und Interpretation* (Aachen: Rimbaud, 1993, 1995), pp. 41–70; Silbermann, *Czernowitz – Stadt der Dichter*, pp. 91–93; Ilana Shmueli, *Ein Kind aus guter Familie. Czernowitz 1924–1944*, ed. by Andrei Corbea-Hoisie (Aachen: Rimbaud, 2006), pp. 46, 74.

40 'Für Karl Horowitz, in dankbarer Erinnerung an sein Haus, seine Bücher, an vieles noch immer Gegenwärtiges', in *Czernowitz – Stadt der Dichter*, ed. by Colin, pp. 248–58.

later wife Ninon Ausländer, the daughter of a renowned lawyer in Czernowitz, was Karl's classmate and childhood friend.⁴¹

Among the older friends who played a key part in Antschel's youth was Jacob Silbermann (1907–1979), a known Czernowitz lawyer and the co-author of a timely study,⁴² detailing legal strategies for Jews to prove their claims to Romanian citizenship at a time when the anti-Semitic regime was contesting them. Silbermann had a large book and record collection, including disks with readings by Alexander Moissi and Karl Kraus, whom he greatly admired. Silbermann introduced his younger friend Antschel to Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *Chandos-Brief* [*Chandos Letter*] and engaged in discussions with him about the critique of language prevalent in 1900. It was Silbermann who gave Antschel the idea to change his name, drawing his attention to the importance of the aura of a writer's name and arguing that nobody would have remembered the name 'Gundelfinger', whereas 'Gundolf' entered literary history. In subsequent years, Silbermann would help Antschel time and again.

Since the age of fifteen or sixteen, Paul Antschel had been a great admirer of Hölderlin and Rilke, one of the 'cult authors' in Czernowitz. Paul frequently entertained his friends by reading to them Rilke's *Cornett*, his poems from *Stundenbuch* and *Buch der Bilder* as well as *Sonette an Orpheus*. Moreover, he shared his friends' interest in Manfred Hausmann's novel *Lampion küsst Mädchen und kleine Birken* (1928) and his dramatic ballad *Lilofee* (1929). Knut Hamsun's novel *Mysterien* [*Mysteries*] (1982), cherished by Edith and the Czernowitz youth, also had a deep impact on the poet. In school, students read Victor Hugo and Alfred de Vigny, but Celan and his friend Oniu (Immanuel) Weißglas were passionate about Paul Verlaine, Stéphane Mallarmé and Guillaume Apollinaire.⁴³ At that time, Paul Antschel also read W. B. Yeats, Rupert Brooke and Shakespeare, whom he greatly admired. In her memoirs, Edith Silbermann recalls that he loved to recite Ophelia's and Julia's parts. Antschel's world of books also included Yiddish literature, in particular Eliezer Stejnberg's innovative fables.⁴⁴ Gustav Chomed, in a letter to Edith Silbermann, underlined that Paul not only read

⁴¹ Ninon and Karl, both teenagers, were Hesse fans. Ninon was so fascinated by Hesse's first novel *Peter Camenzind* (1904) that she sent him a letter which marked the beginning of their friendship. See: Gisela Kleine, *Ninon und Hermann Hesse: Leben als Dialog* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1982).

⁴² Nicu Adelstein, Jacob Silbermann, *Comentariul la Decretul-Lege pentru Reviziunea Cetățeniei* (Commentary to the Decree Law Regarding the Revision of Citizenship), prefaced by Eugen Herovanu (Czernowitz: Tipografia și Editura Eminescu, 1939).

⁴³ Silbermann, *Czernowitz – Stadt der Dichter*, pp. 88–99.

⁴⁴ Paul Celan – Edith Silbermann, pp. 29–30.

Stejnberg's fables to him, but also performed them. Paul's friends nourished his interest in Yiddish. Antschel's new love, Ruth Kraft (1916–1998), aspired to become a Jewish actress. Edith, who remained a close friend, pursued a similar objective, later becoming the star of the Yiddish theatre in Bucharest. Their mutual friend Hersch Segal (1905–1982) co-edited the Yiddish poetry collections *Naje Jidise Dichtung. Klejne Antologie* (1934) and *Zeks Shloflider* (1939).

In the 1930s, Antschel and his Jewish friends were in a vulnerable position, for they were confronted with growing anti-Semitism. 'Well, regarding anti-Semitism in our school, I could write a book three hundred pages thick', remarked Antschel in 1934.⁴⁵ He moved to another school, originally a Ukrainian gymnasium, attended by Jewish students. Similar to his friends, Antschel became deeply aware of his Jewishness. He witnessed repressive anti-Jewish measures such as the closure of Morgenroit⁴⁶ and Jewish efforts to organize self-defence groups against the anti-Semitic excesses that often turned bloody. Yet unlike his own father, Moshe Barash⁴⁷ and other Czernowitz youth, he did not embrace Zionism. Rather, when he was just a high-school student, he joined the illegal communist youth organization in the Bukovina. Although there were severe reprisals against communist activities, Antschel and his friends secretly brought out a leftist pamphlet, *Elevul Roșu [The Red Student]*, and distributed it among high-school students and workers. It included Paul Antschel's Romanian translations of passages from Marxist writings and texts about the situation of the working class. Among these young political activists were Paul, Edith and Gustav, as well as Ilse Goldmann (1921–1983) and Ruth Kissmann (1921–1999); the latter was the daughter of Leah and Joseph Kissmann, the founders of Morgenroit. Time and again they met in Ilse's home in order to read and discuss Marx's *Capital*, the *Communist Manifesto* and Bucharin's *ABC*. They later shared an interest in Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Kautsky, Werner Sombart, Gustav Landauer and Kropotkin. But after reading André Gide's *Retouches à mon Retour de l'U.R.S.S.* (1937), they started to have doubts about their previous political convictions.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Cited after Chalfen, *Paul Celan*, p. 51

⁴⁶ Joseph Kissman, 'Zur Geschichte der jüdischen Arbeiterbewegung "Bund" in der Bukowina', in *Geschichte der Juden in der Bukowina*, ed. Hugo Gold, 2 vols (Tel Aviv: Olamenu, 1958, 1962), vol. I, pp. 143–44.

⁴⁷ 'Moshe Barash über Paul Celan. Interview von Cord Barkhausen', in *Sprache und Literatur in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 55 (1985), 93–107.

⁴⁸ *Paul Celan – Edith Silbermann*, pp. 33–37.

In *Ein Kind aus guter Familie. Czernowitz 1924–1944* (2006),⁴⁹ Liane Schindler, later Ilana Shmueli (1924–2011), describes her first encounters with the poet in Czernowitz. Looking back at her childhood, she notes that Bukovina's Jewish middle class engaged in a 'Kultur-Kult'.⁵⁰ She criticizes its artificiality, saying that it was based on a mimicry of Western European, in particular Viennese models. But she also recounts how the Bukovinian desire to be 'exceptional' and 'different' by striving to be educated and to meet 'high intellectual standards' became the source of an 'unusual and remarkable personal development'⁵¹ for some Bukovinians.

In 1938, Antschel graduated from high school. Under the influence of his parents, he decided to study medicine. But Czernowitz did not have a medical school. After Hitler's rise to power and the Nazi occupation of Austria, Jewish parents sent their sons and daughters to French universities, for they believed that the French republic was an undeniable pillar of democracy. Antschel's parents followed their example and Paul enrolled in a pre-medical programme at the University of Tours. On 8 November 1938, on his journey from Czernowitz to Paris, he passed through Nazi Germany and stopped for a change of trains at the station Anhalter Bahnhof in Berlin. In a letter to Edith written and mailed that day, he describes the smoke hovering over the beech tree woods and asks whether it was the smoke of books or perhaps of people set on fire.⁵²

In Tours, Antschel studied not only medicine but also French surrealism. When he returned from Tours to Czernowitz in the summer of 1939, he had read Breton's *Manifesto* and was familiar with avant-garde literary experiments. With the advent of World War II, he could no longer return to Tours and he remained in Czernowitz.

In Soviet Czernowitz (1940–1941)

On 26 June 1940, the Soviet Union, following the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (a non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany), issued an ultimatum demanding that Romania cede Bessarabia and the northern Bukovina, including Czernowitz, within forty-eight hours. Two days later, the Red Army occupied the territories. Some Romanians, in particular administrators and other officials, fled to the

⁴⁹ Shmueli, *Ein Kind*. In Israel, she met Celan once again, and their later romantic relationship inspired some of his late poems.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵² *Paul Celan – Edith Silbermann*, p. 38.

southern Bukovina. As the Romanian troops withdrew, they attacked Jewish communities, robbing and murdering many Jews in the southern Bukovina. On 1 July 1940, they organized a terrible pogrom in the city of Dorohoi (northern Romania).

At first, politically left-oriented intellectuals and many Jews in the northern region welcomed the Soviet occupation because it marked an end to the anti-Semitic Romanian regime.⁵³ But the realities of the regime soon became apparent. The Soviets took over every aspect of life in the northern Bukovina. Following the agreement between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, Germans from both the northern and southern Bukovina returned to the German Reich, leaving behind everything they had worked for during the past decades. By November 1940, these returnees numbered almost 80,000.⁵⁴ At the same time, special units of the NKVD implemented ‘Sovietization’ through expropriation and nationalization. Their main targets were the alleged ‘enemies of the people’: former businessmen, landowners, politicians, journalists, activists of the associations, national parties, Zionist organizations and potential opponents, including leftist intellectuals and social democrats. In addition, northern Bukovina and Czernowitz underwent a process of Russification: streets were given Russian names, monuments were replaced, and the theatre only presented performances in either Russian or Ukrainian. German-speaking newspapers, mostly published by Jews, had to close. Only Soviet publications were accessible and available. The Soviets also reorganized the school system and the university. Russian became the sole language of instruction and the ideological indoctrination of students the main goal of most teachers.⁵⁵ Since the Soviets regarded Yiddish as the ‘national’ language of the Jews, they funded a Yiddish theatre and permitted Yiddish cultural and educational activities, but they prohibited Zionist organizations and religious schools such as the Cheder.

In this period, Paul Antschel, Erich Einhorn and Gustav Chomed were studying at the University of Czernowitz. Paul focused on French literature,⁵⁶ since he wished to obtain a degree in Romance language and literature, but he also learned Russian. As his later correspondence with his friend Erich shows, he

53 Silbermann, *Czernowitz – Stadt der Dichter*, pp. 126–27.

54 The movement back to the ‘Reich’ also included Germans from Southern Bukovina, see: Mariana Hausleitner, ‘Viel Mischmasch mitgenommen’. *Die Umsiedlungen aus der Bukowina 1940* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2018).

55 Manfred Reifer, *Menschen und Ideen. Erinnerungen* (Tel Aviv: Olympia, 1952), pp. 222–37; Alfred Kittner, *Erinnerungen 1906–1991*, ed. by Edith Silbermann (Aachen: Rimbaud, 1996), pp. 47–54; Shmueli, *Ein Kind*, pp. 69–72.

56 Chalfen, *Paul Celan*, pp. 94–95.

shared a strong interest in Russian poetry, in particular in Sergei A. Yesenin.⁵⁷ It was at that time that he also translated Shakespeare's sonnets into German.

In September 1940, General Ion Antonescu came to power in Romania. He forced King Charles II to abdicate in favour of his son Mihai. The young King Mihai I became a marionette in the hands of the fascist dictator, who had absolute power and proclaimed himself as Romania's state leader ('Conducător al Statului'). Antonescu included members of the Iron Guard in his newly established government, but a few months later, in January 1941, they staged a rebellion against him. Antonescu crushed it and consolidated his relationship with Nazi Germany. Under his leadership, Romania joined the Axis powers that were planning to attack the Soviet Union.

As war loomed, the NKVD organized massive deportations of all potentially 'hostile' elements in sealed train cars to Siberia; among the deportees were thousands of Romanians, Ukrainians and Jews, along with their families.⁵⁸ At the same time, in the summer of 1941, the Soviets withdrew from the Bukovina and Bessarabia. Political events separated Paul, Erich and Gustav, but their friendship lasted a lifetime. Gustav and Erich, along with other students, were evacuated, sent to the Soviet Union and drafted into the Red Army. Paul Antschel remained in Czernowitz. After the war, in Vienna, Paul met Erich once again, who was working as a translator for the Soviet militaries.⁵⁹ Later, when Erich was back in the Soviet Union, Celan corresponded with him and immortalized his friend's family name in the poem 'Schibboleth': 'Einhorn: du weißt um die Steine'.⁶⁰ Like Erich, Gustav – who served in a Soviet storm battalion and was the one to identify Joseph Goebbels's corpse in the bunker of the Berlin Reichskanzlei – became a translator for the Soviet military at the Nuremberg trials. After his return to the Soviet Union, he also corresponded with Celan. 'I need your letters', wrote Celan to Gustav, and this powerful statement summarized Celan's relationship to Gustav and other friends from his youth.⁶¹

57 See: *Paul Celan – Erich Einhorn. Einhorn: du weißt um die Steine... Briefwechsel*, ed. by Marina Dmitrieva-Einhorn (Berlin: Friedenauer Presse, 2001); 'Paul Celan-Erich Einhorn: Briefe', ed. Dmitrieva-Einhorn, *Celan-Jahrbuch*, ed. by Hans-Michael Speier, 7 (1997/1998), 23–49.

58 Manfred Reifer, 'Geschichte der Juden in der Bukowina (1919–1944)' in *Geschichte der Juden in der Bukowina*, ed. Hugo Gold, vol. 2, p. 13; Stefan Purici, 'Represiunile sovietice în regiunea Cernăuți (anii '40–'50 ai secolului al XX-lea)', *Analele Bucovinei* 2 (2001), 249–68.

59 Erich Einhorn served as an interpreter for the Soviet military in Berlin (1945–1946) and Vienna (1946–1949). He returned and remained in the Soviet Union.

60 Celan, *GW5*, vol. I, pp. 131–132. See also footnote 57.

61 See: *Paul Celan – Gustav Chomed: 'Ich brauche Deine Briefe'. Der Briefwechsel*, ed. by Jürgen Köchel and Barbara Wiedemann (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 2010). In 1972, Gustav immigrated with his family to Israel.

During the Holocaust (1941–1944)

On 22 June 1941, without making a declaration of war, the Axis powers launched an attack on the Soviet Union in order to annihilate it. In the notorious Operation Barbarossa, as Hitler and the Nazis called it, the Axis powers deployed four million men. The 11th Wehrmacht (with 100,000 soldiers) and the III and IV Romanian Army (with 200,000 soldiers) conquered the northern Bukovina and Bessarabia. The Nazi Einsatzgruppe D (mobile killing squads), led by SS Standartenführer Otto Ohlendorf, marched into the Bukovina in their wake. Einsatzgruppe D (comprising 600 men) controlled five Sonderkommandos (subgroups with a total of 3,000 men). The main objective of these paramilitary death squads was the mass murder of Jews.⁶² In cooperation with Romanian soldiers as well as anti-Semitic followers ranging from gangs to neighbours, the perpetrators plundered, tortured and massacred the Jewish population of the Bukovina.

On 8 July 1941, the fascist dictator Ion Antonescu decided to ‘cleanse’ the Bukovina of Jews. On 4 October 1941, he issued an order to deport all Jews from the Bukovina to Transnistria, an area located between the rivers Dnjestr (west) and Bug (east) as well as between the northern border of the Hotin district and the Black Sea (south-west). Based on a treaty between Hitler and Antonescu, the region was placed under Romanian administration. From 9 to 13 October 1941, thus within just four days, the large majority of Bukovina’s Jewish population was deported to Transnistria.⁶³ By the summer of 1942, German Nazis and Romanian fascists had deported 96,135 Jews from the Bukovina and the district of Drohobci.⁶⁴

When Czernowitz was occupied on July 5, the Einsatzkommando 10b, Romanian soldiers and policemen, Ukrainian volunteers and even local residents plundered Jewish homes and shops, raped Jewish women and massacred Jews. Within the next few days, 3,000 Jews were arrested, including Jewish dignitaries. Rabbi Abraham Mark, two cantors and the synagogue caretaker were forced into the shaft of the elevator in the hotel ‘Der schwarze Adler’ [The Black Eagle]. On 9 July 1941, the fascist perpetrators drove them along with 600 Jews to the River Pruth and shot them there. According to Mayor Traian Popovici, about 2,000 Czernowitz Jews were murdered in July. The count of the Jew-

⁶² Following Hitler’s order, Himmler established four Einsatzgruppen and several Sonderkommandos. Genocide was their only objective.

⁶³ Jean Ancel, *The History of the Holocaust in Romania*, trans. by Yaffah Murciano, ed. by Leon Volovici with the assistance of Miriam Caloianu (Lincoln: Nebraska University Press, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2011), pp. 289–91.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 544, 559.

ish community was considerably higher. On 1 August 1941, the Einsatzgruppe D arrived in Czernowitz, murdering 682 Jews in one day.

Following the fascist occupation of Czernowitz in July, Jews were deprived of their civil rights; their movements in the city was restricted; synagogues and Jewish schools were closed; banks and post offices were barred from delivering money to Jews; and Jewish shops, businesses and factories were 'romanianized'. In September 1941, German Nazis and Romanian fascist forced about 50,000 Jews into a ghetto surrounded by a three-metre-high fence and guarded by Romanian gendarmes and regular soldiers. Following an order by dictator Ion Antonescu, on 11 October 1941, German Nazis and Romanian fascists began deporting Jews from the Czernowitz ghetto in cattle wagons to the ghettos, forced labour camps and the death camps in Transnistria. By mid-November, 28,391 Jews from Czernowitz had been deported in cattle wagons to Transnistria.

Traian Popovici, Mayor of Czernowitz, rescued about 17,000 Jewish citizens by convincing the dictator Ion Antonescu and his collaborator Mihai Antonescu, the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers, to exempt so-called 'economically useful' Jews from deportation. Several thousand Jews received exemption permits signed by the Romanian general Corneliu Calotescu. They could return to their homes, which they often found looted or destroyed. When the trains could no longer run owing to the harsh winter, those who had remained in the ghetto were also permitted to leave it. Mayor Popovici issued them his own exemption permits. At the start of the following year, the Mayor lost his power. When the deportations to Transnistria resumed in March and April 1942, Jews holding exemption permits signed by the Mayor were among the 4,700 to 5,000 deportees.

In Transnistria, Jews were forced into ghettos, hard labour camps or death camps. Thousands died due to starvation, forced marches, their brutal treatment by Romanian gendarmes and Ukrainian auxiliary troops, typhoid fever and other epidemics, or were murdered by the perpetrators. In some areas under Romanian administration, Jews had a slim chance of survival. But on the other side of the river Bug, German Nazis controlled the regions. They murdered Jews right away or as soon as they could longer work. According to a German-Romanian agreement, all Jewish deportees to Transnistria were supposed to be sent to German controlled territories on the other side of the river Bug. At the end of the war, the Jews who were able to remain in Czernowitz and about 35,000 Jewish deportees to Transnistria survived.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Jean Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României. Problema evreiască*, trans. by Carol Bines (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001), vol. I.2, pp. 111–99, 230–77; and the vol. II.1.

Following the occupation of Czernowitz by Romanian troops in July 1941, the Antschel family, who had decided – in the spite of the foreseeable dangers – to remain in Czernowitz, lived through the nightmare experienced there by the Jewish population: robberies, assassinations, racial laws similar to those of Nazi Germany, the forced wearing of the yellow star and the evacuation to the ghetto. The Antschel family escaped the deportations to Transnistria in the autumn of 1941 and received Traian Popovici's exemption permits. Like so many other Jews, Antschel's parents believed that the Mayor had adequately protected them, but their son recognized the looming danger. On the night of 28 June 1942, Paul had a disagreement with his father regarding their safety. He begged his parents to go into hiding, but they stayed. Paul left them, finding shelter in the home of Karl Horowitz, who held Calotescu permits.⁶⁶ When Paul returned to his parental apartment next morning, it was boarded up. Like many other Jews, his parents had been deported in a cattle wagon to Ataki in Bessarabia and thereafter to Moghilev in Transnistria. From Moghilev they were sent to Schmerinka, then to the camp of Ladijin on the bank of the Bug River, in an area controlled by the Romanian administration. In August, they were deported to Michailowka, an even more horrible camp in an area occupied by German troops. In the autumn of 1942, Leo Antschel either died of typhus or was killed by the guards because he could no longer work. Antschel's mother Friederike was shot dead, in the neck.⁶⁷

When the deportations from Czernowitz stopped, all Jewish men who had escaped them, including Paul Antschel, were sent to forced labour camps in Romania, where they shovelled stones and built roads. 'I have seen life exchanged for utmost bitterness',⁶⁸ he wrote from the labour camp in Tăbărești (Southern Moldavia) on 2 August 1942. In spite of it all, he continued to write poems in German, sending some of his love poems to Ruth Kraft, who had managed to remain in Czernowitz.

⁶⁶ See: Silbermann, *Czernowitz – Stadt der Dichter*, pp. 153–55.

⁶⁷ In a letter dated 1 July 1944 and sent from Kiev to his friend Erich Einhorn, Paul Antschel writes that his parents were deported to and murdered in Krasnopolska on the river Bug. Paul Antschel's letter to Erich Einhorn, in Emmerich, *Paul Celan*, p. 46 and in *Paul Celan – Erich Einhorn, Celan-Jahrbuch 7 (1997/1998)*, 23–24. According to some survivors, Leo Antschel, Celan's father, perished in a camp or area near Gaissin, and Friederike Antschel, the poet's beloved mother, was murdered in Michailowka. Definitive information regarding the places of their murder is still missing.

⁶⁸ Chalfen, *Paul Celan. Eine Biographie*; John Felstiner, 'Paul Celan. The Strain of Jewishness', *Commentary* (April 1985), 44–53.

In December 1942, Romanian officials permitted Paul to visit Czernowitz and again stayed at the house of Edith's parents. In February 1944, the Romanian labour camp was closed down owing to the harsh winter storms, and Paul was allowed to return to Czernowitz. Upon his arrival, his friends Jacob Silbermann and Hersch Segal⁶⁹ presented him with a special gift: a bound edition of his early poetry. It contained ninety-nine poems which they had collected. Since paper was a scarce item during the war, they were able to produce only three copies. When the poet returned to Czernowitz from the forced labour camp in February 1944, they gave him this volume. It was their way of encouraging him to continue to write poetry.⁷⁰

In Soviet Czernowitz again

In March 1944, the Red Army re-conquered the northern Bukovina, but the southern Bukovina remained under Romanian control. The Soviets were preparing a massive attack on Romania. On 23 August 1944, King Mihai I, supported by a coalition of members of the Romanian historical political parties, the Communist Party and the military, ousted the fascist dictator Ion Antonescu, had him arrested along with Mihai Antonescu and publicly announced that Romania had joined the Allied forces. A few days later, Soviet troops marched into Romania and its capital. For decades, the country was to remain within the Soviet sphere of influence.

The response of Bukovinian Jews to the Soviet occupation was mixed. On the one hand, they were grateful because the Red Army had saved them from extermination, but, on the other hand, they had not forgotten the harshness of the Soviet regime during its first occupation of the city in 1940–1941. They feared new food shortages, the Soviet rejection of the free practice of religion, forced conscription either to the army or to work detachments in the coalmines of the Donbas, and further persecutions. After 23 August 1944, many Jews from the northern Bukovina (around 12,000 people) therefore defied all dangers and illegally crossed the border into Romania.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Decades later, Segal was the first to publish a collection of poems entitled *Blütenlese* (1976) by Selma Meerbaum-Eisinger (1924–1942), Celan's talented cousin, regarded today as the second Anne Frank.

⁷⁰ For more information about this first volume, later called *Typoskript 1944*, see: *Paul Celan – Edith Silbermann*, pp. 234–38.

⁷¹ Mordechai Altshuler, 'The Soviet "Transfer" of Jews from Chernovtsy Province to Romania', *Jews in Eastern Europe* 2 (1998), 54–75.

In the autumn of 1944, the University of Czernowitz reopened. Antschel enrolled in its English programme while simultaneously working as a nurse in a psychiatric clinic under the directorship of Pinkas Meyer, the brother-in-law of Hersch Segal. According to Paul Antschel's own statements, at the start of July 1944, he was part of a medical team sent to Kiev.⁷² Upon his return, he wrote the poem 'Nähe der Gräber'. At that time, he also created his own collection of early poems, recording them in his beautiful handwriting in a small booklet. At the start of 1945, Ruth Kraft had the opportunity to leave Soviet Czernowitz for Romania, crossing the border illegally in the disguise of a Red Cross nurse. Paul Antschel gave her his collection of poems, asking her to bring it to Alfred Margul-Sperber, the 'Doyen of Bukovina's Literature', who was in Bucharest. Antschel hoped that Margul-Sperber would help him to publish his poems. Many years after Celan's death, Ruth Kraft published this booklet with a facsimile in *Gedichte 1938–1944*.⁷³

The Soviet regime distrusted Romanians because their country had been an ally of Nazi Germany. As a result, the Soviet authorities decided to permit former holders of Romanian citizenship to repatriate to Romania. There was no official information, but in early spring of 1945 rumours spread in Czernowitz letting people know the locations of makeshift offices that would accept requests for repatriation.⁷⁴ It was difficult and costly to obtain such permissions, but many Jews used the opportunity to leave for Romania, hoping to continue their travel to Western Europe, Palestine or the United States. By the end of April 1945, the borders were closed again but reopened in the summer to let other former Romanian citizens repatriate, this policy change being attributed to an intervention by Nikita Khrushchev, head of the Ukrainian Communist Party at the time.⁷⁵ By April 1946, about 22,307 people from Czernowitz officially crossed the border to Romania.⁷⁶

Antschel also tried to leave Soviet Czernowitz, but he had no means to pay the authorities for a permit and to purchase a ticket. In spite of his own financial hardship, Jacob Silbermann gave Antschel the necessary financial support. To-

⁷² Celan's reference to this trip in his letter to Erich Einhorn, Emmerich, *Paul Celan*, p. 33. See also: Marc Sagnol, 'Celan, les eaux du Boug', *Temps Modernes* 690 (2016), 1–27.

⁷³ Celan, *Gedichte 1938–1944* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1985).

⁷⁴ Vadim Altskan, 'The Closing Chapter. Northern Bukovinian Jews 1944–1946', *Yad Vashem Studies* 2/43 (2015), 51–81; Silbermann, *Czernowitz – Stadt der Dichter*, pp. 185–87.

⁷⁵ Altskan, *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Jean Ancel, 'The New Jewish Invasion – The Return of the Survivors from Transnistria', in *The Jews are Coming Back. The Return of the Jews to Their Countries of Origin After WW II*, ed. by David Banker (New York/Oxford: Berghahn, 2005), pp. 231–56; Altskan, *Ibid.*, pp. 51–81.

gether they boarded the train to Romania. After crossing the border, Antschel continued to Bucharest, while Jacob Silbermann went to meet his family and Edith Horowitz, who had left the Soviet Bukovina via a different route. Rose Ausländer, Alfred Kittner and Immanuel Weißglas were also able to leave the Soviet Bukovina. In Bucharest, the Czernowitz friends reunited. Their life in the Romanian capital was overshadowed by economic and financial hardships as well as the threats of the looming Stalinist-style dictatorship. In spite of his own precarious situation, Silbermann stood by his young friend Ancel (alias Antschel) when he became ill.⁷⁷ In 1947, Paul Ancel managed to leave Romania, crossing the border illegally into Hungary and continuing his journey to Vienna. A few months later, he left for Paris, which became the poet's new adopted home. Margul-Sperber wrote letters of introduction to Otto Basil in Vienna and Yvan Goll in Paris, drawing their attention to Antschel's talent.⁷⁸ Margul-Sperber, who had become Ancel's mentor, tried to open doors for him in the 'Golden West', as Eastern Europeans under the communist dictatorship called Western European democracies. But in Vienna and Paris, the poet was once again confronted with the harshness of émigré life. When he finally succeeded in making a name for himself as a German-speaking Jewish poet, unjustified accusations of plagiarism and anti-Semitic attacks darkened his life. Looking back, the world of 'people and books' experienced in Czernowitz acquired a new sense and significance for him.

77 When Antschel contracted a life-threatening disease in Bucharest and had no means to pay for medical treatment, it was again Silbermann who gave him the funding for the urgently needed medical care. When Edith and Jacob Silbermann finally succeeded in leaving Romania, Celan reciprocated their help. In the early 1960s, the friends met again in Düsseldorf, and Celan bitterly complained about the libel campaign against him. Silbermann, a lawyer, offered to help Celan. But the poet did not wish to pursue legal action. In a phone call to Silbermann in the spring of 1970, Celan asked him whether he could come to Paris. Shortly thereafter, Edith and Jacob Silbermann learned of his suicide. See: Silbermann, *Begegnung mit Paul Celan*, pp. 68–69; Jacob Silbermann's correspondence with Celan appeared in *Paul Celan – Edith Silbermann*, pp. 253–64.

78 For more information about other Czernowitz friends and classmates see: Silbermann, *Czernowitz – Stadt der Dichter*, pp. 85–196. Among them were Marcel Pohne (1913–1964), who later became a journalist working for the *Deutsche Welle*, and the poet Alfred Gong (1920–1981), a classmate, but not a close friend. In Czernowitz, Antschel also met and engaged in a dialogue with Rose Ausländer (1901–1988) and Alfred Kittner (1906–1991).