

# **Jewish student fraternities at the University of Tartu: a part of Baltic student tradition**

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In the research of the university history the students are sometimes forgotten at all. There are a lot of other important issues to describe and to study, from the illustrious founders and famous professors, scholars and researchers to the architecture of the main buildings of the universities.

But an university without students is usually not an university. The history of the student organisations is a part of history of the student body of the current university or the universities of a country or region. In the context of the University of Tartu is also important that the beginning of the statehood of several nations in the Eastern Europe, Estonians among them, was in a big part the service of their first men with university education. They got their first experiences of administration, but also of the democratic decision-making during their studies and in their student organisations.

The University of Tartu, founded by the Swedish king Gustav II Adolf in 1632, has always been a multinational university. During the 17th century the majority of students were the Baltic Germans and Swedes, some Finns and at least one Latvian among them. After the re-establishment of the University in 1802 first of all for the Baltic German students it developed during a century into the university of Baltic Germans, Russians, Poles, Jews, Latvians and Estonians; later came also Ukrainians, Belorussians, Georgians, Armenians and many other peoples of the Russian Empire.

There were about 1600 students enrolled to the Swedish university in Tartu, the *Academia Gustaviana*, during the second period known as *Academia Gustavo-Carolina*. The figure of the students of the University of Tartu (Dorpat, since 1893 officially renamed to Jurjew) from 1802 to the 1918 was much bigger – about 28,000. In the Estonian university from 1919 to 1940 about 20,000 students were matriculated.

I.

*Kaiserliche Universität zu Dorpat* was re-established in 1802 as a German-language university for the three Baltic provinces of the Russian Empire. These provinces were Livonia, Estonia and Courland. While the provinces of Livonia and Estonia were conquered by Russia in 1710, so the Courland was united with Russia almost a century later, during the third division of Poland in 1795. Today, when we are speaking about Baltic countries, we are speaking about Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. In Tsarist Russia the Lithuanian lands, mainly the provinces of Kaunas and Vilnius, did not belong to the Baltic provinces. They constituted a part of so-called Western Provinces together with Belorussian provinces of Vitebsk, Grodno, Mohylew and Minsk, and the provinces of Podolia, Volhynia and Kiev of the Right-Bank Ukraine. The Western Provinces were the area where the Russian authorities tried to downplay the leading role of the Catholic church and the Polish nobility, the magnates and szlachta. Differently from the Poles in Kingdom of Poland and Polish-speaking elites in the Western Provinces, who during the 19th century insurrected against the tsarist regime at least twice, most of the Baltic German elites maintained their loyalty towards Russian Emperor until the end of the Tsarist Russia even despite of the russification beginning with 1880s and 1890s.

Baltic provinces had wide autonomy according to the capitulation treaty of 1710. It included the Lutheran religion as official religion, the German language as official language, the local provincial public and private law and guaranteed rights of the local estates of realm: the nobility with their four knighthoods (of Livonia, Estonia, Courland and Ösel-Saaremaa), the burghers in the towns with their city councils and the Lutheran clergy. According to the privileges, guaranteed by the Russian emperors, the knighthoods and the city councils had preserved their functions in local government, police and justice. One has to keep in mind that the bodies of the knighthoods and the city councils were democratically elected by the members of the nobility or the burghers respectively. But the knighthoods as also the burghers were closed estates of realm: they had the legal right to accept their new members themselves.

Some procedures of the knighthoods' internal rules were taken over by the Baltic student fraternities and are sometimes reflected even today in the statutes of the Estonian student organisations.

The serfdom of the Latvian and Estonian peasants in Livonia, Estonia and Courland was abolished soon after the Napoleonic wars and release of peasants in Prussia, respectively in 1819, 1816 and 1817, forty-five years earlier as in Russia in general.

The control over the educational system in the Baltic provinces was divided between the local authorities and the Imperial Ministry of Enlightenment. Elementary education was supervised by the local clergy, but the gymnasiums and the university were subordinated to the Ministry of Enlightenment. Though, the language of instruction in the gymnasiums as also at the university was German until the russification in the beginning of 1890s.

Among the most important reasons for the re-opening of the University of Tartu was the fear of imperial government of the revolutionary ideas of the French revolution of 1789. In 1798, the Emperor Paul I ordered all students, who were the Russian subjects, to return from European, mostly from the German universities. Most of them were the Baltic Germans and for them the university was re-opened in Tartu. Paul's son and follower Emperor Alexander I, influenced by the Enlightenment, ordered the foundation according to the example of the German universities with a large-scale autonomy. So, the Tartu university was an autonomous imperial university for the autonomous Baltic provinces.

Russian Empire got the most of its Jewish population during the divisions of Poland in 1772, 1793 and 1795. In 1791, the Empress Catherine II issued an order on the creation of the Pale of Settlement (черта оседлости). To this area the provinces of mostly the former Polish lands belonged and there the settlement of Jewish population was allowed. From the Baltic provinces only the Courland, during the 18th century a semi-independent vassal state of Kingdom of Poland with increasing influence of Russia, belonged to the Pale of Settlement. In the middle of 19th century the Jews got the permission to settle also to the suburbs of the city of Riga. But the provinces of Livonia and Estonia remained outside of the Pale of Settlement until the end of Imperial Russia. Though, there was always a number of exceptions in the Russian restrictions concerning the Jews in favour of the former soldiers and educated people for example, and there

have been always been the small Jewish communities in the towns of Estonian and Livonian provinces.

## II.

Soon after the re-establishment of the University of Tartu the national composition of the student body began to change. Although the University was established for the Baltic provinces, a lot of German students from St. Petersburg came here. After the Polish insurrection of 1831 the Polish universities in Warsaw and Vilnius were closed by the Russian authorities and a lot of Polish students came to Tartu. A specific group among them were the Protestants, members of the Lutheran, Augsburg evangelical and Reformed (Calvinist) churches, who came to the only protestant Faculty of Theology in Russia except the Swedish-language one at the University of Helsinki in Finland. A lot of Polish protestant students were with German background, but other Polish students accepted them as the members of their fraternity Polonia, founded in Tartu in 1828, until the foundation of their own society of Polish Theologians at the University of Tartu in 1901.

There was always a dozen or two of Russian students and some Latvians and Estonians. One of the first Jewish students in Tartu was Hermann Bernard, he studied medicine from 1807 to 1812. He was born in London Great Britain, but during his studies his parents lived in the province of Vilnius. Demetrius Levi followed in 1809, Isaak Hopfen came in 1810 and so on. The number of Jewish students remained very small, we can compare it with the number of Estonian and Latvian students.

## III.

The growth of the number of the Jewish students at the University of Tartu accelerated in the beginning of 1880s. The reason of it was the growing antisemitism in Russia. After the assassination of the liberal Emperor Alexander II his son Alexander III came to power in 1881. The Jews were accused in assassination and the pogroms began. In 1884 the new university statutes were introduced for the Russian universities together with *numerus clausus* for Jews and other restrictions. Autonomous German-language University of Tartu continued at first with its liberal statutes of 1865. The number of Jewish students began to increase. Most of them studied medicine because there were less restrictions

for Jews in this field of activity, including the state service. The Russian Empire needed many doctors for its huge army, but a lot of doctors found their place also in the civil service. They had good opportunities to make a career that in Russia was measured according to the table of ranks. Very successful men could achieve the higher ranks that gave the status of personal or even hereditary nobility. Jews were not exception here.

Since the beginning of 1890s the Russification reached the University of Tartu, too. The Russian language of learning was introduced step by step beginning with 1889. Only the Lutheran Faculty of Theology remained with German language of instruction. In 1892 the private gymnasiums of the Baltic knighthoods were closed because the latter refused to transfer their gymnasiums to the Russian language of instruction. The chart (see powerpoint presentation) reflects the changes: figure of Lutheran students decreased quickly and the number of Jewish students began to increase. Russian students initially did not come to Tartu, because there were enough Russian universities in Russia already. Only after 1897, when the diplomas of the first class Russian orthodox priest seminars – where the accommodation for the most of seminarists was covered by the state – were accepted for the matriculation to the university of Tartu, the number of Russian students began to increase quickly. The so-called “seminarists” were accepted only in the universities of Tartu, Warsaw and Tomsk in Siberia.

It should be mentioned here that tsarist government made several attempts in 19th century to convert Latvians and Estonians to Orthodoxy and these attempts were successful in some regions. Therefore there were also Latvians and Estonians who came to the University from the Russian Orthodox priest seminars. More and more students came from the simple milieu, they were the sons of lower urban classes and peasants. Among them were lot of students who were influenced by the leftist-radical ideas. On 30 March 1899 the university was temporarily closed due to the student riots for a first time.

On the other hand, the 1880s and 1890s were also the years when the number of Latvian and Estonian students began rapidly increase. The economic situation of Latvian and Estonian peasants improved due to the economic growth in general, but the reforms in the sphere of land ownership and self-government had strong influence. Laws for the peasant estate of realm enabled them to buy the farms and even manors – earlier the land belonged to the noblemen or state or churches

and the peasants only cultivated it, though guaranteed by agreements and tradition – and the rural municipalities for Latvian and Estonian peasants with elected bodies were founded during 1850s and 1860s. It became a case of honour to send at least one son to the university. Most of Latvian and Estonian students were Lutherans and they kept themselves usually to the side of the Baltic German students despite of the superiority attitude of the latter towards their local commilitones. The most of Latvians and Estonians came from the simpler milieu and they were influenced by the leftist ideas of freedom and equality of all people, too. (It should be noted here that these ideas were popular also among a part of noble Russian students and Jewish students, but very few Baltic Germans). A number of Latvian and Estonian students and former students were among the leading revolutionaries during the first Russian revolution of 1905. It is also noteworthy here that two later Estonian heads of state, Konstantin Päts and Jaan Teemant, were sentenced to death in absence due to their activities during the revolution, and some other, Jaan Tõnisson, the longtime spiritual leader of the Estonian Students' Society among them, were imprisoned for a while.

In 1890s the numerus clausus for the Jewish students was introduced at the University of Tartu, too. Only 5% of the students and 10% of the pharmacy students could be the Jewish faith.

#### IV.

The student life in Tartu was organised on example of the German universities. Although the foundation of any kind of student fraternities was strictly forbidden according to the university statutes up to the beginning of 20th century, the first of them were established soon after the reopening of the university already. The connection to the German universities was more than direct: a lot of Baltic German students have studied before or studied after their studies in Tartu at the German universities and were the members of many fraternities there. Until 1830 there were the Baltic fraternities, mostly named Curonia, at many German universities like Heidelberg, Bonn, Jena, Göttingen and Berlin. Particularly the noblemen from Courland preferred to send their sons to Germany. One has to keep in mind that Courland had a short common border with Eastern Prussia and the way from Mitau (Jelgava) to Königsberg was only a little bit

longer as from Mitau to Tartu to say nothing about the Libau (Liepāja) with its sea connections to Europe. Knighthood of Courland was also insulted by the decision of reopening the Baltic university in Tartu. Before that the opportunity of restructuring the Academic Gymnasium in Mitau, the capital of Courland, to the university was discussed, too. The noblemen from Courland preferred the strongholds of the romantic fraternity life Heidelberg, Bonn, Göttingen and Jena and in some *corps* of Heidelberg and Bonn they constituted a remarkable part of members. Later the level of learning and research became more important than joyous student life and the University of Berlin gained popularity among the Balts. For the theologians the University of Halle was very important. For medical students the important places for post-graduate studies became the Wien, Straßburg, Paris and sometimes also Munich. Before opening the Rigaer Polytechnikum in 1862 a lot of Balts travelled to Germany for the technical higher education. There were even the Baltic fraternities in Karlsruhe and Stuttgart. Forestry was important and specialised forest academies in Tharandt and Eberswalde were also popular. So, one can say that the Baltic student life was constantly influenced by the traditions of different German universities. But important were also the local circumstances: most of all the Russian university legislation, but also the balance between the local Baltic interest to educate their sons at home and imperial interests in getting educated specialists for many fields of state service and Lutheran church. Last but not least – the University of Tartu was one of the Russian windows to the modern European science and education during the first half of 19th century particularly. Here is worth of noting that from the nine members of the first Board of the first Burschenschaft of Jena in 1815 three members were the former students of the University of Tartu from Courland.

Despite the fraternities were strictly forbidden, the university rector usually knew who were the chairmen of them and moreover, connected them in the cases of some problems with the students. And the problems were more than usual: duelling, fightings with the police, military or burghers, making noise at night and so on. We cannot forget the autonomous jurisdiction of the university over its members, i.e. professors, servants and workers and the students. On the other hand, the duels were strongly punished by the criminal court in Russia and a number of students were sent to the jail or to the

military as simple soldiers. The service in the Russian troops in Caucasus was a fearful thing in the middle of 19th century.

Student life at the autonomous University of Tartu was subordinated to the special rules, which were not public, but enforced by the fraternities: the *allgemeiner Comment*. The negotiations of the four Baltic German provincial fraternities Curonia, Estonia, Livonia and Fraternitas Rigensis on the *Comment* finalised in an establishment of a student authority, the *Chargierten Convent* in 1832. Each fraternity had three board members, elected for a term, and the board members of the fraternities constituted the *Chargierten Convent*, which held its meetings at least weekly. Later also the common Court of Honour (*Ehrengericht*) and Court of Student Affairs (*Burschengericht*) were established.

In 1855, after the death of Emperor Nicholas I, more liberal time began under the Alexander II. In the same time a new Curator, the representative of the Imperial Ministry of Enlightenment for the Tartu educational district covering all Baltic provinces, but also the highest official responsible for the university, was appointed: the retired Colonel Georg Friedrich von Bradke. He legalized the fraternities among the first things he did in his office. According to the Rules for Corporations (*Regeln für die Korporationen*, so-called *Kronscoment*) the fraternities and *Chargierten Convent* got some powers, the right to give their agreement for the foundation of a new corporation among them. But the final decision to allow the foundation of a new corporation remained to the Minister of Enlightenment in St. Petersburg personally.

The majority of Corporations were Baltic-German: in addition to the four old provincial fraternities the common-Baltic Neobaltia and Fraternitas Academica of Germans from Russia were founded in 1880s. To the two latter belonged a significant number of germanized Latvians, Estonians and Russians, but also Jews. For example, one of the founders of Fraternitas Academica and the composer of its banner-song (*Farbenlied*) was a Jewish student Joseph Feitelberg from Courland. Also Latvians with their Lettonia were accepted by the *Chargierten Convent*. Estonians tried twice to found their own corporation, in 1882 and 1890, but their attempts were not successful. In 1882 the application was rejected by the *Chargierten Convent*. In 1890 the *Chargierten Convent* accepted the application of Estonians, but new Russian Curator answered that there



were already enough fraternities in Tartu and Estonians could join to some of the already existing. Latvians left the *Chargierten Convent* in 1905, due to the first Russian revolution and the activities of Russian punishment troops in Latvia, in the invitation of which they accused the Baltic Germans.

V.

The new rules for the students from the end of 1860s gave the opportunity to establish the student societies for sciences and humanities (*literärisch-wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft*) and the acceptance of the rector was enough for that. This opportunity was used by many student groups. Among them were the theology students, who rejected the duelling from moral grounds as a mean of solving of the conflicts of honour and therefore were not accepted as a corporation by the *Chargierten Convent*. In addition, a number of national societies were founded, whose members did not want to become a fraternity or were too small for the creation of a fraternity. The fraternity life with coloured caps, societal life, duelling equipment, representation and so on was too expensive for many students, and for the foundation of a corporation 30 members were needed as minimum. The latter was the main problem, why several attempts to found a Russian corporation failed. Another issue was that the ethnic borders had become more visible. When in the first half of 19th century the few Latvian, Estonian and Jewish students belonged to the old provincial fraternities, the Jews mostly to the Curonia, so after the beginning of national awakening of Latvians and Estonians and the increase of the number of the Jewish students most of them did not want any more to join the Baltic German fraternities.

The latter had become to an integral part of Baltic German elite circles and the cooperation of four provincial fraternities in the *Chargierten Convent* become an important factor in strenghtening of the Baltic unity against the growing attempts of the imperial government to limit the Baltic autonomy. Since the last quarter of 19th century the most of leading persons of the Baltic society knew each other already from the meetings of the *Chargierten Convent*. But on the other hand the Baltic elites were not able to maintain the strong position in the Baltic provinces any more and their choice after the beginning of the russification was to encapsulate themselves in their tiny community.

For the Poles and Jews the additional problem was the attitude of the imperial authorities. There was no hope to get the permission for the foundation of Polish or Jewish corporation from the Ministry of Enlightenment. The Polonia of Poles existed illegally from 1828 and took a legal form of a society (see the powerpoint presentation) 60 years later. Only after the Russian revolution of 1905, when the legislation in respect of student organisations was liberalised in all Russian universities partly on the example of the experience of the University of Tartu, the Poles got the permission to restore their fraternity in 1907. After the end of First World War the Polonia settled herself to the Stefan Bathory University in Vilnius, after 1939 left to Great Britain and was reopened in Poland in Gdańsk after the fall of the Eastern Bloc.

Jewish students founded three different societies with very similar names (see the powerpoint presentation). The choice of the name was at least in a part prescribed already by the rules for the students. The first of them, so-called Academic Society, united mostly the Jewish Students who had come from outside of the Baltic provinces. The two others were founded by the students from Courland. The difference between them was that the most of members of one had finished the gymnasium in Mitau (Jelgava) and of the other the gymnasium of Libau (Liepāja). The two latter societies merged in 1907 to one society. Jewish student organisations at the Imperial University of Tartu got never the permission to found the corporation.

An important condition for the existence of legal student organisations in Tsarist Russia was that they were strictly forbidden of any kind of political activities. This condition was accepted in the most of cases and some small pro-German manifestations of Baltic German corporations in 1869 and 1872 gained a lot of attention by the Ministry of Enlightenment and also the local police officers. The fraternities organised the societal life of the student body and guarded the “good and honourable behaviour” in the student life. They took care of their members and educated them to the good members of the elites in general and the Baltic German society in particular. National student societies accepted the leading role of the corporations in organising the student life and they mostly did not anticipate also the joyous student life. But they were very aware of their role as members of the future elites of their national group and therefore educated their members in the spirit of national and cultural goals. Among others the weekly

presentations and discussions by the members on the different topics concerning the national history and culture were held. The Jewish societies were not exception here.

After the russification of the University it became soon impossible for the *Chargierten Convent* to guarantee the “good and honourable behaviour” of all students. Already since 1860s the Russian students protested against the ruling role of the Baltic German corporations at the “imperial Russian university” and refused to recognise the *allgemeiner Comment*. The problem was not serious until the russification because of the very small number of the “rebels” and the silent support of university leadership: the rector and prorector themselves were in most of cases the alumnae members (the *Philister*) of the Baltic German corporations.

Situation changed with the russification. The new curator, rector and prorector for the student affairs were sent to Tartu from other Russian universities and now the attitude of the university leadership towards the corporations could be described only as a very cool toleration. Fateful conflict came soon. In autumn 1894, after a fighting between the members of Curonia and one of the two Jewish societies of the students from Courland, the latter refused to accept the Court of the Student Affairs (*Burschengericht*) of the *Chargierten Convent*. The Prorector for student affairs Filipow chose the side of Jewish students. After that the *Chargierten Convent* declared that from this moment the *allgemeiner Comment* is the rule only for the students who are recognising it. The Poles recognised the *Comment* and the leading role of the *Chargierten Convent* until 1896, the Estonian Students' Society gave the decision of guaranteeing of the *Comment* free for its members in 1904, and the Lettonia of Latvians left the *Chargierten Convent* in 1905.

## VI.

During February and March 1918, after the Treaty of Brest-Litowsk, the imperial German troops occupied Livonia and Estonia. Courland has been occupied already in 1915. In September 1918, the University of Tartu was opened by the High Command of the 8th Army of the German Imperial Army as a German-language *Landesuniversität*. To this university little bit more than 1000 students were enrolled, one quarter of them were the Jews. The percentage of Jews was so high because the Estonian students boycotted the German university in Tartu. Estonia was declared independent in

February 1918, but Germans did not recognize it. The representatives of Estonian student organisations came together and decided to boycott the university. Most of enrolled students during this very short term were the Baltic Germans together with some officers and soldiers of the imperial army, but also Latvians, Russians and Jews, as mentioned already. The German troops left Estonia after the November Revolution in Germany and the university was closed.

The activities of the student fraternities were allowed by the military authorities. Besides of the already existing Jewish societies the first Zionist society in Tartu, a Kadimah was registered. Unfortunately there is not much more known about it than the name and the year of foundation, 1915.

## VII.

The University of Tartu of the Republic of Estonia was opened as an Estonian-language university on 1 December 1919. The most of students and professors of the Russian imperial university were evacuated to Voronezh during the first half of 1918. Only a few professors and students returned to Estonia after the end of hostilities between the Soviet Russia and Estonia, mainly those who lived in Estonia already before the World War I. According to the provisions of the Tartu Peace Treaty between the Soviet Russia and Estonia of 2 February 1920 the former inhabitants of Estonia were allowed to return to Estonia and the former inhabitants of Russia and other lands under the Soviet control could left Estonia. After the end of the war in Latvia the University of Latvia was founded in Riga on the base of the former Polytechnikum. These circumstances influenced the composition of the student body of the new Estonian University of Tartu. Russians, Belorussians, Ukrainians, but also the most of Jews and other left to their homeland. Latvians and many Baltic Germans and the Jews from Courland and Southern Livonia continued their studies at the University of Latvia. Latvian Lettonia as also the two old Baltic German fraternities, the Curonia and the Fraternitas Rigensis, left to Riga, too.

Jewish population in Estonia was very small, only about 4,500 individuals, 0.4% of general population. Due to the different social composition of Estonian Jewish community and various other reasons the precentage of Jewish students at the

University of Tartu was bigger, beginning with about 5% in the 1920 to about 2% in 1938. A significant part of them came from Latvia. There were two Jewish gymnasiums in Estonia, in Tallinn and Tartu, but the latter was closed in the beginning of 1930s due to the lack of students. Very important event was the opening of the chair for the Jewish studies in 1934 at the University of Tartu.

In Estonian university the student organisations, no difference, societies or corporations, were registered by the University Council and beginning with 1925 by the University Government. Most of old Estonian, Baltic German and Jewish organisations continued their activities and many new, mostly Estonian organisations were founded.

**Academic Society for Learning Jewish History and Culture**, founded already in 1872 and registered in December 1883, united initially the members from outside of the Baltic provinces. The background was not so important any more in the Republic of Estonia. Now the Academic Society was a society in contradiction to the corporations *Limuwia* and *Hasmonaea*.

In the end of 1930s the Head of State Konstantin Päts tried to minimize the influence of the University of Tartu that has been seen as a stronghold of the democratic opposition. Among other measures in 1938 the new Act for the Universities was passed. The articles about student organisations set the minimum number of the members to 20. The Academic Society did not have enough members and in October 1938 it was reorganised to the Academic Jewish Society of History and Literature as other academic societies, whose members were not only students. Society was closed after the beginning of the Soviet occupation.

Two Jewish societies of the students from Courland merged in 1907 to the to Literature, Music and and Science Society of Jewish Students. The Society was reorganised to the corporation **Limuwia** in 1925 with the colours dark blue, white and golden and slogans *Freundschaft, Ehre, Nation* and *Amore more ore re firmantur amicitiae*. *Limuwia* followed mostly the common traditions of the Baltic student corporations and had also the loose relationship to the Estonian, German and Russian organisations. At least in the memoirs of Estonian students the visits “to the Jews” during bigger festivities are mentioned. The celebration of 50th anniversary of *Limuwia* in 1933 was greeted by the rector of the university, later Archbishop of Estonian Lutheran Church, Johan Köpp, and by the

prorector, later Prime Minister Jüri Uluots. In the newspaper articles on the anniversary occasion the participation of 17 members of Limuwia in Estonian War of Independence was mentioned as also some famous members listed: the personal doctor of Latvian President Isidor Feiertag, the head of the Lithuanian National Theater in Kaunas Berkowicz, the Professor of the University of Lausanne Landau and the Professor of the University of Concepcion in Chile Alexander Lipschütz.

Limuwia was abolished after the beginning of the Soviet occupation.

The Zionist movement gained popularity among the Jewish students also in the Baltic states. After the visit of Wladimir Zeev Jabotinsky to Riga a group of members of the Academic Society for Knowledge of Jewish History and Culture in Tartu left the society in 1923 and founded the Zionist corporation **Hasmonaea**, recognizing the Basler Program of 1897. Sometimes the Hasmonaea of Tartu has been seen as daughter corporation of Hasmonaea Riga that was founded earlier. The public presentation in the colours hell blue, golden, white was celebrated on 1 April 1926, the anniversary of the University of Jerusalem. Hasmonaea cooperated actively with other Zionist corporations in Latvia and Lithuania and had not so many contacts to the other student organisations in Tartu as had the Limuwia. It seems from the internal statutes, written in German and preserved in the Estonian State Archives, that the Hasmonaea belonged perhaps more to the German or Austrian than to the Baltic tradition of student fraternities. Hasmonaea was closed together with all other student organisations after the Soviet occupation. The Zionists were actively prosecuted by the Soviet secret police. Many members of Hasmonaea were arrested and sent to the Gulag.

In 1925 the founders of the Jewish Female Students Association **Hazfiro (Hacfiro)** left the Academic Society. There is few information about this organisation. Hazfiro was closed in 1938 due to the lack of members and the most of remaining members joined the Academic Society again.

VIII.

The fate of the members of the Jewish student organisations at the University of Tartu during the World War II and after is not known in detail. We know that a number of members were arrested or deported by the Soviets during 1940–1941 and many members were victims of the Holocaust.

A lot of those who survived the war in the Soviet rear returned to Estonia after the war. During the Anti-Jewish campaign in the Soviet Union in the beginning of 1950s some former members of the Jewish student organisations were accused in belonging to these organisations (sometimes a part of accusation of so-called “bourgeois nationalism”). The fate of Abe Liebman (1914–1990) could be exemplary. He was born in Valga/Valka and studied the Jewish history and culture from 1934 at Lazar Gulkowitsch. His MA (mag. phil.) paper (1939) was written on the history of Jewish communities in the Baltic provinces of Russia. He was a member of Limuwia and chairman of it. In 1941 he was mobilised to the Red Army. After the war he served as lecturer in the Party School of the ESSR. His MA-degree was requalified as the Soviet candidate degree. But in the beginning of 1950s his candidate degree was declared to null and void due to the theme of his MA-work and he lost all his positions. In 1951–1956 he worked in a factory in Tallinn. Since 1956 he was a senior research fellow of the Party History Institute of the ESSR, defended his new candidate paper in 1959 and obtained the degree of doctor of history in 1971. Both studies were written on the history of the Communist Party.

Some members of the Jewish student societies succeeded to go to Israel after the war. It is known that the meetings of former members of the Tartu corporations and societies were organised and anniversaries were celebrated. Differently from the most of Estonian fraternities, sororities and societies the Jewish ones are not re-established in Tartu. The history of them is not written yet. The materials preserved in the Estonian archives are waiting for researcher with general knowledge of Jewish history in Tsarist Russia and the Baltic provinces, but even more important are the skills of Hebrew, Jidish, Russian, German, Latvian and Estonian.