

INTRODUCTION



Thomas Pegelow Kaplan and Wolf Gruner

In the conclusions of his pathbreaking 1961 study of the Holocaust, Raul Hilberg commented that “in various forms, some more eloquent than others, the Jews appealed and petitioned wherever and whenever the threat of concentration and deportation struck them: in the Reich, in Poland, in Russia, in France, in the Balkan countries, and in Hungary.”¹ Indeed, throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, officials and ordinary members of Jewish Communities as well as men and women whom the Nazi state defined as racially Jewish or partially Jewish wrote tens of thousands of petitions all across German-occupied Europe and in countries allied to the Nazi regime. Any given local, regional, or state archive on the continent and beyond encompasses collections with a myriad of such entreaties. These petitions ranged from rushed appeals for exemptions from pending deportations, such as the case of Jewish war veterans, widows, and orphans who approached the Sorting Committee in the Romanian city of Dorohoi in late 1941, to very elaborate entreaties, such as Rabbi Jacob Kaplan’s July 1941 appeal against Vichy France’s second *Statut des Juifs* addressed to Xavier Vallat, the Commissioner-General for Jewish Affairs.²

In light of this magnitude, it is striking—and even problematic for the broader understanding of Jewish responses during the Holocaust—that petitions have received so little attention in the scholarship on this genocide. This volume addresses this shortcoming and places petitioning practices at the center of its analysis, understanding these entreaties as evidence for the agency and often even resistance of Jews during the Holocaust. Specialists of Jewish history in various European countries during the 1930s and 1940s discuss the origin and outcome of Jewish petitions and place them in their specific historical context.

The neglect of Jewish petitions in the scholarly literature on the Holocaust is not so much grounded in a lack of awareness—almost every researcher searching for evidence of Jewish reactions to the persecution by the Nazis or other authoritarian regimes has been struck by these en-

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Resisting Persecution: Jews and Their Petitions during the Holocaust

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treaties and their abundance. Rather, it is based on a common disregard, resulting from an underestimation of the function, impact, and goals of petitioning practices in some of the most influential works in the field. In his aforementioned magnum opus, Raul Hilberg even used the enormous number of entreaties to make his case for the alleged absence of “actual” Jewish resistance. “Everywhere, the Jews pitted words against rifles, dialectics against force and everywhere,” he argued, “they lost.”³ Over the decades, these scholarly evaluations of petitions have changed very little. In her important study on the challenges of so-called *Mischlinge* in Hamburg during the Nazi period, historian Beate Meyer, for example, has pointed to the low success rate of petitions for exemptions from the Nuremberg Racial Laws. Moreover, Nazi state officials succeeded, in her view, in misleading petitioners to believe in “sham possibilities,” falsely suggesting that an “‘exit’ from ‘racial’ persecution was possible.”⁴

This volume challenges the widespread notion that Jews wrote their petitions in vain. It takes them seriously, discussing petitionary letters authored by Jewish individuals and representatives of Jewish organizations as a form of communication that was frequently able to surpass the asymmetrical power relations between the oppressed and the oppressor. In most previous studies, historians have reduced petitions to futile individual or collective quests for exemptions from of all kinds of anti-Jewish measures, ranging from early dismissals from jobs to being excluded from the mass deportations that began in 1941–42. Asking for exemptions, however, already expressed a form of agency and even opposition to the Nazi or another authoritarian state. Moreover, in the 1930s and 1940s, quite a number of petitioners openly protested anti-Jewish measures and legislation in general, be it in Germany, Romania, or France, and demanded their abandonment. This volume establishes that petitions repeatedly served as a critical but overlooked political tool for the persecuted in an authoritarian environment.

In addition to requesting exemptions from or even the abolition of national or local anti-Jewish measures, victims of persecution wrote petitions as an important means to reposition and redefine the social and political status assigned to them by the perpetrators. This is especially evident in petitionary letters—be it from regular Jewish individuals or prominent Jewish representatives—addressed to authoritarian leaders such as Adolf Hitler, Rudolf Hess, or Josef Bürckel in Germany or Ion Antonescu in Romania, as Wolf Gruner and Ștefan C. Ionescu’s chapters in this volume show.⁵ Thus, the analyses of this collection serve the purpose of reevaluating petitions as a means of contestation that could also amount to a form of resistance. Eschewing simplifying binaries of resistance versus collabo-

ration, the contributions in this volume offer a more nuanced understanding of these complex and often convoluted practices.

By necessity, entreaties authored by Jewish women and men combined multiple voices and languages, including, at a minimum, those of the petitioners and the petitioned. Often, they referred to traditional, scientific, or religious authorities or employed—in line with Emancipation discourses and gains—legal arguments. In other cases, entreaties revolved around personal appeals, often subservient, and outright flattery that used to be the defining characteristics of pre- and early modern supplications. All in all, they present public or semi-public documents composed by the petitioners with a more or less clear objective, received and, in their vast majority, read by the petitioned agencies or individuals of real or imagined power. Hence, these petitions constituted the kind of hybrid source that should be at the center of the much-needed “integrated histories” of the Holocaust that prominent scholars such as Saul Friedländer and Dan Michman have called for and that relate the practices of the perpetrators, victims, and—as Tim Cole’s chapter on petitioners in Budapest demonstrates—neighbors alike.⁶

Why are petitions so important? In non-authoritarian societies, it is hard to imagine that writing letters to a government might be an effective way to communicate or have any noticeable impact in light of the myriad means to assert influence.⁷ In a dictatorship, conversely, interactions between perpetrators and the persecuted work very differently. The persecuted are excluded from any political participation and representation. They cannot resort to a free press or rely on free speech, since any public or private critique would be in danger of being punished by law or extrajudicial means. Therefore, entreaties often constitute the petitioners’ only or most prominent permissible expression of individual or collective opinion, while simultaneously some also carry considerable risk, as scholars of Soviet history have shown.⁸

At the same time, personal relationships and direct access to individuals in positions of power amount to much greater significance in an authoritarian environment than in a pluralistic society, where different branches of power exist. As a consequence, establishing a channel of communication with authoritarian leaders or their regional and local counterparts via entreaties can be a more effective way to challenge discrimination and persecution than open protest or armed resistance. As James Scott pointed out, autocratic leaders prefer to be in control of requests, which affirms their personal political power.⁹ As a result, a large number of petitions in the 1930s and 1940s—despite popular belief—did not get shelved, but were discussed by the authorities and received answers.

Moreover, responses of the perpetrators to petitioners necessitated the allocation of human and other resources of the oppressors. After all, petitions functioned as a place of negotiation of two or more groups in an asymmetric field of power.¹⁰ As the following chapters prove with striking examples, perpetrators took entreaties seriously as indicated not only by processing them, but also by, time and again, involving agencies other than the addressed to formulate an adequate response or come to a decision. These dynamics often provided the oppressed with much-needed time and even opened opportunities to manipulate perpetrator agencies. As Ștefan Ionescu's analysis of Romanian Jewish leader Wilhelm Filderman's entreaties to Ion Antonescu reveals, petitioners occasionally sought to pit one office against another by appealing to their specific institutional and personal interests. In a dictatorship, in which Jews had no political currency and often lacked the legal means, petition writing, surprisingly, served many men and women as one of the last remaining ways to defend themselves individually or as a community from anti-Jewish laws, local restrictions, and violent attacks. Astonishingly, such efforts frequently bore success.

Methodological Questions

The study of petitions poses a number of methodological and conceptual challenges. In addition to scholars of communist rule in Europe, early modernists outside the field of Jewish studies have extensively grappled with entreaties. Their pathbreaking works inform this volume's approaches, which build on these previous studies and develop their methodologies further.¹¹

Our collection explores what constitutes a "petition" composed by a member or members of a Jewish Community in mid-twentieth-century Europe. The volume raises a number of interrelated questions: How or to what extent do petitions differ from other kinds of writing, such as the crafting of personal letters or completing of bureaucratic forms? Furthermore, how do petitioning practices fit in with the broad continuum of responses by European Jews to violence and oppression that evolved on a continuum from compliance and evasion to individual protest and armed uprisings? In what ways can and should petitioning practices be understood as part of the broader spectrum of Jewish resistance during the Holocaust? And, finally, how were Holocaust-era Jewish entreaties embedded in the often long histories of petition practices, particularly in centralistic or autocratic regimes, and to what extent were these processes shaped by local, regional, national, or even transnational networks and spaces?

The term “petition” derives its meaning from the Latin verb *petere*—to claim, to desire, or to demand. As scholars such as Geoffrey Koziol have shown, it was a commonly used expression of supplication rituals in the early medieval church and kingship that had its origin in Ancient Greek supplication practices and Roman imperial rescripts. In its origins in antiquity, a supplication had moral and religious, but only quasi-legal components and was marked by repetition, distinct verbiage and rules, and oftentimes calls for mercy. The act of *supplicatio* addressed a more powerful person, generally a ruler or ruling body, not a god.¹²

Over the centuries, the very concept and act of petitioning has shifted considerably. There was a range of both different and similar terms with diverse meanings in various European languages that denoted petitioning practices by Jewish and gentile petitioners alike. In German-speaking parts of Europe, for example, *Petitionen* only arose as the dominant term by the beginning of the nineteenth century and was then strongly tied to the language of constitutionalism. Most of the earlier sources contain other terms like *Suppliken*, *Supplikationen*, or *Gravamina*, a Latin noun meaning “burdens.” Later, terms like *Bittschriften* and *Gesuche* came into use. The word *Gravamina*, less often its singular *Gravamen*, was in wide circulation across the continent in the early modern period, referencing the voicing of grievances connected to administrative and legal proceedings or outright rebellions.¹³ In English, “petition” assumed the role of an overarching term much earlier. The *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* captures these various components by defining a petition as “a solemn supplication or request, especially to a superior authority; an entreaty. A formal written document requesting a right or benefit from a person or group in authority.”¹⁴

For the purpose of this study, the co-editors and contributors have agreed on a deliberately broad and far-reaching concept, using “petition” as a generic term to capture the extensive range of entreaties by Jewish populations victimized or about to be victimized in authoritarian and genocidal societies. Despite this broad range, the book’s petition concept encompasses several distinct characteristics in ways that differentiate these Holocaust and early post-Holocaust era practices from other forms of public acts and protests.

First, the vast majority of Jewish petitions of this period had clearly identifiable authors. In addition to individual entreaties, collective petitions emerged from the midst of Jewish religious Communities, political and cultural organizations, but also groups of individuals in distress.¹⁵ On occasion, especially in cases of illiteracy or limited language skills, a third person, often a lawyer, would pen an entreaty with input from the aggrieved party. Anonymous submissions were very rare and, in most cases,

could be more adequately classified as a written protest than an entreaty. Especially during the 1930s, these collective petitions also repeatedly assumed the form of petitionary memoranda that were printed and intended for a wider distribution among Jewish and non-Jewish audiences, as shown in this volume's chapter on petitioning in Nazi Germany.

Second, these documents addressed a variety of specific public institutions or individuals. During the Holocaust, authors approached state offices, such as ministerial bureaucracies in the European capitals, regional administrative agencies, national parliaments, courts of law, and heads of state. They also directed their petitions to officials and leaders of ruling fascist parties, mayors, church leaders, and individuals with real or imagined high standing in the regime. Furthermore, petitioners addressed the Jewish leadership, including Jewish Councils formed at the order of German authorities in ghettos and towns, especially in Eastern Europe, as intermediators as demonstrated in Svenja Bethke's chapter on the Łódź ghetto, as well as rescue organizations and governments around the globe, as examined in Thomas Pegelow Kaplan's analysis of entreaties by Central European Jews trying to escape to the Philippines.

Third, these authors' entreaties evolved around a *petitum*, that is, a specific request or demand.¹⁶ This request could assume the form of a favor or seeking redress for a perceived injustice by the repressive or dictatorial regimes of mid-twentieth-century Europe. They did not merely convey information and were not limited to acts of denunciations. While petitions also did not exclusively focus on criticism, they, time and again, also expressed an implicit or even open form of critique or protest.

Fourth, petitions were written documents, even if authors sometimes introduced them verbally to the addressee. During the 1930s and 1940s, Jews under different European regimes employed, as the chapters in this volume demonstrate, petitions in a great variety of formats, from letters to formal memoranda, from handwritten postcards to printed interventions, and from individual to collective entreaties. Entreaties triggered by exemption clauses in racial laws often required longer written texts and an annex with a range of supporting documents.¹⁷

Fifth, these pleas always remained "embedded in a functional context" that meant their authors were expected and generally sought to follow specific rules of communication and adhere to regulations stated by the addressed agency, while drawing on broader cultural and national traditions of entreaty compositions.¹⁸ These traditions encompassed various notions of deference and civility and, especially during the early years, expressed a belief in civil and constitutional rights.

Finally, petitioners, composing their pleas during the Holocaust and other periods of twentieth-century mass violence, often expressed a sense

of urgency that only increased as a result of radical persecution, looming mass deportation, sudden imprisonment, and systematic murder.

All in all, petitions during the Holocaust differed from other kinds of writing such as diary keeping, family correspondence, and many other forms of letter composition. Scholars of everyday history in authoritarian regimes, such as Sheila Fitzpatrick, have subsumed petitions under public letters.¹⁹ Still, Holocaust-era petitions remain quite distinct in their focus on a *petitum* and request and, especially at the height of the killings, often rushed form that could consist of just a few lines scribbled on a piece of crumpled paper. Furthermore, some historians of petitioning practices have begun to frame them as ego-documents. However, this understanding, we would argue, is more confusing than illuminating since it downplays the hybrid nature of entreaties and the regulations and language of the petitioned that pervade them.²⁰

Entreaties belonged to the broad range of possible responses by victims of oppression and mass violence. While they might look inconsequential in comparison to armed resistance, almost all of these entreaties constituted acts of contestation, since the individual or group of petitioners would challenge—even if only for the authors and their relatives—the effects, but also often the foundations and legality, of discrimination, persecution, and violence.

Jewish petitions across the continent unfolded on a striking continuum. They ranged from expressing partial conformity with and even support for the racist discourses of petitioned regimes, while still requesting exclusion from persecution for the petitioner, as captured in Benjamin Frommer's assessment of entreaties for "Honorary Aryan" status by members of Czech families, all the way to defiance and even resistance as explicated in Wolf Gruner's examination of Jewish petitions in the Greater German Reich.

To fully grasp the defiance end of the continuum, a brief examination of the main conceptualizations of Jewish resistance is in order. The aforementioned decrying of an alleged lack of Jewish resistance during the Holocaust by Raul Hilberg was echoed by scholars like Hannah Arendt and Bruno Bettelheim.²¹ Some scholars, especially in Israel, rejected Hilberg's controversial position. Yehuda Bauer has forcefully argued that armed—and unarmed—resistance by European Jews "took place wherever there was the slightest chance that it could."²² During the next decades, the academic discussion, nonetheless, settled on narrow readings of resistance as armed, organized group activities.²³

As a consequence, a thorough discussion of individual Jewish resistance is missing in almost all prominent Holocaust narratives, surprisingly even in those focusing on the integration of Jewish voices, such as

books authored by Saul Friedländer or Moshe Zimmermann.²⁴ Besides the conceptual neglect, this situation can be explained by the fact that historians relied on a very limited set of sources to evaluate Jewish behavior, mostly serial political reports originated by Nazi institutions, written testimonies of survivors, and, more recently, diaries. In all of these materials, individual acts of opposition barely left traces.

Yet, already shortly after the war, the Israeli scholar Meir Dworzecki, himself a ghetto survivor, developed the concept of “standing up” — *amidah* in Hebrew — as a comprehensive term for all expressions of Jewish non-conformism and for all acts aimed at thwarting the plans of the Nazis, especially moral and spiritual acts of resistance.²⁵ During the 1970s, the Australian historian Konrad Kwiet and the East German scholar Helmut Eschwege also tried to open up the definition of Jewish resistance toward individual activities and included petitions in their deliberations.²⁶

Picking up these ideas, some scholars recently challenged the traditional picture of Jewish passivity in Nazi Europe introducing analyses of a range of new materials. In earlier studies, the co-editors of this volume proposed novel concepts of contestation and a broader definition of resistance by Jews and other Europeans of Jewish ancestry.²⁷ In his study of linguistic violence and genocide, Pegelow Kaplan developed the concept of “discursive contestation” to capture and analyze the wide range of practices converts and so-called *Mischlinge* employed in the changing languages of Germanness and Jewishness to defy official racial categories and escape persecution.²⁸ In a pioneering article in *Yad Vashem Studies*, Gruner defined Jewish “resistance as any individual or group action in opposition to known laws, actions, or intentions of the Nazis and their collaborators, whether successful or unsuccessful, which comprises a wide range of acts of opposition and defiance, including flight, ignoring anti-Jewish restrictions, and verbal protest.”²⁹ Both of these conceptualizations return agency to the persecuted minorities and challenge the myth of these men and women’s alleged passivity. At the same time, petitions could emerge as important acts of resistance and self-determination.

In an insightful study traversing several continents and time periods, social scientist James Scott has provided a general conceptualization of petitions as a form of “public declared resistance” that resembled boycotts, demonstrations, and strikes.³⁰ Albeit not analyzing the persecution of the Jews and the Holocaust, Scott emphasized that in both Tokugawa Japan and Imperial Russia petitions were “commonly seen as an implicit threat to domination.”³¹ The “implicit” is explained by the fact that “most acts of power from below,” as Scott points out, “even when they are protests . . . will largely observe the ‘rules’ even if their objective is to undermine them.” “A petition of desperation is therefore likely,” as Scott

concluded, “to amalgamate two contradictory elements: an implicit threat of violence and a deferential tone of address.”³²

As this volume demonstrates, petitions sent by the persecuted to governments, state administrations, and party agencies of genocidal or authoritarian regimes have been crucial in the struggle of Jewish individuals and groups for self-determination, self-preservation, and ultimately survival. From Jewish interwar reassessments of belonging and claims for protection to Jewish populations’ requests and protests in German-controlled Europe during the Holocaust and postwar struggles for care and compensation, individuals and groups used the means of writing entreaties to reclaim agency, redefine their place in society, get access to resources, and manipulate their oppressors.

As noted earlier, many historians have opted to ignore Jewish petitions, assuming they were hapless texts written in vain. Yet, a closer look, as demonstrated in this volume’s chapters, reveals that a surprising number actually produced results. Upon closer scrutiny, the very question of what constitutes “success” proves to be a relative and complex phenomenon. For more than six years, Walter Jellinek, one of the Weimar Republic’s most prominent scholars in administrative law and the former *rector designatus* of Heidelberg University, for example, petitioned for exemptions from the 1935 Nuremberg Laws and his racial classification as a “full Jew.” Although the Reich Interior Ministry finally rejected his claims in early 1941, he was allowed to produce more evidence, which he did until US troops liberated Heidelberg in the spring of 1945.³³ Hence, long-lasting investigations of petitions for exemption repeatedly offered the petitioners invaluable time to explore alternative strategies, including securing more support from regime officials, escape, or going into hiding. In this sense, even Holocaust-era petitions that were never approved could be successful to a degree and played an important part in the petitioners’ survival.

Other entreaties by persecuted Jews did not claim exemptions, but protested persecution or humiliation, reclaimed their rights as citizens, or emphasized their contributions to the fatherland; the latter is aptly demonstrated by Stacy Renee Veeder in her chapter on Jewish petitioners who sought their own or their family members’ release from transit camps in France. This quest for self-determination recuperated agency and took away the power of definition from the oppressors. Others protested against specific local policies and were able to significantly influence and even reshape perpetrator policies, as Tim Cole unearths in his chapter on the flurry of entreaties prompted by the 1944 ghettoization in Budapest.

Petitions, thus, need to be re-evaluated—and beyond the purpose of this volume—as important political means for groups or individuals, not only, but especially in times of dictatorships across the European continent

and globally. A closer reading reveals that petitions provided a resource for those men and women who were subjected to a lower civil status, had no political representation, and no chance to participate in a public discussion. With this volume, we argue that petitions constitute an asymmetric response to persecution often aiming to abolish discriminatory laws and local restrictions. They provide a powerful opportunity to redefine the status of the discriminated groups and individuals in front of perpetrators.

Historiographical and Historical Overview

To date, no volume exists that is exclusively devoted to analyzing petitions during the Nazi genocide of European Jewry or, more broadly, pleas composed by Jewish victim populations targeted by state sponsored violence in the mid-twentieth century. Until the 1970s and 1980s, the field of Holocaust studies in Europe and North America relied extensively on documents produced by the perpetrators of this mass crime.³⁴ Since the 1990s, an intensified focus on the Holocaust's victims has led to a large-scale interdisciplinary examination of diaries, memoirs, and video interviews of persecuted Jews.³⁵ Albeit already a well-established practice among Israeli scholars, these novel works on the persecuted have shed new light on the unfolding of the Holocaust.³⁶ Recently published extensive collections of primary sources on the Holocaust rightfully include many personal survivor and ego-documents. They have, nonetheless, largely ignored sources on petitioning practices. Even an, in many ways, insightful multivolume series of primary documents on Jewish responses published by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is representative of this phenomenon.³⁷

Since the turn of the century, a number of influential Holocaust scholars have called on their colleagues to write "integrated histories" of the Holocaust with multiple combined perspectives of various groups of actors from perpetrators to victims.³⁸ As uniquely and inherently hybrid sources, Holocaust-era entreaties penned by Jewish men and women reflect not only the voices and demands of Jewish petitioners but also the expectations of the petitioned government and party officials and often members of other bodies such as scientists, church representatives, and lawyers. While acknowledging the very real power differentials, these entreaties emerge as far more complex and consequential as much of the previous scholarship has realized.

The small number of works that examine Jewish petitioning practices and petitioned agencies and officials during the 1930s and 1940s have largely reduced their focus to a distinct petition or specific national and re-

gional dynamics and have thus remained limited in scope. Philipp Graf's study of the Bernheim petition uses the history of one particular entreaty submitted to the League of Nations as a vehicle to discuss Jewish politics in the interwar period. Renée Poznanski's analysis of entreaties against Vichy France's racial legislation centers on appeals against being racially categorized as Jewish. Thomas Pegelow Kaplan has analyzed petitions by Germans of Jewish ancestry, who contested their racial classification by a range of state and party agencies, as part of a broader study on the use of language in Hitler's Germany.³⁹

Throughout the twentieth century, as this literature has started to demonstrate, European-Jewish petitioning processes were anything but static and unchanging. Holocaust-era entreaties assumed distinct characteristics, despite regional and national specificities. They unfolded in close interactions with persecutory practices of regional and national governments and fascist party apparatuses and often responded to quickly changing circumstances such as the enactment of new laws and violent attacks.

At the same time, Jewish petitioning processes in 1930s and 1940s Europe were thoroughly rooted in the long-term historical development of composing and employing petitions. Any study of these Holocaust-era practices has, first, to be situated in the *longue durée* of Jewish petitions. Second, Jewish entreaties have to be related to mainstream petitioning practices by non-Jewish populations since antiquity paying specific attention to dynamics in emerging autocratic and dictatorial regimes of the modern period.

Practices of Judaism in Jewish religious Communities in the Diaspora across Europe included forms of supplicatory prayers and petitions to God that, by the High Middle Ages, had largely become universally normative in the liturgy. The *Amidah* at the center of Jewish worship services, for example, contained a series of petitions asking God to hear and respond to the prayers of the congregation and individual Jewish worshippers.⁴⁰

In more secular terms, petitions by Jewish Communities in the European Diaspora originated in antiquity in close interactions with the non-Jewish world. Many Jewish Communities and most individual Jewish *cives Romani* and *peregrini* petitioned provincial governors and directed supplications (*supplicatio*) to the emperor in Rome to secure privileges, avoid expulsion, and gain freedom to practice their religion.⁴¹ In medieval Christian Europe, Jewish Diaspora Communities increasingly submitted pleas to popes and emperors for protection, settlement, and other rights. There was no legal framework, let alone a constitution, guaranteeing this practice. Still, a religious or secular ruler could not arbitrarily dismiss supplications.⁴²

Time and again, Jewish petitions in Christendom proved successful. In 1219, for example, the Jews residing in the Kingdom of Castile submitted a petition to the Archbishop of Toledo requesting permission not to wear a distinguishing mark on their clothing decreed in the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215. Supporting the petition, the archbishop approached Pope Honorius III who granted an exemption. Jewish petitions of this period were mainly collective in form, penned by the communal leadership, and written in a highly formalized language that—like Christian entreaties—was based on the petitioners’ humility and recipients’ graciousness.⁴³ In so doing, Jewish Communities, as Kenneth R. Stow has argued, often became “adept petitioners,” even finding ways to keep the Inquisition somewhat in check.⁴⁴

With the rise of territorial rulers and imperial cities, Jewish petitioners adjusted their entreaties’ language and direction. In Central European territorial states prior to Emancipation, the rapid increase of bureaucracies prompted the integration of petitioning in even the most mundane administrative procedures such as marriage licenses or local public positions.⁴⁵ As a result, entreaties already had an astounding scope. A considerable number still related to requests for residency and protection, which in the Holy Roman Empire had assumed the form of protected Jew (*Schutzjude*) status that often necessitated initial formal petitions and included a tax or other type of payment.⁴⁶ At the same time, Jewish petitioning practices also came to include a range of other objectives from trade and employment requests to complaints about slander and outright participation in supra-local politics. In fact, petitioning constitutes a key practice in those scholarly interpretations that construe the boundaries between Christian and Jewish life and politics in parts of the Holy Roman Empire as far more permeable and anything but isolated from one another.⁴⁷

Throughout the early modern period, for example in Poland-Lithuania, Jewish petitioners often benefited from what historian Moshe Rosman has characterized as an economically oriented “marriage of convenience” between Jewish businessmen and gentile nobles. As a result, the Jewish Community in Vilna received considerable support that also included gentile petitions submitted on its behalf.⁴⁸ During the second half of the eighteenth century, Jewish Community leaders, informed by Haskalah movements, developed new forms of entreaties for legal emancipation and the end of civic restrictions. Alongside Communities’ entreaties, more and more individual Jews crafted and submitted petitions. The early 1760s entreaties by a young Moses Mendelssohn to the Prussian King Frederick II to be granted the status of a protected Jew are but one, albeit prominent, example of petitioning practices that soon became more expansive in their goals and scope.⁴⁹ Regional studies, for example, of eighteenth-

century Jewish petitions for the right to reside in the territory of the margrave of Baden-Durlach indicate considerable agency for members of the often-persecuted minority. Despite the rather androcentric leadership of Jewish Communities, petitioning was also much more common for Jewish women even in rural areas.⁵⁰

When late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century liberal lawmakers gradually removed the vestiges of the early modern estates' collective privilege to state grievances and most European constitutions began to enshrine petitioning to parliament and government agencies as an individual basic right, more and more individual members of Jewish Communities joined their representatives and the much larger and rapidly growing numbers of gentile petitioners. The drafting and submission of entreaties increasingly ceased to address single rulers, appeal to their mercy, and use religious verbiage. While petitioners had fewer and fewer reasons to fear negative repercussions from their practices, the right to petition, however, was still largely a "negative" right that did not dictate when and if the petitioned bodies had to respond.

With increasing success, Jewish petitioners relied on entreaties to parliamentary bodies as a core vehicle to articulate their demands for legal equality and bring about change, most noticeable the late eighteenth-century French National Assembly in Paris and the 1848–49 Parliament in Frankfurt that resulted from revolutionary upheaval. Petitions, often supported by the first elected Jewish parliamentarians, to the Frankfurt assembly, as scholars such as Rüdiger Moldenhauer have shown, were debated and decided in committees following further reports. In addition to Jewish Community leaders, individual Jews, including a number of widowed Jewish women who challenged a ban on remarrying or sought to secure access to government bonds, came to play increasingly prominent roles.⁵¹

The long histories of Jewish petitioning practices were by no means limited to Diaspora Communities on the European continent. The Ottoman Empire, which at its height reached far into Southwestern and Southeastern Europe, had rich cultures of petitioning directed at shari'a courts, or regional and central authorities in the imperial capital of Istanbul. Jews generally relied on professional Muslim petition writers (*arzuhalisi*), who assumed the position of interlocutors between the aggrieved parties and the petitioned institutions, and elaborate writer's guides (*münseat*).⁵² Early twentieth-century Sephardic Jewish immigrants to Ottoman Palestine, aided by their supporters on the continent, even participated in the Ottoman system directly, composing and submitting petitions to Istanbul.⁵³ Many were still alive in the 1930s and able to share their experiences.

The extensive scholarship on Ottoman entreaties has started to inform the study of Jewish petitioning in general. Suraiya Faroqhi has conceptual-

ized every act of petitioning agencies of the authoritarian Ottoman system as inherently political in nature, affecting the very question of the Sultan's legitimation. Recent literature on female petitioners, whose numbers grew in the waning days of the Empire, has shed light on their practices as forms of "double-voiced" writings. They did not simply compose their entreaties as part of a male-dominated practice, but also developed a muted discourse to articulate profound challenges without being dismissed.⁵⁴

These practices extended far beyond the shifting borders of the Ottoman Empire. In response to the ritual murder charges in Damascus in 1840, Jewish Communities under Ottoman rule resorted to petitioning as did their counterparts and other Jewish organizations based in North America and Europe, forming extensive transnational networks. An entreaty by the "Israelites of the City of New York" to US President Martin Van Buren forcefully expressed support of the arrested Jewish Community leaders in Damascus and resulted, as Jonathan Frankel has argued, in one of the first American diplomatic initiatives on behalf of Jewish Communities abroad.⁵⁵

The tradition of petitioning practices had arrived in the Americas from the United Kingdom. Indeed, one origin of modern petitioning practices, as scholars of social and British history have demonstrated, can be traced to English law, dating back to the Magna Carta of 1215. Petitioning constituted the right of the people to lay complaints "at the foot of the throne." More importantly, this also included the right to a formal response. In the late thirteenth century, Jews were among the earliest petitioners.⁵⁶ During the following century, petitioning had become common in England. Nevertheless, petitioners could and routinely would be punished for their petitions.⁵⁷ As petitioning became more democratized and popular, the British Parliament found it increasingly difficult to ignore—let alone punish—petitioners. Scholars such as Ronald J. Krotoszynski have argued that an increase in the volume of both petitions and petitioners reflected political awareness and a new possibility of "parliamentary agitation." Essentially, petitioning secured a right of government access and served as a means of political participation that was open to anyone, including women and Jews, long before they were granted the right to vote.⁵⁸

Even in autocratic Tsarist Russia, home to the largest Jewish populations in Europe, Jewish petitioning practices became increasingly widespread, bolstered by the reforms under Alexander II and the belated arrival of the Haskalah movement. The Maskilim—supporters of the movement—focused not only on the removal of legal restrictions, but also the opening of secular schools in the Pale of Settlement and Congress Poland. In the late nineteenth century, thousands of Jewish graduates of secondary schools petitioned the Russian Ministry of Enlightenment each year to circumvent

the stifling quota system and be permitted to university.⁵⁹ In the Pale of Settlement, entreaty compositions ranged from petitions to be granted the freedom to reside anywhere in Tsarist Russia to pleas to Russian Orthodox bishops, priests, and military officers to convert or stop the conversion of Jewish children, serving for example, in the Russian army.⁶⁰

Compared to nineteenth-century Jewish petitions in England or revolutionary France, many Russian Jews continued to pen entreaties in the form of supplications, appealing to a benevolent authority figure and often without evoking the language of “rights.”⁶¹ In light of the pogroms of the early 1880s, some Jewish Communities and organizations also resorted to domestic petitioning to stop the mass violence; others sought to solicit entreaties and interventions with the Tsarist government by congregations and governments abroad. In the case of forced conversions and secular education initiatives, even Judaeophobic Tsarist officials repeatedly granted the petitioners’ requests.⁶²

The 1917 revolutions radically changed Jewish life and petitioning practices. The Provisional Government abolished the Pale of Settlement and outlawed discrimination on ethnic or religious grounds, a policy that the Council of People’s Commissars confirmed in its condemnation of antisemitism and pogroms the following year.⁶³ Nonetheless, the new Bolshevik government also swiftly shattered the very structural foundations of Jewish existence by closing religious institutions and nationalizing the property of Jewish Communities. All the while, Soviet authorities encouraged the writing of public letters and petitions. These practices, as a number of scholars have shown, were quite widespread and constituted one of the very few instruments for the population to address the authorities in the Soviet dictatorship—and, subsequently, other communist regimes—in cases of discrimination, deportation, and exile.⁶⁴

While the pathbreaking studies of the 1990s paid scant attention to Jewish petitioners, more recent work has revealed the significance of petitions with its new languages and *petita* for Jews under the Soviet regime, who also used these writings to practice and “becom[e] Soviet Jews.” Various municipalities became sites of veritable “petitioning war[s]” involving truncated Jewish Communities.⁶⁵ While some members of the Jewish Community in Minsk, for example, successfully petitioned local Soviet authorities against the confiscation of a synagogue in the late 1920s, other Jewish workers signed entreaties that prompted the conversion of Jewish Community property into Yiddish reading rooms to support their political education.⁶⁶

Elsewhere in post-World War I Europe, the number of authoritarian and dictatorial regimes also proliferated. From Hungary and Poland to Spain and Romania, the new ruling powers sought popular acclaim and legiti-

macy. Petitions extolling and praising the new leaders' virtues were one means toward this end, which revived many of the older elements of supplications. At the same time, in some of the new democracies, especially in Germany, new constitutions enshrined the explicit right to petition. Listed in its basic rights section, Article 126 of the Weimar Constitution guaranteed every German citizen recourse to petition parliament or the responsible authority. This constitution required, as its commentators stressed, the petitioned bodies to accept the entreaty and provide a decision.⁶⁷

Facing new forms of antisemitism, German Jews and their organizations, most noticeably the Central Association of German Citizens of Jewish Faith (Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens, CV) made use of these constitutional changes. Despite the CV's founding generation's dismissal of petitioning and "unobtrusive groveling" as ineffective and its call for more robust and public acts, the largest Jewish organization in Germany adjusted this tool of political involvement and contestation in their local and national work in the 1920s and, as Wolf Gruner's chapter shows, even more effectively in the 1930s.⁶⁸

While the Weimar Constitution formally remained in effect during the Nazi dictatorship, few opted for a post-1933 petition to the Reichstag, the German parliament.⁶⁹ Like other dictatorial regimes in Europe, the emerging Nazi state, however, condoned and even encouraged petitioning. Formal early anti-Jewish legislation, including the April 1933 Reich Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service, already alluded to avenues of petitioning, for example for a decision on descent by the Expert in Racial Research at the Reich Minister of the Interior.⁷⁰ In November 1934, the newly established Chancellery of the Führer of the Nazi Party also began to accept and process literally hundreds of thousands of petitions, including by Germans of real or imagined Jewish descent, to the regime's leader, an influential component of the *Führerkult*.⁷¹

At the onset of the Holocaust, Jews across the continent had been engaging in a wide array of different petitioning practices as one of their key means of political and cultural participation and, increasingly, struggle. Jews used entreaties to navigate complex political landscapes, mobilize support, and pit gentile government agencies and political groups against one another. While some knowledge of the centuries-long traditions of Jewish entreaties writing with all their intricacies had been lost and other forms of supplication seemed antiquated, there were numerous forms, experiences and complex skills to draw from. In addition, many acculturated Western and Central European Jews were exposed to universal and petitioning letter-writing manuals that gained prominence during the second half the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century.⁷²

Jews frequently used petitions for exemptions from anti-Jewish restrictions and to oppose racist policies of all authoritarian regimes in Europe, including in Germany. Individual petitions could influence and even reshape authoritarian policies, as Tim Cole in his chapter proves for the ghettoization in Budapest in 1944. Even when the Nazi regime started the systematic deportation of Central European Jews to killing sites and ghettos in the east in the fall of 1941 and Romanian army units and their civilian collaborators engaged in mass killings of Jews in Bessarabia and North Bukovina in the summer of that year, Jewish Communities across the continent responded by drawing on the proven tool of entreaties. With rapidly shrinking options, Jewish leaders and other Community members, however, were hardly naïve or easily duped, but used petitions as one of the means to resist that was still available to them. As the chapters in this volume reveal, quite a number of petitioners failed in their immediate request, but many achieved short-term and even long-term success.

Petitioning, it is important to note, did not end in 1945. Even after the Nazis and their allied regimes across the continent had systematically murdered many authors of entreaties, Jewish survivors once more opted for and often were forced to rely on petitions to newly formed postwar bodies such as the Victims of Fascism committees and international aid organizations. Relatively few scholars have, as Maximilian Strnad does in his chapter for this collection, systematically analyzed the struggles and entreaty writing practices of German-Jewish survivors in occupied Germany, most of whom had survived due their marriage to a non-Jewish German. These survivors' petitions sought to secure food, other forms of aid, and even their very recognition as victims. In East Germany and other parts of Cold War Eastern Europe, petitioning, including complaints, remained key components of everyday life, revealed the social praxis of authoritarian rule, and a plurality of voices initially drowned out in the socialist regimes' ritualized language. By the mid-1950s, fewer and fewer entreaties in these countries came from the truncated Jewish Communities. Most that did were requests for emigration to Israel or the West.⁷³

Battling the Diversity of Persecution: Jewish Petitions of the 1930s and 1940s

This volume offers the first extensive analysis of entreaties from persecuted Jews in authoritarian circumstances in mid-twentieth century Europe. While scholars have hitherto overlooked petitions as largely worthless, this book demonstrates the opposite. Tens of thousands of entreaties sent by the persecuted to authoritarian governments and party agencies have

been crucial in the struggle of Jews for self-determination, self-preservation, and ultimately, survival.

Our collection provides a reassessment of petitions for two reasons. First, entreaties demonstrate Jewish agency. Second, petitions represent a political means by which Jews countered their racial discriminatory redefinition as groups and individuals as well as other discriminatory actions by an authoritarian regime. This approach is the result of a discussion between the co-editors who agreed on the common misperception of entreaties and their overlooked importance as well as the need for a renewed methodological discussion of Jewish contestation and resistance, which included a range of practices of petition writing. The co-editors solicited chapters from specialists in Jewish and Holocaust history in different countries and different regions. None of the other contributors had worked specifically on petitions before, but all had used them in their research. They all responded positively to our call to revisit the importance of these texts. Based on more in-depth studies employing nuanced methodological approaches, the contributions of this volume provide scholarly reassessments that will change the previous underestimation and misperception of Jewish entreaties in Holocaust studies and contemporary European Jewish history.

The chapters offer analyses of petitions and their historical context authored by Jews in Germany, Austria, and annexed Bohemia-Moravia, occupied France and Poland, as well as the independent Hungary and Romania as distinct loci of contestation and victim-perpetrator interaction. The collection brings together original research from accomplished senior and junior scholars, who collectively offer a broad array of different approaches, language skills, and insights from archives around the world. While advancing far-reaching analyses of Jewish petitioning practices in Europe during the Holocaust, the volume also examines transnational networks on a global scale, reaching all the way to the Philippines. Central European Jews used and reworked these networks and means of communication in ways, as Thomas Pegelow Kaplan's chapter argues, that require a much-needed rethinking of the spatial terms of analysis of Holocaust and European-Jewish histories.

To allow for a thorough analysis and as a basis for comparison, the contributors to this volume address a series of key questions developed by the co-editors. These questions included basic inquiries such as: Who were the petitioners? Why did they resort to the instrument of entreaties in their genocidal and/or authoritarian societies? Whom did the authors of petitions approach and why? What were the aims of the analyzed petition? Did individual or collective entreaties revolve around a protest against state discrimination or claims of property, requests for exemption

from racial classification, a fight for specific rights, or the insistence of self-determination?

Other, more complex questions asked authors to identify ways or patterns of self-determination in various petitions by members of a group. What difference did gender dynamics and hierarchies make in the petitioning processes? Did these petitions result in discernible changes for the authors or the communities? Did they have any direct positive outcomes or negative consequences? To what extent did petitions in genocidal and/or authoritarian societies serve to negotiate, protect or enhance the authors' agency? How were these practices of crafting entreaties embedded in the often-long histories of petitions? What impact, if any, did transnational networks and exchanges have on the composition of petitions? Finally, to what extent does the close examination of petitioning processes demand a rethinking of practices of contestation or even (unarmed) individual and group resistance?

In sum, this volume examines the form and scope of a broad array of Holocaust-era petitions, identifies their aims and merits, evaluates the complex strategies of their authors and the broader political and cultural contexts, emphasizes the agency of the persecuted, and probes into the reactions of the addressed agencies to establish its merits as overlooked tools of Jewish self-determination, contestation and, repeatedly, resistance.

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Notes

1. Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago, 1961), 663–64.
2. Jean Ancel, *The History of the Holocaust in Romania* (Lincoln, NE, 2011), 300–1; Jacob Kaplan, “French Jewry under the Occupation,” *The American Jewish Year Book* 47 (1945–46): 89.
3. Hilberg, *Destruction*, 664. Although Hilberg revised and updated *The Destruction of the European Jews* for every new edition, he never substantially changed this harsh judgment.
4. Beate Meyer, “Jüdische Mischlinge”: *Rassenpolitik und Verfolgungserfahrung 1933–1945* (Hamburg, 1999), 158.
5. See, among others, pp. 28–50, 91–113, this volume.
6. Dan Michman, “The Jewish Dimension of the Holocaust in Dire Straits? Current Challenges of Interpretation and Scope,” in *Jewish Histories of the Holocaust: New Transnational Approaches*, ed. Norman J. W. Goda (New York, 2014), 17–38; Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, vol. 1: *The Years of Persecution 1933–1939* (New York, 1997).
7. Richard W. Taylor, “When Germans Complain: The Right to Petition and Grievance Redress by Parliamentary Committee,” *The Ombudsman Journal* 1 (1981): 70.
8. See, for example, Sheila Fitzpatrick, “Supplicants and Citizens: Public Letter-Writing in Soviet Russia in the 1930s,” *Slavic Review* 55 (1996): 103–4.
9. James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, CT, 1990), 94.
10. Andreas Würgler, “Asymmetrie und Reziprozität: Herrschaft und Protektion in Suppliken der Frühen Neuzeit,” in *Protegierte und Protektoren: Asymmetrische politische Beziehungen zwischen Partnerschaft und Dominanz* (16. bis frühes 20. Jahrhundert), ed. Tilmann Haug, et al. (Cologne, 2016), 279–94.
11. See, for example, *ibid.*; Peter Blickle, ed., *Gemeinde und Staat im Alten Europa* (Munich 1998); Lex Heerma van Voss, ed., *Petitions in Social History* (Cambridge, 2002). For works on petitions in the Soviet Union and Communist Eastern Europe, see Alf Lüdtke and Peter Becker, eds., *Akten. Eingaben. Schaukasten: Die DDR und ihre Texte: Erkundungen zu Herrschaft und Alltag* (Berlin, 1997); and Fitzpatrick, “Supplicants and Citizens.”
12. Geoffrey Koziol, *Begging Pardon and Favor: Ritual and Political Order in Early Medieval France* (Ithaca, NY, 2011), 26; Fred S. Naiden, *Ancient Supplication* (Oxford, 2006), 6–8, 289.
13. Andreas Würgler, “Voices from Among the ‘Silent Masses’: Humble Petitions and Social Conflict in Early Modern Central Europe,” *International Review of Social History* 46, Supplement 9 (2001): 14
14. *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, s.v. “Petition.”
15. In her theoretical reflections, Anita Hodgkiss stresses the importance of collective petitions and empowerment. See her “Petitioning and the Empowerment Theory of Practice,” *Yale Law Journal* 96, no. 3 (1987): 572.
16. *Staatslexikon*, comp. Görres-Gesellschaft, 7th ed. (Freiburg, 1985), s.v. “Petitionsrecht.”
17. For some petitioning provisions in Nazi racial legislation, see Decree of the Reich Minister of the Interior, 4 December 1935, *Ministerialblatt für die Preußische Innere Verwaltung* 50 (1935): 1455–56.
18. Würgler, “Voices,” 32. On the importance of rhetorical convention in other contexts preceding the Holocaust, see also David Zaret, “Petitions and the ‘Invention’ of Public Opinion in the English Revolution,” *American Journal of Sociology* 101, no. 6 (1996): 1514–17.
19. Fitzpatrick, “Supplicants and Citizens,” 80.

20. Claudia Ulbrich, "Zeuginnen und Bittstellerinnen: Überlegungen zur Bedeutung von Ego-Dokumenten für die Erforschung weiblicher Selbstwahrnehmungen in der ländlichen Gesellschaft des 18. Jahrhunderts," in *Ego-Dokumente. Annäherung an den Menschen in der Geschichte*, ed. Winfried Schulze (Berlin, 1996), 223. On ego-documents, see the defining work by Rudolf Dekker, including his edited collection *Egodocuments and History: Autobiographical Writing in Its Social Context since the Middle Ages* (Hilversum, 2002).
21. For key discussions of Jewish resistance, see Michael Marrus, "Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust," *Journal of Contemporary History* 30, no. 1 (1995): 86; Konrad Kwiet, "Problems of Jewish Resistance Historiography," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 24 (1979): 37; Robert Rozett, "Jewish Resistance," in *The Historiography of the Holocaust*, ed. Dan Stone (Houndmills, 2004), 343.
22. Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven, CT, 2000), 141–42, 165–66; Richard Middleton-Kaplan, "The Myth of Jewish Passivity," in *Jewish Resistance against the Nazis*, ed. Patrick Gerard Henry (Washington, DC, 2014), 11–12.
23. For an account of the historiography of Jewish resistance, see Wolf Gruner, "'The Germans Should Expel the Foreigner Hitler': Open Protest and Other Forms of Jewish Defiance in Nazi Germany," *Yad Vashem Studies* 39, no. 2 (2011): 14–17.
24. Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, vol. 1; Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939–1945*, vol. 2: *The Years of Extermination, 1939–1945* (New York, 2007); Moshe Zimmermann, *Deutsche gegen Deutsche: Das Schicksal der Juden 1938–1945* (Berlin, 2008).
25. Meir Dworker, "The Day to Day Stand of the Jews," in *Jewish Resistance during the Holocaust: Proceedings of the Conference on Manifestations of Jewish Resistance*, Jerusalem, April 7–11, 1968 (Jerusalem, 1971), 152–81.
26. Konrad Kwiet and Helmut Eschwege, *Selbstbehauptung und Widerstand: Deutsche Juden im Kampf um Existenz und Menschenwürde, 1933–1945*, 2nd ed. (Hamburg, 1986), 18–19.
27. Gruner, "Germans Should Expel"; Thomas Pegelow Kaplan, *The Language of Nazi Genocide: Linguistic Violence and the Struggle of Germans of Jewish Ancestry* (New York, 2009).
28. *Ibid.*, 9–14.
29. Gruner, "Germans Should Expel," 18.
30. Scott, *Domination*, 198.
31. *Ibid.*, 63.
32. *Ibid.*, 94–95.
33. Walter Jellinek to Adolf Hitler, 22 November 1935, copy, Bundesarchiv Berlin (hereafter BAB) R1509/91, p. 38; E. Schircks to Stellvertreter des Führers, 25 February 1941, BAB R1509/91, p. 257; Pegelow Kaplan, *Language of Nazi Genocide*, 156–57, 201.
34. See, for example, Jewish Black Book Committee, *The Black Book: The Nazi Crime against the Jewish People* (New York, 1946), Hilberg, *Destruction*; Uwe Dietrich Adam, *Judenpolitik im Dritten Reich* (Düsseldorf, 1972).
35. In the 1990s, the Visual History Archive of the USC Shoah Foundation, for example, amassed some 52,000 audio-visual testimonies mostly from Holocaust survivors interviewed around the globe. See USC Shoah Foundation, n.d., "Visual History Archive."
36. See, for instance, David Bankier and Dan Michman, eds., *Holocaust Historiography in Context: Emergence, Challenges, Polemics and Achievements* (Jerusalem, 2008).
37. Jürgen Matthäus et al., eds., *Jewish Responses to Persecution*, 5 vols. (Lanham, MD, 2010–2015). A large multivolume German-language source collection on the persecution and extermination of the European Jews likewise includes only a few entreaties by Jewish authors. Götz Aly et al., eds., *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch*

- das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945*, 16 vols. (Munich, 2008). An English translation is under way. Volumes 1–3 were published in 2019.
38. Michman, “Jewish Dimension of the Holocaust in Dire Straits?” 17–38; Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, vol. 1.
 39. Philipp Graf, *Die Bernheim-Petition 1933: Jüdische Politik in der Zwischenkriegszeit* (Göttingen, 2008); Renée Poznanski, *Jews in France during World War II* (Waltham, MA, 2001); Pegelow Kaplan, *Language of Nazi Genocide*.
 40. Leo Trepp, *A History of the Jewish Experience* (Springfield, NJ, 2001), 353.
 41. Fergus Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World* (31 BC–AD 337) (Ithaca, NY, 1977), 541–44; Naiden, *Ancient Supplication*, 224–25.
 42. Würgler, “Voices,” 15; Koziol, *Begging Pardon*, 26.
 43. Koziol, *Begging Pardon*, 8; Rebecca Rist, *Popes and Jews, 1095–1291* (Oxford, 2016), 127.
 44. Kenneth R. Stow, *Popes, Church, and Jews in the Middle Ages: Confrontation and Response* (Aldershot, 2007), 42–43.
 45. Würgler, “Voices,” 26.
 46. J. Friedrich Battenberg, “Die Privilegierung von Juden und der Judenschaft im Bereich des Heiligen Römischen Reiches deutscher Nation,” in *Das Privileg im europäischen Vergleich*, ed. by Barbara Dölemeyer et al. (Frankfurt/Main, 1997), 1:151–56.
 47. On the suprapolitical aspects, see Christopher R. Friedrichs, “Jews in the Imperial Cities: A Political Perspective,” in *In and Out of the Ghetto: Jewish-Gentile Relations in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany*, ed. Ronnie Po-chia Hsia et al. (New York, 1995), 275–88.
 48. M. J. Rosman, *The Lords’ Jews: Magnate-Jewish Relations in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA, 1991), 201.
 49. Mordechai Breuer and Michael Graetz, *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, vol. 1: *Tradition and Enlightenment, 1600–1780* (New York, 1996), 267–68.
 50. See André Hohenstein, “Bitten um den Schutz: Staatliche Judenpolitik und Lebensführung von Juden im Lichte der Schutzsupplikationen aus der Markgrafschaft Baden (Durlach) im 18. Jahrhundert,” in *Landjudentum im deutschen Südwesten während der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Rolf Kießling et al. (Berlin, 1999), 97–153. On female petitioners, see Ulbrich, “Zeuginnen und Bittstellerinnen,” 221–26.
 51. Rüdiger Moldenhauer, “Jewish Petitions to the German National Assembly in Frankfurt 1848/49,” *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 16 (1971): 189–90, 192, 194. See also Uri R. Kaufmann, “The Jewish Fight for Emancipation in France and Germany,” in *Jewish Emancipation Reconsidered: The French and German Models*, ed. Michel Brenner et al. (Tübingen, 2003), 79–92.
 52. Fruma Zachs and Yuval Ben-Bassat, “Women’s Visibility in Petitions from Greater Syria during the Late Ottoman Period,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 47 (2015): 766–67.
 53. Yuval Ben-Bassat, *Petitioning the Sultan: Protests and Justice in Late Ottoman Palestine, 1865–1908* (London, 2013), 171.
 54. Suraiya Faroqhi, ed., *Coping with the State: Political Conflict and Crime in the Ottoman Empire, 1550–1720* (Istanbul, 1995); Zachs and Ben-Bassat, “Women’s Visibility in Petitions,” 766–67. The concept of “double-voiced” is borrowed from feminist literary critic Elaine Showalter’s work.
 55. Jonathan Frankel, *The Damascus Affair: “Ritual Murder”, Politics, and the Jews in 1840* (Cambridge, 1997), 226–27.
 56. Paul Brand, “Petitions and Parliament in the Reign of Edward I,” *Parliamentary History* 23 (2004): 34.

57. Ronald J. Krotoszynski, Jr., *Reclaiming the Petition Clause: Seditious Libel, "Offensive" Protest, and the Right to Petition the Government for a Redress of Grievances* (New Haven, CT, 2012), 86, 81.
58. *Ibid.*, 16, 90, 82, 94; Todd M. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain, 1656–2000* (Berkeley, CA, 2002), 101–2.
59. Benjamin Nathans, *Beyond the Pale: The Jewish Encounter with Late Imperial Russia* (Berkeley, CA, 2002), 272–73.
60. Jay Michael Harris et al., eds. *Everyday Jewish Life in Imperial Russia: Select Documents, 1772–1914* (Waltham, MA, 2013), 143–44, 507, 515–19.
61. For a representative example, see Gregory L. Freeze, *From Supplication to Revolution: A Documentary Social History of Imperial Russia* (New York, 1988), 189–90.
62. John Klier, *Russians, Jews, and the Pogrom Crisis of 1881–1882* (Cambridge, 2011), 234, 245.
63. Benjamin Pinkus, *The Jews of the Soviet Union: The History of a National Minority* (Cambridge, 1988), 84–85.
64. Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times, Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (Oxford, 1999), 128; Fitzpatrick, "Supplicants and Citizens," 95–97.
65. Elissa Bemporad, *Becoming Soviet Jews the Bolshevik Experiment in Minsk* (Bloomington, IN, 2013), 117.
66. *Ibid.*
67. Karl Hüfner, "Artikel 126," in *Die Grundrechte und Grundpflichten der Reichsverfassung. Kommentar zum zweiten Teil der Reichsverfassung*, ed. Hans Carl Nipperday (Berlin, 1930), 2:176–79.
68. Avraham Barkai, *Hoffnung und Untergang: Studien zur deutsch-jüdischen Geschichte des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Hamburg, 1998), 113.
69. Rupert Schick, *Petitionen: Von der Untertanenbitte zum Bürgerrecht*, 3rd ed. (Heidelberg, 1996), 20.
70. Erste Verordnung zur Durchführung des Gesetzes zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums, 11 April 1933, *Reichsgesetzblatt 1* (1933): 195.
71. Thomas Pegelow Kaplan, "Petitioning the Führer: The Construction of Germanness and Jewishness in Personal Appeals to the Nazi Leader, 1934–1941" (unpublished AHA paper, 7 January 2007). As scholars of petitioning in the Soviet Union have already discerned, petitioning, even if unintended by its authors, could also help to stabilize authoritarian regimes by providing a means to gauge the impact of regime policies, provide the illusion of an accessible leader, and diffuse tensions. See Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk under Soviet Rule* (Cambridge, MA, 1958), 407.
72. In the German-speaking lands, Otto Friedrich Rammler's *Universal Brief-Steller*, which printed its 65th edition in 1895, was one of the most successful examples. See Christa Hämmerle, "Requests, Complaints, Demands. Preliminary Thoughts on the Petitioning Letters of Lower-Class Austrian Women, 1865–1918," in *Gender and Politics in the Age of Letter-Writing, 1750–2000*, ed. Caroline Bland et al. (New York, 2004), 116–17, 130.
73. Felix Mühlberg, *Bürger, Bitten und Behörden: Geschichte der Eingabe in der DDR* (Berlin, 2004); Lüdtke and Becker, *Akten. Eingaben. Schaufenster; Boris Morozov, Documents on Soviet Jewish Emigration* (London, 2015).

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