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A Lasting Transit in Antwerp: Eastern European Jewish Migrants On Their Way To the New World, 1900-1925

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Migrants are often depicted as pawns in the hands of transport and state agencies. The most notorious example of migrants being denied any agency is the story of the Russian Jews whom an English shipping captain duped by making them believe that the Irish port Cork was the port of New York. As the story goes, Jewish emigrants from Lithuania arrived in the port of Cork on a ship from Hamburg and were instructed to disembark on the pretext that they had arrived in America.[1] These gullible Russian Jews thought they indeed had arrived at their destination and started life in the New World in Dublin. The founding myth of the Jewish community in Dublin as an "accidental" community has an alternative story in which the Jewish migrants are depicted as even more ignorant. According to this story, the calls of "Cork, Cork" were mistaken for "New York," prompting the befuddled Jews from Russia – lost in the great world – to disembark in Ireland.[2]

In scholarly studies, migrants are often perceived as passive victims as well. Thus, in a study of Jewish migration from German ports, Tobias Brinkmann is impressed by the mechanisms put into place at the end of the nineteenth century to control transit migration throughout the German Empire. He writes that "most European migrants were deprived of agency."[3] Indeed, the decisions of migrants were constrained by other, more powerful actors. It seems, however, that denying most of them agency is an overstatement of the power of the state and economic interest groups.

This article aims to point out the means by which migrants overcame the obstacles erected by powerful actors to stop them from arriving at their planned destination in the New World. Outlining first the policy directed towards Jewish migrants from Eastern Europe passing through the port of Antwerp, it will consider the Jewish migrants' responses to constraints imposed upon them. The focus is on the first quarter of the twentieth century, as this was a period in which international migration slowly but steadily became a focus of state intervention. By the second quarter of the twentieth century, the era of experimentation was over. In 1924, the American Congress passed a draconian quota law, and the U.S.

authorities found the means to limit transatlantic migration in an efficient manner for the next four decades. Before 1925 a very small number of Jewish migrants was sent back at Ellis Island while quite a few who had planned to migrate overseas were forced to stay in Belgium. It turns out, however, that most of these Jewish migrants, by dint of sheer grit and determination, did succeed in executing their original migration project.

Jewish Transit Migration Through the Port of Antwerp

The number of Jewish transatlantic migrants originating in imperial Russia and Austria-Hungary and moving through Antwerp remained small until the very end of the nineteenth century, when the numbers exploded. The peak years were 1906 and 1907. Nearly 80,000 people from the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires, mainly Jews, left the continent through Antwerp. After a dip in 1908, the upward trend resumed, and in 1913, almost 90,000 people from these countries left through the Belgian port for the New World.[4]

The mass migration to the U.S. was no stampede or unselective flight. Transatlantic migration was structured and selective. Most migrants did not leave for the unknown. Mostly pioneers left their place of birth and if they found they were on economic solid ground, they called upon their relatives and friends to join them, which established a pattern of chain migration. Although separated by wide oceans, emigrants stayed in close contact with the home region. As Adam Walaszek shows in this volume, emigrants seldom left their homelands without knowing exactly where to go, how to get there, and even what kind of work they would do. The head of the Belgian emigration service mentions this as early as 1895: "Out of 1000 emigrants, 950 know in which state, city or village they will settle."[5]

John Bodnar has pointed out that Jewish migration, in contrast to other migration flows to America, had a gender balance.[6] This does not mean that Jewish emigrants moved in family units. As Gur Alroey has shown, the migration pattern of these families was characterized by two stages. In the first stage, male heads of household went in advance to the U.S. where they prepared everything for the arrival of their dependents. When they became financially able to support their family members and to fund the journey for those left behind, they sent remittances or the steamship tickets themselves, the so-called pre-paid tickets.[7]

By the early twentieth century, more than thirty percent of the tickets for passage to the U.S. were sold by agents residing in the U.S. These travel agents did business with a relative of the travelers, a relative already in the U.S. who paid for the crossing.[8] This follow-on migration was abruptly stopped due to the First World War. Thousands of fathers, brothers, and husbands were separated for four years from their family members. Shortly after the end of the war, in 1920, European Jewish aid organizations, investigating the emigration potential in Eastern Europe, concluded that 65,000 Jews would be emigrating in the very near future. According to these estimates, 86 percent of these 65,000 emigrants would join a close relative.[9] Thirty-nine percent would be wives and children of U.S inhabitants who had left Eastern Europe before the war. They were immediately proven correct. Of the estimated 75,000 Jewish immigrants to the United States in 1920, 92 percent came to join immediate family or other close relatives. Women and children made up three-fourths of these migrants.[10]

Between July 1920 and December 1921, a total of one hundred thousand transit migrants passed through the port of Antwerp.[11] Of these, the Jewish aid organization had registered 11,281 by December 1921, 55 percent of whom were Polish citizens, 25 percent Romanian, and 12 percent Russian. This was largely a follow-on migration, confirmed by the large share of female migrants (34 percent) and children under the age of eleven (17 percent) among those registered by the Jewish aid organization.[12] The quick recovery of the transatlantic traffic in Antwerp can be explained by the fact that the ports of Hamburg and Bremen were closed for overseas traffic until the end of 1921. In addition, this quick recovery was connected to the policy of English shipping companies like the Cunard Line, the White Star Line, and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, which had selected the port of Antwerp to bring all their East European passengers through to reach England. About 20 percent of the transit migrants who left Antwerp for overseas destinations in 1920 and 1921 sailed from ports in Liverpool and Glasgow to America.[13] The mass migration was hampered considerably by the end of 1921 – a prelude to the virtual closing of the border by 1925.[14]

The Policy Towards Jewish Migrants Passing Through Antwerp

From the 1860s onwards, there was a consensus among political elites in Western Europe and North America that immigration should not be regulated. This was the heyday of liberalism and the belief in the beneficial effect of the free interplay of market forces. At worst, European states refused destitute immigrants and criminals access to their territory. Law-abiding, able-bodied immigrants could migrate through the North Atlantic space without hindrance.

When the legal authorities in the U.S. decided that migration was a federal domain, Congress quickly synchronized its legislation with that of Europe. In 1882, Congress enacted the first immigration law and charged border control officers with the power to refuse admittance to "any convict, lunatic, idiot, or any person unable to take care of himself or herself without becoming a public charge." In the same year, immigration policy was racialized by largely excluding immigrants from China.[15] The legislation was an expression of the changing American attitudes towards immigration. The rise of anti-immigration feeling was shaped by the then-emerging economic crisis. In the 1890s, the U.S. became the trendsetter of a restrictive immigration policy and developed an administrative capacity to control immigration. But since the U.S. was a liberal regime in need of

an unrestricted inflow of labor to meet the enormous demand of its booming industrial economy, this new American state capacity was used in a restrained manner. Only after the First World War would the American authorities decide to use the administrative capacities developed since the 1880s to call mass immigration to a halt.

The economic crisis of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, combined with the cholera epidemic of 1892, offered nativist forces leverage to push through broader exclusionary practices. These nativist forces considered mass immigration as a threat to the integrity of the American nation. Organized labor wanted immigration to be curtailed not only for nation-building considerations but also because newcomers offered economic competition in the labor market. Immigration control stations were set up. The most important was Ellis Island, opened in 1892. A medical check became part of immigration control. Those who were considered unfit for industrial America were debarred. Not only people carrying diseases but anyone who, in the opinion of the Ellis Island medical staff, could not meet the productivity requirements of the industrial world was to be rejected. The insane as well as deaf and feeble-minded immigrants could be barred from entering U.S. territory.[16]

Early twentieth-century American immigration policy became a public-private mix in which transport companies were lured by financial incentives. Expenses incurred for the return of "unfit" passengers had to be paid by the transportation companies. In these ways, the American authorities wanted to make the transport companies accountable for unwanted immigration even as the authorities tried to involve them heavily in their immigration policy. The main shipping line sailing from Antwerp to New York, the Red Star Line (RSL), became a subcontractor for American immigration policy from 1898 onwards. The Red Star Line organized its own team of medical examiners in the port of Antwerp to exclude those immigrants who they could foresee might be turned back upon arrival at Ellis Island. In this manner, those migrants deemed medically unfit by American standards were barred from ever leaving Antwerp.[17]

The medical check-up in Antwerp was rigorous to ensure that no immigrant liable to deportation was able to board the carrier. The Red Star Line had done its arithmetic; this policy of prevention cost less than the maintenance and repatriation of passengers who would be turned back in New York. For example, RSL physicians rejected any migrant with an eye infection, which they diagnosed as trachoma.[18] In contrast, the Belgian government's medical inspectors who also inspected the transit migrants allowed those migrants to pass through and complained that Red Star Line doctors made no distinction between trachoma and other infections. Diagnosing trachoma at an early stage was not a simple matter in this period, and the Red Star Line physicians did not want to take any risks. It was better to refuse too many than too few.[19] The general exclusion rate of the American authorities at Ellis Island when it started was 1 percent. There was a slight rise to 1.5 percent by 1914.[20] Given the low numbers of immigrants being refused entry to the United States by American immigration policy, it appears to have been little more than symbolic. Economic interests and the wish of political parties not to antagonize their ethnic constituents explain this lenient policy on the East Coast. Those interests were also used by ethnic lobbyists advocating a liberal, non-discriminatory policy and representing themselves as spokespersons of immigrant voters.[21] Thus, more migrants were kept from entering U.S. territory by the control subcontracted to the transportation companies than by immigration services in the harbor of New York.

After the First World War, new grounds for refusal were added to immigration legislation. The Immigration Act of 1917 included a literacy test. With the passage of that act, immigrants over the age of sixteen years would have to show that they could read a recognized language. This became the first general restriction that applied to all immigrants, but if the head of a household was literate, his female dependent was free to enter the country regardless of whether she was literate or not. There was a strong belief in the U.S. that the country was about to receive an unprecedented flood of immigrants from war-torn Europe. This belief appeared to be confirmed by rising immigration rates in 1921, the first year that civilian shipping resumed its full capacity. In fact, in the first decade of the twentieth century, immigration averaged almost 900,000 a year, while in 1921 only 650,000 immigrants were admitted. The movement to restrict immigration gained momentum. The severe post-war depression started in the summer of 1920 and lasted until the spring of 1922. It also fueled the movement that advocated immigration restrictions. In 1921, these restrictionists secured approval for a numerical cap on immigration – namely, a percentage of the number of foreign-born from each country listed in the 1910 population census. The result was ethnic discrimination, a policy that established national quotas on the basis of one's country of origin. Between 1922 and 1924, a maximum number of 350,000 persons were admitted to the U.S. Within each country's quota, allocations were on a monthly basis and worked on the basis of first come, first served. Once the limits were reached, immigrants were refused entry even if they had a visa.[22]

In addition to these broad grounds for exclusion, the visa became an innovative tool used in the selection of immigrants. Wartime security concerns in Europe had imposed passport requirements for all travelers going abroad. The passport obligation enabled the American authorities to impose a statutory counterpart after 1918: the U.S. visa. This was the way to control immigration at its source, since entry permits were now granted before departure.[23] Consuls were instructed to refuse visas in the country they were assigned once the quota of that country was filled. The new system required a more efficient administration that was only attained by the middle of the decade. From then onwards, the consular officers sought to fill their quota with only the most desirable immigrants. To that end, in 1926, the U.S. authorities in Antwerp opened a medical inspection station.

By 1930 this was generalized to the whole of Europe. About 5 percent of the applicants were rejected in these stations. Remote control was now firmly in public hands, and the transport companies lost their pivotal role in American immigration policy.[24]

In the meantime the 1924 Act further reduced the number of immigrants admitted. A ratio of only two percent of the American population would be admitted. This diminished the annual quota to about 180,000 immigrants. More importantly, the baseline of the quota system was pushed back to the census of 1890, a time when the heaviest immigration from Eastern Europe still had not started.[25]

In the wake of America's restrictionist policy, British and Canadian immigration authorities stepped up their control. Remote control would remain the most important migration control mechanism of these countries. The visa system and border control gave public authorities the power to manage migration efficiently. The continental European countries had a harder time slowing or halting immigration due to their land (or green) borders with the East and South European emigration regions. Moreover, the political elites in continental Europe still considered a largely uncontrolled immigration flow beneficial.

It is unclear whether American restrictionist policy in the first quarter of the twentieth century influenced the volume of migration from Eastern Europe, but it definitely influenced the direction. Shortly after the First World War, the intervention of the American authorities in migration caused a fundamental shift in the destinations of Jewish migrants from Eastern Europe. Continental Western Europe became the final stop for the Jewish mass migrations of the 1920s.

How Transit Migrants Got into Trouble

Different kinds of obstacles confronted migrants on their voyage to the New World. Being short of funds could impede a quick transit through Europe. Spending too much on travel to the port or while waiting for the ship, or being robbed could prove devastating for migrants.[26] The migration pattern of Jewish migrants – the male head of household leaving first, and his dependents following later – created special problems. Once the men were settled in America with a minimum of security, they contacted a travel agency to bring their wives and children over. The trip was usually paid in two installments – one when the contract was signed, and the second due before the family boarded the ship at the port city. During the economic crisis of 1907-1908, many East European Jews in the United States were not able to come up with the second installment. As a consequence, wives and children arriving in Antwerp were stranded there. These women and children became an important clientele for the local Jewish charity organizations.[27]

Other transit migrants successfully arrived at Ellis Island only to find they couldn't enter the country because they were considered paupers. David Hershik was such a case. He arrived at Ellis Island to join his uncle and told the authorities he had left a pregnant wife and a child behind but that his uncle would provide for him. When, in response to an inquiry, his uncle said that he himself was a poor man with six children, the authorities refused to accept him as a guarantor. They considered David Hershik likely to become a public charge, and therefore he was denied entrance and sent back to Antwerp.[28]

Most of the transit migrants debarred at Ellis Island but also in Antwerp itself were stranded because of reasons associated with their medical examination. As noted, about three percent of passengers were denied passage by the Red Star Line in Antwerp or entry at Ellis Island due to a diagnosis of trachoma.[29] Another reason for refusal at either end of the line was mental illness. These cases are well documented because those migrants usually required the help of others to sort out the situation for them. Marie Dutka from Galicia came to Antwerp with her husband and three children in August 1904 to emigrate to Canada. While the four other members of her family left Antwerp for Canada, she was debarred from the ship and sent to an asylum close to Antwerp, in Duffel. On 19 October 1904, she planned to board a vessel bound for Canada again, but she was overtaken by such a deep fear on the day of departure that she could not leave the asylum.[30]

Other mentally ill emigrants were refused entry to the U.S. at Ellis Island. Seventeen-year-old Chaja Grodsky from Lithuania in Czarist Russia is a case in point. In the summer of 1904 she had received a prepaid ticket for the Red Star Line from her uncle who was living in New York. On arrival at Ellis Island, the medical staff considered her feeble-minded and she was returned to Europe. Back in Antwerp, Chaja was transferred to the insane asylum in Duffel.[31] Joseph Helmans, a fifty-seven-year-old Rumanian worker embarked in the port of Antwerp in the summer of 1905 and passed successfully through Ellis Island. He started a new life in New York City, but after a few months he was struck by madness. The 1891 Immigration Act authorized the deportation of anyone who was likely to become a public charge within one year after arrival. Under the provisions of this act, Joseph Helmans was sent back to Antwerp and interned in an insane asylum.[32]

After the First World War, mentally ill immigrants continued to be debarred in Antwerp or at Ellis Island. Etta Gorka Nudelman, born in Warsaw in 1913, was set to sail from Antwerp to New York with her mother and brother in September 1921 to join her grandfather in the U.S. The shipping line refused to board the eight-year-old girl because she was considered retarded. She was left in Antwerp on her own.[33] Rachel Zylbergeld was thirteen years old when she arrived at Ellis Island on October 1921 with her brother and mother. She was diagnosed as feeble-minded and returned to Antwerp. Both Rachel and Etta were placed in a Jewish orphanage.[34] David Hirschfeld suffered a similar experience. In 1921, at age twenty-three, he left Poland together with his mother and two sisters for Antwerp where they boarded a ship for New York. The rest of his family was already in

Chicago. Suffering from schizophrenia, David was not permitted to disembark at Ellis Island and was sent back to Antwerp. He was sent to the same mental institution where Joseph Helmans had stayed before the war.[35]

Stories like those of David and Rachel, two fragile individuals separated from their families at Ellis Island, became the subject matter of Sholom Asch's novel, *America*, in which a son is separated from his family because of a bodily defect. Asch describes the anger of the father:

> His heart was burning with an indignant sense of outrage, and his lips tight shut. He dramatized inwardly a long remonstrance before "Americas evildoers." To tear a father from his children – who even heard the like? An outcry rose from his inwards: verily, this exceeds the wickedness of Sodom! What was he expected to do? Throw this child into the water? Do they mean to deport the lad?[36]

These cases show the determination of the American immigration authorities to impose a selection process on newcomers to America. Though few were stopped at the border, for those who were considered unwanted, even if they were children, there were no mitigating circumstances.

In addition, after the First World War, the grounds for refusal multiplied. In 1922, Hinda Chane Grosbard arrived in Antwerp at the age of fifty-seven. She was a Polish Jew and a widow who wanted to join her four children living in the U.S. Nevertheless she was not permitted to leave for the U.S. when authorities determined she was illiterate.[37] Other migrants were refused because they did not have the right papers. After the First World War, passports were necessary for international travel and East European Jews also needed a visa for the U.S. and for each transit country, which clearly formed a new hindrance to international travel. In the early 1920s, most migrants who were stranded in Antwerp could not leave for the U.S. – not because of personal defects but because the U.S. had filled the national quota for their country. In January 1924, for example, there were about 5,000 Russians in Western Europe waiting to leave for the United States, of whom about 250 were in Antwerp. The quota for Russia had been met, and these migrants would be able to depart in June at the earliest. Because the new quota allocated to Russia was limited to 1,792 people annually, the departure of all 5,000 Russians would take years.[38]

The Belgian Authorities and Stranded Jewish Migrants

By the early twentieth century, there was growing hostility towards the Red Star Line in Belgian official circles, as the authorities were forced to foot the bill of the U.S. admission policy. An earlier law passed on 14 December 1876 stipulated that transport companies had to abide by the laws of the country of departure and arrival. When a ticket was sold to a migrant who was not allowed to disembark, not only did the price of the ticket have to be reimbursed, the stranded migrant could also charge the transport companies for the costs of food and lodging while in Antwerp. When delays were caused by the shipping agency itself, the Belgian authorities required the transport company to reimburse the living expenses of their passengers at two francs a day. But passengers stranded in Antwerp due to the American immigration policy seem to have been considered *force majeure*.[39] By threatening to withdraw the license of the companies, the Belgian authorities could have exerted additional pressure to reimburse the costs, but it seems that before the First World War the Belgian authorities hardly did so. It was, however, put on the political agenda a few times.[40]

By 1893, Belgian authorities tried to address the problem of stranded migrants by granting entry into Belgium only to those who had the means to pay for their own repatriation. In part, this was due to a cholera epidemic in some regions of Russia and a very strong American reaction, if not overreaction, to the inflow of Jewish migrants from the Russian Empire. At that time, the Red Star Line and other shipping companies lobbied the Belgian authorities strongly and successfully for an inhibited flow of transit migrants. The shipping agencies had promised they would assume the cost of repatriating all stranded migrants. However, when the Belgian authorities tried to make this oral concession into a contractual obligation, the shipping agencies refused to do so.[41] The urgency of the problem waned when the cholera epidemic ended, and the Belgian authorities did not insist any further.

In 1903, the Red Star Line adamantly refused to pay for the repatriation and living expenses of migrants stranded in Antwerp if they had been refused by RSL's own doctors on medical grounds.[42] In 1906, at the peak of the transit movement, Eugène Venesoen, the Belgian Emigration Commissioner, called upon the authorities to stop the invasion: "(Just) As America, we have to protect ourselves against the invasion of undesirable people, suffering from defects and who cannot render any service to our population."[43] Venesoen attributed the rise of the Jewish community in Antwerp to the stranded transit migrants. In September 1906, in an alarmist report, he estimated the number of Russians stranded in Antwerp since 1905 to be at least 1,500.[44] His figure is difficult to verify, and given that it was used as part of a political strategy to restrict immigration, this estimate should not be considered reliable.

The number of stranded migrants considered a nuisance seems to have remained manageable for the Belgian authorities, since no drastic public action was taken against this inflow or against the shipping companies, the magnet attracting these migrants. Until the First World War, transit migration flow remained largely uncontrolled. Free mobility was a corollary of free trade and was in these liberal times considered a benefit to all. The business interests in the

growing popularity of tourism as well as the transatlantic migrants' trade were powerful economic motives that favored unrestricted international mobility.

The only migrants stranded in Antwerp for whom the Red Star Line was willing to pay repatriation were those who could not continue travel to the New World due to mental illness. When it took several months before they were considered fit enough to be repatriated, their stay in a mental asylum was paid for by the Belgian authorities. In June 1905, the asylum director in Duffel claimed that Chaja Grodsky's mental situation had improved – "she was slowly coming back to her senses and anyway she was very meek" (author's translation). He determined that, if she were accompanied, she could go home. Her father Chaïm Grodsky, who was still in Russia, had kept in touch with his daughter. He was completely willing to have his daughter back, but he was not able to pay for her stay in the asylum nor for her trip home. The Red Star Line agreed to pay for Chaja's trip. On 31 July 1905, one year after she had left Lithuania in Czarist Russia, she returned home. During this trip, she was accompanied by a Belgian military officer. The Red Star Line also paid for the round trip of this officer.[45] The mental patients mentioned above were also repatriated at the expense of the Red Star Line. Respectively after eleven and seven months in an insane asylum, Marie Dutka and Joseph Helmans were considered in sufficient health to be repatriated.[46] Handling their repatriation was largely a symbolic gesture by the Red Star Line in order to appease the Belgian (and American) authorities and to prevent having obligations imposed on them by law.[47]

Repatriation was the preferred solution of the Belgian authorities to the problem of stranded migrants. Aid organizations also tried to convince the stranded to return "home." But repatriation represented the total failure of the migration project and was not an option for most of the migrants.[48] Using force to return stranded migrants was not straightforward. Many were a long way from home and, in order to return, they had to pass through the German Empire. In the 1880s, Germany resented the Russian and Austro-Hungarian subjects who had been forced to leave the Netherlands, France, and Belgium but who were unable to return home directly due to their lack of adequate financing. Some ended up stranded in Germany, thereby increasing its population of poor but also ethnically unwanted individuals, given the German authorities' interest in an ethnically homogenous German population. In 1884, the German authorities imposed a national logic upon deportation procedures. Destitute aliens who had been expelled to the German Reich by the police force of neighboring countries were rejected at the Prussian border. Only if these migrants could prove they needed to pass through the German Empire to return home and only if they could show sufficient funding for their fare would the Prussian border guards allow them to cross the border.[49] Nevertheless, the German authorities found that, even if these returnees had funding, the selective border control was not very effective. In some cases, the Russian or Galician Jews whose return was subsidized by the Belgian authorities or by the transport agencies, saw arrival at the Cologne train station in Germany as an opportunity to sell their return ticket.[50] The small capital they accrued from this sale gave them an opportunity to either settle in Germany or attempt departure overseas on another occasion.

In the early 1920s in Antwerp, when migrants were denied entrance to the U.S. at Ellis Island because their national quota had been filled, they lodged complaints with the Belgian migration department. In this they were helped by the Jewish aid organization, Ezrah. The Belgian authorities argued that the transport lines knew of the quotas and that they had enough advance time to prevent these returns. Furthermore, they insisted that the shippers were financially responsible for all costs caused by America's restrictive immigration policy.[51] The White Star Line, which had started massive operations in Antwerp in 1920, refused to pay and even questioned the authority of the Belgian state in this matter. "As the passengers are not of Belgian nationality, we fail to see what jurisdiction the Authorities at Antwerp have in this matter."[52] This refusal to even consider compensation was not well received by the Belgian authorities, but the outcome of these disputes is unknown.

How Jewish Transit Migrants Coped with their Forced Stay in Antwerp

Migrants who were short of funds tried to get to the New World the cheapest way possible. At the end of 1906, between eight and ten Russian stowaways were discovered every time the ships of the Canadian Pacific were set to sail.[53] Those debarred at Ellis Island because of the likelihood of becoming a "public charge" were a bit more cunning on their second trip to the U.S. [54] Those who were stranded in Antwerp due to lack of money did odd jobs or had relatives send them money. Other migrants tried alternative routes to reach America. Canada was a much-used backdoor and other American ports aside from New York were known for greater leniency in controlling the influx of migrants. In 1904, a transatlantic steamship line run by the Canadian Pacific Railroad company opened in Antwerp. Antwerp turned into a nodal point for illegal migration to the U.S. through Canada.[55]

Some migrants took years to execute their migration project. An example is the story of sixty-year-old Jacob Leschinsky who arrived in Brussels in 1907 with his wife, Baelia Hoerevitsch. He listed his occupation as Hebrew teacher. The couple only had the meager funds sent to them by their children in the U.S. Leschinsky and his wife survived by begging and from the limited support they received from the local Jewish community. Although they were born in Russia, they had come to Brussels from London. When asked how long they would stay in Brussels, they answered they had not the faintest idea. A few months later they moved on to Bremen. In October 1909, they returned to Belgium and took up residence in Ant-

werp. Finally in 1910, after having tried to depart from British, Belgian, and German ports, they sailed from Antwerp to the United States to join their children.[56] Fifteen years later, Hinda Chane Grosbard, who had been refused passage at Antwerp in 1922 because she was illiterate, had to stay in Belgium for more than two years before she could join her children in the U.S. She received about 300 dollars annually from her children to cover her living expenses.[57]

Hinda Chane Crosbard, Jacob Leschinsky, and his wife were all supported by their children and by the local Jewish aid committee. Just before the war, only about eight percent of the transit migrants contacted the Jewish aid organization in Antwerp in any given year, and only one percent received some kind of financial aid. This increased to 12 percent and nine percent respectively by 1921.[58] Before the war, most of the financial aid given by Jewish charity organizations was spent on shipping tickets, while immediately after the war nearly half of their budget went to food and lodging. Such aid had been limited before the war to, at most, twenty-four days in order to encourage the migrants to communicate with friends and relatives. After the war, this timeframe was no longer upheld.[59]

Even if transit life became much more difficult, most of the migrants arrived at their intended destinations. Their determination to execute their original plan sustained them, and relatives and the local Jewish community gave them practical support. Ezrah contacted relatives of the migrants for financial support. It also directly subsidized the departure of these transit migrants by providing tickets, and gave them pocket money and better clothes. According to the Russian-Jewish journal of the Jewish Colonization Association, *Der Yidisher Emigrant*, emigrants' dress was important. The American immigration officers took appearance into serious consideration. Being clean and clothed in a respectable manner prevented a transit migrant from being treated as a pauper.[60] And because the American authorities had imposed a head tax on all arriving immigrants from 1882 onwards, small sums were given to needy emigrants so they would not arrive in America penniless. After the First World War, administrative formalities such as passports and visas became even more important. The Jewish aid organization in Belgium spent five percent of its budget in 1920-1921 on the necessary papers for East European Jews. Before 1914, proper papers had hardly been an issue.[61]

After the First World War, because illiteracy was grounds for refusing a migrant entry to the U.S., the Jewish aid organization set up a school in Antwerp to remedy the problem. Medical treatment also helped stranded migrants to qualify for the transatlantic journey by curing them of simple ailments.[62]

Others who did not qualify for migration to the United States moved on to Great Britain, usually not considered an end station. For many poor Jews, Great Britain was just another stage in their transatlantic journey.[63] From 1905 onwards, Britain erected its own immigration barriers: each emigrant had to carry five pounds. But this did not impede the flow from Belgium to Britain. It only increased the price for crossing the English Channel. Russian and Galician Jews stranded in Belgium had to buy second-class tickets, as the Belgian shipping lines abolished all third-class tickets to Britain. This, however, had the added benefit of relieving all patrons from examination. Only vessels with more than twenty steerage passengers were classified as migrant ships and subject to inspection.[64]

America's restrictive immigration policy in the end only delayed the original migration project. It did not cause many to abandon plans. When they had acquired basic reading skills, were cured of disease, or when they were finally included in the quota, these transit migrants were keen to move on and execute their original plan.[65] Even in the early 1920s, very few who were stranded in Belgium settled there permanently, nor did they return to Poland or Russia. Nevertheless, the transit in Belgium could take years. Even those transit migrants who found work in Belgium moved on as soon as it was possible.[66] In 1923, the cobbler Leib Moszek Lesz arrived in Antwerp from Warsaw. He was twenty-seven years old. He had married Eva Sapirsztein about a year and a half before, and his wife was already in New York. He wanted to join her. Two years later, he was still in Belgium asking for a permanent residence permit there, "as he had abandoned all hope of being able to leave for America." Records show that he finally left Belgium in 1926 for an unknown destination, never to return.[67]

Among those who stayed in Belgium, the mentally ill were clearly overrepresented. None of the seven Jewish emigrants who were stranded in Antwerp after the war due to mental illness were repatriated. They all stayed in Belgium. The best-documented case is David Hirschfeld who was sent back from Ellis Island because of schizophrenia. From 1925 onwards, he stayed in the psychiatric hospital of Geel, which worked on the basis of de-institutionalized care. Patients were placed with a host family. David Hirschfeld was a resident in two families, first for fifteen years with the Loots family and then from 1945 onwards with the Mols family. His brothers in Chicago paid for the costs of his stay in Belgium through a Jewish organization. It appears the organization kept in regular contact with him. When, in 1959, David was transferred to hospital because of a lung disease, he informed his brother in Chicago. His brother wrote the director of the asylum saying that David "wanted to move back to the family of 'Mols,' where he had been quite happy for a very long time when he resided with them."[68] Shortly afterwards, David returned to the Mols family and stayed there until his death in 1967.[69] Eight-year-old Etta Gorka Nudelman, who could not board ship with her mother and brother in 1922 because of mental retardation, was placed in a Jewish orphanage in Antwerp. In 1940, at age twenty-seven, she was also transferred to Geel and remained there until she died in 1965.[70] The feeble-minded Rachel Zylbergeld, who had been sent back from Ellis Island at age thirteen, was put in the Antwerp Jewish orphancy. She was financially supported by her mother who resided in the U.S. until Rachel was eighteen. After 1927, all contact (and financial transfers) with her mother stopped. Rachel Zylbergeld remained in Belgium for the rest of her life.[71]

In contrast to similar cases before the war, these mentally ill Jewish migrants were not repatriated. Their very different fate is probably due to the fact that they were the last of their families to leave for the U.S. When misfortune struck and all other family members went on to the U.S., there was little to return to in Eastern Europe. Therefore these stranded migrants stayed in Belgium, stuck between their Old World in Eastern Europe and the New World. For them, the door to the U.S. remained closed. For many other Jews who wanted to leave Eastern Europe in the 1920s, the American door remained equally closed.

East European Jews who arrived in Antwerp from the mid-1920s onwards had already given up the hope of leaving for overseas. Their destinations now were Belgium and France. France, and in particular Paris, had already attracted East European Jews in ever greater numbers by the beginning of the twentieth century.[72] Belgium gained mass appeal in the 1920s. Until 1914, Jewish settlement migration to Antwerp from Eastern Europe had been a very selective immigration flow. Antwerp as a port attracted Russian Jewish grain traders who underpinned the intensive traffic between Russian ports and Antwerp.[73] At the end of the eighteenth century, Antwerp had gained prominence as a diamond center and could attract jewelers from Russia, mainly from Odessa and Bialystock, but mostly diamond traders from Galicia and in particular from Krakow. These two economic sectors which were increasingly dominated by East European entrepreneurs also seem to have exercised a pull on less wealthy Jews in Eastern Europe. While Antwerp had a few thousand people active in the diamond sector at the end of the nineteenth century, the number of diamond workers alone had risen to 14,000 by 1914.[74] Those people were a selective lot, by region of origin as well as by professional qualifications.[75] Only in the 1920s would the pull of Belgium on Eastern European Jews be less selective.

Conclusion

Different Jewish migration flows to Antwerp should be distinguished, each with its own logic. Analysis shows a very limited overlap between them. The migration flow through Antwerp from Eastern Europe to the U.S. is different from highly selective migration in which Belgium was the final destination. Emigration to the Antwerp diamond industry and the grain trade had little to do with the Jewish mass migration to the U.S. Only when the U.S. started to close its borders did Jewish emigrants from East Europe, a very heterogeneous lot, start to look for a new destination, and only then did Belgium gain mass appeal among Jews.

Before 1925, the barriers erected by the U.S. were not solid enough for the Jewish migrants to change their plans. The presence of stranded Jewish transit migrants in Antwerp was ephemeral, and only a few of them finally settled in Belgium. Jewish migrants were not solitary individuals moving to America. They were whole families, some of whom had started a new life in the New World already and had firmly turned their backs on the Old World by the early 1920s. In the light of this migration dynamic, the determination of the follow-on migrants to arrive in America is comprehensible. Most migrants stranded in Antwerp had relatives in America who took care of them and the migrants' aid organizations offered a hand in getting them back on track. Before 1924, the authorities could at most postpone the plans of these migrants but not cancel them. Transit life became more difficult after the First World War. While the mentally ill at the beginning of the twentieth century could return to the old home when some family members were still there, this was no longer the case after the war. Whole families were transplanted. There was no way back to the Old World. Only from the mid-1920s onwards, when the American authorities closed the door to the New World for new immigrants, did stranded migrants stay put. Only then did Antwerp come to the fore as a new destination for the East European migrants.

Notes

1. Gerald Y. Goldberg, "'Ireland is the only country,' Joyce and the Jewish dimension," in *The Crane Bag Book of Irish Studies*, eds. M. P. Hederman and R. Kearney (Dublin: Blackwater Press, 1977-1984), 5-12; Nick Harris, *Dublin's Little Jerusalem* (Dublin: A. & A. Famar, 2001). We thank Rosa Reicher for bringing this story and its bibliography to our attention.
2. Ó Gráda Cormac, "Notes on the Early History of Cork Jewry," in *Gerald Goldberg: A tribute*, eds. Dermot Keogh and Diarmud Whelan (Blackrock: Mercier Press, 2008), 73-100.
3. Tobias Brinkmann, "Travelling with Ballin: The impact of American Immigration Policies on Jewish Transmigration within Central Europe, 1880-1914," *International Review of Social History* 53 (2008): 480.
4. These figures are based on the annual reports of the Emigration Commissioner. Archive Ministry of Foreign Affairs Brussels, Emigration, 2020, VIII, 2951, I-IV and 2953 I-II and Provincial Archive Antwerp [henceforth, PAA], Landverhuizing- Emigratie, 45, 54, 67.
5. Annual report of the Emigration Commissioner 1895. PAA, Scheepvaart, 83.
6. John Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1987), 20.
7. Gur Alroey, "And I Remained Alone in a Vast Land: Women in the Jewish Migration from Eastern Europe," *Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture, Society* 12.3 (2006): 50-51.
8. Torsten Feys, "Prepaid tickets to ride to the New World: the New York Continental Conference and transatlantic steerage fares 1885-1895," *Revista de Historia Economica – Journal of Iberian and Latin American Economic History* 26.2 (2008): 173-204; Dillingham Commission Reports (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), vol. 3: 359-363.
9. Conférence de Bruxelles, 7.8.1921. Yiddisher Visns Haftelekher Institut, New York [henceforth, YIVO], folder 131/5960-6071 (MKM 1.5).

10. Lloyd P. Gartner, "Women in the great Jewish migration," *Jewish Historical Studies* 40 (2008): 133.
11. Walter Willcox, *International Migrations* (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1969), 617.
12. Interview with Emigration Commissioner in *Le Matin*, 18.6.1921. City archive Antwerp, 27.816; Ezrah, Report for the period 1.7.1920-31.12.1921 (in total 23.636 emigrants would have called upon the aid organization, but only 11.278 registered). At the Conférence de Bruxelles, 7.8.1921 (YIVO, folder 131/5960-6071 (MKM 1.5)), the representative of Erza mentions that between June 1920 and the first months of 1921 40,000 transit migrants had passed through the port of Antwerp and that 17,000 emigrants had called upon the Jewish aid organization for assistance.
13. PAA, Landverhuizing 1912-1993, 99, quoted by De Coster, *Eindverslag research in Provinciaal Archief*. In 1913, there had been 114,000 emigrants, of whom 14,000 went indirectly overseas, passing through England. Tobias Brinkmann, "Ort des Ubergangs-Berlin als Schnittstelle der jüdischen Migration aus Osteuropa nach 1918," in *Transit und Transformation. Osteuropäisch-jüdische Migranten in Berlin 1918-1939*, ed. Verena Dohrn and Gertrud Pickhan (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2010), 33; Willcox, *International Migration* (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1969), 617.
14. On the Canadian restrictive policy in the wake of the policy of the United States, see N. Kelley and M. Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: History of the Canadian Immigration Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).
15. In 1891, the phrase "persons who were unable to take care of themselves" was transmuted into "paupers or persons likely to become a public charge" or the "LPC clause" and would later be used to bar also able-bodied immigrants. Roger Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants Since 1882* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004).
16. Amy L. Fairchild, *Science at the Borders: Immigration Medical Inspection and the Shaping of the Modern Industrial Labor Force* (Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 2003); Vincent J. Cannato, *American Passage: The History of Ellis Island* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 127-260; Aristide Zolberg, *A Nation by Design: Immigration Policy in the Fashioning of America* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2006), 199-242.
17. Emigration Commissioner to Governor, 6.4.1898. PAA, Scheepvaart, 98. We presume 1898 is the year when the Red Star Line started to medically check the transit migrants before departure and thus not only to assure that they were fit for the voyage, but also to stop those from boarding the vessel who would be debarred in Ellis Island. However, the Belgian authorities (the only source on the Red Star Line, as there are no archives on the company) explicitly mentioned this broader objective no sooner than 1902. Emigration Commissioner to Governor, 25.4.1903. PAA, Scheepvaart, 98.
18. Trachoma is an eye disease that can lead to blindness if left untreated and, in the 1890s, was regarded at Ellis Island as a dangerous infectious disease; it was often a reason to deny entry to the U.S. Barbara Lüthi, *Invading bodies. Medizin und Immigration in den USA 1880-1920* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2009), 248-290; Krista Maglen, "Importing Trachoma. The Introduction into Britain of American Ideas of an 'Immigrant Disease,'" 1892-1906," *Immigrants and Minorities* 23 (2005): 87-99.
19. Annual report of the Emigration Commissioner, 1903, PAA, Scheepvaart, 67; Head of emigration inspection to governor, 6 April 1898, PAA, Scheepvaart, 98.
20. Frank Caestecker and Torsten Feys, "East European Jewish Migrants and Settlers in Belgium, 1880-1914: A Transatlantic Perspective," *East European Jewish Affairs* 40.3 (2010): 266-271.
21. Zolberg, *A Nation by Design*, 220-232.
22. Cannato, *American Passage*, 330-331.
23. Zolberg, *A Nation by Design*, 241; John Torpey, *The invention of the Passport, Surveillance, citizenship and the state* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
24. Fairchild, *Science at the Borders*, 259ff.; Zolberg, *A Nation by Design*, 254.
25. Zolberg, *A Nation by Design*, 244.
26. Jean-Philippe Schreiber, *L'immigration juive en Belgique du moyen-âge à la première guerre mondiale* (Bruxelles: Editions de l'université de Bruxelles, 1996), 200. Schreiber refers to 418 Jews stranded in Antwerp in 1906 due to the bankruptcy of the travel agent who would have provided them with shipping tickets upon arrival in Antwerp.
27. Ezrah, *Société philanthropique pour la protection des émigrants*, Anvers Rapport 1907, Anvers, 1908, AAD, 1029; Gur Alroey, "Out of the Shtetl. On the trail of the Eastern Jewish emigrants to America," 1900-1914. *Leidschrift*, 22.1 (2007): 96; Lloyd P. Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870-1914* (London: Simon Publications, 1973), 170-171.
28. David Toback, *The Journey of David Toback (As Retold by his Granddaughter Carole Malkin)* (New York: Schocken Books, 1992).
29. In September 1906, three percent of the passengers (n=1830) were not permitted to board a ship in Antwerp bound for the U.S. due to medical reasons: "Report on the conditions existing in Europe and Mexico affecting Emigration and Immigration being a compilation in digested form of reports submitted," 114. National Archives Washington, Records of Immigration and Naturalization Service [henceforth, NAW, RINS], 54411/1. Thanks to Torsten Feys for sharing this document with me. The Emigration Commissioner gave a similar figure but only for trachoma. He estimated that the Red Star Line's medical control rejected each week about fifteen to thirty Russian emigrants in 1906. Emigration Commissioner to Minister of Justice, 22 December 1906, General Belgian archives, Archives Aliens Department [henceforth, AAD], 265-268. See also AAD, individual alien's file, 1.422.625 and 1.489.597.
30. AAD, individual alien's file, 764.787.
31. AAD, individual alien's file, 772505; www.ellisisland.org, Chaja Grodsky (20.8.2010) (refers to list of alien passengers from the U.S. immigration officer at port of arrival).
32. AAD, individual alien's file, 782.563.
33. AAD, individual alien's file, 1.5222.408; www.ellisisland.org, Etla Nudelman (10.4.2011).
34. AAD, individual alien's file, A 126.787; www.ellisisland.org, Rachel Silberg...ld (10.4.2011) .
35. AAD, individual alien's file, 1.212.950. On the passenger list of Ellis Island, the file David Hirszfeld is marked as deported. www.ellisisland.org (10.4.2011).
36. Sholem Asch, *Amerika* (Warsaw/New York: 1911), 71-72. The novel was translated into English as *America* (New York: Alpha Omega Publishing Group, 1918), 93. Thanks to Michael Boyden for providing me with the original version.
37. AAD, individual alien's file, 1.368.768; See also AAD, 1029.

38. Red Star Line to Governemental Commissaire, 6.6.1924. PAA, Landverhuizing – Emigratie, 66 quoted by De Coster, *Eindverslag research in Provinciaal Archief*; AAD, 1029.
39. Torsten Feys, *De regeringspolitiek met betrekking tot de Belgische emigratie naar de Verenigde Staten via de haven van Antwerpen* (Gent: Universiteit Gent, unpublished Master's thesis, 2003), 179.
40. Another manner to force the transport companies to pay the bill is through private litigation. We are, however, unaware of court cases in which stranded transit migrants accused the shipping lines of breach of contract.
41. E. Spelkens, "Antwerp as a port of Emigration, 1843-1913," in *Two Studies on Emigration through Antwerp to the New World*, eds. G. Kurgan and E. Spelkens (Brussels: Center for American Studies, 1976), 73.
42. Emigration Commissioner to Governor, 25.4.1903. PAA, Scheepvaart, nr.76, quoted by De Coster, *Eindverslag research in Provinciaal Archief*.
43. Emigration Commissioner to Governor, 28 September 1906, AAD, 265-268; document quoted at length in Ronin, *Antwerpen en zijn 'Russen' Onderdanen van de tsaar, 1814-1948* (Gent: Stichting Mens en Kultuur, 1993), 229-231. Author's translation; Spelkens, "Antwerp as a Port of Emigration," 72-73.
44. Emigration Commissioner to Governor, 28.9.1906. AAD, 265-268.
45. AAD, individual alien's file, 772505.
46. AAD, individual alien's file, 764.787 and 782.563.
47. Letter of Minister of Justice to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 12 May 1905, PAA, Scheepvaart, 104 quoted by De Coster, *Eindverslag research in Provinciaal Archief*.
48. Schreiber, *L'immigration juive en Belgique*, 11; Toback, *The Journey of David Toback*, 11, 12.
49. Frank Caestecker "The Transformation of Nineteenth-Century West European Expulsion Policy, 1880-1914," in *Migration Control in the North Atlantic World. The Evolution of State Practices in Europe and the United States from the French Revolution to the Inter-War Period*, eds. A. Fahrmeier, O. Faron and P. Weil (New York/Oxford: Berghahn, 2003), 126-128.
50. Report of special immigrant inspector Marcus Braun in Report of the Commissioner General on immigration, 1903, 94, NAW, RINS, 52320/47; Brinkmann, "Travelling with Ballin," 479.
51. In January 1924, the Emigration Commissioner was still in negotiation with the Red Star Line about paying the living expenses of the migrants stranded in Antwerp. City archive Antwerp, Modern Archive, 27.816 quoted by De Coster, *Eindverslag research in Provinciaal Archief*.
52. Correspondence between F. Van den Abeele, agent of the White Star Line and Emigration Commissioner, 1921-1922. PAA, Toezichtscommissie van de dienst voor Landverhuizing 1912-1993, 94. General State Archive Beveren Waas, Archief van de Dienst voor Emigratie, 118.
53. Maritime commissaire to Minister of Justice, 22.12.1906. AAD, 265-268.
54. See Toback, *The Journey of David Toback*.
55. NAW, RINS, 52320/47, Marcus Braun, European investigation, 1903-1904, report 23 August 1903.
56. AAD, individual files, 855063. These were the only Russian transit migrants we came across in a random sample of about 1,000 immigrants registered by the Belgian authorities in 1904 (842) and 1906 (150). In this sample we counted 31 immigrants from Russia. The sample is skewed in favor of arrivals in the fall. This caused an overrepresentation of students who arrived at the start of the academic year: 17 of these 31 migrants from Russia were coming to Belgium to follow higher education. Most Russians who were not students declared immediately upon arrival that they would be active in the diamond and grain trade. In these files there is hardly any reference to the ethnic or religious orientation of these migrants. For the registration of aliens in Belgium, see Frank Caestecker, Filip Strubbe and Pierre-Alain Tallier, *Individual files on foreigners opened by the Sûreté publique (Police des étrangers) (1835-1943)* (Brussel: Algemeen Rijksarchief, 2009); Frank Caestecker and Lieselotte Luyckx, "Het individuele vreemdelingendossier, een unieke bron over migratie en migranten?" in *Grensgevallen. De vreemdelingenadministratie in België*, ed. Pierre-Alain Tallier (Brussel: Rijksarchief, 2010), 15-28.
57. AAD, individual files, 1.368.768.
58. Conférence de Bruxelles, 7.8.1921. YIVO, folder 131/5960-6071 (MKM 1.5); Caestecker and Feys, *East European Jewish Migrants and Settlers*, 275. On Ezrah, see Vladimir Ronin, *Antwerpen en zijn 'Russen'*, 248-250 and Schreiber, *L'immigration juive en Belgique*, 338.
59. Alexander Harkavy, "Diary of a Visit to Europe in the Interests of Jewish Emigration," 1906-1907, 24. *American Jewish Historical Society*, Harkavy Papers, 5. Archival document generously put at our disposal by Gur Alroey [henceforth, Harkavy Diary]. The financial reports of Ezrah point out that in 1913, 70 percent of its expenses were spent on tickets. In the period 1.7.1920-31.12.1921, only 14 percent of the expenses went to tickets and five percent to travel documents, but 41 percent to food and lodging, expenses which only amounted to 24 percent of the budget in 1908. Caestecker and Feys, "East European Jewish Migrants and Settlers," 281; Ezrah, *Verslag voor de periode 1.7.1920-31.12.1921*.
60. The Jewish transit travelers in Belgium in *Der yidisher emigrant*, 14.12.1912 (24). An archival document generously put at our disposal by Gur Alroey and translated by the care of the team of the future migration museum in Antwerp, RSL People on the Move.
61. Ezrah, *Verslag voor de periode 1.7.1920-31.12.1921*; Hatikwah, organe bimensuel de la Fédération des Sionistes de Belgique, XV, 1922, 5, 59.
62. For example, medical treatment for trachoma could take a considerable time, and it seems that the public authorities in Antwerp rather than the Jewish aid organization paid the expenses due to this treatment. Governor to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 31.5.1894. PAA, Scheepvaart, 60; City archive Antwerp, MA 27816 quoted in De Coster, *Eindverslag research in Provinciaal Archief*. Immediately after the war, 11 percent of the expenses of Jewish charity went to medical assistance, while in 1908 this was only 3 percent of the budget. Ezrah, *Verslag voor de periode 1.7.1920-31.12.1921*. Sholem Aleichem wrote a novel on the transit migrants in which he evoked the lot of the Jewish girl Goldele who had to stay in Antwerp due to trachoma while her family left for the U.S. She was not yet cured after a treatment of one year. Sholem Aleichem, *Adventures of Mottel, the Cantor's Son* (New York: Henry Schuman, 1953).
63. According to an American official, Marcus Braun, rumors had it that it would be easier for diseased passengers to get to the U.S. from London. Report of special immigrant inspector Marcus Braun in Report of the Commissioner General on immigration,

1903, 88, NAW, RINS, 52320/47. The trip over the Channel from Belgium was inexpensive: in the 1890s, a one-way trip cost 14,70 francs. AAD, individual files, 467.272.

64. Maritime commissioner to Minister of Justice, 22 December 1906, AAD, 265; Report of agents sent to Europe, 1907, NAW, RINS, 54411/01; Karin Hofmeester, *Jewish Workers and the Labour Movement: A Comparative Study of Amsterdam, London and Paris (1870-1914)* (Ashgate: Imprint, 2004), 156-174.
65. Annual report of head of emigration inspection for 1898, PAA, Scheepvaart, 98.
66. Note 12.1.1924. Antwerp city archive, Modern Archive, 27.816. Correspondence between Emigration Commissioner and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 7.1924. PAA, Landverhuizing-Emigratie, 66. On a sample of fifty Jewish transit migrants who were stranded in Belgium in the first half of the 1920s and most of whom were supported by Ezrah, Lars Vancompernolle found positive information that nearly half of them (22) finally arrived in the United States. Sometimes this took years to realize. On eighteen others, we have no conclusive data on their whereabouts, but as the alien police did not add any information on them, it is highly likely that they left Belgium but their destination is unknown. Eight of the fifty stayed in Belgium, seven of them due to mental illness. Lars Vancompernolle, *Oost-Europese Joden in België. Casestudies over Amerikareizigers in de Jaren 1920* (Gent: Universiteit Gent, unpublished Master's thesis), 100-154.
67. AAD, individual alien's file, 1.295.991. Author's translation.
68. James Hirschfield to Raedemaeckers, director of Geel, 11.12.1959. Patient file David Herschfeldt, mental institution Geel (documentation Dr. Carl Henrik Carlsson).
69. AAD, individual alien's file, 1.212.950; *Nieuwsblad van Geel*, 22 September 1995, 4; Interview Bernard Levatin (David's nephew) and other relatives by Carl Henrik Carlsson. Dr. Carl Henrik Carlsson (Göteburg) put his documentation generously at my disposal.
70. AAD, individual alien's file, 1.5222.408.
71. AAD, individual alien's file, A 126.787.
72. Of the 50 debarred transmigrants of the first half of the 1920s whose trajectory Lars van Compernolle analyzed, two moved on to France. Vancompernolle, *Oost-Europese Joden*, 100-154. Just before the First World War, the Belgian Jewish committee in Brussels insisted that destitute stranded migrants move to Paris, as assistance was more likely to be available for them, given that the Jewish community in the French capital was wealthier than in Brussels. Schreiber, *L'immigration juive en Belgique*, 180-181. In France by 1914, 44,000 East European Jews settled down, mostly after 1905. Nancy Green, "A Tale of Three Cities: Immigrant Jews in New York, London and Paris, 1870-1914," in *Patterns of Emigration, 1850-1914*, eds. Aubrey Newman and Stephen W. Massil, (London: Jewish Historical Society of England and the Institute of Jewish Studies, University College, 1996), 201-206.
73. Ronin, *Antwerpen en zijn 'Russen,'* 275-279.
74. These, at least, are the figures given by De Coster of the emigration service. Heertje, as quoted by Schreiber in *L'immigration juive en Belgique*, mentions 7,200 diamond workers in 1913. De Coster to the Governor, 31.5.1919; PAA, Landverhuizing-Emigratie, 102; Ronin, *Antwerpen en zijn 'Russen,'* 265-275 and 289-292.
75. The Austro-Hungarian emigrants who settled in Antwerp originated mostly from Krakow. In a sample of 150 Galician Jews settling in Antwerp prior to the First World War and who obtained a leave to remain after the First World War, the professional and geographic homogeneity is outspoken. Eighty of them were born in Krakow itself. Frank Caestecker and Antoon Vrints, Project Belgian Germans, unpublished paper "Galician Jews"; Sylvie Renneboog, "De Antwerpse diamantsector en 'de Groote Oorlog,'" *Bijdragen tot de Eigentijdse Herinnering* 9 (2010): 13-32. *Der yidisher emigrant*, 14.12.1912 (24) stressed that it was very difficult for a transit migrant without experience in this trade to settle in the diamond trade.