In the edited version, the “Polish cad” is, again, replaced by “a hooligan.”\textsuperscript{33} These are only two examples of several similar changes.\textsuperscript{34}

These seemingly small interventions altered the meaning of both the passages and of Opoczynski’s reportage in its entirety. They very clearly disguised the Polish nationality of perpetrators, putting the blame mainly on the Germans. Probably for the same reason, the most controversial reportage, \textit{Goyim in getto} (Goyim in the ghetto), focusing on the greediness of Poles who conducted illegal trade with Jews in the ghetto, was left out of the anthology. The editors explained that their decision not to publish this and some other pieces by Opoczynski was based on artistic merit, which was not fulfilled by works of a strictly journalistic character. Their explanations however are (probably on purpose) hardly convincing, as they admitted that as an exception, they also included those pieces of work, which fitted into the “non-artistic” category.\textsuperscript{35}

Editors were even prepared to safeguard the image of Poles by compromising Jewish victims. Such was a case in Zalmen Skalov’s novel \textit{Der haknkrayts} (discussed below), where a passage describing participation of Poles in ghetto disinfection actions was changed from: “Disinfectors (Polish) were stealing. Doctors (Polish) were stuffing their pockets with bribes”\textsuperscript{36} into: “Disinfectors (Polish and Jewish) were stealing. Doctors were stuffing their pockets with bribes.”\textsuperscript{37}

\textbf{Editorial Changes as Internal Censorship?}

Not all changes carried out in the aforementioned books can be defined as enforced by state censorship. The editors and publishers almost certainly made changes on their own personal initiative as well. Their aim was to portray the Holocaust in the way they saw fit, both for the sake of commemorating the victims as well as providing a sound structure for the rebuilding of Jewish life in Poland. This type of editorial changes dealt mainly with the conflicts within the Jewish community during the Holocaust.

\textsuperscript{33} Opotshinski, \textit{Reportazhn fun varshever geto}, 35.
\textsuperscript{34} Other examples are a “barber” replacing “a sheygets” and shkotsim, shiksas, and goyim replaced by “hooligans.” Opoczynski, \textit{Reportaże z warszawskiego getta}, 76, 80; Opotshinski, \textit{Reportazhn fun varshever geto}, 40, 44.
\textsuperscript{35} Mark, “Perets Opotshinski,” 7.
\textsuperscript{36} AZIH, ARG I 1233, 80.
\textsuperscript{37} Skalov, \textit{Der haknkrayts}, 124.
This was the case with the novel *Der haknkrayts* by Zalmen Skalov (real name Leyb Truskalovski, 1908–1942). The publication of Skalov’s novel was from the beginning problematic. In an article on literature in the ghettos published in *Biuletyn* two years before the novel came out, Ber Mark criticized it for having a “too harsh and unwarranted pathological-erotic element.” In his 1954 study *Di umgekumene shrayber fun di getos un lagern un zeyere verk* (The murdered writers from ghettos and camps and their work) Mark again rebuked Skalov’s work for “naturalistic imaginary with overblown eroticism.” What he found particularly appalling was that the book depicted a romantic relationship between an ethnic German from Poland (Volksdeutscher), Mazur, and a Jewish woman, Estusia Wolf. While Mark had no particular opinion on Mazur, he believed Estusia, a Jew (and thus someone who should hold higher moral ground for Mark) to be particularly repulsive: a capitalist, an enemy of the USSR, and a representative of the demoralized bourgeoisie. He wrote disdainfully: “Once difficult times arose, the degradation of the profiteer family intensified. Estusia is ready to give herself to the Polish lumpenbourgeois Mazur just to reach a business deal.”

It is not clear why Mark finally decided to publish *Der haknkrayts*. The book was significantly reduced, even by the standards of socialist censorship. The second part, where the cuts were particularly severe, was reduced from 13 to 10 chapters, with some passages ordered differently. In many passages that could not be fully excised, individual words and sentences were removed or altered. In the introduction to the novel, written by Mark himself, there is no mention of his past criticism of Skalov. Harsh criticism was replaced by unequivocal praise. As he put it: “Skalov’s works from the ghetto period are not only a strong indictment [against imperialism] but also a hymn to the moral strength of simple ghetto inhabitants, who showed stamina, true humanity, national solidarity, and internationalist feelings in the most tragic times of our history.”

Not all of the deletions of the novel reflected socialist censorship. For instance, also missing from Skalov’s work, undoubtedly removed under Mark’s initiative, were references to bourgeois Jewish collaborators, who state censors

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39 Ber Mark, *Di umgekumene shrayber fun di getos un lagern un zeyere verk* [The murdered writers from the ghettos and camps and their work] (Warsaw: Yidish Bukh, 1954), 79.
40 Mark, *Di umgekumene shrayber fun di getos un lagern un zeyere verk*, 80.
41 Mark, *Di umgekumene shrayber fun di getos un lagern un zeyere verk*, 80.
42 Skalov, *Der haknkrayts*, 8.
would probably have no problem mentioning. Thus, Jewish “collaboration” was also a postwar taboo topic, but less a communist than a Jewish one. This taboo included anything that would allege Jewish complicity in the Holocaust, such as the Jewish police and the Jewish Councils. In Skalov’s novel such references were simply removed, even if they appeared in a neutral context. The reader would not be aware that one of the protagonists, Nekhemia Fusnagel, had a fake work certificate from the Judenrat, while another, Moshe Davidovitz, worked in the Jewish Order Service (the Jewish Police). While it could be claimed that the editors cut out those passages to avoid having to interpret them in line with the strict Stalinist interpretation of class struggle in the ghetto, their self-censorship here was in line with the silence on these topics in works published by other Jewish publishing houses around the world.

The editors applied a similar level of censorship to the erotic details of Skalov’s novel, having carefully removed all of them from the 1954 edition. It is difficult to ascertain whether this was done to comply with the guidelines of socialist realism, or in order to preserve the virtue of the victims of the Holocaust. Safeguarding the victims’ dignity in the 1950’s included also removing mentions of sexual violence against Jewish women. Thus, readers of Skalov’s novel did not learn of the experiences of one of the novel’s protagonists, Eda Berman. Eda, together with other Jewish women, was caught by the Germans during the street round up in Litzmannstadt (the Nazi name of Łódź), then imprisoned and repeatedly raped. The novel provides a very graphic and shocking description of her ordeal, one unique for texts written during the Holocaust.

While Skalov writes that such events were common knowledge among Litzmannstadt inhabitants and happened repeatedly, they proved unpublishable for the postwar editors. Editorial changes in this book also led to omitting the topic of sexual violence against Polish women. This was the case for Wanda, a Polish housemaid in the novel, who out of good will and empathy towards persecuted Jews decides to stay in the ghetto with her Jewish employers. Skalov

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45 Skalov, Der haknkrayts, 47–48.
portrays Wanda, in addition to her positive characteristics, as sensual and sexually promiscuous, a common way of describing non-Jewish women in popular prewar sensationalist Jewish novels. While the censors cut out passages referring to her sensuality, they also decided to remove mentions of the sexual violence which she is subjected to. At one point in the novel Wanda is deported to a “great unknown city with cloisters and chimneys, with speeding trains and trams. . . . Somewhere there, to a small establishment located in a narrow lane came officers from torpedo boats and submarines, they gathered there during their leave to carry out orgies with young Poles, who have to give them their bodies on demand.”

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Attempting to cover up the truth about sending young Poles to German brothels in the Reich, the editors transformed a brothel in Hamburg into a German forced labor camp.

A significant part of editorial changes dealt with the rebuilding of Jewish life in Poland in the shape envisaged by the editors. This included the revival of Yiddish culture in the new political environment. Printing novels in their original Yiddish was part of this effort, as was removing information about the use of Polish in the ghetto, and the decline of Yiddish. Such changes seem to clearly be an internal initiative as there were no requirements regarding this topic from state censorship.

Interventions of this kind often took place in the works of Opoczynski as well, a keen observer of social changes taking place in the ghetto who discussed social inequality and progressing assimilation in his essays. All longer passages discussing the marginalization of Yiddish in the ghetto were cut out in their entirety by the editors, irrespective of the message they carried. Such was the case with a longer passage in which Opoczynski blames the prevalence of Polish-speakers among caretakers for children in the ghetto for the failures in caring for impoverished children, who should have been spoken to in Yiddish, the language they identified with.

In a similar vein, the editors dealt with issues relating to conflicts within the ghetto, which ran contrary to the preferred vision of Jewish unity in the face of destruction. Opoczynski’s opinions, in particular when they referred to the

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46 AZIH, ARG I 1233, 83.
47 Skalov, Der haknkrayts, 128; see Ghetto: Berichte, 114.
48 As Joanna Nalewajko-Kulikov notes, the Yidish Bukh milieu maneuvered between internationalism and a genuine attachment to the Yiddish language and culture. Nalewajko-Kulikov, Czy socrealizm miał odmianę żydowską?, 174.
poorest members of the ghetto, to the so-called “Jewish masses,” proved to be unacceptable. Editors resolved this by changing internal conflicts in the ghetto into de facto class conflicts. Such changes can be seen in the short story entitled “Der yidisher brivtreger” (the Jewish postman) in which Opoczynski describes his daily interactions with ghetto inhabitants. In part of the story, which discusses how the ghetto’s medical doctors dislike Yiddish, those who stood against it were changed from the original “working intelligentsia” to “bourgeois intelligentsia” and their attitude towards Yiddish from “almost hateful” to “truly hateful”. Hence the sentence “Working intelligentsia, in particular medical doctors, treated the mailmen almost hatefully,”\(^{50}\) was changed to “Bourgeois intelligentsia, in particular doctors, treated the mailman truly hatefully.”\(^{51}\)

Such editorial changes altered other novels as well. In Skalov’s novel, for example, when the national identification of Poles could not be removed, the editor changed their class affiliations. Describing one of the summer resorts popular among inhabitants of Warsaw, Skalov wrote:

Original version:
Here the air is “judenrein,” and the guesthouses and villas are inhabited only by decent Christians who came here for the summer.\(^{52}\)

Edited version:
Here the air is “judenrein,” and the guesthouses and villas are inhabited only by Christian magnates.\(^{53}\)

Editorial adaptations in postwar Polish editions of documents from the Ringelblum Archive had implications extending beyond the country’s small surviving Jewish community. While the most notorious case is undoubtedly that of the ghetto notebook of Emanuel Ringelblum, with the vast majority of existing translations based on the heavily censored Polish edition in Yiddish, the editions discussed above were also translated into other languages. These translations show very clearly that the editorial changes in the Polish edition were not as extreme as elsewhere in the Bloc.

\(^{50}\) Opoczynski, Reportaże z warszawskiego getta, 166.
\(^{51}\) Opotshinski, Reportazhn fun varshever geto, 78.
\(^{52}\) Skalov, Der haknkrayts, 4.
\(^{53}\) Skalov, Der haknkrayts, 11.
An East German translation of the literary works from the Underground Archive was published in 1966 under the title: *Ghetto: Berichte aus dem Warschauer Ghetto 1939–1945*. The German edition was based on documents which appeared in the 1954 publication, yet the word “re-written” rather than “translated” seems to be more appropriate in this case. Many passages were transformed drastically. In most cases, ideological footnotes added by editors to the Yiddish versions printed in Poland were incorporated into the text of the document itself. Such was the case with Skalov’s novel. In 1954 Ber Mark annotated one passage of the novel, in which the author describes escapes to the east from Warsaw, with the footnote: “The Soviet Union was the only country which opened its borders to suffering Jews, who were escaping the fascist hell.” The German version not only kept the “censored” passages, it also integrated the footnotes into the text, so that the reader could not clearly separate original passages from the editors’ comments and annotations.

Censorship of documents from the Ringelblum Archive continued through the socialist period, appearing even in editions published by such esteemed scholars of the Warsaw Ghetto as Ruta Sakowska. The changes were most commonly explained by a lack of document legibility, but in one case, a famous essay on the deportation from the Warsaw Ghetto in the summer of 1942 entitled *Ostatnim etapem przesiedlenia jest śmierć* (The last stage of the resettlement is death), ascribed to writer Gustawa Jarecka, Sakowska omitted a passage of the document relating to the crimes committed by the Jewish police. She wrote openly in a footnote: “31 words of the document have been omitted due to their offensive character towards the whole of the ghetto community.” In another document published in *Biuletyn*, where Sakowska censored fragments of a newspaper published by children from one of the ghetto’s orphanages, she declared that “the boys’ judgement and assessment regarding particular people as well as...

55 Skalov, *Der haknkrayts*, 47.
58 Sakowska, *Dwa etapy*, 273. This information was provided by Dr. Eleonora Bergman.
'Centos’ [The National Society for the Care of Orphans] ... were not always just.” In other documents controversial passages were cut out from the text without any indication. As late as 1988, historian Artur Eisenbach described direct pressure from state censorship to alter part of Emanuel Ringelblum’s *Polish-Jewish Relations* (written after Ringelblum’s escape from the ghetto). He was allowed to publish it only after long and humiliating (in his own words) conversations in the Central Bureau of KPPiW and removal of over a dozen pages from the introduction and one footnote. Eisenbach considered this to be a price worth paying to ensure publication of Ringelblum’s essay.

**Conclusion**

Current research regarding the mechanisms of censorship shows that the burden of responsibility for carrying out socialist censorship guidelines was placed mainly on publishing houses. It was employees (here, editors of sources) who were expected to carry out self-censorship according to the ideological expectations of the time. In exchange for that they received certain (limited) freedoms. The Jewish Historical Institute was no exception. As Stephan Stach writes, it was probably only thanks to Ber Marks’ ideological involvement that the Jewish Historical Institute survived the attack on independent Jewish communal life that took place under Stalinism.

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60 This happened for example to the following passage from Leyb Goldin’s *Chronicle of One Night*: “A burly prostitute hands out sweets to her girlfriends. The light brings out their ghostly, calcified faces, skin and bones painted with lipstick, dark contour of their eyebrows.” AŽIH, ARG I 1219, 7. Compare with Lejb Goldin, “Kronika jednej doby” [Chronicle of one day], in *Dwa etapy*, 84–96.


62 See Nalewajko-Kulikov, “The Last Yiddish Books Printed in Poland.”

63 This is discussed in Zbigniew Romek, “Wstęp” [Introduction], in *Cenzura a nauka historyczna w Polsce 1944–1970*, 10. Zbigniew Romek argues against the long standing perception of state censorship having a dominating role in controlling publications.

64 Stach, “Walka klas w getcie?,” 276. Mark’s attitude can be witnessed in his 1954 letter to the Press Department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Describing documents that he had sent to former inhabitants of Hrubieszov in Israel, Mark wrote: “We found only a limited number of such materials relating to the time of the occupation. But since the majority of this material has a more or less anti-Polish attitude, we found only two documents which we could with full responsibility send to the above-mentioned association. These are two descriptions of martyrlogy of the Jewish population of Hrubieszov located in the Ringel-