

# The Politics of Precariousness - Josel of Rosheim and Jewish Intercession in the Holy Roman Empire in the 16th century

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This contribution argues that Josel of Rosheim (1478-1554), the most prominent Jewish intercessor in the history of the Holy Roman Empire, considered intercession as a necessary instrument of his political involvement which he applied with routine and success, though that he also was conscious of its limitations. The intention to substantially improve the legal status of the Jews of the Empire becomes apparent in 1530, in the context of a renewal of imperial privileges and, more importantly, in the context of the Imperial Diet of that year. Josel of Rosheim was prominently involved in drafting a reform proposal concerning the status of the Jews in the Empire, the *Artikel und Ordnung*, directed at the Imperial Diet. This discussion also reviews Josel's own terminology pertaining to intercession.

Keywords: Early modern history; Holy Roman Empire; Jewish political culture; Josel of Rosheim; intercession (Hebr. shtadlanut)

## Introduction

This chapter proposes to revisit some aspects of the well-known political trajectory of Josel of Rosheim (1478–1554).<sup>1</sup> It will argue that the growing experience of interceding with ever higher echelons of the imperial administration and with the Emperor Charles V himself inspired Josel, the well known 'governor' or *regierer*<sup>2</sup> of the Jewish community in the Holy Roman

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<sup>2</sup> The designation as *regierer* in 1535 led to the accusation of usurpation of powers. Rosheim defended himself by emphasising that this term merely corresponded to a translation of his communal role of *parnas* and *manhig*; see Selma Stern, *Josel von Rosheim. Befehlshaber der Judenschaft im Heiligen Römischen Reich Deutscher Nation* (Stuttgart 1959 [English: *Josel of Rosheim, Commander of Jewry in the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation*, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1969]): 115, also Ludwig Feilchenfeld, *Rabbi Josel von Rosheim. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland im Reformationszeitalter* (Straßburg: Heitz 1898): 12-16, and most recently J. Friedrich Battenberg, "Josel von Rosheim,

Empire of the 16th century to propose a substantial overhaul of the legal status of Jews in the Holy Roman Empire. As is reflected with great clarity in Josel's recollections of his political involvement, the objective was to overcome the precariousness of Jewish life in the Empire, a precariousness which Josel had experienced himself, and which had marked the existence of his community and his family. It will be argued that his own perceived successes as an intercessor encouraged Josel to pursue the objective to achieve a more sustainable legal and political status for the Jews in the Holy Roman Empire by integrating the Jews further into the Empire's administrative and judicial fabric. Josel's ultimate failure to achieve this goal mirrors the political realities in the Holy Roman Empire of the period. The main objective of this chapter, which is based on well-known and published historical records – most importantly, the chronicle Josel of Rosheim drafted towards the end of his life – is to emphasise the reservations of one of the best known Jewish intercessors of the early modern period expressed in his own writings about this political instrument, despite the routine and the success with which he applied it. This contribution however does not aspire to offer yet another review of all instances of intercession in which Josel of Rosheim was involved.<sup>3</sup>

What is intercession, and how do we identify the characteristics of Jewish intercession in the context of the long history of the Jewish diaspora in

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Befehlshaber der deutschen Judenheit, und die kaiserliche Gerichtsbarkeit," in Jost Hausmann, Thomas Krause (eds.), *'Zur Erhaltung guter Ordnung'. Beiträge zur Geschichte von Recht und Justiz. Festschrift für Wolfgang Sellert zum 65. Geburtstag* (Köln u.a.: Böhlau Verlag, 2000): 183-224.

<sup>3</sup> The more recent scholarship on Rosheim was inaugurated by the magisterial study by Stern, *Josel von Rosheim*, (see above, fn. 2) with a comprehensive review of earlier research. The writings of Josel have been edited with exemplary care by Chava Fraenkel-Goldschmidt: *Sefer ha-mikneh*, ed. Chava Fraenkel-Goldschmidt (Jerusalem: Mekize Nirdanim, 1970) and *Ktavim historiim*, ed. eadem (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1996), the latter published in translation as *The Historical Writings of Joseph of Rosheim. Leader of Jewry in Early Modern Germany*, ed. eadem, transl. Naomi Schendowich, ed. and afterword of the English edition Adam Shear (Boston, Mass./Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2006), cited henceforth as *Historical Writings*. Like all scholarship on Josel of Rosheim, also this article is indebted to the life-long research conducted by Fraenkel-Goldschmidt leading to these critical editions. See also Gabriele Jancke: *Autobiographie als soziale Praxis: Beziehungskonzepte in Selbstzeugnissen des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts im deutschsprachigen Raum* (Köln, Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2002).

Europe?<sup>4</sup> At the most basic, descriptive level, an intercession was the act to address a concern or a request on behalf of an individual or a group of people to a person, a political agency or an institution in full or partial control of the individual or the group on behalf of which this request was formulated. An intercession could be submitted in writing or in person, and it could be formulated on behalf of somebody else, through an intermediary, as the result of being requested – and sometimes paid – to act as an intercessor. The full range of personal, economic, and political relations between the interceding individual or group on the one side, and the person (or institution) to whom the request was submitted defined the channels of communication and the efficiency of the intervention. Such an understanding of intercession excludes petitions of individuals on their own behalf, however the fate of an individual – for example to save a defendant in a ritual murder accusation – could well be at the heart of an intercessory effort. Intercessions could be undertaken in reaction to an emergency situation – *Organizing rescue* was the title of a volume focusing on this type of political intervention published in 1992<sup>5</sup> – but intercessions could also, as the trajectory of Josel of Rosheim demonstrates, have a pro-active, regulatory character. In the context of the European diasporic trajectory of the Jews, intercession was thus as multiform and elastic as the relations between the contexts and relationships governing the

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<sup>4</sup> While references to intercession abound in historical research, no comprehensive and systematic attempt to assess the historical permutations of this political instrument has been undertaken. The following reflections are part of an ongoing project to analyse the transformation of intercession from the early modern period to the 19th century, see François Guesnet, "Politik der Vormoderne. Shtadlanut am Vorabend der polnischen Teilungen," in *Simon-Dubnow-Institute Yearbook*, 1 (2002): 235–255; idem, "Textures of Intercession: Rescue Efforts for the Jews of Prague, 1744/48," in: *Simon-Dubnow-Institute Yearbook*, 4 (2005): 355–375; idem, "Die Politik der Fürsprache. Vormoderne jüdische Interessenvertretung," in *Synchrone Welten. Zeitenräume jüdischer Geschichte*, ed. Dan Diner (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005): 67–92; idem, "Moses Mendelssohns Tätigkeit als Fürsprecher im Kontext jüdischer politischer Kultur der frühen Neuzeit," in *Moses Mendelssohn, die Aufklärung und die Anfänge des deutsch-jüdischen Bürgertums*, ed. Julius H. Schoeps et al. (Hamburg: Philo & Philo Fine Arts, 2006): 115–137 and most recently idem, "Negotiating Under Duress: The Expulsion of Salzburg Protestants (1732) and the Jews of Prague (1744)," in *Negotiating Religion. Cross-disciplinary perspectives*, ed. idem, Cécile Laborde, Lois Lee (Abingdon/New York: Routledge 2017): 47–62.

<sup>5</sup> *Organizing Rescue. National Jewish Solidarity in the Modern Period*, ed. Selwyn Ilan Troen and Benjamin Pinkus (London: Frank Cass, 1992).

cohabitation of non-Jews and Jews, a group excluded from sovereign power, but not from accessing princes, church leaders and monarchs, with whom they would often have well established relations.<sup>6</sup> These relations were defined by legal agreements, economic cooperation, and patronage.<sup>7</sup> The clear asymmetry in status between the representative of a diasporic community and their addressees, i.e. sovereigns or representatives of sovereign power, necessarily impacted on the communication between the two sides.<sup>8</sup> Also, the complexity of Jewish-non-Jewish relations and of how political power was exercised on the various levels of a commonwealth would have a significant impact on the outcome of any intercessory effort, as would an expert understanding of law, protocol, and the potential impact of the performative dimension of a personal intervention. A thorough understanding of practices of governance and the ability to convey such expertise constituted a major asset in intercessory endeavours.<sup>9</sup> This happened mostly by following instances of best practice in the context of a given community, but also by reflecting on the most iconic biblical text concerning intercession, namely the Book of Esther. As Dov Barry Walfish has shown, this biblical legend guided

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<sup>6</sup> Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi: *'Diener von Königen und nicht Diener von Dienern.'* *Einige Aspekte der politischen Geschichte der Juden* (München: Siemens-Stiftung 1995); in English published as idem, "Servants of Kings and not Servants of Servants: Some Aspects of the Political History of the Jews (2005)," in *The Faith of Fallen Jews. Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi and the Writing of Jewish history*, ed. David N. Myers and Alexander Kaye (Lebanon, NH: Brandeis University Press, 2014): 245–276.

<sup>7</sup> For a discussion of patronage and the traditional or modern character of interpersonal relationships of reciprocity in the late medieval and early modern society see Gabriele Jancke, "Autobiographical Texts: Acting within a Network. Observations on Genre and Power Relations in the German-Speaking Regions from 1400-1620," in *Mapping the "I". Research on Self-Narratives in Germany and Switzerland*, ed. Claudia Ulbrich, Kaspar von Greyerz, Lorenz Heiligensetzer (Leiden/Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2015): 118–166 and Marina Rustow, "Patronage in the Context of Solidarity and Reciprocity: Two Paradigms of Social Cohesion in the Premodern Mediterranean," in *Patronage, Production, and Transmission of Texts in Medieval and Early Modern Jewish Cultures*, ed. Esperanza Alfonso and Jonathan Decker in *Medieval Church Studies* 34 (2014): 13–44.

<sup>8</sup> See the helpful observations of Rotraud Ries: "Politische Kommunikation und Schtadlanut der frühneuzeitlichen Judenschaft," in *Räume und Wege: jüdische Geschichte im alten Reich, 1300-1800*, ed. Rolf Kießling et al. (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2007): 169–189.

<sup>9</sup> Ismar Schorsch, "On the History of the political judgment of the Jew," in idem: *From Text to Context: The Turn to History in Modern Judaism* (Hanover, NH: Published for Brandeis University Press by University Press of New England, 1994), 118–132, here: 122.

medieval Jewish commentators in their reflections on political practice, and intercessors in their endeavours.<sup>10</sup>

Personal interventions of spokespeople were rarely describe in any detail in historical records, and even less so the content of possible negotiations. The Hebrew term for this type of negotiating – *lehishtadel*, from the root *shidel* (to persuade, to pressure, to seduce), from which the Hebrew term for intercessor *shtadlan* is derived – was not highly thought of in the period under consideration here. Both the circumspect and discreet nature of negotiations between the representative of a religious minority and a ruler, and the fact that these interactions reflected the subaltern status of this minority, undoubtedly have contributed to their feeble reflection in historical records. For this very reason, it is rarely possible to clearly assess the impact of a personal intervention of a *shtadlan* on the decision-making process of a ruler, leading to a specific administrative measure or political decision.

### ***Josel of Rosheim's chronicle: A narrative of success***

Josel became an intercessor and one of the leaders of the Jews of the Holy Roman Empire by default, with his range of intervention increasing over the long years of his communal involvement. Born in 1478, he became a communal elder (Hebr. *parnas*) in the Alsatian town of Oberehnheim (today Obernai) in 1509/10. The extreme precariousness of Jewish life in the Holy Roman Empire left deep marks in his family's and his community's history, with close members of the family falling victim to ritual murder accusations in 1470 and his parents expelled from their hometown in 1475. During a punitive military campaign by Emperor Maximilian against the Duke of Heidelberg, Josel lost most of his possession in a random attack, and only two years later, the Jews of Oberehnheim were attacked and robbed by a mob of neighbours and marauding soldiers. In the year of Josel becoming the elder of his community, the Jews of Brandenburg fell victim to a gruesome judicial murder, with around forty members of this community burnt at the stakes in

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<sup>10</sup> Dov Barry Walfish, *Esther in Medieval Garb. Jewish Interpretations of the Book of Esther in the Middle Ages* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993).

consequence of a ritual murder accusation. That same year, the false accusations by a Jewish convert, Johannes Pfefferkorn (1469–1521), put the very existence of the Ashkenasic Jewish community at risk, and the worst was avoided through a major effort of the Jews of Frankfurt am Main. Only four years later, Josel had to battle false accusations against himself and several other Jews from his community.<sup>11</sup>

These encounters of persecution, violence and precariousness, of judicial arbitrariness, false accusations and constant threats form the backdrop of Josel's own account of his achievements and his career as an intercessor and politician, preserved as an untitled manuscript and defined by its editor, Chava Fraenkel-Goldschmidt, as a chronicle.<sup>12</sup> As a personal and comprehensive reflection of a Jewish community leader reviewing decades of his own political involvement, it qualifies as single most important ego-document on Jewish intercession in the early modern period. Josel wrote this very condensed description of his political career at an advanced age and with the obvious intention to inform posterity of his endeavours, and by integrating the history of his failures and successes in a broader framework. Implicitly, and quite modestly, he also conveyed his pride over his achievements. Josel explained his decision to write down this trajectory by the unexpected confrontation with past persecutions which his own community and family suffered during one of his later missions: In 1543/44, Josel and several other intercessors were in Würzburg in order to save a group of Jews under arrest, accused of ritual murder and subjected to torture. Through their own entreaties, by initiating written enquiries from the imperial court about the cases, by paying the legal fees and probably bribing local officials, the intercessors obtained the release of the defendants.<sup>13</sup> While in Würzburg, a

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<sup>11</sup> Historical Writings: 311-12, and Chava Fraenkel-Goldschmidt's comments, 81-90.

<sup>12</sup> The untitled manuscript of the chronicle was first published by Isadore Kracauer in 1888. The authenticity of the handwritten manuscript, preserved today in the Bodleian Library at Oxford (MS Opp. 715), was established on the basis of numerous surviving autographs of Josel of Rosheim, see *Historical Writings*: 39–40.

<sup>13</sup> The following references to Rosheim's chronicle are to the English edition, unless matters of terminology require references to the earlier Hebrew edition (cited as *Ktavim historiim*); *Historical Writings*: 256–63, 334–35. Stefan Litt, *Juden in Thüringen in der Frühen Neuzeit (1520-1650)* (Köln, Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2003):

priest offers him to purchase a Hebrew book, which, it turns out, contains notes about the persecutions which occurred in Alsatia a few years before Josel himself was born – a stark reminder indeed about the context of his own intercessory endeavours.

While Chava Fraenkel-Goldschmidt is undoubtedly right when she states that the chronicle was “not designed [by the author] to laud a particular individual or place, and is devoid of any trace of boastfulness or self-advertisement,”<sup>14</sup> the overall desire to describe a success story appears to be contained in its very structure. Compellingly describing his own family's and community's cruel fate at the onset of the narrative, Josel describes a steady increase in political reach and success. It sets out with a description of passive victimhood, recounts episodes of growing political impact and repeated encounters with the imperial elite and the Emperor Charles V. himself. It offers reflections about Josel's attempts to redefine the legal and political status of the Jews. For the deliberations during the Imperial Diet in 1530, he formulated a comprehensive review of existing rules and practices between Jews and Christians in a document entitled “Articles and Regulations” (Germ. *Artikel und Ordnung*), which foresaw reduced interest rates for Jewish moneylenders and abstaining from costly litigation in imperial courts in exchange for an improved legal status, as will be discussed later.<sup>15</sup> He fought a battle on two fronts, negotiating with the Christian elites as well as the Jewish leadership in the Empire.<sup>16</sup> In his chronicle, Josel implied to have negotiated a new imperial charter signed by Charles V. in 1544 addressing most legal, political and

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137-38, proposes a direct connection between this blood libel case and a new imperial privilege issued in 1544, explicitly protecting the Jews from ritual murder accusations, and equally going back to an intercession of Josel of Rosheim.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 53. See also the assessment of Gabriele Jancke that Josel's memoir had an overall thrust of reminding the reader of the moral duty to defend “the physical existence, the livelihoods and religious identity of the Empire's Jewish community ... despite his overall pessimistic judgment,” see Jancke, *Autobiographie*: 42–43.

<sup>15</sup> *Historical Writings*: 179–83.

<sup>16</sup> Fraenkel-Goldschmidt observes that Josel “understood that in order to earn their living the Jews had to make concessions, even when these ran counter to the promises accorded them in their charters. However, he had great difficulty in convincing his brethren to surrender some of their privileges. In effect, R. Joseph had to do battle on two fronts – with the gentile authorities and with his own coreligionists,” see *Historical Writings*: 26.

economic grievances of the Jews in the Holy Roman Empire in return for substantial funds through which the Jewish communities in the Holy Roman Empire contributed to the war effort against France.<sup>17</sup> Also, Josel records the attempt to establish an institutionalised representation of the Empire's Jews through a recognized *Gemeine Judenschaft* after the ritual murder accusation in Würzburg of 1543/44 mentioned above.<sup>18</sup>

Josel's eagerness to move beyond merely reacting to discrimination and persecutions is also visible in his involvement in reforming the by-laws of the Jewish community in Prague in 1533/34. In a challenge to the oligarchic regime of the Horowitz family, members of this leading community had invited Josel to propose a new by-laws (Hebr. *takanot*). Josel proudly reports that he “prepared and enacted 23 excellent and estimable regulations, and upwards of 400 adult and responsible men were pleased to come and sign on the document.”<sup>19</sup> This involvement in an intra-communal dispute led to charges against Josel, most likely initiated by the communal elite which was bound to lose in influence, and resulted in his temporary imprisonment – a strong indicator that this initiative was highly political in nature, and not an intercession in the narrow meaning of the term.<sup>20</sup>

The concluding episode of the chronicle is perhaps the strongest reflection of Josel's ambition to be remembered by posterity as a political deal-maker,

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 335–36. See Stern, *Josel von Rosheim*: 189–206, and Barbara Staudinger, “Die niederösterreichische ‘Landjudenschaft’. Innerjüdische Organisationsformen im regionalen Vergleich,” in *Räume und Wege. Jüdische Geschichte im Alten Reich, 1300-1800*, ed. Rolf Kießling et al. (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2007): 145–167, for the limited degree of supra-regional organisation of the Jews in the Holy Roman Empire.

<sup>18</sup> *Historical Writings*: 337.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.: 326–27. See a similar assessment in Jancke, “*Autobiographical Texts: Acting within a Network*,” 133.

<sup>20</sup> *Historical Writings*: 225–30. The considerable impact of Josel of Rosheim's intervention can be inferred from the fact that his opponents, the Horowitz family in Prague, acquired items belonging to Solomon Molkho (c. 1500-1532), a follower of the messianic pretender David Reubeni (c. 1490-1540) who were both much opposed by Josel when they appeared at the Imperial Diet of 1530. The Horowitz honored Molkho, later burned at the stakes by the Roman inquisition, by keeping and honoring his relics in their synagogue, the Pinkas Synagogue, see Rachel L. Greenblatt: *To Tell Their Children. Jewish Communal Memory in Early Modern Prague* (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 2014): 21-22.



rather than a mere rescuer, despite the fact that it indeed recounts the saving of the Jewish community in Frankfurt am Main during the Schmalkaldic Wars (1546–47). The Frankfurt Jews had asked Josel to negotiate in their name and in person with the commander von Büren, commander of the imperial troops about to conquer the city. In return for an agreed ransom payment and the opening of the gates, the troops took Frankfurt without looting or vandalising the town. What is more, the imperial soldiers sold the bounty of earlier conquests (Feuchtwangen and Darmstadt) to the Jews of Frankfurt, who, according to Josel, were able to sell them for a profit. As the concluding episode of the chronicle, this account conveys an almost redemptive meaning of successful political involvement: Due to Josel's acumen, the Jews of Frankfurt, captives of a political confrontation between the Empire and the insurgent Protestant imperial cities, were spared the violence and plundering which often would follow the taking of a city after a siege. What is more, they even benefited from the situation.<sup>21</sup> In contrast to intervening in an unfolding emergency, Josel's skills as intercessor – and a considerable gift – allowed him to prevent a misfortune from taking place.<sup>22</sup> The deliberate choice of this episode in conclusion of his chronicle suggest that it contained a crucial element in his understanding of political involvement: to move from repairing damage to preventing it from happening. The following reflections should offer further support for this assumption.

### ***Shaping Jewish intercession***

Josel became leader of his community, Oberehnheim, in 1509/10. The first entries in the chronicle describe expulsions, ritual murder accusations and violent attacks against the Jews in Alsatia, and thus convey an image of overall precariousness of Jewish life at the onset of his own, Josel's, career. It is in his modest role as leader of a local community that he is sent to the

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<sup>21</sup> Fraenkel-Goldschmidt's assessment in *Historical Writings*: 299, that Josel's intervention prevented von Büren's troops to ransack the non-Jewish residents of Frankfurt seems not corroborated by the chronicle's wording, which speaks of the "peace in the Jewish street and city" (Hebr. *v'haya shalom b'rehov u-be'ir l'yehudim*), *Ktavim historiim*: 310.

<sup>22</sup> *Ktavim Historiim*: 310, and *Historical writings*: 339 for the episode itself.

imperial court in 1514/15 to submit a complaint against a coordinated attempt of a bishop, the landlord in Andlau, and the town magistrate to expel the Jewish community of Oberehnheim. Two features distinguish Josel's political approach: his persistence – “I had to travel to the court three times on horseback” – and his resolve to answer an attack from Christian competitors, the clergy, or the nobility, with a sustained legal counter-attack which will become his most efficient political instrument in the years to come. In this case, he successfully requested the summoning of the bishop, the landlord, and representatives of the city council to the Aulic Chamber.<sup>23</sup> Shying away from the costly procedure with an uncertain outcome, the bishop and the landlord preferred to settle with the Jewish community, leaving the city council without the necessary support to carry out its plans.

Equally important was the support from powerful allies: When the Jewish community of Dangolsheim near Oberehnheim is threatened with expulsion a few years later (1518/19), Josel recruited the support of the Bishop of Strasburg and of the *Unterlandvogt*, an imperial district official, to assert the privileges of the Jewish community. Both the *Unterlandvogt* and Josel traveled to Dangolsheim in person. In the chronicle, Josel recalls that he warned the people of Dangolsheim of the consequences of an illegal expulsion, and indeed the villagers “repent from their evil intentions and deeds.”<sup>24</sup> Josel concludes this episode mentioning a punitive expedition conducted against the small town by the *Unterlandvogt* – a measure he defines as “vengeance” (Hebr. *nekama*). The emphasis of Josel's description is on the close cooperation with the Emperor's representative in Alsatia, and their joint successful effort to impose the rule of law through direct and personal intervention. The episode instructs the reader that Jews can actually take revenge if they choose to insist on the full implementation of the privileges guaranteed in charters. His own successful intervention is contrasted with the different outcome of a similar threat to the – much more important – Jewish community in Regensburg, expelled in the same period. This expulsion occurred only a few months after the death of emperor

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<sup>23</sup> *Historical Writings*: 313.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*: 315, and *Ktavim historiim*: 288.

Maximilian I. who had until then shielded the community from relentless attacks by the magistrate.<sup>25</sup> By contrasting his success with the failure of the Regensburg Jews to prevent their expulsion, Josel emphasised the superiority of his own political strategy.

The overall trajectory of the narrative of Josel's chronicle from passive suffering to the establishment of modes of cooperation with the authorities to proactive political strategies becomes more visible in an episode about the first encounter between himself, another intercessor, and Charles V., inaugurated as emperor in 1519, as well as the upper echelons of the imperial administration. The outcome of these negotiations were new imperial charters for the entire Jewish community in the Holy Roman Empire, and thus a significant achievement.<sup>26</sup> This success stands in contrast to the difficulties Josel encounters to push back the attempts of the magistrate in Oberehnheim to expel the Jews, and he emphasises the great effort necessary to avoid the worst: "By dint of supreme efforts we succeeded time after time, with great difficulty, in obtaining yet another postponement [of the planned expulsion]."<sup>27</sup> The following episode juxtaposes political progress on the imperial level and difficulties on the local level in a very similar way, however with a clear indication that things improved: At a meeting preceding the Imperial Diet of 1521/22, where new taxes for the Jews of Ashkenas are to be negotiated, representatives from Jewish communities coordinate their positions. On top of this, Josel successfully prompts the imperial administration to nominate a

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<sup>25</sup> For a discussion of the Regensburg expulsion see Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia, "The Usurious Jew: Economic Structure and Religious Representations in an Anti-Semitic Discourse," in *In and Out of the Ghetto. Jewish-Gentile relations in late medieval and early modern Germany*, ed. idem and Hartmut Lehmann (Washington, D.C.: Cambridge University Press, 1995): 161–176, here 162–165, and Elisheva Carlebach, "Between History and Myth: the Regensburg Expulsion in Josel of Rosheim's *Sefer Ha-Miknah*," in *Jewish History and Jewish Memory. Essays in Honor of Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi*, ed. Elisheva Carlebach et al. (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1998): 40–53. A number of documents recently discovered in the regional Tyrolian archive shed new light on the cooperation between Josel and the non-Jewish authorities, most likely the imperial chancellery, through the execution of copies, see Veronika Nickel: "(Wieder-)entdeckte Urkunden aus dem Landesarchiv Tirol in Innsbruck," in *Archiv für Diplomatik* 61,1 (2015): 279–289, here: 284. I'm grateful to Björn Siegel for drawing my attention to this article.

<sup>26</sup> *Historical Writings*: 127, 315.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 315.

moderator for the negotiations between the Jewish community and the magistrate of Oberehnheim, leading to an agreement – which Josel calls a ‘covenant’ (Hebr. *brit*)<sup>28</sup> – between both sides, securing the future of this community. According to Josel, the summons to an imperial court “filled them [the magistrate of Oberehnheim] with dread,” and motivated them to conclude this agreement, thus echoing his earlier success when pursuing litigation in imperial courts.<sup>29</sup>

The religious and political upheaval in the wake of the Protestant Reformation further added to the precariousness in the existence of Jewish communities in the Holy Roman Empire. Josel's attempt to prevent the military confrontations during the Peasants' War from degenerating further into anti-Jewish violence demonstrates his remarkable courage and determination. Thus, in 1525 he travels to the abbey of Altdorf in Alsatia to meet the leaders of insurgent Protestants and exhorts them not to attack the Jews in their confrontation with Catholic imperial forces.<sup>30</sup> In his own description, he does so without any support or protection. In Altdorf, Josel spoke “to their hearts with the book,” i.e. the Bible, rather than arguing on the basis of legal titles.<sup>31</sup> He persuaded them not only to issue an order to spare the Jews, but also successfully requests written letters of safe-conduct for traveling Jews. While acknowledging in the chronicle that in consequence of his exhortations, the Protestants did not attack the Jews, Josel describes the subsequent massacre of the insurgent peasants as a just and appropriate consequence of their “evil devices.”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> In German texts, Josel would use the term ‘ey’ or ‘ee,’ equally designating marriage, agreement, and covenant; see for example his *Trostschrift*, in *Ktavim historiim*: 343, ‘bey unser alten Ee’ (i.e. covenant with God), and *ibid.*: 349, ‘die alte Ey’.

<sup>29</sup> *Historical Writings*: 316.

<sup>30</sup> For a thorough discussion of this episode, see Debra Kaplan, “Entangled Negotiations: Josel of Rosheim and the Peasants' Rebellion of 1525,” in *AJS Review* 40,1 (April 2016): 125–143, proposing a close coordination between Josel and the magistrate of Strasbourg of the negotiations with the insurgent peasants.

<sup>31</sup> This episode contains several references to the Book of Esther, including Esther 9:25 (‘speaking with the book’) and the annihilation of the Jews' enemies ‘in other territories’ (Esther 9:12).

<sup>32</sup> *Historical Writings*: 317, with ‘evil devices’ being another reference to Esther 9:25.

This intercession was prompted by an immediate threat of large scale violence against Jewish communities which prompted him to act without formal mandate – at least he does not mention one.<sup>33</sup> In contrast, he emphasises in the subsequent chapter that the Jewish communities of the whole province (Hebr. *medina*) instructed him in 1527/28 to intervene at the imperial court to fend off a concerted attempt to expel the Jews of Alsatia – a promotion of sorts, as he had hitherto acted exclusively on the basis of a mandate of the Oberehnheim community. The considerable funds at his disposal indicate that the Alsatian-Jewish communities had jointly agreed on this intercession. The increased urgency is reflected in Josel’s emphasis on his spiritual and physical involvement: Because of an ailment of his horse, he has to walk most of the way to the imperial court, a prolonged journey marked by “toil, prayer and supplication.”<sup>34</sup> His task is further complicated as the court relocates from Regensburg to Prague before he has seen the emperor, and he thus has to continue his journey to Prague, where he finally “came into the King’s chamber” and “with God’s help found favour in his eyes.”

In the following years, Josel would attend imperial diets almost on a yearly basis and negotiate a variety of Jewish issues with emperor Charles V. directly. His interventions would encompass an ever wider geographic space, and included matters of great urgency and significance for the well-being of Jewish communities in the entire Holy Roman Empire and beyond. Josel’s growing experience as an intercessor became visible in the year 1528/29, when news of the accusation of a large number of Jews in Pösing in Moravia (today Pezinok, in Slovakia) of ritual murder spread through the Empire, leading to repercussions against Jewish communities and prompting a meeting of Jewish delegates from several communities.<sup>35</sup> Josel, who was also present, was commissioned by these delegates to intervene on behalf of the defendants – the first intercession of Josel reaching beyond the borders of the Holy Roman Empire. Josel explained in the chronicle to have been prompted

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<sup>33</sup> About the relevance of the mandate see Stern, *Josel von Rosheim*: 73 f. and 203 f., as well as Fraenkel-Goldschmidt’s crucial comments in her introduction to *Historical Writings*: 92–96.

<sup>34</sup> *Historical Writings*: 318. Also for the following citation.

<sup>35</sup> Stern, *Josel von Rosheim*: 72–75.

by the “request of our rabbis and the urgencies of the hour” to mount a defense of the accused.

The meeting had been convened in Günzburg on the Danube river, as it was the location of the imperial chancellery, offering access to privileges, charters and papal bulls, and allowing to draft a letter to the King of Hungary, Ferdinand I.<sup>36</sup> Referring to earlier privileges and assurances from the emperors Frederick and Maximilian which he was able to consult at the location of the meeting, Josel forcefully argued against the local nobleman responsible for the persecution, accusing him of “depraved and tyrannical” actions, including torture of children and a pregnant woman.<sup>37</sup> Beyond the detailing of these crimes, the letter contains specific claims about legal and procedural aberrations in the case: the haste of the proceedings, the arrogation of adjudication belonging to the king, the theft of Jewish property and non-repayment of debts, the refusal of cross-examination of witnesses and of depositions under oath, and more. The letter was signed by the *gesandt des judisheit* (‘delegate of the Jews’), i.e. the title that Josel would indeed use consistently, though with signing by name.<sup>38</sup> This comprehensive and forceful argument was complemented by substantial gifts to the monarch and others, if we believe a Jewish chronicle from Prague. Written three generations later, it recalled the concerted effort to save the Jews of Pösing, and imparted that the Jewish intercessors “bribed the King and many officials with a large sum, several thousands.”<sup>39</sup>

The intervention for the Jews of Pösing reflects circumspect planning and considerable familiarity with the legal principles to be invoked. Meeting in Günzburg allowed the authors of the letter to Ferdinand I to include precise

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.: 320, and the comprehensive documentation by Fraenkel-Goldschmidt: 156–169.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.: 158. The letter is documented in *Monumenta Hungariae Judaica*, vol. I (1092–1539), ed. Armin Friss (Budapest: Wodianer, 1903): 413–16 (item 333).

<sup>38</sup> The author follows Fraenkel-Goldschmidt, *Historical Writings*: 156–66, in her assumption that Josel is the author of this letter, reflecting considerable routine and precision in the intercessory argument.

<sup>39</sup> *A Hebrew Chronicle from Prague, ca. 1615*, ed. Abraham David, translated by Leon J. Weinberger with Dena Ordan (Tuscaloosa, Ala., London: University of Alabama Press, 1993): 36.

references to earlier texts rejecting the ritual murder accusation. It backed up earlier interventions which had proven unsuccessful. A number of defendants had already been executed, but the intervention of the King – which Josel claims was triggered by his letter – led to the release of those still under arrest. While the resolve of Jewish leaders and the routine of Josel of Rosheim were at least partially successful, they did not, however, address the underlying problem, the hatred and distrust of the Jews. The developments in the immediate aftermath of this major incident indicate that Josel of Rosheim shifted his political focus towards measures to address these structural issues.

### ***The Artikel und Ordnung (1530): moving beyond intercession?***

In a first step, Josel's persuaded emperor Charles V. in 1530 to extend charters originally granted in 1433 to the Jews in imperial cities in Alsatia alone to the Jews resident in the entire Empire.<sup>40</sup> While the Emperor's main concern was to assert the principle of precedence in matters of ruling over the Empire's Jews, Josel sought to strengthen imperial protection for the Jews.<sup>41</sup> He emphasised that he acted “on behalf of the communities” when “amending and structuring” the memorandum (Hebr. *kuntres*), which emphasises his prominent role in drafting and refining the submission.<sup>42</sup> As Stern points out, this significant imperial legislation enacted in May 1530 was not based on an additional tax or encouraged by a Jewish ‘gift’, further indication for the convincing legal argument provided by Josel. It came at a moment of significant shift in the legal understanding of the status of the Jews in the Holy Roman Empire. A few years earlier, the leading legal scholar Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522) had proposed to reconsider and reject the medieval notion of Jews as *servi camerae* in favor of a principle of citizenship based on

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<sup>40</sup> *Historical Writings*: 174–76.

<sup>41</sup> Stern, *Josel von Rosheim*: 90–91.

<sup>42</sup> *Ktavim historiim*: 293 reads *‘t’kanti v’sedarti kuntres.*’ In *Historical Writings*: 321, the translators propose ‘prepared and put together,’ which seems less specific than the original.

Roman legal principles.<sup>43</sup> The privilege of May 1530 appears to be last instance of an imperial charter referring to the Jews as such.<sup>44</sup> The endeavour which Josel – undoubtedly in coordination with other representatives of Jewish communities in the Empire – pursued may well have been inspired by these shifts in current legal thinking, and aimed at a redefinition of the legal and economic framework governing Jewish/non-Jewish relations in the Holy Roman Empire. The result was a proposal of a new set of rules, the *Artikel und Ordnung*.<sup>45</sup> At the core of this proposed legislation we find a *quid pro quo*: Jews would relinquish some of their legal prerogatives in pursuit of their economic activities, but would in return see their legal status considerably improved.

The *Artikel und Ordnung* were the result of extended deliberations of representatives of Jewish communities whom Josel of Rosheim had urged to come to Augsburg soon after the inception of the Imperial Diet in June 1530, at which a memorandum from nineteen imperial cities requesting to curb Jewish usury had been submitted, considerably raising the stakes for the Jews.<sup>46</sup> Works on the counter-memorandum were delayed not in the least by a public disputation of Josel with Antonius Margaritha, a convert from a family with a proud rabbinical pedigree who had published an anti-Jewish treatise *Der gantz Jüdisch Glaub* (The Whole Jewish Faith) in 1530.<sup>47</sup> Because of this delay, it was completed only towards the very end of the Diet, and became not, in contrast to Josel's intention, part of the official proceedings.<sup>48</sup> The *Artikel und Ordnung* proposed a substantial reform in the status of the Jews in

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<sup>43</sup> J. Friedrich Battenberg, "Juden als 'Bürger' des Heiligen Römischen Reiches im 16. Jahrhundert," in Rolf Decot, Matthieu Arnold (eds.), *Christen und Juden im Reformationszeitalter* (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 2006), 175-197, here: 192-93.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 189.

<sup>45</sup> See *Ktavim historiim*: 353-363 and *Historical Writings*: 377–387. The archives of Strasbourg, Stuttgart and Obernai hold each a copy of this document.

<sup>46</sup> For a detailed account of events see Stern, *Josel von Rosheim*: 91–101. See also *Historical Writings*: 179–184.

<sup>47</sup> Stern, *Josel von Rosheim*: 85–90.

<sup>48</sup> It is not possible to identify who besides Josel of Rosheim contributed to the proposed administrative reform formulated in the *Artikel und Ordnung*. Josel's own attempts to disseminate the text – discussed below – seem however a rather strong indication of his prominent role in the process.



the Holy Roman Empire. It outlined new rules for Jewish-non-Jewish economic interactions in nine different areas: loans, interest, indebtedness, stolen collaterals, contractual capability, debt inheritance, absencing Jewish debtors, judicial assistance by Jewish communities, and the duty of notification of fraud. The *Artikel und Ordnung* proposed a limited number of procedural principles. Most importantly, a Jewish creditor, entrepreneur or merchant was accountable to the elders (*parnasim*) of his or her community.<sup>49</sup> Costly litigation at distant courts – among the favourite procedural instruments of Josel himself when fighting expulsion decrees – was to be prohibited. Individual Jewish communities answered for the wrongdoings of their members, and both Jews and Christians were to promise the application of legal sanctions against anyone found guilty. The Jewish authors of the based this principle of legal reciprocity on an invocation of a neutral legal foundation, namely natural law: Mutual legal assistance was “just and proper also according to natural law, and there is no difference between human beings on earth.”<sup>50</sup> In return, the Diet was asked to recognise the right of Jews to settle and trade and move safely across the entire Empire, to desist from expulsions, excessive taxation and charges “because we are people as well, created by God the Almighty to dwell on earth.”<sup>51</sup>

The address at the beginning to the *Artikel und Ordnung* offers evidence that its authors had intended to present the reform memorandum publicly to the Imperial Diet in Augsburg in 1530, itself a major date in the history of the Protestant Reformation. Its presentation to this broad forum of imperial dignitaries reflects a broader process of Jews redefining their role as political actors – a process for which Josel’s political involvement is an important indicator. He did not consider himself not just a discreet intercessor, but rather a political actor in the arena of the imperial public sphere:<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> For most of these areas, Josel explicitly included both “Jud oder Judin”, i.e. Jewish male and female businesspeople.

<sup>50</sup> *Historical Writings*: 386. Kaplan, *Entangled Negotiations*: 132.

<sup>51</sup> *Ktavim historiim*: 358.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*: 353-54, translation *Historical Writings*: 383, with minor amendments.

Illustrious, well-born, noble, esteemed masters, fearsome, honourable gentlemen, first of all, I am the humble and faithful servant of all the merciful and honourable lords. Gracious Lords and Estates of the Holy Empire!

This address defines the audience for the proposed legal changes: not the emperor alone, but the entire Diet, including kings, representatives of the nobility, ecclesiastic dignitaries, and imperial cities were invited to reconsider the legal and administrative status of the Jews in the Empire - a bold step in itself in a period where the immediate exercise of political rights for Jews was still controversial.<sup>53</sup> The proactive impetus of the address is further corroborated by the steps Josel took to disseminate his proposal as widely as possible. A surviving copy contains indications written in various hands that Josel personally presented the text to dignitaries in southern German territories, including the Archbishop of Augsburg, the *landschreiber* (public records officer) of the margraviate of Burgau, the imperial governor in Esslingen, the *unterlandvogt* of Lower Alsace, as well as the magistrates of Rosheim and Oberehnheim, and probably also the *stadtschreiber* (town clerk) of Ulm, and it is not unlikely that further attempts for dissemination were undertaken.<sup>54</sup> The proposed legislation thus reflects the main thrust of Josel's political involvement at this period, which went beyond reactive intercession. Based on his understanding of privileges, legal practices, and power relations, this Jewish politician wanted to achieve sustainable, substantial reform of Jewish-non-Jewish economic interaction as well as its implementation and adjudication. By referring to natural law as a shared legal ideal, Josel and the other authors of the *Artikel und Ordnung* proposed a novel basis for a contractual agreement between Jews and non-Jews.<sup>55</sup> As Debra Kaplan has

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<sup>53</sup> Battenberg "Juden als Bürger", 179, argues that the trial against the alleged usurpation of a title of 'commander' (see above, footnote 2) indicates that such political participation was still unacceptable.

<sup>54</sup> *Historical Writings*: 182.

<sup>55</sup> The ability for Jewish communities to act as contractual partners of non-Jewish municipalities, beyond being granted royal or noble privileges, seems among the most significant features distinguishing the situation of Jews in early modern Poland-Lithuania; see François Guesnet, "Agreements between neighbours. The 'ugody' as

recently argued, the invocation of natural law and shared basic human rights had already been the main platform for coordinating the negotiations which both the magistrate of Strasbourg and Josel, as the spokesman of the Jews of Alsatia, held with the insurgent peasants in 1525. Thus, a reoccurrence a few years later is not at all surprising.<sup>56</sup>

The ambitious proposal allows us to reflect on an important issue in the historical assessment of Jewish intercession, namely the political resources for negotiating the needs of a religious minority. As discussed in the introduction, the nature and quality of personal relations between an intercessor and non-Jewish authorities played an important role for the outcome of such negotiations. Josel of Rosheim remains a unique figure in the history of the Jews in the Holy Roman Empire not in the least because of the continued interaction with Emperor Charles V. In contrast to later court Jews who in some cases gained considerable leverage, Josel gained the Emperor's trust not as his business partner or creditor. For sure, his clout as a Jewish politician originated in a traditional reciprocity-based patronage, a bond based on trust and individual allegiance. Both Josel's *Sefer ha-mikneh* as well as the chronicle abound in expressions of admiration and reverence for the Emperor. The references in the *Artikel und Ordnung* to natural law and to the equality of humans before God, the planned presentation *coram publico* at the Imperial Diet, as well as the wide distribution seem however to suggest that this proposal was an attempt to redefine the political basis for the status of the Jews in the Holy Roman Empire – not as depending upon a bond of individual patronage, but on “a broader set of social institutions and ideologies,” typical for solidarity-based forms of patronage.<sup>57</sup>

Josel's unique determination and ambition led him to believe, one might conjecture, that a new era in the relations between Jews and non-Jews was possible - an era marked by a redefined status of the Jews, based on trust as

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a source on Jewish-Christian relations in early modern Poland," in *Jewish History* 24, 3-4 (2010): 257–270.

<sup>56</sup> Kaplan, *Entangled Negotiations*: 132. Kaplan does not include the *Artikel und Ordnung* in her argument.

<sup>57</sup> Rustow, “Patronage,” 15–17, here: 17.

well as agreement. It is difficult to disregard the fact that the Imperial Diet, ending in disarray between the imperial establishment and the Protestant territories emerging as new, major players on the European map, did not deliberate about the *Artikel und Ordnung*. Also, Fraenkel-Goldschmidt observes that Josel "had great difficulty in convincing his brethren to surrender some of their privileges." In support for this assessment she cites a note on a later review of the *Artikel und Ordnung* (the so-called 'Economic document' of 1536) that despite his status as *befehlshaber*, Josel had "great difficulty in securing the agreement" of Jewish communities.<sup>58</sup> Nevertheless, Josel went at great length to disseminate the memorandum, undoubtedly hoping to promote it in the aftermath of the Diet. These hopes were disappointed, the *Artikel und Ordnung* were never implemented, and the many years of Josel's ongoing involvement as an intercessor demonstrate that a fundamental reform and improvement in the status of the Jews in the Holy Roman Empire did not materialise. Josel withdrew to Alsatia only towards the very end of his life. No individual Jew in the Holy Roman Empire would ever again combine the status of a legitimate spokesperson of the Jewish communities in the Holy Roman Empire with such unique access to the highest echelons of imperial power, indicating the impact of Josel's personality and exceptional abilities.<sup>59</sup>

### ***Conclusion: Intercession as philanthropic activity?***

In Josel of Rosheim's days as well as in other periods, intercession was prompted by the precariousness of the Jewish diasporic existence. To fend off

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<sup>58</sup> *Historical Writings*: 26, and above, fn. 15.

<sup>59</sup> Much more shortlived was the role of Cosman zum Rade as spokesman of the Empire's Jews, see Daniel J. Cohen: "Cosman zum Rade – Emissary of the Jews of Germany in the 1560s," in *Zion* 35 (1970): 117–126; Bernhard Brilling: "Die Prager jüdische Gemeinde als Fürsprecherin und Vertreterin des deutschen Judentums im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert," in *Theokratia* 3 (1979): 185–198, suggested to consider representatives of the Prague Jewish community to have held a similar position *ex officio*, though their impact seems hardly comparable. A review of the shortlived hopes for a continuation of an institutionalised representation reflecting Josel's role see Staudinger, "Niederösterreichische 'Landjudenschaft,'" 149 and Ries, "Politische Kommunikation," 178.

expulsions, blood libels, or violence was not a matter of lovingkindness, and at no time does Josel refer to his activities as an act of philanthropy or *tsedakah*. Those who took responsibility in defending their community were to be guided, Josel wrote in his ethical treatise *Sefer ha-mikneh*, by “the law and the judgment of our Torah alone” – and to take up such a role was the privilege of those who understood these precepts, the *hahamim*, the learned.<sup>60</sup> He considered this type of responsibility a challenge which required humility and introspection, or, in his words, “toil, prayer and supplication.”<sup>61</sup> It does not come as a surprise that later generations identified him with the role of intercessor.

If we however endeavour to fully appreciate the implications of how spokespeople of Jewish communities defended their members' well-being and status, terminology matters. It therefore seems important to state that Josel considered himself a community elder (Hebr. *parnas*) of Alsatia's Jews, and a governor (*regierer*) and commander (*befehlshaber*) of the Jews in the Holy Roman Empire. He would also use the German term of delegate (*gesandt*). Never did he, however, sign as *shtadlan*, the Hebrew term for spokesman or negotiator. In the chronicle, the term only appears as a verb, and only on one single occasion, which however is telling. When describing the intercessory effort of Salomon Romm, a Jewish delegate from Rome defending the community of Naples threatened with expulsion in 1541, Josel of Rosheim writes:

“Although the man from Rome named Solomon Romm was there and *did all that he could [Hebr. b'hishtadlut rav]*, the Emperor refused to listen to his words, and issued his harsh decree expelling them from that entire [kingdom]. He *forbade Solomon to continue his endeavours on pain of forfeiting his head.*”<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> *Sefer ha-mikneh*: 21 and [57–59].

<sup>61</sup> See above, fn. 34.

<sup>62</sup> *Historical Writings*: 331, and *Ktavim Historiim*: 307. Emphasis mine.

Josel of Rosheim thus defined his role in broader terms, which went beyond the limited role of discreet (or, as in the case of Salomon Romm, too insistent) negotiator. This is not only well reflected in the proud use of epithets and titles which revolve around notions of leadership, power and control. It also resonates with the way Josel qualified his role in his chronicle. Here, the most frequent term used is ‘to act’ (Hebr. *pa'al*) and terms derived from it. “With G-d's help I spoke to the [the newly inaugurated Emperor Charles V.] and succeeded in having the expulsion from Kaysersberg cancelled [*pe'alti 'im ha-melekh ad hisagti levatel ha-girush*],” Josel relates his first encounter with the Emperor.<sup>63</sup> Also his intercession to prevent the expulsion of the Jews from Alsatia in 1527 is defined as action [Hebr. *pe'ulot*]<sup>64</sup> rather than just entreaties, and when pleading for the Jews of Brabant in 1530, he defines his negotiations with the Emperor as “speaking to the Emperor [Hebr. *ledaber imo*] about our needs.”<sup>65</sup> Similarly, when pleading on behalf of the community of Tittingen accused of ritual murder in 1540, Josel had to “act with great insistence [Hebr. *lif'ol b'pe'ulot rabot*].

The considerable room of maneuver Josel acquired over the years was originally based on a mandate, a mandate which he obviously considered also as one to lead. In the introduction to a – sharply worded – letter to the Landgrave of Hanau in 1539 reminding him of the legal status of the Jews in his territories, he relates that he “was appointed many years ago as head (Germ. *vurgenger*) and commander [to appear] before emperors and kings, electors and princes, and I was elected to this position by all of Jewry.”<sup>66</sup> The Jews of Hanau acknowledged his successful intervention in their minute book, praising his many achievements and counting him “among the leaders [Hebr. *manhigei*] of Israel.”<sup>67</sup> It seems that Josel's afterlife as an intercessor reflects later developments rather than perceptions of his contemporaries, or himself. Selma Stern's discussion of the identification of the *shtadlan* with the most

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<sup>63</sup> *Ktavim Historiim*: 288.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*: 291.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*: 295.

<sup>66</sup> *Historical Writings*: 94, fn. 104.

<sup>67</sup> Shaul Pinhas Rabinovits: *Rabi Yosef Ish Rosheym. Perek ahad l'korot ha-shtadlanut b'israel* (Varshe: Tushia, 1914): 149.

powerful position in a community in the 17th and 18th century Holy Roman Empire, in most cases occupied by court Jews, offers ample illustration for this.<sup>68</sup> For Josel, to be a leader necessarily involved intercession and negotiation, and he undoubtedly was proud of his achievements - he did not though consider it acts of lovingkindness.

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<sup>68</sup> Selma Stern: *The Court Jew. A Contribution to the History of Absolutism in Europe* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 2nd ed., 1980): 177–208.