ABSTRACT

LECHNER, STEVEN E.B. *Recalling Ethnic Yorkville: The Histories, Heritage Practices, Imaginaries, and Identities of Two Ethnic Communities in One Urban Neighborhood* (Under the direction of Dr. David A. Zonderman).

Recalling Ethnic Yorkville examines the histories and heritage practices of two hybrid communities – German Americans and Hungarian Americans – with deep connections to Yorkville, an urban neighborhood on Manhattan's Upper East Side. The working-class ethnic enclaves these migrants constructed in the late-nineteenth century survived for nearly a century until succumbing to the forces of gentrification during the last third of the twentieth century. Book I traces the active and declension phases of the enclaves, while foregrounding the dynamic and transnational nature of the hybrid identities by which each cohered. It also tracks the development of a politically compliant, socially conformist, and artificially linear story that portrays Yorkville's ethnic constituencies as having melted away into undifferentiated Americanness, a result hailed as consistent with the nation's need for socio-cultural unity. This imagined past reinforces nationalizing myths such as the melting pot metaphor, a largely racialized distortion that depicts Euro-Americans as the "good" immigrants by which all subsequent newcomers must be judged. Moreover, by proclaiming ethnic Yorkville's death, the dominant narrative ignores the communities' contemporary heritage afterlives. Book II, through four case studies, reconnects these ethnic heritage practices to their historical roots, analyzes their present manifestations, and explores the complex relationship between ethnicity and place. This intervention is intended to transcend problematic tropes about America's immigration past to enrich our public discourse concerning its immigration present and future.

Recalling Ethnic Yorkville: The Histories, Heritage Practices, Imaginaries, and Identities of Two Ethnic Communities in One Urban Neighborhood

by
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother Rose Marie Nicometo. She supported my decision to pursue a doctoral degree in public history at North Carolina State University just as she had every major decision I made in my life. My mother worked harder than any person I have ever known, laboring without complaint so that I might have a chance to taste success. As a young woman growing up in Oakfield, New York she earned a teaching scholarship, although circumstances prevented her from chasing that dream. Nevertheless, in her seventies, she returned to the school system from which she graduated to serve as its most beloved substitute teacher and bus aide. The life of "Grandma Rose" had come full circle.

My mother played an active part in this project. Each draft chapter I shared with her gave us an opportunity not only to discuss the history and heritage of Yorkville, but to delve deeper into our family's migratory past. In 1913, my maternal grandfather, Antonio Nicometo, barely seventeen years old, left his native Celano, Italy, a village carved right into the Apennine Mountains, in pursuit of a new life in America. Lena LoBue, my maternal grandmother, was born in 1908 in Western New York shortly after her parents emigrated from central Sicily. They were twenty-six and fifteen respectively when they married in 1923. In July 2020, nearly a century later, my mother rejoined her parents. Completing this dissertation after her sudden and unexpected passing has been the most emotionally difficult thing I have ever done. I find peace in having shared so much of this experience with her over the past three years. *Ti amo madre*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"Don't be afraid of death so much as an inadequate life," German playwright Bertolt Brecht once warned. This dissertation stems from my quest to embrace curiosity, pursue knowledge, and live fully whatever the obstacles. A passion to explore ideas takes root and blossoms through our relationships with others. That is, an intellectual journey is a social enterprise. It is my highest honor, therefore, to acknowledge the women and men who have played significant roles in shaping *Recalling Ethnic Yorkville*. I am forever in their debt.

I could not have completed this project without the love and support of my family. My lovely and talented wife, Jennifer Moeller Lechner, demonstrated uncommon patience, sagacity, and wisdom throughout this process. Her ideas improved the final product and her encouragement saw me through difficult times. My daughter, Grace, and son, Abera, lived with this project as a constant interloper. I thank them for their patience and love. I hope my risk taking will inspire them to pursue their dreams. Jeanne Moeller, my mother-in-law, provided feedback on drafts and brought to bear her formidable copy-editing skills. Finally, a special thank you to my older sister, Tammy Lechner, who showed me the power of storytelling through her acclaimed career in photojournalism.

I express my deepest appreciation for my advisory committee members. Dr. David Zonderman, the committee chair, guided me while shepherding NC State's History Department through innumerable challenges including a global pandemic. His experience and wisdom helped me turn abstract ideas into concrete historical arguments. Dr. Katherine Mellen Charron pushed me to transcend my self-imposed limits. From the smallest detail to the most fundamental claims, the fruits of her insight appear in every part of this dissertation. Dr. Akram Khater, an expert in the daunting field of migrations studies, challenged me to think deeply about the ways a single neighborhood connects to larger collectives and ideas. He also made it possible for the Moises A. Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies to

fund a key research trip. Finally, Drs. Shea McManus and Dru McGill showed me the merits of anthropological theory and methodology. Book II's style and substance reflects their advice.

Several scholars outside my advisory committee deserve mention for their contributions to my intellectual development. Drs. Charles Bolton and Greg O'Brien guided me through my M.A. experience at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. They taught me to think like a historian and showed faith in my ability to continue my academic journey. Dr. Tammy Gordon, NC State's Director of Public History, modeled how to build and nurture relationships between the academy and history-making and history-consuming publics. Dr. Craig Friend of NC State and Dr. Watson Jennison of UNCG helped improve my writing. Dr. Herb Strentz, my mentor at Drake University, once told me that pursuing truth is a quest without end requiring courage and humility, a lesson I have carried with me ever since.

Many colleagues enhanced my experience at NC State. Marilyn McHugh Drath taught an old dog new tricks with respect to research and technology. She also possesses an unrivaled ability to cut through the mental clutter to establish conceptual frameworks, chronological logic, and narrative elegance. I trust that our bond of friendship will endure beyond the temporal limits of this project and I look forward to attending her dissertation defense. My work also benefitted from the advice of Dr. Megan Tewell, a recent graduate of NC State's public history program, and Lisa Withers, who will soon defend her dissertation. Thank you, also, to Derrick Kay and Tyler Ellis, both of whom made my time in Wolfpack nation memorable and fun.

I wish to acknowledge the archivists and other professionals who broadened this project's evidentiary scope. I especially thank Kate Feighery, director of the Archdiocese of New York's Archives and Records, and Dwight Johnson, of the New York City Municipal Archives. I extend the Hungarian expression "nagyon szépen köszönöm," meaning thank you very much, to Olga Cupp, who translated primary sources from Hungarian to English. Her work helped me to understand the perspectives of key historical actors within Hungarian Yorkville.

In closing, I thank all those women and men connected to Yorkville's ethnic past who shared their time and stories, most notably Kathryn Jolowicz, *the* Yorkville historian, and Viktor Fischer, one of Hungarian New York's leading figures. Jolowicz provided me with a front row seat to observe and analyze the heritage afterlives of German Yorkville. Fischer helped to ensure the accuracy of Hungarian names and terms and offered insight into Hungarian culture and history. Ethnic Yorkville lives on through the spirit and sacrifice of women and men such as this. Lastly, I note the hospitality of Katrina Dengler, the president of the Kolping House, who made it possible to stay in Manhattan during multiple research trips. It has been an honor to spend time in Yorkville and I look forward to maintaining a relationship with this special slice of New York City.

BIOGRAPHY

Steven E. B. Lechner, a Ph.D. candidate in Public History, authored this dissertation entitled "Recalling Ethnic Yorkville: The Histories, Heritage Practices, Imaginaries, and Identities of Two Ethnic Communities in One Urban Neighborhood." Book I of this work explores the origins, development, and decline of the German American and Hungarian American enclaves once prominent in Yorkville, a formerly working-class neighborhood on Manhattan's Upper East Side. This historical interpretation also tracks the emergence and persistence of a hegemonic narrative, constructed principally by New York's print press, that influences social memories of Yorkville's ethnic past. This imagined past reinforces nationalizing myths such as the melting pot metaphor, a largely racialized distortion that depicts Euro-Americans as the "good" immigrants by which all subsequent newcomers must be judged. Book II critically examines contemporary heritage practices arising from these enclaves. Its four case studies – Kathryn Jolowicz, an amateur historian dedicated to preserving memories of German Yorkville; the German-American Steuben Parade that marches up Fifth Avenue each September; the Magyar Ház, Gotham's Hungarian cultural headquarters; and Hungarian Yorkville's Christian faith communities – emphasize the complex relationship between ethnic identity and place attachment.

Lechner serves as an adjunct history instructor at William Peace University in Raleigh, North Carolina. Prior to entering North Carolina State University's public history program, he taught social studies and civics at the high school level. Lechner gravitated to education after practicing law in Maine for a decade. He earned a Juris Doctorate *summa cum laude* from the University of Maine School of Law, an M.A. in History from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, an M.A. in Communications from Drake University, and a B.S. in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism from the University of Missouri. Lechner hails from Saugerties, New York, located in the Mid-Hudson Valley. He and his wife, Jennifer Moeller Lechner, will celebrate their silver wedding anniversary in May 2021. Their daughter, Grace, attends Boston University, and their son, Abera, is completing his eighth-grade year.

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INTRODUCTION

If one knows where to look, it is possible to spot contemporary heritage practices arising from and connected to the German American and Hungarian American communities once prevalent in Yorkville, a neighborhood on Manhattan's Upper East Side. On most Saturday mornings, boys and girls dutifully enter a red brick structure on East 82nd Street known as the Magyar Ház to attend Hungarian language school or their weekly Hungarian Scouting meeting. Each Sunday morning, just a few strides down the same street, two to three dozen conservatively attired parishioners enter the Independent Hungarian Reformed Church of New York to receive spiritual guidance from Árpád Drótos, a Hungarian-born pastor, delivered in the Magyar tongue. Reading a community calendar online or in local newspapers might reveal an exhibition and lecture by the self-described Yorkville historian, Kathryn Jolowicz, a longtime resident of the neighborhood, who fuses memoir and historical interpretation to wax nostalgic about German Yorkville. And, on the third Saturday of September, one can soak in the lederhosen, dirndls, floats, bands, and lager as part of the German-American Steuben Parade, which terminates at East 86th Street, once hailed as Yorkville's Sauerkraut Boulevard.[1]

These heritage practices, despite deploying generalized notions of German and Hungarian identity and heritage, carry the potential to flesh out, complicate, and increase interest in the history of "ethnic Yorkville." Yet, the stubbornly dominant social memory of the neighborhood's ethnic past that such practices attempt to commemorate does not lead to such outcomes. The division between ethnic

[1] Assigning the label "German" to specific individuals or subgroups is imprecise. For instance, the nation-state of Germany did not officially emerge until 1871. Thus, the German-speaking immigrants who came to America prior to 1871 did not hail from a unified German state. Moreover, even after political unification, many German-speaking people lived outside of Germany's political boundaries. Also, many German immigrants and their descendants were Jewish. Given all these matters, when discussing the historical record, the term "German" will refer to self-identification as much as possible. The term "German-speaking" may be used to widen the lens where and when appropriate. The label "Hungarian" presents its own set of challenges. From the mid-nineteenth century through WW I, the Kingdom of Hungary was a semi-autonomous political partner within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Kingdom was much larger than the present-day nation-state, as the Treaty of Trianon stripped Hungary of an immense part of its territory at the conclusion of World War I. Magyars, or ethnic Hungarians, comprised the majority of the Kingdom of Hungary's population. However, several other ethnic minorities resided in the Kingdom of Hungary, including Germans, some of whom were German Jews. Generally, the term "Hungarian," as used in connection with Yorkville, refers to both Christians and Jews who identified as such. However, differentiating between these groups at specific times is a relevant part of exploring questions of identity and memory.

Yorkville's history and memory and the veiled connections between its heritage practices necessitates both a synthetic historical interpretation of ethnic Yorkville and attention to the parallel development of the ethnic Yorkville imaginary over time. It also depends upon a thick description of the contemporary heritage practices created and nurtured by German Americans and Hungarian Americans who claim some connection to ethnic Yorkville not only to recover their hidden histories and meanings and messages, both explicit and implicit, but also to illuminate the connections between ethnic Yorkville's historical past and its heritage present. This study describes and analyzes these intersecting modes of recalling ethnic Yorkville – archival history, social memory, and heritage practices –to engage with salient issues in migration studies such as ethnic identity, intra-ethnic conflict, ethnic adjustment to dominant socio-cultural paradigms, transnationalism, and how notions of "race," as a dynamic social construction, influenced the uneven processes by which European immigrants gained acceptance as "white" and as "Americans." Moreover, it contributes to public history queries about how and why dominant tropes about America's "immigration history," such as the melting pot thesis, are constructed, articulated, challenged, defended, and subject to change over time as well as the relationship between place-related ethnic histories and ethnic heritage practices.[2]

RECALLING ETHNIC YORKVILLE'S SENSE OF PLACE

Recalling ethnic Yorkville begins with unpacking the concept of place, an essential vector of memory. Place comprises three features: geospatial location; natural and man-made materiality; and stories privileging it as subject or setting. The three maps below show Yorkville's position with Manhattan's broader cityscape:

[2] The term "ethnic Yorkville," as used herein, signifies Yorkville's German American and Hungarian American communities, particularly during the active period of the ethnic enclaves from the late nineteenth century to the 1960s. During the period covered by this study, Yorkville was a polyglot that included not only Germans and Hungarians, but those identifying as Irish, Czech, and Slovak, as well as native born New Yorkers who did not identify with these ethnic groups. This study focuses on Germans and Hungarians because they constituted the two most prevalent groups that, generally, demonstrated the strongest ties to their respective ethnic identities over the longest period.

Figures 1 and 2. The maps designated as Figures 1 and 2 are modified versions of the Yorkville map appearing on the neighborhood's Wikipedia page. Yorkville, Manhattan (Last edited August 19, 2020). In Wikipedia. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yorkville,_Manhattan.

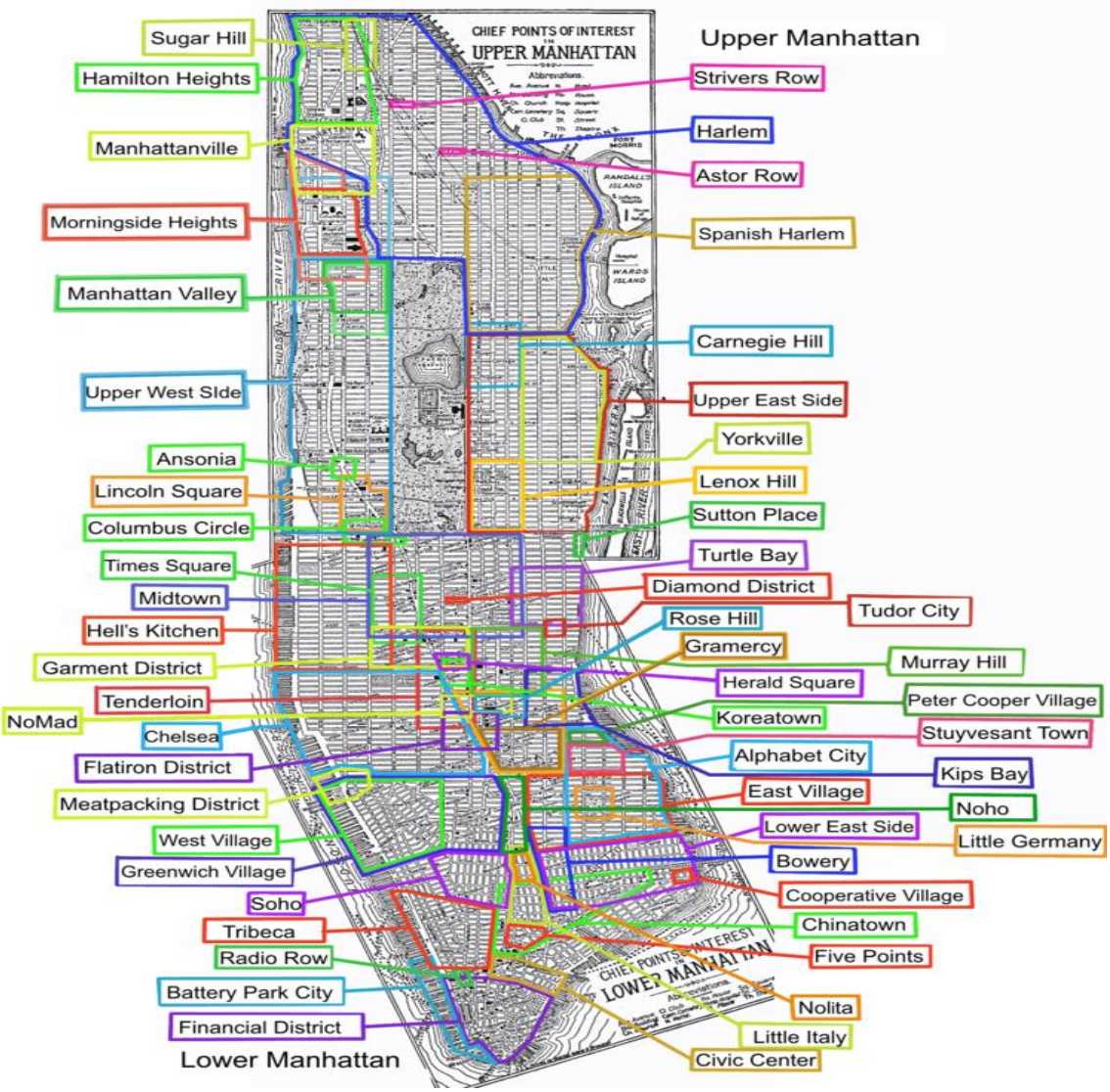

Figure 3. The map designated as Figure 3 is adopted from the Wikipedia page labeled "List of Manhattan Neighborhoods." List of Manhattan Neighborhoods (Last edited August 20, 2020), In Wikipedia. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Manhattan_neighborhoods.

According to its commonly recognized metes and bounds, Yorkville runs east to west from the East River to Third Avenue, and north to south from East 96th Street to East 72nd Street, covering an area of nearly 320 acres. On the south, East 72nd Street forms a porous boundary with Midtown Manhattan. Just west of Yorkville lies an area known variably at the "Gold Coast" or the "Silk Stocking District," exemplified by Fifth Avenue's high rise apartments buildings, as well as Central Park, New York's renowned urban oasis. Yorkville's working-class residents operated within wholly different socio-

economic circumstances compared to those residing in or near this affluent area, rendering Third Avenue a notional yet palpable line of class division. For several decades, Yorkville's demographic composition also differed starkly from its northern neighbor, East Harlem. Once home to the *other* Little Italy and a thriving Jewish community, migrants from Puerto Rico gravitated to East Harlem after World War II, generating sobriquets such as "Spanish Harlem" and "El Barrio." In 1967, Deirdre Carmody of the *New York Times* declared East 96th street "as divisive a line as the wall that separates the two Berlins."[3] Clearly, location, a relational aspect of place, has influenced Yorkville's distinctive reputation as a Manhattan neighborhood of working-class white ethnics.[4]

Yorkville's imagined social organization, another aspect of place, has also influenced recollections of the neighborhood. Social memory tends to depict Yorkville's once-prominent white ethnic groups as residing in micro-neighborhoods clustered around specific boulevards. According to claims of inter-ethnic segregation, East 79th Street, otherwise known as Goulash Boulevard, denoted the Hungarian neighborhood, whereas Germans congregated on or near 86th Street. The residential locations of these ethnic groups, leaving aside the artifice of perceiving each group as homogenous in the first place, were much more complicated than these simplistic mental maps suggest. Nonetheless, the ethnic Yorkville imaginary clings to these rigid divisions to deliver simplified, digestible narratives depicting Euro-American newcomers clustered in separate, foreign spaces. This artificially linear

[3] Deirdre Carmody, "East 96th: Wall Between Worlds," *New York Times*, July 27, 1967, 20.

[4] Thomas F. Gieryn, *Truth-Spots: How Places Make People Believe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 2; Alison Pan, "Crossing the Border: Art and Change in East Harlem," *Journal for Cultural Research* 12, no. 1 (Jan. 2008): 40; Gerald Meyer, *Vito Marcantonio: Radical Politician, 1902-1954* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 1-5. Pan, "Crossing the Border," 40. Even today, East Harlem's diverse residential population that includes migrants from China and the Caribbean differs from Yorkville's high proportion of residents who identify as white. Pan, "Crossing the Border," 40. According to the 2010 census, its population was just under 78,000, representing a modest increase of 1.5% from 2000. Yorkville's population density was 244.2 inhabitants per acre as of 2010. Four miles of urban terrain separate Yorkville from the former site of *Kleindeutschland*, later known as the Lower East Side, where German-speakers and migrants from the Kingdom of Hungary once proliferated. "NYC Planning Community Profiles," New York City Department of City Planning communityprofiles.planning.nyc.gov.; "NYC 2010: Results of the 2010 Census: Population Growth and Race and Hispanic Composition," New York City Department of City Planning, https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/data-maps/nyc-population/census2010/pgrhc.pdf.

interpretation claims that the eventual incorporation of these migrants into generalized categories of white ethnics and then white Americans reinforces faith in the nation's melting pot.[5]

Defining Yorkville by its geospatial coordinates, however, does not fully satisfy the quest to understand this place on a deeper level. Materiality, the second feature of place, has been a powerful tool for recalling ethnic Yorkville and tracking its changing countenance. In *The Power of Place*, Dolores Hayden opines that each urban landscape evinces its own amalgam of materiality, as traces of the old mix with newer construction. Hayden argues that "[t]hese parts of older landscapes can be interpreted to strengthen people's understandings of how their city has developed over time."[6] This understanding, she suggests, holds the promise of fostering curiosity, engendering empathy, or even opening possibilities for connections transcending racial, ethnic, or class lines.[7]

Guided by Hayden's vision for social change through public history practice, this study's historical and heritage elements note the role and status of ethnic Yorkville's built environment, a brief description of which is offered here for illustrative purposes. Well into the nineteenth century, Yorkville's constructed landscape consisted merely of large estates lining the East River, with most of the area remaining undeveloped. Hence, Yorkville was at once the domain of New York's landed gentry as well as its beaconing frontier. Led by the German-owned breweries that swallowed up much of northern Yorkville, the neighborhood's urban landscape started to fill in after the Civil War. As the twentieth century drew near, developers lured northward would-be urban pioneers, especially those living downtown, with the promise of newly built brownstones and apartments in the so-called new

[5] Joseph Berger, "On the Upper East Side, Memories Fueled by Strudel," *New York Times*, April 7, 2006, E29; "Lost City's Guide to Yorkville," *Lost New York City Blogspot*, April 13, 2009, https://lostnewyorkcity.blogspot.com/2009/04/lost-citys-guide-to-yorkville.htmlBarry Popik, *The Big Apple*, (website), "Hungarian Boulevard or Hungarian Broadway (East 79th Street in Yorkville)," September 23, 2008, https://www.barrypopik.com/index.php/new_york_city/comments/about_the_site_editor/; Given the numerical superiority of Yorkville's German-speakers relative to other groups during its purported Golden Age, social memory often designates 86th Street as Yorkville's nucleus, a mark of distinction that persists today.
[6] Dolores Hayden, "The Power of Place: Claiming Urban Landscapes as People's History," *Journal of Urban History* 20, no. 4, (1994): 466.
[7] Ibid; Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1995), 2-43.

tenements. German-speaking émigrés from Hungary trekked uptown, building churches, banks, restaurants, and grocery stores in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.[8]

Little remains of ethnic Yorkville's constructed landscape. It is therefore difficult to recall the past by gazing at the present. St. Joseph's Catholic Church, founded in 1873, a monument to Yorkville's immigrant-led building period, still serves Germans and Hungarians with masses in their native languages. Voluntary associations such as the New York Turn Verein, with its peculiar mix of athletic training and radical politics, migrated from lower Manhattan to Yorkville in 1898. Eighty years later it continued its march north by moving to the Bronx unable to keep pace with Manhattan's rising rents. The Liederkranz, a German singing society, in contrast, maintains its East 87th Street property in which it hosts concerts and meetings of the German-American Steuben Parade's planning committee. Demonstrating the exulted status of foodways, the two most prominent German enterprises still operating in Yorkville are the Heidelberg Restaurant, featuring staff donning Bavarian dress, and Schaller & Weber, an old-school German butcher shop. These establishments sit side-by-side just steps from Yorkville's former German epicenter, the corner of Second Avenue and East 86th Street. Pursuant to the law of scarcity and visceral connections to foodways, these two businesses receive inordinate attention as symbols for ethnic Yorkville's oft-noted living remnants. Among Hungarian Yorkville's material remnants are the Independent Hungarian Reformed Church and the Magyar Ház, a cultural center otherwise known as the Hungarian House, both on East 82nd Street.[9]

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[8] While "wild" Yorkville disappeared long ago, Carl Schurz Park, named for the celebrated German American statesman and U.S. Senator, provides bucolic relief near the neighborhood's northeast corner. Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel, *The Landmarks of New York*, 5th Ed. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2011), 87; Peter T. Lubrecht, *Carl Schurz, German-American Statesman: My Country Right or Wrong* (Mount Pleasant, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2019), 165; Ilona Stölken, *Das Deutsche New York: Eine Spurensuche* (Leipzig: Lehmstedt Verlag, 2013),107-118; George Von Skal, *History of German Immigrants in the United States and Successful German-Americans and their Descendants* (New York: F.T. & J.C. Smiley, 1908), 98, 103.

[9] Paul Basu and Simon Coleman, "Introduction: Migrant Worlds, Material Cultures," *Mobilities* 3, no. 3 (Nov. 2008): 313-30; "About St. Joseph's." St. Joseph's Church, Yorkville (New York City), https://www.stjosephsyorkville.org/about/; Shawn G. Kennedy, "Ethnic Makes Way for Modern," *New York Times*, September 16, 1984, A1; Joseph Berger, "Towers Crowd Yorkville: 'We Could be Living Anywhere Now,'" *New York Times*, July 30, 2019, A24; "Welcome," New York-I Magyar Ház/Hungarian House of New York, accessed May 1, 2020, http://www.hungarianhouse.org/en/.

THE ETHNIC YORKVILLE IMAGINARY IN STYLE AND SUBSTANCE

Stories, the third feature of place, represent the most common mode of recalling ethnic Yorkville. There are few living who experienced firsthand ethnic Yorkville's heyday from the 1930s through the 1950s, when East 86th Street purportedly resounded with German music and theatrical productions, and aromas emanating from Hungarian restaurants and shops wafted down East 79th Street. Exacerbating the paucity of lived memories, urban historical scholarship has paid scant attention to this neighborhood or its ethnic past. Ethnic Yorkville, usually only its German element, appears in limited form in narrowly focused nonfiction works, such as those relating to Prohibition-era New York or the pro-Nazi German American Bund once headquartered on East 85th Street. Short on firsthand accounts and loosed from rigorous historical interpretation, inherited and uncritical narratives exert unfettered control over how ethnic Yorkville is recalled, especially by those unattached to the ethnic communities.[10]

How place-related narratives assume their shape and wield power within the public sphere is therefore a key area of inquiry in this study. Social memory theory distinguishes between individual and collective memories, providing insight into the latter. Susan Crane succinctly defines collective memory as "a conceptualization that expresses a sense of the continual presence of the past."[11] Jeffrey Olick, a Holocaust scholar, emphasizes that people often recall in community, that is, within a social context. In this sense, individual recollections may aggregate to produce *collected* memories. In almost all cases,

[10] Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, Rev. and trans. ed., ed. and trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992 [1941]); Sarah Gensburger, "Halbwachs' Studies in Collective Memory: A Founding Text for Contemporary 'Memory Studies'?," *Journal of Classical Sociology* 16, no. 4 (2016): 396-413; Michael Ian Borer, "From Collective Memory to Collective Imagination: Time, Place, and Urban Redevelopment," *Symbolic Interaction* 33, no. 1 (2010): 96-100; In fact, amateur historian Anthony Lofaso's *The Origins and History of The Village of Yorkville in The City of New York* is the only historical monograph featuring the neighborhood of Yorkville. Lofaso's well-researched work sketches the neighborhood's social, political, commercial, and infrastructure history from the days of New Amsterdam to the 1870s and 1880s. Lofaso makes passing reference to the German-speakers who settled in the area during the last third of the nineteenth century and omits from his narrative other immigrant groups such as Hungarians and Czechs. My efforts to discuss this dissertation with Lofaso through his contacts with the New York Public Library system were unsuccessful. Anthony Lofaso, *The Origins and History of The Village of Yorkville in The City of New York* (New York: Xlibris, 2010).

[11] Susan Crane, "Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory," *American Historical Review* 102, no. 5 (1997): 1373.

however, "groups provide the definitions, as well as the divisions, by which particular events are subjectively defined as consequential," a societal vetting process Olick refers to as *collective* memory.[12] Thus, collective or social memory constitutes a circumscribed version of the past; it discards more stories than it carries forward to achieve a sense of cohesion. Put another way, forgetting defines the process more than remembering. Social memory can generate an incomplete record through negligence or intent, although discerning state of mind in this realm remains challenging. The sheer complexity of social memory in a nation as diverse as the United States and in New York's distinctly multicultural milieu suggests that collective recollections of urban neighborhoods such as Yorkville develop through an admixture of accident and scheme, of omission and commission. This work introduces multiple actors operating on various levels who have harvested and influenced the ethnic Yorkville imaginary over the past century, including media elites like the *New York Times* and the *Daily News*, travel guide publishers, WPA researchers and writers, and preservation organizations. It also examines how ethnic Yorkville, as imagined in social memory, props up meta-discourses such as the melting pot trope, claims that America is *a nation of immigrants,* and New York's self-image as *the city of immigrants*.[13]

The ethnic Yorkville imaginary operates as a reductionist narrative, despite recurring claims by its purveyors that it reveals a "hidden history." Generally, it conveys the past through two techniques: tableaus and an episodic, selective chronology. Gotham's print press wielded asymmetrical power in setting the tone for imagining Yorkville in ethnic terms, often writing in the manner of foreign correspondents sending dispatches from the colony back to the metropole. In their hands, the imaginary flashed as a set of images of a timeless place where people from Central and Eastern Europe, residing in well-delineated ethnic enclaves, carved out culturally foreign and overtly traditional spaces where nary a

[12] Jeffrey K. Olick, "Collective Memory: The Two Cultures," *Sociology Theory* 17, no. 3 (Nov. 1999): 341.
[13] Olick, "Collective Memory," 333-43; Jeffrey K. Olick, The *Politics of Regret: On Collective Memory and Historical Responsibility* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 92-118; James V. Wertsch and Doc M. Billingsley, "The Role of Narratives in Commemoration: Remembering as Mediated Action," in *Heritage, Memory and Identity*, eds. Helmet Anheier, Yudhishthir Raj Isar (London: Sage Publications, 2011), ix-xi; Paul Connerton, *How Modernity Forgets* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 2-35; Paul Connerton, "Seven Types of Forgetting," *Memory Studies* 1, no. 1 (2008): 59-71.

word of English was spoken. Generic and stereotypical scenes of Germanness – beer halls with clanging steins, restaurants with singing waiters, men reading German-language newspapers, and concert halls playing Wagner or Beethoven – often stood in for historical facts. Amateur historians, bloggers, and tour book writers continue to echo these scenes, creating consensus through regurgitation.

These tableaus authored by outsiders coexist with and add color to an episodic and highly selective chronology of ethnic Yorkville. In its standard form, it starts with a creation myth: the 1904 explosion of the General Slocum, a local passenger ship, which took the lives of more than one thousand German Americans in the East River. An oft-repeated claim holds that Germans moved uptown en masse to escape the horrible memories of losing their loved ones, making German Yorkville a community forged out of tragedy. Hungarians and other groups supposedly followed their German counterparts in the first decades of the twentieth century, thus forever relegated to a supporting role in ethnic Yorkville's subsequent history. The chronology then skips to the Great War, which purportedly threatened to erase German Yorkville as anti-German sentiment swept through Gotham, and its accompanying story pays greater attention to the coercive actions of federal, state, and municipal authorities, all of which pursued an Americanization agenda, than to the agency of Yorkville's German-speaking residents. It doubles down on the theme of existential crisis by hopping to the Second World War, inaccurately alleging that the German American Bund, a pro-Nazi movement with a Yorkville address, marched in uniform up and down the Upper East Side with impunity. Any consensus chronology tends to break down in the depiction of the postwar period. Images of the neighborhood's thriving restaurant and entertainment scene overlap with lamentations about its vanishing ethnic residents. Regardless of when the declension narrative begins, the story invariably portrays a neighborhood in its death throes sometime during the last third of the twentieth century, its built environment evaporating almost without a trace; and its foreign element joining the bridge-and-tunnel crowd or melting into indistinguishable white Americans as a result of the irrepressible forces of

assimilation. Concluding that ethnic Yorkville died decades ago, those who parrot the ethnic Yorkville imaginary show little understanding of or interest in connections between ethnic Yorkville's past and the contemporary ethnic heritage practices deriving therefrom.[14]

ETHNIC IDENTITY AND YORKVILLE'S GERMAN AMERICANS AND HUNGARIAN AMERICANS

This study purposefully deploys the term "ethnicity," as well as its cognate, "ethnic," in reference to the two groups within its purview: German Americans and Hungarian Americans.[15] Ethnicity is a multivalent term used variably as an historical signifier, self-description, ascribed classification, and empirical category. It encompasses the dynamic social process of self-identifying or being identified by others as belonging to a collective putatively distinguishable from other collectives based on a shared sense of cultural assertions, beliefs, and practices, including historical memories, language, ritual, religion, and foodways, usually accompanied by claims of common ancestry or national origin. This definition endorses the notion that ethnicity is socially constructed. It acknowledges individual agency regarding ethnic identity, an ethnic group's parameters for inclusion and exclusion, and processes whereby external actors ascribe ethnic labels to individuals or groups. This formulation's breadth and elasticity carve out ample room to evaluate historical as well as contemporary manifestations of

[14] Orm Øverland, *Immigration Minds, American Identities: Making the United States Home, 1870-1930* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 1-10.

[15] As a specific term, "ethnicity" did not gain wide purchase in the United States until after World War II. As early as the 1830s, however, German-speaking migrants who settled in New York started to develop a shared sense of Germanness reflected in commercial, social, and political institutions. Enclaves such as *Kleindeutschland* in lower Manhattan and subsequently parts of Yorkville on the Upper East Side and Ridgewood in Queens emerged as distinctive German American spaces. Gotham's Hungarian population also tended to settle together in micro-neighborhoods, including the Houston street area of lower Manhattan and subsequently the central portion of Yorkville. Unless otherwise noted, the use of the terms ethnic and ethnicity refer, in a basic sense, to these collectives, through which people negotiated hybrid identities based, at least in part, on direct or indirect bonds with the Old World. Stanley Nadel, *Little Germany: Ethnicity, Religion, and Class in New York City, 1845-80* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1990); Béla Vassady, "The "Homeland Cause" as Stimulant to Ethnic Unity: The Hungarian-American Response to Károlyi's 1914 American Tour," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 2, no. 1 (Oct. 1982): 44; John Kosa, "Hungarian Immigrants in North America," *Canadian Journal of Economic and Political Science* 22 (1956): 365-68.

ethnicity. Put another way, this study sees ethnicity as something people do as much as who they think they are. In this sense, ethnic identity is processual.[16]

Migrants from Central and Eastern Europe who came to settle in Yorkville in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries often coalesced economically, politically, socially, and geospatially around notions of ethnic identity. They formed benevolent societies, fraternal organizations, singing and athletic clubs, and established newspapers, banks, and insurance companies using or relying on designations such as "German" and "Hungarian." Émigrés exercised agency at the personal or familial level over their identities through choices about where to reside, where to work, where to send children to school, and whether to affiliate with ethnic voluntary associations. At the same time, white Protestant agents of New York's municipal government, the city's English-language newspapers, social workers, charity organizers, and scions of "Old New York" projected their own views about the ethnic identity of individuals or groups in their midst, frequently demarcating Germans and Hungarians in pejorative terms.

Intersections of ethnic identity and adjustment to the socio-cultural milieu and political economy of the United States, Greater New York, and the neighborhood of Yorkville are paramount concerns in this study. Scholars of migration studies, in its formative years from the early twentieth

[16] Kathleen Neils Conzen, David A. Gerber, Ewa Morawska, George E. Pozzetta, and Rudolph J. Vecoli, "The Invention of Ethnicity: A Perspective from the U.S.A.," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 12, no. 1 (Fall 1992): 3-41; Glazer and Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot*, xiii-ixvii; *The Invention of Ethnicity*, ed. Werner Sollors (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), xiii-xx; James J. Connolly, "Immigration and Ethnic Politics," in *A Companion to American Immigration*, ed. Reed Ueda (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 58-76; Marilyn Halter, "Ethnic and Racial Identity," in *A Companion to American Immigration*, ed. Reed Ueda (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 161-176. Examples of the definitions of ethnicity reviewed for this study include those offered by scholarly institutions such as the American Sociology Association ("refers to shared culture, such as language, ancestry, practices, and beliefs"), those put to use by the U.S. Census Bureau – ethnicity is a classification "determin[ing] whether a person is of Hispanic origin or not" –, and those articulated by theorists like Kanchan Chandra and Steven Wilkinson– ethnicity identity constitutes an "arbitrary subset of categories in which descent-based attributes are necessary for membership." These disparate and situational definitions act as reminders that one must use ethnicity prudently, as its plasticity makes it susceptible to neglectful imprecision or misuse. "Race and Ethnicity," American Sociological Association, https://www.asanet.org/topics/race-and-ethnicity#:~:text=topic%2Dimage_race.&text=%E2%80%9CRace%E2%80%9D%20refers%20to%20physical%20differences,ancestry%2C%20practices%2C%20and%20beliefs; "Research to Improve Data on Race and Ethnicity," U.S. Census Bureau, https://www.census.gov/about/our-research/race-ethnicity.html; Kanchan Chandra and Steven Wilkinson, "Measuring the Effect of 'Ethnicity," *Comparative Political Studies* 41 no. 4 (Apr./May 2008): 520.

century through the 1950s, argued that European-born migrants, or at least their descendants, would eventually shed their "Old World" ways and assimilate to Anglo-American cultural norms and practices. Sociologists from the Chicago School wrote the lyrics of urban determinism in the 1920s, arguing that city life accelerated the assimilation process. Historian Oscar Handlin put this line of reasoning to music in his seminal work, *The Uprooted*, published in 1955. Handlin connected an unforgiving and irrepressible assimilative process to the rigors of industrial capitalism. This interpretive bent paid little heed to local particularity, ethnic agency, and transnationalism, three essential elements of migration studies. John Bodnar's 1985 monograph, *The Transplanted*, a critical response to Handlin, urged scholars to attend to granular details and distinctive qualities of places of origin, motivations for emigration, and places of settlement. Proponents of Bodnarian particularism put the local context of reception, such as facts on the ground in a specific locale, on equal footing with macro-structural concerns such as industrial capitalism, national immigration discourses and legislation, and geopolitics.[17]

Yorkville's German Americans and Hungarian Americans exercised agency in numerous ways. They seized opportunities to work in the neighborhood's burgeoning businesses such as breweries and cigar factories, made decisions about when to move in and out of the Upper East Side, sought to influence municipal elections, took stances on Tammany Hall's machine politics, comprised the rank-and-file of labor organizations, marketed their shops and restaurants across Gotham, and built relationships with new waves of migrants entering their community. Within the context of New York, a

[17] Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted*: *The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1951); Donna R. Gabaccia, "The Minnesota School and Immigration History at Midwestern Land Grant Universities," *Journal of Migration History* 1 (2015): 171-99; Jon Gjerde, "New Growth on Old Vines: The State of the Field: The Social History of Immigration to and Ethnicity in the United States," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18, no. 4 (Summer 1999): 40-65; William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, ed. and abridged by Eli Zaretsky (1918, repr., Urbana: University of Illinois Press, c1984); Kathleen Neils Conzen, "Thomas and Znaniecki and the Historiography of American Immigration," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 16, no. 1 (Fall 1996): 16-25. John Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985). Intense interest in the process by which foreign-born migrants and their progeny adjust to their new environment dates back to politically charged debates regarding national immigration policy during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Proponents of closing the Golden Door expressed concerns that so-called new immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe seemed ill-equipped to assimilate to mainstream American life. See, e.g., Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race or The Racial Basis of European History*, 4th rev. ed. (1916: repr. North Stratford, NH: Ayer Company Publishing, 2006).

"continuous gateway" of migration, as well as their specific neighborhood of Yorkville, German Americans and Hungarian Americans adroitly assessed the threats and opportunities of their specific local environment and acted accordingly. Their actions and decisions constitute a significant part of what makes their stories distinct but are too often omitted from the ethnic Yorkville imaginary's preoccupation with the forces of assimilation.[18]

An approach acknowledging particularity must analyze how local ethnic communities influence and connect to wider cultural, social, and political networks. Transnationalism considers how such networks transcend the confines of the nation-state, sometimes linking ethnic localities with homelands and diasporic imagined communities. As noted by Akram Khater, transnational connectivity within migrant communities did not emerge anew from modern breakthroughs in transportation and communication but has long been an integral aspect of the migration experience. Khater argues that earlier examples of transnationalism are noteworthy in large part because migrants had to work harder to develop and maintain such connections. Ethnic localities are also nodes within translocal networks. During its apex, Yorkville acted as a commercial center for German Americans in the Bronx, Ridgewood, Queens, and Franklin Square, Long Island. For Hungarian Americans, Yorkville had a similar magnetism while also sharing prominence with New Brunswick, New Jersey, Bridgeport, Connecticut, and Washington, D.C., as part a Northeastern ethnic corridor.[19]

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[18] Mary Waters and Philip Kasinitz, "Immigrants in New York City: Reaping the Benefits of Continuous Immigration," *Daedalus* 142, no. 3 (Summer 2013): 92-97; John R. Logan, Wenquan Zhang, and Richard D. Alba, "Immigrant Enclaves and Ethnic Communities in New York and Los Angeles," *American Sociological Review* 67, no. 2 (Apr. 2002): 299-302; Kathryn M. Galchutt, "Lutherans in Harlem," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 74, no. 1 (March 2005): 50-51; David F. Remington, *Ashbel P. Fitch: Champion of Old New York* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2011), 1-33.

[19] Donna R. Gabaccia, *From the Other Side: Women, Gender & Immigrant Life in the U.S., 1820-1990* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994); Donna R. Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000); Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Special Sorrows: The Diasporic Imagination of Irish, Polish, and Jewish Immigrants in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995); Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Szanton Blanc, "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration," *Anthropological Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (Jan. 1995): 48-63; Akram F. Khater, "Becoming "Syrian" in America: A Global Geography of Ethnicity and Nation," *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 14 no. 2/3 (Fall/Winter 2005): 299-331; Cornelia Wilhelm, "From Community and Place to Network and Space: The Transnational Dimension of Immigration in American Jewish History," *American Jewish History* 101, no, 4 (Oct. 2017): 545-51; Susan Eckstein, "Deepening and Broadening Transnational Immigration Analyses: Commentary on Roger Waldinger's The Cross-Border Connection," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38, no. 13 (2015): 2291-98; Ewa Morawska, "Disciplinary Agendas and Analytic Strategies of Research on Immigrant Transnationalism: Challenges of Interdisciplinary Knowledge," *International Migration*

Study on migration have focused much attention on the generational loss or retention of ethnic identity. In the 1970s, for example, cases of visible ethnic identity among third- and fourth-generation European-Americans called into question the inevitability of assimilation, provoking a politicized discourse on the so-called "new ethnicity" in academia, media, and throughout society.[20] In Yorkville, for example, German Americans continued to nurture the Steuben parade, created in the mid-1950s, and Hungarian Yorkville's Magyar Ház, opened in 1966, entered its second phase following the deaths of its founding generation. The persistence of ethnic events and institutions like these interested sociologists seeking to explain the apparent durability of ethnic identity in modern America. Herbert Gans, a storied member of this subgroup, coined the term "symbolic ethnicity" to explain this phenomenon. Gans, Mary Waters, and other proponents of this theory argue that later generations of Euro-Americans had the luxury of exercising a notable degree of choice about whether and on what terms to engage with ethnic identity. Waters stressed that the mixed European ancestry of most Americans supplies a veritable menu of options. Symbolic ethnicity's general call to evaluate the continuity and dynamism of ethnic identity over time is valuable. Importantly, it also brings into the equation social constructions of race, for symbolic ethnicity theorists point out that the privileged social status of "whiteness" makes ethnic choices possible. This powerful argument provokes inquiry into when, how, and to what extent European migrants and their descendants gained entry to the American social category of "white."[21]

Review 37, no. 3 (Fall 2003): 611-40; Alejandro Portes, "Conclusion: Toward a New World – The Origins and Effects of Transnational Activities," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22, no. 2 (Mar. 1999): 463-77.

[20] The merger of multiple trends in the 1960s and 1970s called into question the inevitability and linearity of assimilation, while also giving rise to the label, "white ethnic." Generally, this term stood for second- or third-generation descendants of the so-called new immigrants (e.g., Italy, Poland), who entered the country between 1880 and 1924. Nathan Glazer and Patrick Moynihan's 1963 book, *Beyond the Melting Pot*, observed that many white ethnics in urban environments continued to prioritize and identity partially with their Euro-American roots. In 1972, Michael Novak's *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics* attempted to raise the consciousness of white ethnic Catholics, who, Novak asserted, had been denied the full fruits of American prosperity and democracy despite eschewing the divisive tactics of the African American Civil Rights Movement. America's mainstream media ran stories on the "new ethnicity" that referred to white ethnics as "hard hats," "anti-intellectuals," and occasionally as "white racists." Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City* (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1963); Michael Novak, *The Unmeltable Ethnics: Politics and Culture in American Life, Second Ed.* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1996).

[21] Herbert J. Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2, no. 1 (1979): 1-20; Mary Waters, *Ethnic Options: Choosing Identities in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Richard D. Alba, *Italian American: Into the Twilight of Ethnicity* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1985); Richard Alba and

Symbolic ethnicity, however, also perpetuates misconceptions and suffers from blind spots. The concept treats ethnic identity as the sole province of the individual, an ode to personal autonomy. If we believe, however, that ethnicity was formed in the past pursuant to social processes, including macro- and micro-level modes of cultural transmission, would not the same be true of the present? Moreover, symbolic ethnicity, channeling classical economic theory, rests on the predicate of a perfect marketplace of ethnic representations from which the rational subject can choose to be whatever he or she desires. However, this imagined free market of identity does not exist, as numerous factors, much of them place-specific, determine available options, fix probable costs and benefits, and otherwise influence decisions. Ethnic identity is contingent. Last, labeling certain types of ethnic engagement as "symbolic" threatens to reify essentialized versions of ethnicity, a seemingly ascriptive endeavor. Symbolic ethnicity breathes life into assimilation theory by implicitly marking terminal points of ethnic authenticity.[22]

For all these reasons, this study cannot rest on the conclusions of the symbolic ethnicity theorists to the extent they tack away from particularism but can draw inspiration from the questions they pose. Thus, this work follows a similar path as that charted by Yiorgos Anagnostou, whose monograph *Contours of White Ethnicity* focused on the social category of Greek American. Anagnostou used the spirit of symbolic ethnicity, especially its emphasis on "usable pasts," to explore "why and how selective pasts are retained, reworked, dismantled, discarded, or contested in the making of ethnicity," not to declare certain cultural representations inauthentic or shallow.[23] Given that history and heritage

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Victor Nee, *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991); Theodore W. Allen, *The Invention of the White Race: Racial Oppression and Social Control* (New York: Verso, 1994); Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); and Tanfer Emin Tunc, "Recapitulating the Historiographical Contributions of Matthew Frye Jacobson's *Whiteness of a Different Color* and Gail Bederman's *Manliness and Civilization*," *Rethinking History* 12, no. 2 (June 2008): 281–288.

[22] Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity," 1-20; Waters, *Ethnic Options.*

[23] Yiorgos Anagnostou, *Contours of White Ethnicity: Popular Ethnography and the Making of Usable Pasts in Greek America* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2009), 2

share the stage in this project, Anagnostou's line of questioning undergirds the critical analyses of the German American and Hungarian American heritage practices featured in Book II.[24]

RECALLING YORKVILLE'S HISTORIOGRAPHICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FAMILY TREES

This study's research goals are to flesh out the histories of German Americans and Hungarian Americans connected to Yorkville, to juxtapose those historical interpretations with the ethnic Yorkville imaginary, and to describe how this past is reflected in contemporary heritage practices. As no work of history can claim completeness, these objectives require appropriate choices. Scores of books and articles have shaped this work, but a small cadre warrant mention as historiographical forebears.

In focusing on a single place, this study represents a work of local history with wider implications. Historian Joseph Amato opined that "[p]eople of every place and time deserve a history."[25] Stanley Nadel's *Little Germany* gives credence to this adage. Nadel chronicles one ethnic neighborhood in Manhattan, *Kleindeutschland*, in a dense monograph with detail about the economic and social lives of the German Americans who literally and figuratively built the place. Moreover, his explanation of the neighborhood's multicausal decline, featuring external pressures and internal agency, models analytical nuance. Given that Yorkville came to be viewed as the capital of German New York in the twentieth century, this dissertation humbly continues Nadel's historical narrative of German New York. Hasia Diner's *Lower East Side Memories*, which also focuses on a single ethnic neighborhood, privileges social memory. Diner addresses how and why American Jews came to esteem the Lower East Side as hallowed ground as their place of origin in the United States by examining various ways of recalling the place,

[24] Ibid.; John Stone and Kelsey Harris, "Symbolic Ethnicity and Herbert Gans: Race, Religion, and Politics in the Twenty-first Century," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 9 (2017): 1397-1409.
[25] Joseph A. Amato, *Rethinking Home: A Case for Writing Local History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 2002), 3.

people, and time. Diner's work demonstrates the merits of investigating the intersections of place, ethnicity, and memory.[26]

Three additional works influence this dissertation's comparative approach. John Bodnar argues that single group migration histories too often decontextualize and artificially separate an analytically constructed set of migrants, whereas, multi-group studies, especially those involving a shared setting, allow for comparative analysis. He, along with Roger Simon and Michael Weber, modeled this advice in *Lives of Their Own*, a history of working-class African Americans, Italians, and Poles set in Pittsburgh. Sociologist Ewa Morawska, in *For Bread and Butter*, pursued similar goals through more interdisciplinary means in a monograph that deftly introduces readers to the complex and multifarious Central European collectives who came to settle in Jonestown, Pennsylvania in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Maria Kefalas's *Working-Class Heroes*, of more recent vintage, is set in a blue-collar Chicago neighborhood. She contends that scholars ignore the history of white ethnics at their own peril, for continuing their historical trajectories into the modern period offers insight into the confluence of race, place-attachment, and urban dynamism, all of which complicate pithy conclusions about white working-class racism.[27]

Methodologically, traditional historical research grounds this study. Book I, and a significant proportion of Book II, rely on public archival sources such as newspaper articles, institutional records, oral histories, and speeches. Private archival collections of the ethnic Yorkville diaspora or others connected in some way with the neighborhood's once prevalent German and Hungarian communities fill in gaps and provide necessary details. Indispensable are secondary sources relating to a wide array of

[26] Stanley Nadel*, Little Germany*; Hasia R. Diner, *Lower East Side Memories: A Jewish Place in America (*Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[27] John Bodnar, Roger Simon, and Michael P. Weber, *Lives of Their Own: Blacks, Italians, and Poles in Pittsburgh, 1900-1960* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1983), 1-9; Ewa Morawska, *For Bread with Butter: The Life-Worlds of East Central Europeans in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, 1890-1940*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Maria Kefalas, *Working-Class Heroes: Protecting Home, Community, and Nation in a Chicago Neighborhood* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003).

subjects ranging from the history of New York City to nineteenth century German emigration to twentieth century Hungarian geopolitics to theoretical works pertaining to migration studies.

To accommodate this dissertation's interest in ethnic Yorkville's heritage, Book II's analysis relies on qualitative data and analytical insights generated by ethnographic techniques. Specifically, participant observation of the Steuben parade, Kathryn Jolowicz's exhibit and lecture on German Yorkville, and Hungarian language worship services provided an emic perspective of these contemporary heritage practices. Likewise, formal and informal interviews of those closely associated with the contemporary heritage practices produced additional data and sparked ideas. Scholars such as Clifford Geertz have extolled the virtues of marrying historical and anthropological methodologies. This project constitutes a modest attempt to follow their advice to gain a greater understanding of the contemporary ethnic heritage practices as well as how those relate to the histories of Yorkville's German and Hungarian communities. To be clear, using ethnographic techniques is not equivalent to the embedded fieldwork routinely deployed by anthropologists. Rather, in this case, periodic engagement with these ethnic heritage practices complemented the rigorous historical research described above.[28]

The core tenets of critical heritage studies animate this dissertation's evaluation of these contemporary ethnic heritage practices. The concept of critical heritage studies carefully examines the processes by which cultural heritage is constructed, deployed, contested, and defended. In addressing these matters, it foregrounds Foucauldian and Gramscian analyses of asymmetrical power relationships among stakeholders. Historian John Bodnar and heritage scholar Rodney Harrison provide crucial guidance in this regard. Both scholars deploy a dichotomous formulation to analyze cultural heritage practices, differentiating between official or formally sanctioned cultural heritage and vernacular forms

[28] Clifford Geertz, "History and Anthropology," *New Literary History* 21, no. 2 (Winter, 1990): 321-35; Lejla Voloder, "Introduction: Insiderness in Migration and Mobility research: Conceptual Considerations," in *Insider Research on Migration and Mobility: International Perspectives on Researcher Positioning*, eds. Lejla Voloder and Liudmila Kirpitchenko (Burlington, VT: Farnham, 2014), 1-17; Rhys Isaac, "Ethnographic Methods in History: An Action Approach," *Journal Historical Methods* 13, no.1 (1980): 43-61.

existing outside of and sometimes pushing against them. While the reality of cultural heritage production does not adhere neatly to theoretical binaries, Bodnar and Harrison provoke inquiry into the inequalities within heritage-making ecosystems based on political positionality, socio-economic status, and other differentiating features that create and affect power and access.[29]

Laurajane Smith's concept of the authorized heritage discourse (AHD) adds theoretical heft to the matter. Smith conceives of the AHD as a Western-centric set of ideas, proclivities, and practices aimed at sanitizing, declawing, beautifying, and streamlining cultural heritage to render it easily digestible, noncontroversial, essentialized, and broadly supported. On the national scale, the AHD works to ensure that heritage unifies citizens under a commonly accepted understanding of the nation's core heritage claims. This study does not apply the AHD as a rigid analytical framework, but rather draws inspiration from the concept to identify and consider how and perhaps why the ethnic Yorkville imaginary omits certain voices and interpretations it deems not sufficiently celebratory. The ethnic Yorkville imaginary exemplifies how the AHD manifests on the local level, especially in its tendency to adhere to and ratify nationalizing mythologies such as the melting pot metaphor, which in turn feed misguided notions of "good" European immigration of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries versus "bad" immigration from Mexico and Central America during recent decades.[30]

RECALLING YORKVILLE'S PRINCIPAL CLAIMS

With the concept of recalling as a framework, this dissertation interprets ethnic Yorkville's history from the mid-nineteenth century to the present, tracks the development of the dominant narrative about this past, and critically examines contemporary ethnic heritage practices arising from or

[29] John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 13-20; Rodney Harrison, *Heritage: Critical Approaches* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 14.
[30] Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 9-42.

associated with this past.[31] In the process of meeting these objectives, it explains how and why recalling Yorkville's ethnic past privileges social memory over evidence-based historical interpretation. It argues that popular depictions of ethnic Yorkville, marked by tableau-like representations of German Americans and Hungarian Americans as well as an episodic chronology, emerged from a century-long pattern of recalling this neighborhood's ethnic legacy led by New York's white mainstream print press. The tableau representations depict ethnic Yorkville as a timeless but bounded place peopled principally by Germans and Hungarians living in well-delineated and fortified enclaves. The dominant narrative claims that these groups created culturally foreign and overtly traditional spaces contrasting sharply with Manhattan's dynamism and modern sensibilities. The imaginary's episodic and selective chronology aims to show that the forces of Americanization ground down ethnic Yorkville and assimilated its foreign occupants, a process which it describes as unfortunate but ultimately necessary and unavoidable. This narrative of the rise and fall of an ethnic neighborhood eventually ossified into a politically compliant and socially conformist narrative, advancing nationalizing and mythologized immigration discourses such as the melting pot metaphor while simultaneously bolstering New York's claimed status as a paragon of multiculturalism. Yorkville was and is a place with a public biography generated more by the vagaries of social memory than history. Little to no room exists in this imaginary for contemporary heritage practices arising from or related to this neighborhood's ethnic past, as they do not fit with the seemingly settled notion that ethnic Yorkville died or melted away long ago. Accordingly, the public history element of this work seeks to illuminate these ethnic heritage practices, and to reintroduce them as

[31] The concept of recalling grounds this study. Recalling connotes distance, loss, or even rupture; we recall that which no longer exists as it once was. Recalling the past, whether done individually or in communion with others, encompasses a broad array of actions ranging from fond memories meant to soothe the spirit or nurture community to politicized claims about the past brandished as weapons in contemporary power struggles. Recalling can happen unexpectedly, stimulated by a scent, scene, or comment, or can be planned or purposeful. Recalling, as a present participle, suggests an ongoing process, albeit one variable among actors and over time. When we recall we also forget, as our recollections lack completeness. We recall trends, triumphs, tribulations, decisions, and material objects. Place, people, and time, however, are the dominant matters filling our minds, for these three vectors of memory organize how we engage with the past and imbue the process with meaning and texture.

integral parts of the public conversation about the merits, meanings, and broader implications of recalling ethnic Yorkville.[32]

RECALLING YORKVILLE'S PUBLIC HISTORY IMPLICATIONS

This project reinterprets and supplements existing historical narratives of Yorkville's German American and Hungarian American communities. Especially through its explication of contemporary ethnic heritage practices, it demonstrates how and why Yorkville's ethnic past continues, albeit in altered forms, in the present. As such, it contributes to broader issues pertaining to public history theory and practice. Theoretically speaking, it provides a rich case study through which to examine how dominant or hegemonic narratives are constructed and what consequences flow from their deployment. Deconstructing the narrative-making process, while valuable in its own sake, can also fuel efforts from below to disrupt or amend these narratives.

Additionally, this dissertation's conclusions and the process from which they manifested offers insight into several areas of public history practice. For example, Book II's focus on contemporary ethnic heritage practices leans heavily on the communities themselves to explain how and why they do what they do. The tenets of shared authority, as set forth by Michael Frisch, informed both the ethnographic techniques as well as the writing process. Closely related is the degree to which this project seeks to exemplify the value of granularity of so-called ordinary lives. In other words, the dissertation, where possible, highlights lesser known or heretofore invisible women and men within Yorkville's German American and Hungarian American communities.[33]

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[32] Emily R. Cabaniss and Abigail E. Cameron, "'Unassimilable and Undesirable': News Elites Discursive Construction of the American Immigrant during the Ellis Island Years," *Discourse & Society* 28, no. 6 (2017): 614-634; Minelle Mahtani, "Representing Minorities: Canadian Media and Minority Identities," *Canadian Ethnic Studies Journal* 33, no. 3 (2001): 99-133; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1983).
[33] Michael H. Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990).

The final three points, discussed in more detail in the dissertation's conclusion, speak to the potential public history uses of this project. New York City's preservation community has recently shown intensified interest in Yorkville's ethnic past. FRIENDS of the Upper East Side, for instance, published *Shaped by Immigrants: A History of Yorkville* in 2018, which presented the neighborhood's ethnic past largely through its lost and extant built environment. The questions this dissertation raises, the information it gathers, and even its conclusions could contribute to further explorations of ethnic Yorkville's past within Gotham's preservation community or provide evidence to assist targeted efforts to protect and designate certain properties. Also, this project is keenly aware of and endorses Dolores Hayden's call to unlock the potential energy of grassroots histories tied to place. To date, the German American and Hungarian American communities have not collaborated or coordinated to any significant degree on cultural heritage projects. Perhaps seeing their communities presented together in this form might inspire collaborative projects capable of putting their histories into conversation in the public sphere in ways that complicate the story and broaden the audiences.[34]

Lastly, given public history's laudable concern with how the past might speak to the present, this study and similarly situated works complicating European immigration, adjustment, and heritage, can contribute to America's contemporary immigration debate. For several years, this debate has commanded headlines, heated up social media, and acted as a wedge issue within the American body politic. In the 2016 presidential election cycle, for instance, the political right, led in volume, vitriol, and disinformation by Donald Trump, claimed that recent immigrants, especially those from Mexico and Central America, have a higher propensity to carry disease or commit crimes, and that unchecked immigration imperils American democracy through illegal voting. Trump's demands for a "wall" on America's southern border with Mexico tied a material objective to this problematic rhetoric.[35]

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[34] Hayden, *Power of Place*, 2-43.

[35] Jeesun Kim and Wayne Wanta, "News Framing of the U.S. Immigration Debate during Election Years: Focus on Generic Frames," *The Communication Review* 21, no. 2 (2018): 89 – 115; Robert Warren and Donald Kerwin, "National Interests and

Those wielding these arguments often seek safe harbor in one of America's most cherished but abused myths: the melting pot metaphor, which argues that European migrants of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries assimilated completely to a putative "mainstream" Anglo-American culture. Adherents of this belief distinguish the "white" European migrants of yore from contemporary counterparts of color hailing from Mexico and Central America. In this dichotomy, the Europeans – even those who did not achieve the status of "whiteness" until later – are remembered as having entered the U.S. "legally," worked hard, learned the language, doggedly pursued upward mobility, welcomed assimilation, and comprehended the benefits of becoming fully American. Implicitly this vision holds that contemporary migrants can be described in converse terms, which creates a "good" versus "bad" immigration binary with real world, and too often tragic, consequences. Paradoxically, then, those who rely on this dichotomy deploy America's immigration past to argue against select immigration in the present or future. Projects that complicate the history and heritage of European migration offer a means to disrupt the melting pot mythology's divisive tendencies.[36]

RECALLING YORKVILLE'S ORGANIZATION

This dissertation is organized into two "books." Book I constitutes a periodized history of ethnic Yorkville presented in four chapters. Book II introduces select aspects of ethnic Yorkville's contemporary heritage practices. Book I begins with a brief introduction as well as ethnic Yorkville's prehistory, including sketches of *Kleindeutshland* and Little Hungary, the German and Hungarian enclaves in lower

Common Ground in the US Immigration Debate: How to Legalize the U.S." *Journal On Migration And Human Security* 5, no. 2 (2017): 297 – 330; Hugh Mehan, "The Discourse of the Illegal Immigration Debate: A Case Study in the Politics of Representation," *Discourse & Society* 8, no. 2 (Jan. 1997): 249-70.

[36] Nida Bikmen, "Still a Nation of Immigrants? Effects of Constructions of National History on Attitudes toward Immigrants," *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy* 15, no. 1 (2015): 282-302; Gregory W. Streich, "Discourses of American National Identity: Echoes and Lessons from the 1910s-1920s," *Citizenship Studies* 13, no. 3 (2009): 267-87; William D. McCorkle, "Using History to Inform the Modern Immigration Debate in the United States," *Journal of International Social Studies* 8, no. 1 (2018): 149-67; Ian Tyrrell, *Historians in Public: The Practice of American History, 1890-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Hayden, *The Power of Place*; *Letting Go?: Sharing Historical Authority in a User-Generated World,* 1st Edition, eds. Bill Adair, Benjamin Filene, and Laura Koloski (New York: Routledge, 2011).

Manhattan. Chapter 1, *Recalling Ethnic Yorkville in Bloom: 1840s through the First Decade of the Twentieth Century*, analyzes the origins and early development of ethnic Yorkville. It features German American uses of Yorkville spaces as festival grounds in the 1850s, chronicles German and Hungarian migrations uptown, and introduces pan-ethnic projects in each community during the early twentieth century. Chapter 2, *Recalling Yorkville in the Summer Heat: World War I to World War II*, addresses the threats posed to Yorkville's German and Hungarian communities during the Great War and how subparts of these communities attempted to mitigate such threats. Attention is also given to the influence of homeland politics on each community during the interwar period, as reactions to Hungary's Horthy government fractured Hungarian New York and the rise of fascism in Germany divided German Yorkville and harmed its reputation. Chapter 3, *Recalling Ethnic Yorkville's Autumn Colors: WW II through the 1960s,* emphasizes how America's entry into the Second World War demanded that Yorkville's German and Hungarian communities publicly demonstrate their loyalty to and support for the Allied cause. The two communities' paths diverged in the postwar period. German Yorkville waned under the stress and strain caused by narratives emphasizing the presence of pro-Nazi groups in the neighborhood prior to the war, whereas Hungarian Yorkville gained strength via waves of migrants displaced by the war and later fleeing Hungary's communist regime. Chapter 4, *Recalling Ethnic Yorkville in Wintertime: The 1970s to the Present*, assesses the protracted decline of Yorkville's German and Hungarian communities, including their gradual loss of commercial entities. This chapter highlights the efforts by residents and restaurant and shop owners to stem the tide of rapacious developers who sought to incorporate Yorkville into the affluent area to its west.

Book II's examination of the contemporary heritage practices connected to ethnic Yorkville's past also has four chapters. It begins with a brief introduction setting forth the theoretical underpinnings of the analyses. Chapter 5, *Telling Heritage: The Role of Storytellers, Memory Keepers, and Local Historians in Interpreting and Conveying Ethnic Yorkville's Past*, analyzes various forms of

telling ethnic Yorkville's history. More specifically, it sketches the history of ethnic Yorkville's bardic tradition in which a series of voices from inside the community sought to influence narratives about the neighborhood's once prevalent ethnic groups. Kathryn Jolowicz, the self-described Yorkville historian, provides a case study in the origins, practices, and values of an amateur historian and memory keeper. The chapter closes by introducing storytelling techniques owing more to ethnic Yorkville's built environment, such as tour books and walking tour guides.

Chapter 6, *Marching Heritage: History and Heritage in New York's German-American Steuben Parade*, takes Yorkville's ethnic identity on parade. The German-American Steuben Parade, an annual event including thousands of marchers and performers from throughout Greater New York as well as German-speaking areas of Europe, has deep roots in German New York. Thus, this chapter chronicles the long course of German parading and festive culture in Gotham, exploring its intersections with political legitimacy and social capital. This chapter connects this past to the creation of the German-American Steuben Parade in the mid-1950s, and analyzes how that event has changed over the past six decades. Tracking the parade's historical trajectory clarifies the disjuncture in the relationship between Yorkville as a crucial site of German American heritage and a parade that has increasingly diverged from its localized past.

Chapter 7, *Housing Heritage: The Magyar Ház and Hungarian New York's Quest for an Ethnic Headquarters*, discusses how Hungarian New Yorkers' decades long quest to create a headquarters for the city's Hungarian community fell victim to intra-ethnic conflict driven, in large part, by homeland politics. This chapter also describes how waves of exiles, émigrés, and refugees, displaced by World War II and the subsequent onset of communist rule in postwar Hungary, altered the demographic and ideological makeup of Hungarian New York, including the Yorkville enclave. A small but influential group of exile elites initiated multiple political and cultural projects that laid the groundwork for the Magyar Ház, which opened in 1966. For more than a half century, this institution has endeavored to represent

Hungarian American identity and culture in New York, in the process eliding the communities' radical political traditions as well as the role played by Hungarian Jews.

Chapter 8, *Believing Heritage: Cultural Heritage in Ethnic Yorkville's Places of Worship*, explores the intersection of organized religion and ethnic cultural heritage practices by focusing on two of Hungarian Yorkville's longstanding places of worship: The First Hungarian Reformed Church and St. Stephen of Hungary Roman Catholic Church. Part I introduces and analyzes the origins of these two churches including their connections to homeland causes or institutions, pressures to Americanize, and internal power struggles. Part II examines the churches during their mature years. The careers of two charismatic pastors of the First Hungarian Reformed Church – Rev. Dr. Géza Takaro and Rev. Dr. Imre Kovács – provide a way to assess the influence of homeland concerns and Cold War geopolitics on local ethnic religious identity during the mid-twentieth century. On the other hand, St. Stephen's highwater mark as an ethnic anchor institution in Hungarian Yorkville during the 1950s and 1960s coincided with battles to retain the church's status as a national parish even as increasing numbers of non-Hungarians joined the congregation. Part III focuses on the divergent contemporary experiences of these two faith communities. It juxtaposes the First Hungarian Reformed Church's successful preservation efforts, including a listing on the National Register of Historic Places and protected status under New York's landmark law, against St. Stephen of Hungary's putative death, marked by the New York's Archdiocese's decision to merge the national parish with a nearby territorial parish and the resulting effort by many Hungarian Americans to find alternative means to preserve their ethnic faith community.

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As a study focusing on specific groups associated with a specific place, this dissertation is subject to the critique of being too narrow, or even provincial. The following chapters address this concern by demonstrating, both in Book I's historical interpretation and Book II's exploration of contemporary ethnic heritage practices, that "going small" can problematize boundedness in constructive ways that

ultimately produce broader, nuanced, and more inclusive histories. These histories, in turn, provide means to critically engage with the received wisdom that celebrates uncritically Euro-American migration history and misuses this past to advance political programs of exclusion.

BOOK I: THE HISTORIES AND IMAGINARIES OF ETHNIC YORKVILLE'S GERMAN-AMERICAN AND HUNGARIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

INTRODUCTION

Until recently, written accounts of Yorkville's ethnic past consisted of a scattered and disconnected assortment of old newspaper clippings, memoirs, and websites. No synthetic history existed. That changed in 2018, when FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts (FRIENDS), a nonprofit membership organization founded in 1982 and "dedicated to preserving the architectural legacy, livability, and sense of place of the Upper East Side," published *Shaped by Immigrants: A History of Yorkville*.[1] A blend of photography and text billed as the first ever comprehensive history of Yorkville, *Shaped by Immigrants* acts as the centerpiece of FRIENDS's renewed commitment to preserving the neighborhood's past, especially its multicultural legacy. FRIENDS is in the process of drafting an "umbrella context statement" regarding Yorkville's history, ready for use in future preservation applications. FRIENDS felt a sense of urgency in this work due to the city's completion of two Second Avenue subway stops at 86th and 96th streets, which opened on New Year's Day 2017. They, like many others, believed the subway links would irrevocably alter Yorkville's feel by making it a more attractive locale for Manhattan's professional set. Their concerns were justified. Realtors and developers now tout Yorkville, long seen as an antiquated holdout to Manhattan's rapidly changing urban landscape, as the next hot space ready for a total architectural and socio-economic makeover.[2]

It remains unclear whether FRIENDS's Yorkville campaign might unlock the "power of place," a concept Dolores Hayden defined as the "power of ordinary urban landscapes to nurture citizens' public

[1] "About," *Friends of the Upper East Side*, accessed December 1, 2019, https://www.friends-ues.org/about/.
[2] "Now Available-Get Your Copy of Shaped by Immigrants: A History of Yorkville, *Friends of the Upper East Side*, accessed December 1, 2019, https://www.friends-ues.org/now-available-get-your-copy-of-shaped-by-immigrants-a-history-of-yorkville/; *Shaped by Immigrants: A History of Yorkville* (New York: Friends of the Upper East Side, 2018); Nick Paumgarten, "The Second Avenue Subway Is Here! The Début of New York's Newest Train Line Took Place at Noon on New Year's Day—Ninety-seven Years After It Was First Conceived," *New York Journal*, February 5, 2017 (February 13 & 20, 2017 Issue), accessed on December 3, 2019, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/02/13/the-second-avenue-subway-is-here; Lindsay Turley, "Ringing in the New Year with the Second Avenue Subway," *Museum of the City of New York*, January 3, 2017, accessed December 20, 2019, http://mcny.org/story/ringing-new-year-second-avenue-subway; Philip Mark Plotch, "Waiting More Than 100 Years for the Second Avenue Subway to Arrive," *Journal of Planning History* 14, no. 4 (2015): 309-328.

memory, to encompass shared time in the form of shared territory."[3] Hayden sounded a clarion call more than two decades ago to rediscover the neglected pasts of working-class urban neighborhoods, in all their messiness and contestation, so that civic identity might reflect and elevate the value of diversity. For several decades, the ethnic Yorkville imaginary has curbed the potential of Yorkville's ethnic, working-class past to accomplish this laudable goal. Through reduction and repetition, this imagined, packaged, and highly selective account has supported municipal and national mythologies relating to immigration, most notably the melting pot metaphor, while largely missing opportunities to deepen our understandings of the intersections of place, identity, and memory in America's immigration history. Inspired by the actions of FRIENDS and the spirit of Hayden, the following four chapters present a historical interpretation of ethnic Yorkville focusing on the experiences of German Americans and Hungarian Americans connected to the neighborhood driven by the archival record. It also tracks the parallel development of the ethnic Yorkville imaginary to show how, and in some cases why, these two modes of recalling ethnic Yorkville diverge in specific ways. Interpreting Yorkville's history while also noting dominant collective memories reinforces a fundamental but crucial tenet of public history theory and practice: places have histories, interpretations of the past recoverable through archival records and reliable evidence, but they often ignite memories owing more to nostalgia and popular mythology.[4]

Book I's history begins with a brief description of the origins of New York's German and Hungarian communities. A periodized portrayal of ethnic Yorkville through its four seasons follows this background: "Springtime": 1840s through the first decade of the twentieth century; "Summer": the years immediately preceding the Great War to Pearl Harbor; "Autumn": America's entry into World War II through the 1960s; and "Winter": the 1970s to the present.

[3] Hayden, *Power of Place*, 9.
[4] Ibid.; *Shaped by Immigrants*.

KLEINDEUTSCHLAND: NEW YORK'S ORIGINAL GERMAN ENCLAVE

From the mid-nineteenth century into the first decade of the twentieth century, German ethnic identity in New York remained constantly contested and always in flux. During the 1850s, more than 70,000 German-speaking immigrants per year came to America, a phenomenon James Bergquist dubbed "the first great wave of German immigration."[5] Consequently, Manhattan became the third largest German-speaking city on the planet. By 1855, Germans comprised sixteen percent of its population. Many mid-century migrants were members of the 48ers: Jews, Catholics, and Protestants who emigrated due to the political fallout from the failed 1848 revolutions, which sought to displace Central European monarchs. In addition, tens of thousands of German-speakers came to America due to crop failures, depressed grain markets, and the loss of home-based occupations such as hand-looming.[6]

Most German newcomers who arrived in New York from the 1840s through the 1860s settled in in an area of lower Manhattan that assumed the moniker Kleindeutschland or "Little Germany." Therefore, the roots of Kleindeutschland pre-date the unification of the German nation-state in 1871. Downtown Manhattan's eleventh and seventeenth wards doubled in size from 1845 to 1855 due principally to an influx of German-speaking migrants. Most of Kleindeutschland's Germans found work within the city's burgeoning textile industry or in semi-skilled jobs such as shoemaking and cabinetmaking, with wives and husbands sometimes laboring side-by-side. A few pursued

[5] James M. Bergquist, "German-America in the 1890s: Illusions and Realities," in *Germans in America: Aspects of German-American Relations in the Nineteenth Century,* ed. E. Allen McCormick (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 3.
[6] Carl Wittke, *The German Language Press in America* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky, 1957), 2-7; Robert Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City, 1825-1863* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1949), 41-42; Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 44; Farley Grubb, *German Immigration and Servitude in America, 1709-1920* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 376, 392; LaVern J. Rippley, *The German-Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishing, 1976), 21, 84; Bruce Levine, *The Spirit of 1848: German Immigrants, Labor Conflict, and the Coming of the Civil War* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 63-93; Frederick M. Binder and David M. Reimers, *All the Nations Under Heaven* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 47; Walter D. Kamphoefner, "German Emigration Research, North, South, and East: Findings, Methods, and Open Questions," in *People in Transit: German Migrations in Comparative Perspective, 1820-1930*, ed. Dirk Hoerder and Jörg Nagler (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 20; Ira Rosenwaite, *Population History of New York City* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1972), 40. Hawgood singled out 1855 as the point when the German element started to "live not in the United States, but in German America." To be sure, Germans-speaking migrants planted numerous ethnic communities throughout the Ohio River Valley, the Corn and Wheat Belts, and Texas during the mid-nineteenth century. While German New Yorkers operated within the greater context of German America to varying degrees, Gotham's urban setting presented a distinctive set of challenges and opportunities. Hawgood, *The Tragedy of German-America*, xviii.

entrepreneurial opportunities as bakers, grocers, and saloon keepers.[7] New York's native-born population tended to lump all German-speaking migrants together and characterized Kleindeutschland as an exclusively Germanic space. Their contemporary observations failed to recognize the area's non-German-speakers and paid no heed to Central Europeans' geographic and religious heterogeneity. Also, Kleindeutschland was never the sole locus of German New York. German emigres were distinctly mobile during the 1850s and 1860s, establishing ethnic beachheads in Brooklyn, Queens, and northern New Jersey. In the 1860s, Yorkville joined a loose confederation of German neighborhoods when it emerged as a viable option for a burgeoning set of skilled workers including many German-speaking craftsmen.[8]

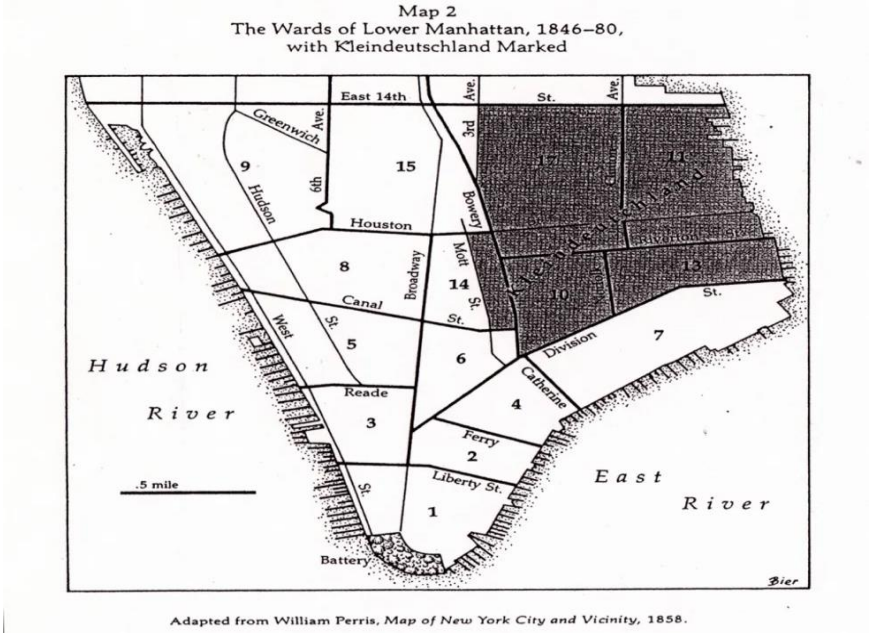

Figure 4. This map depicts Kleindeutschland within the wider territory of Lower Manhattan. It appears in Frank Jacobs, "The Short Life of Little Germany, New York's First Ethnic Enclave," *Big Think*, June 22, 2014, https://bigthink.com/strange-maps/663-death-of-little-germany-how-a-ship-sank-an-enclave.

[7] Stanley Nadel, *Little Germany: Ethnicity, Religion, and Class in New York City, 1845-80* (Urbana, University of Illinois, 1990), 13-46; Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City*, 41-42; Wilhelm, "From Community and Place to Network and Space," 65-67; Spann, *The New Metropolis*, 154; Stansell, *City of Women*, 44-45

[8] Nadel, *Little Germany*, 13-46; Binder and Reimers, *All Nations Under Heaven*, 47-48; Diana Dizerega Wall, "Examining Gender, Class, and Ethnicity in Nineteenth-Century New York City," *Historical Archaeology* 33, no. 1 (1999): 103; Ernst, 42, Edward K. Spann, *The New Metropolis, New York City, 1840-1857* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 108-109; Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church: New York's Irish and German Catholics, 1815-1865* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 38-41; Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 745.

LITTLE HUNGARY: NEW YORK'S ORIGINAL HUNGARIAN ENCLAVE

During the nineteenth century's final two decades, with Kleindeutschland firmly in place, Jewish and Christian Hungarians created and nurtured a mixed community in an area of lower Manhattan around East 14th Street known as "Little Hungary." This micro-neighborhood owed much to the culture of religious coexistence nurtured within the Kingdom of Hungary. From the creation of the Austro-Hungarian dual monarchy via the 1867 Compromise to the empire's dismemberment after the Great War, Magyars, or ethnic Hungarians, dominated a semi-autonomous polyglot in Hungary, which included significant numbers of Romanians, Germans, Slovaks, Croats, Serbs, and Rusyn (Ruthenians). Starting in the 1870s, Magyar political elites attempted to tighten their grip on minority populations through Magyarization, a hegemonic cultural and social program that made Hungarian the state's sole bureaucratic and educational language, and promoted the predominance of Magyar heritage through dance, music, and literature. The impact of Magyarization on language acquisition and transmission was evident in the percentage of Budapest residents who spoke only Magyar, which more than doubled from 1880 to 1910. Many Jewish Hungarians acquiesced to or actively participated in this hegemonic system, with some even adopting Magyar surnames. For cooperative Jews, Magyarization presented economic and social opportunities to ascend within Hungary's burgeoning industrial sector.[9]

Migrants who emigrated from the Kingdom of Hungary during the dual monarchy period were normally driven by economic concerns. In contrast, prior to 1880, most members of New York's modestly sized Hungarian community were political refugees who had fled the failed revolt against the

[9] Zoltán Szasz, "Government Policy and the Nationalities," in *Hungarians and Their Neighbors in Modern Times, 1867-1950*, ed. Ferenc Glatz (Highland Lakes, NJ: Atlantic Research and Publications, 1995), 23-32; R.W. Seton-Watson, *Racial Problems in Hungary* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1972), 171-73, 187; Paul Lendvai, *The Hungarians: A Thousand Years of Victory in Defeat* (London: Hurts & Company, 1999), 330-33; Robert A. Kann, "Hungarian Jewry during Austria-Hungary's Constitutional Period (1867-1918)," *Jewish Social Studies* 7, no. 4 (Oct. 1945): 357-86. It is worth noting that, like Hungarian Christians, the Hungarian Jewish community was not monolithic. For example, a subset of Hungarian Jews were part of the city's Orthodox community and Hungarians dominated a "moderate reform temple" on Lexington Avenue. Adam S. Ferziger, "Hungarian Separatist Orthodoxy and the Migration of Its Legacy to America: The Greenwald-Hirschenson Debate," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 105, no. 2 (Spring 2015): 250-83; Perlman, *Bridging Three Worlds*, 189.

Austrian crown in 1848. From 1880 to 1910, despite the apparent socio-economic promise of Magyarization, approximately fifteen percent of Hungary's Jewish population emigrated, nearly all of them completing their journey in the United States. By 1900, Jewish Hungarians outnumbered non-Jews of Hungarian descent in New York City two-to-one. The vast majority of Hungarian Jews and Gentiles settled in lower Manhattan. The Hungarian district's downtown boundaries were hardly fixed, but the area generally extended from the commercial hub of East Houston Street northward to Tenth Street and eastward to the East River. Historian Moses Rischin described the Hungarian quarter as a zone that was "once indisputably Kleindeutschland," an example of ethnic succession whereby newer waves of migrants replaced more established groups who, based on growing affluence, sought out neighborhoods with higher quality homes and more space.[10]

In Little Hungary, Jews and Gentiles not only coexisted and interacted but cooperated in multiple ways due to a sense of shared national identity. One contemporary observer opined that "it is almost impossible to distinguish between the Hungarian Jew and the Hungarian Gentile in New York

[10] Moses Rischin, *The Promised City: New York Jews, 1870-1914* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), 76-77; Robert Perlman, *Bridging Three Worlds: Hungarian-Jewish Americans, 1848-1914* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1991), 89;; Steven B. Vardy, "The Great Economic Immigration from Hungary: 1880-1920," in *Society in Change: Studies in Honor of Béla K. Király*, ed. Steven B. Vardy and Agnes H. Vardy (Boulder, Co: Eastern European Monographs, 1983), 189-216; Anikó Prepuk, "Jews in Metropolitan Transformations of New York City," *Fulbright Grant 2010-2011*, University of Debrecen and Rutgers, the State University of Rutgers, accessed November 28, 2017, http://www.fulbright.web2.vhost.hu/book6/prepukaniko.pdf; Tibor Frank, "Interwar New York – City of Europeans: Forging a New Identity," *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies* 16, no. 1-2 (2010): 157. Tyler Anbinder describes the area as extending north to Fourteenth Street, west to the Bowery, Fourth Avenue, and Market Street, with the East River forming a natural border to the east and south. To connect it to the German American story in New York City, Anbinder adds that the Lower East Side was roughly the "same area New Yorkers had called Kleindeutschland in the Civil War era." Tyler Anbinder, *City of Dreams: The 400-year Epic History of Immigrant New York* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016), 354-56. Mario Maffi, a scholar of turn-of-the century Manhattan, described the Lower East Side as "the pale" within which "there lived – or struggled to live – a world apart, a multi-layered social and cultural microcosm [where] each group left its deposits as in geology. Mario Maffi, *Gateway to the Promised Land: Ethnic Cultures on New York's Lower East* Side (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 65. By the 1890s, journalists regularly referred to the Lower East Side as the Jewish Quarter, the Hebrew Quarter, and the Jewish East Side, suggesting Jewish statistical and cultural predominance. Many established New Yorkers envisioned this section of downtown Manhattan simply as an overcrowded zone of human misery riddled with nearly uninhabitable tenements and infested with disease and crime. Ira Rosenwaike, *Population History of New York City* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1972), 202; Rischin, *The Promised City,* 129; Howard Markel, *Quarantine! East European Jewish Immigrants and the New York City Epidemics of 1892* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 30; Nancy L. Green, "From Downtown Tenements to Midtown Lofts: The Shifting Geography of an Urban Industry," in *A Coat of Many Colors: Immigration, Globalism, and Reform in the New York City Garment Industry,* ed. Daniel Soyer (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 28-32; Daniel Soyer, "Cockroach Capitalists: Jewish Contractors at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," in *A Coat of Many Colors: Immigration, Globalism, and Reform in the New York City Garment Industry*, ed. Daniel Soyer (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 91.

[because] they mingle indiscriminately, [and] both glory in the traditional freedom and patriotism of the Magyar."[11] Seventy-five percent of Hungarian Jews claimed Magyar as their mother tongue. Consequently, most Jewish and non-Jewish Hungarians read the same newspapers and a high proportion of Magyars boarded with Jewish Hungarian families. Language may also help to explain why Hungarian Jews did not cling to co-religionist affiliations to the same degree as other Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, a fact underscored by their decision to appoint a Hungarian chief rabbi to oversee religious services for Gotham's Hungarian Jews in the early 1890s.[12]

Multiple examples of Jewish and non-Jewish Hungarians banding together to form relief organizations, such as the Hungarian Association, and cultural institutions like the First Hungarian Literary Society, or A New-Yorki Első Magyar Önképző Egylet, exist. Majorities of Hungarian Jews and Gentiles also worked together within the lower Manhattan's expanding garment industry, although more Jewish Hungarians attained positions of upper management and ownership within that sector. During the Little Hungary period, outsiders tended to see Jewish and Gentile Hungarians as forming a single ethnic category. A 1900 *New York Times* article relating to Little Hungary did not distinguish between Jewish and non-Jewish Hungarians, instead focusing on the Maypole dance as a pan-Hungarian cultural expression. "Almost anywhere in town children can be seen dancing in the streets to an organ

[11] Louis H. Pink, "The Magyar in New York," *Charities* 13, no. 10 (Dec. 3, 1904): 262.
[12] Ibid.; Tibor Frank, *Double Exile: Migrations of Jewish-Hungarian Professionals Through Germany to the United States, 1919-1945* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009), 226; Perlman, *Bridging Three Worlds*, 137-38; Rischin, *The Promised City*, 129, 148; Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers* (New York: Simon Schuster, 1976), 82; Daniel Soyer, "Introduction," in *A Coat of Many Colors,* 8; Hasia R. Diner, *Lower East Side Memories: A Jewish Place in America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 38; *New York Times*, "Benefit of the Hungarian Association," December 16, 1894; Deborah Dwork, "Immigrant Jews on the Lower East Side of New York: 1880-1914," in *The American Jewish Experience*, ed. Jonathan D. Sarna (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1997); *New York Times,* "Terpsichore on East Side," August 5, 1900; Hutchins Hapgood, *The Spirit of the Ghetto: Studies of the Jewish Quarter of New York* (New York: Schocken Books, 1966); Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the Tenements of New York* (New York: Sagamore Press, Inc., 1957), 76-87, 88-112. Riis, for instance, distinguishes several groups of ethnic Jews in the Lower East Side, including Russians and Poles, Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*, 77, 107. Historian Elizabeth Ewen comments that social workers who focused on the Lower East Side in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were often surprised "to find well-worked out systems of neighborly support and solidarity in the new communities." Elizabeth Ewen, *Immigrant Women in the Land of Dollars: Life and Culture on the Lower East Side, 1890-1925* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1985), 86.

grinder's music," the article begins, "but in no quarter have these impromptu dances developed into such a science as along what is known as "the Hungarian Broadway."[13]

Kleindeutschland and Little Hungary represent ethnic Yorkville's prologue. During the final third of the nineteenth century, more German- and Hungarian-speaking migrants called lower Manhattan home than any other part of the New York. Especially around the turn-of-the century, many inhabitants of these communities traveled northward to resettle in the less-developed area of Yorkville. In the process, they transplanted and continued to nurture broad understandings of ethnic identity fueled by linguistic commonalities and shared cultural practices. Ethnic Yorkville, while not merely a replica of these earlier enclaves, showed some family resemblances in its early days. Ethnic faith communities, businesses, and social clubs relocated or started branches on the Upper East Side. Gradually, Yorkville developed into a successor hub for both communities, and even outsiders looked north when seeking out or discussing Gotham's representative German and Hungarian neighborhoods. The phrases Little Germany and Little Hungary even surface from time to time as appellations for Yorkville's ethnic neighborhoods. Chapter 1 situates the German and Hungarian enclaves in lower Manhattan within the larger story of ethnic Yorkville's origins and early development. It demonstrates that well before the American Civil War, German migrants found Yorkville's wide-open spaces conducive to their ethnic festivals. As lower Manhattan's population exploded during the peak immigration years of the late nineteenth century, these pre-existing connections led these migrants and their descendants to reestablish their ethnic community in Yorkville.

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[13] Robert M. Langer, "Arpad Gerster and Max Thorek Contributions to American Surgery," *Journal of Investigative Surgery* 22, (2009): 162-66; *New York Times*, "Benefit of the Hungarian Association," December 16, 1894; Pink, 262; Perlman, *Bridging Three Worlds*, 137-38, 249; Rischin, *The Promised City*, 129, 148; Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers*, 82; Daniel Soyer, "Introduction," 8; Diner, *Lower East Side Memories,* 38; *New York Times*, "Benefit of the Hungarian Association," December 16, 1894; Deborah Dwork, "Immigrant Jews on the Lower East Side of New York: 1880-1914,"; *New York Times,* "Terpsichore on East Side," August 5, 1900; Hapgood, *The Spirit of the Ghetto: Studies of the Jewish Quarter of New York*; Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the Tenements of New York* (New York: Sagamore Press, Inc., 1957), 76-87, 88-112. Riis, for instance, distinguishes several groups of ethnic Jews in the Lower East Side, including Russians and Poles, Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*, 77, 107.

CHAPTER 1
RECALLING ETHNIC YORKVILLE IN BLOOM: 1840S TO THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

It Is Spring

Spring lets her blue ribbon,
flutter in the breeze again;
sweet familiar scents,
drift with promise o'er the land.
Violets lie dreaming already,
soon to be awakened –.
Listen, from afar the faint sound of a harp!
Spring, it is you!
I can hear you coming!

Eduard Mörike, 1829[1]

"All Yorkville was ablaze," announced the *New York Times* on October 13, 1889, and "[e]very store which had a German name over its lintel, every house where sons of the Fatherland lived, had lots of lanterns and more flags, and as much light as they could get into their windows."[2] Local German Americans used the relocation of one of its many Turn Vereins, clubs conjoining athletic training with egalitarian political ideology, for a public celebration proclaiming their contributions to growing Gotham. As immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe started to pour into New York as part of the so-called "new immigration," German-speakers reinforced their more established presence. On this damp evening, members of the Central Turn Verein, joined by several other German American clubs and organizations, processed in a line of march from their old headquarters on East 77th Street in Yorkville. Accompanied by a band and drum corps, they methodically stepped in unison past the alighted

[1] "It Is Spring," Translated by Charles L. Cingolani, 2008," Charles L. Cingolani, accessed November 15, 2019, http://www.cingolani.com/3em.html. Eduard Mörike was born in 1804 in Ludswigburg in Swabia. He was a Lutheran pastor as well as a writer and poet. Mörike's family claims descendancy from Martin Luther. Contemporary and later composers put some of Mörike's poetry to music, connecting him to the German folk tradition in multiple ways. One of his best-known works, Mozart on the Way to Prague, describes an imagined episode in the life of Mozart, where he and his wife, Constance, travel by carriage to Prague. Among other things the work ruminates on the ephemeral nature of genius. T.M. Campbell, writing in 1917, said of Mörike, "[t]he people do him the honor of singing his songs while forgetting who wrote them." T.M. Campbell, "Eduard Mörike: A Neglected German Classic," *The Sewanee Review* 25, no. 2 (Apr., 1917): 171; see also Herbert Meyer, Eduard Mörike, *Zweite Auflage* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1961); Susan Youens, "Doubters and Believers: Case Studies in the Geistliche Lieder of Eduard Mörike and Hugo Wolf," *American Journal of Semiotics* 13, nos. 1-4 (1996): 103-146.
[2] "In the New Clubhouse: The Central Turn Verein Takes Possession of New Quarters," *New York Times*, October 13, 1889, 2.

headquarters of the Arion and the Liederkranz, New York's two most prominent German singing societies, toward their grand new space in what was then Yorkville's southern reaches on East 67th Street. Jacob Ruppert, owner of the Ruppert Brewery and one of three lords of lager whose commercial exploits and devotion to institution building helped forge German Yorkville, donated $750,000, the equivalent of more than $20 million today, to purchase and renovate this property. The beer magnate, the son of Bavarian immigrants, handed the keys to the new clubhouse to Charles Nehrbas, a Rhinelander brought to New York as an infant who rose to become an attorney, a municipal judge, a leading figure within Democratic circles, and president of the Central Turn Verein.[3]

The Turn Verein members' departure from central Yorkville symbolized the vitality of German Americans in this Upper East Side neighborhood. Yorkville's German presence had steadily increased for two generations. The good health of its houses of worship and social organizations engendered spin-offs and subsidiaries inside and outside the district. Germans were not withdrawing from central Yorkville. Rather, the neighborhood served as a base camp for further expansion. In the process, these German Americans appended Manhattan's one-time hinterlands to its more settled environs, establishing a network through which Germanness would transcend Manhattan Island.[4]

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Yorkville rarely appears within the social memory of German New York's early stages, other than in faint whispers. Occasionally, the ethnic Yorkville imaginary, a set of nostalgic and mythologized memories of Yorkville's ethnic past, reaches back to the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries to introduce the Upper East Side's landed gentry who had German roots, such as the Rhinelanders, Astors, and Schermerhorns. This "great man" historical narrative does little to elucidate Yorkville's

[3] "In the New Clubhouse: The Central Turn Verein Takes Possession of New Quarters," *New York Times*, October 13, 1889, 2; "Judge Nehrbas Dead: Carried Off by Consumption Aggravated by the Grip," *New York Times*, March 16, 1890, 13; "Tammany's Formal Approval," *New York Times*, October 20, 1883, 1; Ruppert and Nehrbas embodied the concept of hybrid identity so common within German New York. Each saw their efforts to nurture German cultural identity as part of their broader community involvement, as congruous with engaged citizenship.

[4] "In the New Clubhouse: The Central Turn Verein Takes Possession of New Quarters," *New York Times*, October 13, 1889, 2.

development as a German enclave, however, other than through the gradual partitioning of the wealthy land barons' immense property holdings. Rather, the common narrative holds that ethnic Yorkville's story cannot start until *Kleindeutschland*'s tale ends. That is, received wisdom conveniently affixes German Yorkville's birth to the 1904 General Slocum steamship disaster, the city's worst tragedy prior to the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001. The Ladies Aid Society of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, a prominent place of worship in lower Manhattan, had chartered the General Slocum to take women and children associated with the Sunday-school program to an annual picnic at the Weisser Garten on Long Island. More than one thousand people, three-quarters of them members of St. Mark's, perished when the steamer caught fire in the East River. Beginning in 1905, survivors and community members held an annual memorial service at the Lutheran Cemetery in Middle Village, Queens. Relatives of the deceased, however, continued to suffer long after the incident. They failed to recover any significant monetary relief despite the establishment of a compensatory claims process. William Van Schaick, the captain who abandoned the burning vessel, served approximately four years at Sing Sing prison for criminal negligence, only to be pardoned by President William H. Taft on Christmas Day 1912 over the objections of the Organization of General Slocum Survivors.[5]

Subsequent retrospectives of the General Slocum disaster, commencing in earnest more than a generation later, depicted *Kleindeutschland* as saturated in melancholy and claimed that this collective

[5] "Yorkville Homes in Earlier Days: Many Well-Known Residents Found Locality Pleasant Place to Live," *New York Times*, August 5, 1934, RE1; Report of the United States Commission of Investigation upon the Disaster to the Steamer "General Slocum," *U.S. Department of Commerce and Labor*, October 8, 1904 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904); "General Slocum Survivors Hold Memorial for Dead," *New York Daily News*, June 16, 1922, 3; "Slocum Memorial," *New York Daily News*, June 7, 1941, 7; "Want No Mercy for Van Schaick: Slocum Survivors Protest against Plan to Parole Aged Steamboat Captain," *New York Times*, February 2, 1911, 1; "Van Schaick Pardoned: Captain of the Ill-Fated Slocum Is Restored to Full Citizenship," *New York Times*, December 20, 1912, 24; Gilbert King, "A Spectacle of Horror: The Burning of the General Slocum," *Smithsonian.com*, February 21, 2012, accessed December 16, 2019, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/a-spectacle-of-horror-the-burning-of-the-general-slocum-104712974/; "To Aid Slocum Survivors: President Roosevelt Gives Promise to Delegation from New York," *New York Times*, February 6, 1906, 5; "$1,475,673 Slocum Claims: City Wants $950 for Draping City Hall – Forty-seven Death Claims, *New York Times*, January 29, 1905, 18. Even though more than a century has passed, dedicated volunteers continued with annual memorial services at the cemetery where several unidentified victims are buried. Lisa L. Colangelo, "General Slocum Victims Remembered 109 Years," *New York Daily News*, June 14, 2013; The memorial to the victims near Tompkins Square depicts two children gazing toward the water, and contains the phrase, "They were earth's purest children young and fair." David W. Dunlap, "In Remembrance of Sorrow from Other Times," *New York Times*, January 25, 2002, E39.

sadness precipitated a German exodus to Yorkville. Syndicated columnist James Aswell, writing in 1935, described Yorkville as a place "which took on its thoroughly German complexion after the tragic General Slocum steamship fire near the turn of the century."[6] Aswell asserted that "so many from the community died in the disaster that a mass migration took place uptown – to get away from a neighborhood which reminded [them] only of mourning."[7] A 1948 *Daily News* column by Danton Walker repeated the tragic exodus story while adding that "[t]he bierstubes and rathskellers that had closed temporarily, in mourning over the General Slocum incident, eventually shuttered permanently."[8] By stating that "[t]he Hungarian coffee houses soon followed suit," Walker intimated that the Germans' uptown migration stimulated similar movements by other Central and Eastern European groups.[9] By the twenty-first century, many recalled the General Slocum disaster as a historical event with hard edges: *Kleindeutschland's* death in 1904 simultaneously breathed life into German Yorkville. A 2003 piece for the periodical *German Life* illustrates this point. "One result of the fire," wrote Therese Lanigan-Schmidt "was that the entire population of Little Germany soon moved uptown to Yorkville to escape the ever-present memories of their devastating losses."[10] Even sources acknowledging the presence of German-speakers in Upper Manhattan prior to the General Slocum disaster downplay the significance of German Yorkville prior to the General Slocum disaster. Ilona Stolken's 2013 German-language synthesis of German Gotham devotes a single paragraph to nineteenth century Yorkville before presenting an in-depth account of the 1904 tragedy as the district's origin story.[11]

Ethnic Yorkville did not materialize *ex nihilo* from the wreckage of the General Slocum disaster, as demonstrated by the story of the Central Turn Verein's move to its new clubhouse in 1889. While the

[6] James Aswell, "My New York," *Shenandoah Evening Herald (PA)*, October 19, 1935, 2.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Danton Walker, "Broadway: Café Cavalcade," *New York Daily News*, May 8, 1948, 13C
[9] Ibid.
[10] Therese Lanigan-Schmidt, "The Sinking of the General Slocum," *German Life* 9, no. 6 (Apr.-May 2003), 28.
[11] Danton Walker, "Broadway: Café Cavalcade," *New York Daily News*, May 8, 1948, 13C; Lanigan-Schmidt, "The Sinking of the General Slocum," 28; Ilona Stölken, *Das Deutsche New York: Eine Spurensuche* (Leipzig: Lehmstedt Verlag, 2013), 56-57.

tragedy offered a clear and dramatic beginning, it problematically collapsed the narratives of Yorkville and Little Germany, flattening out differences between the two neighborhoods and creating an artificially linear story. Rather, the two enclaves co-existed for several decades, assisted by transportation innovations such as the extension of the New York & Harlem Railroad from lower Manhattan to Harlem as well as the elevated train system. The German-speaking migrants who ventured to Yorkville well before the 1880s formed a vanguard who transformed this section of Manhattan from a rural, lightly settled area as late as the 1830s, to a prosperous suburban community. In fact, by the late 1880s, Yorkville had matched *Kleindeutschland's* lofty status as a social and commercial center of German life within the flourishing metropolis. Yorkville's ascent and *Kleindeutschland's* decline during the nineteenth century's final decade rendered the former the indispensable node within the German American network, which subsequently extended to all corners of Greater New York. Moreover, Yorkville beckoned other European migrants, Hungarians among them, in search of space, improved housing, and enhanced economic opportunities. Recovering this past yields vital information about how Germans and Hungarians constructed and projected ethnic identity, how they perceived and responded to economic and political threats and opportunities within New York's rapidly changing urban milieu, how they made sense of discrepancies between America's idealistic promises and its harsh realities, and how external audiences came to interpret and describe ethnic Yorkville as a foreign space with a distinct personality.[12]

[12] Lofaso, *Origins and History of the Village of Yorkville in the City of New York*, 200-49; John D. Steven, Sensationalism and the New York Press (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 59; Charles Lockwood, Manhattan Moves Uptown: An Illustrated History (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976), 305-310; New York City Subway Authority, "Second Avenue El," https://www.nycsubway.org/wiki/The_2nd_Avenue_Elevated, accessed September 28, 2017. In the 1830s, Yorkville was a fledgling village reachable by the New York and Harlem Railroad, which, as the name would suggest, terminated in Harlem. New York's affluent set sometimes ventured to the northern woodlands via Third Avenue propelled by horse-powered sleighs, often partaking in food and drink at Wintergreen's, a popular tavern which served up hot buttered rum and sherry flips. The frontier zone of Yorkville provided a recreational outlet for Gotham's urban dwellers. Lloyd Morris, *Incredible New York: High Life and Low Life from 1850 to 1950* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996), 11-12; C. Astor Bristed, "The Upper Ten Thousand: Sketches of American Society," (New York: Stringer and Townsend, 1852), 24. It is also worth noting that the designation "Yorkville" was used liberally during the first half of the nineteenth century. For example, the reservoir constructed in the 1840s to hold water from the Croton Aqueduct project was dubbed the Yorkville Reservoir, even though it lay well west of Lexington avenue, at the present location of the Central Park's Great Lawn. Christopher Gray, "A Reservoir Below Causes a Dust Bowl

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Although evidence exists of some Central European settlement on the Upper East Side prior to the Civil War, New York's German-speakers first stamped Yorkville through their festive culture. In the late 1850s, German New Yorkers frequently choreographed resplendent outdoor festivals in uptown New York's open spaces, typically utilizing Conrad's Yorkville Park, also known as Conrad's Garden, located at the juncture of 86th Street and the East River, as well as Jones' Woods, an area extending from Sixty-fifth to Sixty-first Streets and bounded by the East River and First Avenue. At these events, Yorkville served as a gathering place for German Americans from *Kleindeutschland*, Yorkville, Brooklyn, and New Jersey. Further, German Americans leveraged these events for political gain by inviting the city's highest office holders to partake in the merriment. In turn, the throngs provided municipal officials with an efficient means to court the ethnic vote, in the process multiplying German Americans' political power and influence.[13]

The celebration of Pfingstmontag, or Whit Monday, in May 1858 provides a glimpse into the sights, sounds, and scale of these spectacles. Twenty-thousand attendees crammed into the two upper Manhattan festival grounds despite foul weather. They listened to German bands and singing societies, consumed German fare in the form of ham, sausage, and veal, and drank plenty of lager. The Yorkville locale attracted German New York's old guard, including the Allegemeine Sängerbunde, a well-established singing club, a coalition of New York's Turn Vereins, and the German Rifle Company. Mayor Daniel F. Tiemann graced the Yorkville contingent by joining in a grand procession around the

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Above 1842 'Bathtub' under the Great Lawn Is to Get a Drainage System," *New York Times*, March 10, 1996, RCW7; Christopher Gray, "Gobbled Up by a Great Lawn: The Yorkville Reservoir Was Built in the Middle of Nowhere: Then Along Came Central Park," *New York Times*, February 10, 2013, RE8.

[13] "New-York City: The Sangerbund at Yorkville--Chief Matsell and Mayor Wood Dine with Them, and Mayor Wood Makes a Speech-Six-Thousand People Present, Immense Quantities of Lager Bier Consumed," *New York Times*, June 3, 1857, 8; Vera Brodsky Lawrence, *Strong on Music: The New York Music Scene in the Days of George Templeton Strong, Vol. III, Repercussions, 1857-1862* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 178-79; "Great German Festival in Aid of the Fund for Erecting a Monument to Baron Steuben," *New York Times*, July 27, 1858, 4; *The Middle States: A Handbook for Travelers, A Guide to the Chief Cities and Popular Resorts of the Middle States and to Their Scenery and Historic Attractions; with the Northern Frontier from Niagara Falls to Montreal; also Baltimore, Washington, and Northern Virginia* (Boston: James R. Osgood & Company, 1876), 32.

fairgrounds and imbibing lager beer whenever requested. Mayor Tiemann, a second-generation German American, also delivered a speech praising German culture and asserting that only Germans could engineer such merrymaking while avoiding the mayhem often caused by alcohol. Frederick A. Tallmadge, General Superintendent of the Metropolitan Police, upped the ante by adding that an Irish event of equivalent size would likely result in numerous fisticuffs. For decades to come, Gotham's newspapers would frequently restate the trope of an innate Germanic tolerance for alcohol, and these claims still echo in events such as the contemporary German-American Steuben Parade.[14]

In the 1860s, growing numbers of first- and second-generation Germans made upper Manhattan more than a recreational venue. German-speakers started to venture north from downtown Manhattan in the 1850s, settling in micro-neighborhoods on East 26th Street near Second Avenue, and eventually between East Fiftieth and East Sixtieth Streets proximate to Third Avenue. In 1859, German New Yorkers inscribed the Yorkville area in a material sense by dedicating the first monument in what would become Central Park, in honor of the poet Friedrich Schiller. After the Civil War, increasing numbers of Germans moved into Yorkville, as economic opportunity met expanded housing options. Speculators such as William "Boss' Tweed pounced on Yorkville as improved and extended streets and avenues quickly came online. They built scores of brick row houses, typically three-stories in height, boasting clean Croton

[14] "The Germans and their Festival: Pfingstmontag, the Saengerbunde, the Saengerunde, and the Gesangverein – Twenty Thousand Germans at Yorkville Park and at Jones' Woods, Mayor Tiemann Drinks Lager Beer," *New York Times*, May 25, 1858, 4; Elbridge T. Gerry, *Trial of Hon. Frederick A. Tallmadge, General Superintendent of Metropolitan Police* (New York: Baker & Goodwin Printers, 1858), 1. For other uptown German festivals see "Whitsuntide and Pfingstmontag: Grand Gala Day for the Germans Jollity in our Suburban Retreats," *New York Times*, May 29,1860, 1; "Among the Germans," *New York Times*, July 5, 1873, 8; "The I.O.R.M.: Festival at Conrad's Park – Handsome Procession and Ceremonies – The Grand Tribe Officers Present – Address by the Grand Secretary – Annual Session," *New York Times*, September 10, 1862, 2; "General City News," *New York Times*, September 4, 1860, 8. There were times when Gotham's print press questioned the image of the ultra-disciplined German. For example, in 1858 a municipal judge claimed that a group of inebriated Germans coming from an uptown festival had harassed female travelers and physically assaulted him on the Third Avenue El. "Justice Osborne Assaulted in the Railroad Cabs," *New York Times*, June 24, 1858, 1.

water and indoor bathrooms. The profiteers devoted much of their marketing efforts to the city's German and Irish residents anxious to better their station [15]

The population of the nineteenth ward, which included Yorkville, reached 40,000 in 1865. Yorkville's commercial and residential development, which had clung so tightly to East 86th Street, now fanned out beyond the paved streets. In this same decade, multiple breweries, including ventures owned by George Ringler, Jacob Ruppert, and George Ehret, a brewer who perfected his craft in Heidelberg and Mannheim, launched large-scale operations in Yorkville's northern section sometimes referred to as "Hellgate."[16] These businesses joined an emerging mixture of light industry attracting migrants seeking steady work, many of whom wanted to settle close to their jobs. In addition, Henry Steinway, the renowned piano maker, established a factory just across the East River in Astoria, Queens. Germans, as well as other European-born immigrants, found gainful employment at the Steinway plant, many commuting to work via the East 92nd Street ferry that operated between Yorkville and Long Island City in the 1870s.[17]

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[15] Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 930; "Central Park: Friedrich Von Schiller Monument," New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, accessed July 8, 2020, https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/central-park/highlights/13316.

[16] Social memory of Yorkville's brewing days often fails to mention George Ringler's family-owned brewery. Ringler, born in Friedewald in the Hesse area of Germany, established his brewery in the same general location as Ehret and Ruppert in 1872. All three enterprises were in a growth phase in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, but Ehret and Ruppert increased production at a faster rate than Ringler. F.W. Salem, *Beer, Its History and Its Economic Value as a National Beverage (*Hartford: F.W. Salem & Co. 1880), 235-37; William Steinway Diary, 1861-1896, https://americanhistory.si.edu/steinwaydiary/annotations/?id=827, accessed March 1, 2020. Rosa Ringler, the wife of brewer George Ringler, was noted for her charitable giving and commitment to Yorkville's poor throughout the latter nineteenth century. "The Poor Lose a Friend," *New York Times*, March 28, 1887, 8. The geographic tag "Hellgate" is a bit slippery but typically stands for the northern section of Yorkville (the east 90s) as well as the junction point of the East River and the Harlem River just off East 96th street and Carl Schurz Park. The watery version of Hellgate still conjures recollections of the Slocum disaster, for it was here the ship burned and most of its passengers perished. Michael Nichols, *Hell Gate: A Nexus of New York City's East River* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2018), 4, 86-88.

[17] Peter Conolly-Smith, *Translating America: An Immigrant Press Visualizes American Popular Culture, 1895-1918* (Washington: Smithsonian Books, 2004), 28; Noa Kasman, "AHMC of the Month: Central Park's First Monument," *New-York Historical Society*, September 25, 2017, accessed September 26, 2017, http://blog.nyhistory.org/ahmc-of-the-month-central-parks-first-monument/; "Local Intelligence: Central Park, What's to be Seen There and How the Money Goes," *New York Times*, August 19, 1866, 8; "Report of the Council of Hygiene and Public health of the Citizens' Association of New York upon the Sanitary Condition of the City," *Citizens' Association of New York* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1865), 325-27;; George Von Skal, *History of German Immigration in the United States and Successful German-Americans and Their Descendants* (New York: F.T. & J.C. Smiley, 1908), 98, 103; "Obituary--The Late Henry Steinway," *Scientific American* 24, no. 8 (Feb. 18, 1871): 117, Stable URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26040633; Tim Goyens, *Beer and Revolution: The German Anarchist Movement in New York City, 1880-1914* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 23; Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History*

As Manhattan's population pushed beyond East 59th Street, the northern boundary of development for much of the nineteenth century, a mixture of native-born and foreign-born sojourners added to Yorkville's diversity. Yorkville's growing German population seized opportunities to open shops, banks, and medical facilities that catered to co-ethnics and other newcomers to the Upper East Side. They also attended to their spiritual needs by erecting new places of worship, or, in some cases, relocating churches originally founded downtown. The Immanuel German Evangelical Lutheran Church, started in 1863, was one of Yorkville's first ethnic congregations. German-speaking Catholics, many of whom migrated to Yorkville to work in light industry, began to worship in the now defunct St. Joseph's Orphanage in the 1860s. Archbishop John McCloskey, responding to this group's appeals, authorized the establishment of a German national parish in 1873. St. Joseph's was built and dedicated the following year, and in 1880, a parochial school run by Bavarian nuns opened its doors. In the 1880s, German Evangelicals broke ground on a church on East 84th Street between First and Second Avenues. Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church assumed possession of this property through auction in 1892, and subsequently merged with St. Mark's Lutheran Church, the latter relocating to Yorkville from its lower Manhattan location several decades after the General Slocum disaster. Oftentimes, surveys of Yorkville's residual "ethnic space" deemphasize or omit these places of worship, suggesting that all that remains of ethnic Yorkville is a German restaurant and a butcher shop. Not only were these spaces a vital part of ethnic Yorkville's social dimensions during its peak period, but some continue to welcome pilgrims who return to the neighborhood regularly to experience a religious service in their ancestral tongue, connect with former neighbors, and engage with their heritage.[18]

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of New York City to 1898 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 938; Diana Shaman, "If You're Thinking of Living In/Steinway, Queens; By Any Name, Residents Find It Friendly," *New York Times*, March 2, 2003, RE5.

[18] "Local Miscellany: Prospects of the Broken Banks, Examination of Thompson W. Decker, Late President of the Third Avenue Bank, the German Up-town and Other Banks," *New York Times*, December 19, 1875, 7; St. Joseph Church remains connected to the neighborhood's migrant past through its monthly German-language mass as well as its decision to host weekly Hungarian-language masses. As for the latter, the church unofficially adopted some of the Hungarian parishioners of the now-defunct St. Stephen of Hungary on East 82nd Street. Saint Joseph's Church, Yorkville (New York City), "History," accessed December 16, 2019, https://www.stjosephsyorkville.org/history/; David W. Dunlap, "In the Heart of Yorkville: Life Has Changed for German

Yorkville's Central and Eastern European population increased rapidly during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Most migrants came directly from Europe or relocated from lower Manhattan. Growing numbers of Germans left *Kleindeutschland*, a trend caused, in part, by the influx of so-called "new immigrants" from Southern and Eastern Europe. By the 1880s, the Tenth Ward, once a vital section of lower Manhattan's German enclave, assumed the moniker of the "Jewish Quarter." German migrants' growing affluence also contributed to this movement. Throughout the 1870s and 1880s, German New Yorkers continued to gain traction within the city's skilled trades. Communities such as Yorkville offered upwardly mobile ethnics enhanced economic opportunities, better accommodations with increased living space, as well as the ability to maintain ethnic connectedness. Yorkville became even more attractive when the city extended the Second Avenue Elevated line northward in the 1880s with 86th Street serving as an express station. This technological tethering of Yorkville and *Kleindeutschland* allowed the people, products, and ideas of German Manhattan to flow two ways with a new level of efficiency.[19]

The General Slocum thesis inaccurately holds that non-German Central and Eastern Europeans slowly relocated uptown from lower Manhattan only after a critical mass of Germans had abandoned

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Catholics, *New York Times*, April 19, 2008, B1; Stölken, *Das Deutsche New York*, 57. Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun, an Orthodox Jewish synagogue on East 85th street, traces its neighborhood roots to 1872, although it current place of worship opened in 1905. Irving Spiegel, "Yorkville Synagogue Marks 100th Year, Rabbi His 50th with Congregation," *New York Times*, October 8, 1972, 38. In this same period, African Americans took up residence in the area immediately north of East 96th Street, normally identified as the neighborhood's upper boundary. A retrospective piece in the *New York Age* in 1925 referred to East 97th Street and its proximate environs as part of the developing community of Yorkville. The presence of a black micro-neighborhood in this area begins to explain why East 96th Street emerged as Yorkville's rigid northern boundary. According to this article, "[i]n the early settling of colored citizens on the East Side, there was a feeling of enmity and misunderstanding that existed within the rank and file of early Americans who were original residents in that section, and colored citizens were forced to fight out their own salvation." "Yorkville's Negro Citizens Have a Bit of N.Y. History: Early Settlers Uptown Took up Abode in East 97th Street 50 Years Ago," *New York Age*, May 25, 1925, 2. In 1868, the German Hospital and Dispensary was constructed at Fourth avenue, now Park avenue and east 77th street. In 1890, an ambulance service (horse-drawn) was established at the corner of First Avenue and East 77th Street. "Hospital History," *Lenox Hill Hospital/Northwell Health*, accessed December 20, 2019, https://lenoxhill.northwell.edu/about?id=102; Klaus Wust, *Guardian on the Hudson: The German Society of the City of New York, 1784-1984* (New York: The German Society of the City of New York, 1984), 38.

[19]Charles Lockwood, *Manhattan Moves Uptown,* 305-310; *New York City Subway Authority*, "Second Avenue El," https://www.nycsubway.org/wiki/The_2nd_Avenue_Elevated, accessed September 28, 2017; Eunice Fuller Barnard, "New York's Elevated Now Sixty Years Old: The Elevated Inspired Fear," *New York Times,* July 1, 1928, 122. Stölken, *Das Deutsche New York,* 56-57.

Kleindeutschland in the wake of the 1904 tragedy. This claim elides the earlier northern migrations of former inhabitants of the Kingdom of Hungary.[20] Events surrounding the death of the Hungarian-born virtuoso violinist, Edouard Reményi, reveal the existence of a Hungarian émigré community in Yorkville prior to the turn of the century. In May 1898, the Yorkville Hungarian Society (YHS), an organization composed of self-identifying Christian and Jewish Hungarian men, led the United Hungarian Societies of New York's effort to honor the world-class musician publicly. Reményi's body lied in repose at their East 78th Street lodge prior to the funeral. Two-hundred members of the YHS led the funeral cortège as it proceeded twenty blocks south from Yorkville to the Lenox Lyceum, the site of the obsequies, where the group joined the Hungarian Literary Society, the Hungarian Singing Society, and the Hungarian Sick and Benevolent Society in a show of ethnic strength and unity. Hungarians were eager to celebrate Reményi, who had fought against Hapsburg rule in the failed revolution of 1848-49 and thereafter lived as a political exile in New York. They hailed his story as their own, a freedom loving people whose values aligned with and brought value to their host country.[21]

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[20] This included Hungarians but also Czechs and Slovaks. Czechs, often referred to as Bohemians, migrated to Yorkville in the 1880s. In 1888, they erected the Jan Hus Presbyterian Church on East 74th Street. By the 1890s, Yorkville's growing Czech community constructed the Bohemian National Hall on East 73rd Street, a multipurpose venue containing a spacious ballroom, a restaurant, and even a shooting gallery. Czech leaders approved an addition to this building in 1899, in response to concerns that the original space was inadequate to meet the burgeoning community's needs. Christopher Gray, "Cityscape: Bohemian National Hall; On East 73rd Street, A Lingering Vestige of a Czech Heritage," *New York Times*, March 15, 1987, 493; Barbara Crosseite, "In Search of the Czechoslovak East Side," *New York Times*, September 10, 1976, 68; Vlado Simko, "Evolution of Our Ethnic Community in New York City," KOSMAS, Czechoslovak and Central European Journal 25 (2012): 103 – 114; "Farewell to Jan Hus Presbyterian Church As We Know It," Bohemian Benevolent Association, accessed on December 15, 2019, https://www.bohemianbenevolent.org/news/farewell-to-jan-hus-presbyterian-church-as-we-know-it.

[21] "Lenox Lyceum Under Long Lease: Amusement Hall to be Controlled by Walter J. Salomon for Twenty-one Years, Owned by J.D. Crimmins Annual Rental of $50,000 Obtained – Structure Will Probably Be Converted Into a Business Building," *New York Times*, August 16, 1907, 2; "Girl's Picture Adds to Mystery: Acquaintance of Simon Szekely, Union Station Suicide, Seeks to Explain His Motive," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 25, 1904, 11; "Edouard Remenyi Dies Suddenly: The Curtain Rung Down on the Life of the Great Musician at the Orpheum Stage," *San Francisco Call*, May 16, 1898, 10; "Edouard Remenyi's Funeral: Arrangements Completed for Services Over the Violinist's Body," *New York Times*, May 26, 1898, 7; "Remenyi's Body Arrives: Arrangement Completed for the Public Funeral To-morrow, *New York Times*, May 28, 1898, 4; "Burial of Remenyi: Famous Violinist Laid to Rest in Beautiful Evergreen Cemetery," *Boston Globe*, May 30, 1898, 5; "The Funeral of Remenyi: Friends of the dead Musician Crowd Lenox Lyceum to Honor His Memory," *New York Times*, May 30, 1898, 7. It bears mention that Reményi's life speaks to the complex hybridity present within the Hungarian diaspora of this period. While details about the precise date and location of Reményi's birth vary, sources concur that his original surname, Hoffmann, signifies his Jewish lineage. Early in his life, the musical prodigy adopted a Magyar name and identified as a Christian. Gwendolyn Dunlevy Kelley and George P. Upton, *Edouard Remenyi: Musician, Litterateur, and Man: An Appreciation* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1906), 9, 70-73; Karen H. Brown, "Edouard Reményi," *African Arts* 33, no. 2 (Summer, 2000): 11; Corinne Ramey, "Learn to Love Johannes Brahms' Piano Quartet in G Minor," Op. 25, *San Anselmo* 27, no. 5 (Dec 2012): 37-38; "Personal," *Harper's Bazaar* 28, no. 33 (Aug 17,

For ethnic Yorkville, the 1890s represented not only a time to look to the future but also a moment to take stock of the past. In Spring 1896, the Yorkville Männerchor, a male singing society headquartered at the corner of East 92nd Street and Second Avenue, commemorated its fortieth anniversary with weeks of celebratory events. The Männerchor, formed during German New York's nascent years, regularly appeared at early German festivals at Conrad's Yorkville Park, presented concerts throughout the city, and networked with other musical clubs as a founding member of the United Singers of New York. In reporting on these festivities, the *New York Times* stressed how this civic organization had survived several crises, including its near extinction when members joined the Union army during the Civil War. While the Männerchor's perseverance was noteworthy on its own, in the bigger picture it stood for the determination of Yorkville's mid-century German pioneers who had forged a strong and stable ethnic community in what had once been upper Manhattan's hinterlands.[22]

Ethnic Yorkville also constituted a political space during its formative years. As early as the 1870s, Yorkville's German community broke into various political factions. While New York's Germans tended to be politically heterogenous, many in Yorkville backed a reform agenda, which, among other things, questioned the raw political power of Tammany Hall. By the 1880s, the city's Democratic machine took notice, as some of its leaders warned candidates about the growing influence of the German element. Courting the German vote, either directly or by attending German social events, became a mainstay of municipal political practice. Some of Yorkville's German-speakers, however,

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1895): 659. Speakers recalled Reményi's participation in the failed mid-century revolution against Hapsburg rule, which caused him to seek refuge in New York. Morris Cukor, a Hungarian American lawyer, even took creative license with the circumstances of the violinist's death, telling the capacity crowd that, "Hungary cannot alone lay claim to owning this great man, but this country, in which, when he died, [for which] he was playing its National hymn, can also claim him." "Burial of Remenyi: Famous Violinist Laid to Rest in Beautiful Evergreen Cemetery," *Boston Globe*, May 30, 1898, 5. That Reményi collapsed while playing a piece from a French ballet would not distract from this golden chance to publicly bolster the image of Gotham's Hungarians. E. Heron Allen, "Eduard Remenyi," *British Periodicals (The Cremora)* (Aug. 1907): 96; "Celebrities in El Dorado: 1850-1906: History of Music in San Francisco Series, Vol. 4, ed. Cornel Lengyel, *Works Projects Administration: Northern California* (1939), 41; Dunlevy and Upton, *Edouard Remenyi*, 101-112.

[22] "Yorkville Maennerchor: Its Fortieth Anniversary Has Just Been Celebrated," *New York Times,* March 8, 1896, 23; "New-York Singers Hosts: Opening Concert of the Big Saengerfest Last Evening*," New York Times*, June 24, 1894, 1; "Among the Germans," *New York Times*, July 5, 1873, 8.

gravitated toward alternative political expression. Germans formed the backbone of the city's organized labor movement during the late nineteenth century. Many joined the Central Labor Union, which led an unsuccessful boycott against Ehret's brewery in 1886 due to the owner's allegedly anti-union testimony in an extortion case. A few years later, journeymen brewers sought to boycott George Ehret and his fellow "Lords of Lager," for operating the equivalent of a beer cartel. Others pursued more radical politics. German anarchists often met in the saloons that dotted the stretch of Yorkville from East 71st to East 83rd Streets.[23]

In the 1890s, German Americans galvanized around the goal of amending the so-called Excise Law, legislation which from 1857 limited alcohol sales and mandated saloon closings on Sundays. In the late 1880s, German New Yorkers, including those from Yorkville, waged public protests and organized parades to push back against Mayor Abram Hewitt's policy of applying this prohibition to German social events held outside of saloons. In 1895, tensions surrounding this issue reached new heights as German New York splintered on the question of whether to trust Democratic candidates to push through the German position. Unlike their Irish counterparts, German New Yorkers had kept their distance from Tammany Hall. Now, however, a newly formed pro-Tammany faction, the German-American Reform Union (GARU), publicly challenged the German-American Citizens Union, a group bitterly opposed to the city's machine politics, to an impromptu parade "competition." The Yorkville Brewers' Battalion, the Yorkville Bowlers Club, and the Yorkville Maennerchor were among the many German American organizations pledging to support GARU's efforts. GARU reasoned that warring marches would allow New Yorkers to judge for themselves which alliance enjoyed the greatest support. Perhaps only the "lager question" could convince a significant portion of German New York to back Tammany Hall. The

[23] "Local News in Brief: New York," *New York Times*, November 27, 1871, 8; "Candidates for Office: Democrats Preparing for the Local Campaign," *New York Times*, August 30, 1881, 6; "Laboring Men's Complaints: Reports of the delegates to the Central Labor Union," *New York Times*, November 9, 1885, 8; "Cowardly Boycotters: The Secret Fighting against Ehret, the Brewer," *New York Times*, July 13, 1886, 8; "About the Ehret Boycott," *New York Times*, September 4, 1886, 2; "Opposing the Beer Pool: Journeymen Brewers Who Want to Boycott George Ehret," *New York Times*, September 19, 1892, 8; Goyens, *Beer and Revolution,* 22-23.

political activity pouring forth from German New York around the turn of the century was booming, brash, and visible. Moreover, German Americans had the numbers to make a difference. In 1900, prior to the full impact of increased Italian and Jewish immigration, 785,000 Germans surpassed 710,000 Irish as New York's largest ethnic collectivity.[24]

The political coming of age of German Yorkville also yielded the neighborhood's first family, the Wagners. In 1904, Robert F. Wagner, a native of Naststätten in Germany's Rhineland-Palatinate region, commenced a forty-five-year political career as the state senate majority leader, a justice of the state Supreme Court, and a leading light of the New Deal Coalition within the U.S. Senate. As an immigrant who arrived as a young boy, Wagner's rise personified the upward trajectory of Yorkville, his adopted "hometown." His was the story of a newsboy who honed his oratory skills in the district's public schools, earned a law degree from New York University, and forged a stellar reputation as a member of the bar while only in his twenties. As a Democratic politician, he managed to earn Tammany's endorsement while maintaining arms-length independence. His commitment to reform, developed through his alliance with once-time Speaker of the New York Assembly and eventual presidential candidate, Al Smith, informed his work in Washington, where he sponsored the National Labor Relations Act and the Social Security Act, the core programs of the Second New Deal. While Wagner the elder served in the nation's capital, his son, Robert F. Wagner, Jr., would chart his own political course, eventually ending just down the street at Gracie Mansion, the home of the city's mayor. For both Wagners, German heritage and Yorkville ties embossed their political biographies throughout their careers.[25]

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[24] "Revise the Excise Law: German-Americans Will Ask This of the Albany Solons," *New York World*, December 16, 1890, 7. "Germans for Tammany: Thousands of Them Will Parade with Music and Lanterns," *New York Times*, October 30, 1895, 2; David F. Remington, *Ashbel P. Fitch: Champion of Old New York* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2011), 46-50, 194-9; Deborah Dash Moore, "Class and Ethnicity in the Creation of New York City Neighborhoods: 1900-1930 in *Budapest and New York: Studies in Metropolitan Transformation: 1870-1930*, eds. Thomas Bender and Carl E. Schorske (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1994), 140.

[25] "Former Newsboy for Assemblyman: Campaign of Robert F. Wagner in the Thirtieth District Is Attracting Attention in Tammany and Out," *New York Evening World*, October 14, 1904, 5; "Injunction Stops Subway," *The South Brooklyn Home Talk*, June 17, 1908, 1; "Legislature Is Organized: Senator Robert F. Wagner of New York Elected President Pro-Tempore," *Buffalo Commercial*, January 2, 1913, 2; "500 Friends Dine Senator Duhamel: Silvery Loving Cup Presented to Him at Feast at Stauch's," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, March 30, 1913, 6; "Legislature Makes No Important Move: Robert F. Wagner Presides Over the Senate as

During the first decade of the twentieth century Yorkville emerged as the cultural and social center of German New York. At the turn of the century, Manhattan Island's population density of just over 143 people per acre was the highest in the world. Overcrowding was particularly problematic on the Lower East Side. Consequently, German Americans spread to all corners of Greater New York at an accelerated rate after 1900, creating a series of residential enclaves. Spatial diversity thus joined religious identity, Old World regional allegiance, Turn Verein membership, political party designation, and socio-economic class distinction as another layer of ethnic heterogeneity within the city's German milieu. Yorkville's expanding population, especially its German contingent, began to covet entertainment venues and meeting spaces in addition to the standard commercial services required by any growing community. East 86th Street's German aesthetic emerged within this context, helping to transform Yorkville into the one place within German New York capable of bringing together constellations of co-ethnics and promoting ideological and social exchange. Yorkville's cultural offerings ranged from saloons and beer gardens with live bands to classical music and theater. In the fall of 1904, the Yorkville Theatre enjoyed its inaugural season. In fitting fashion, its opening week featured a comic-opera starring Ernestine Schumann-Heink, a renowned contralto of German-Bohemian descent.[26]

No venue within ethnic Yorkville would have a greater impact in the twentieth century than the six-story stone building just down East 86th Street known as the Yorkville Casino. Commissioned and paid for by the Musician's Mutual Protective Union in 1904, this capacious structure quickly assumed an

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Acting Lieutenant Governor," *Glens-Falls Post-Star*, August 20, 1913, 1; "Wife of Justice Wagner Dies at Woodmere Home," *Brooklyn Standard Union*, July 28, 1919, 2; "Mrs. Robert F. Wagner," *New-York Tribune*, July 29, 1919, 8; "Coolidge Ax Upstate Whetted for Smith," *New York Daily News*, October 1, 1926, 8; "Wagner Once Immigrant Lad, Off to Senate," *New York Daily News*, December 5, 1927, 6.

[26] Roy Lubove, *The Progressives and the Slums: Tenement House Reform in New York City, 1890-1917* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1962), 94; "Union Musicians Move with a Grand Parade: 300 in Their Band and Nearly 5,000 Men in Line," *New York Times*, February 27, 1906, 16; "New Yorkville Theatre Opens" *New York Tribune*, October 4, 1904, 9; "Mme. Schumann-Heink in Comic Opera: She Appears at the Broadway in "Love's Lottery,"" *New York Times*, October 4, 1904, 9. In addition to the "ethnic" built environment, Yorkville became home to the first branch of the New York Public Library financed by steel magnate Andrew Carnegie in 1902. The Yorkville branch provided resources for the neighborhood's English- and foreign-speaking populations, serving as an important symbol of the neighborhood's diversity. "Yorkville Library Open: First of the Carnegie Series to be Dedicated," *New York Times*, December 14, 1902, 7; L.H. Robbins, "Treasury of Books: Forty Years Old, the Public Library Has responded to Changing Currents of Life," *New York Times*, May 19, 1935, SM10.

integral role in the social and political lives of ethnic Yorkville. In its first twenty years of existence, the Yorkville Casino hosted presidential, gubernatorial, and mayoral candidates and other political players ranging from Socialist party organizers to an Eammon de Valera rally in support of a free Irish Republic. It even served as the backdrop to the eighty-second birthday soiree honoring Samuel Gompers, the noted labor leader. To pay the bills, the Yorkville Casino regularly hosted local dances, dinners, wedding receptions, and trade union meetings. Social memory often portrays the Yorkville Casino as being an exclusively German space, with emphasis usually placed on a chaotic 1938 gathering of the German-American Bund honoring Adolf Hitler's 49th birthday.[27] While the Bund meetings constitute a sensational and troubling part of its legacy, the totality of the Yorkville Casino's sixty-year run as a vital neighborhood asset and a shrine to unfettered political speech is much more complex, just like ethnic Yorkville itself.[28]

As German Yorkville thrived, elites within Gotham's wider German community pursued a quest to construct a durable pan-Germanism equipped to face myriad challenges such as the anti-pluralist "melting pot" ideology, the Prohibition movement, and Congressional threats to terminate open immigration. German New York's elites formed the National German-American Alliance (NGAA) and the

[27] This event ended in a headline grabbing melee between Bundists and members of an anti-Nazi coalition consisting primarily of American war veterans. Warren Grover, *Nazis in Newark* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 52; "Seven Are Injured at Nazi Rally Here When Legionnaires Heckle Speaker; Storm Troopers' Blackjacks Rout 100 in Battle in Yorkville Casino – Police Prevent Crowd From Storming Hall – 4 Arrested," *New York Times*, April 21, 1938, 1; "Held in Nazi Fracas, Youth Denies Guilt: German-Born Boy Facing Trial Hopes to Become Citizen," *New York Times*, May 5, 1938, 18. For example, Dana Schulz, writing for 6sqft, an online source conveying news important to New York's architectural and real estate scene, states that the Yorkville Casino was "not casino like we think of today, it was a social center for the German community." Dana Schulz, Germantown NYC: Uncovering the German History of Yorkville," *6sqft*, July 11, 2016, https://www.6sqft.com/germantown-uncovering-the-german-history-of-yorkville/, accessed February 2, 2020.

[28] "Tom Hackett," *Variety* 18, no. 8, (Apr 30, 1910): 10; "Gompers Family Holds a Reunion: Four Generations Celebrate the Birthday of Labor Leader's Father," *New York Times*, October 31, 1909, 14; "Musical Union Out for Higher Wages: Though the Theatrical Managers Deny That They Have Yet Received Demands," *New York Times*, March 14, 1908, 2; "Socialists Nominate Their Candidates: John D. Chase for Governor Heads Their Ticket," *New York Times*, June 3, 1906, 7; "Gov. Wilson Scores Roosevelt's Plans: What Colonel Proposes, He Says, Was Tried in Aristotle's Time and Since with Disaster," *New York Times*, September 5, 1912, 1; "Valera on His Tour: Says Ireland "Lost 3,000,000 Men" in War, All Deceived," *New York Times*, December 1, 1919, 10. DAVIS WINS CHEERS OF 3,000 NEGROES: Prediction of Political Equality Loudly Applauded in Packed Hall," *New York Times*, October 29, 1924, 2; "Mitchel Comes Out for J.A. Hennessy: Mayor Says He and F.D. Roosevelt Are Clean and Militant Leaders," *New York Times*, September 15, 1914, 6; "Sees City's Streets Dirtiest Under Hylan: Socialist Mayoralty Candidate Declares They Menace Health, Especially That of Children," *New York Times*, October 27, 1921, 7; Anthony Connors, "Then & Now: The Yorkville Casino," *New York Daily News*, March 29, 1998, 60; John Koegel, *Music in German Immigrant Theater: New York City, 1840-1940* (Rochester, N.Y.: University of Rochester Press, 2009), 367.

United German Societies (UGS) in the early twentieth century to craft and project a pan-German American cultural identity with political aspirations. These organizations deployed a multi-pronged approach of ethnic identity-making. They searched for opportunities to foreground Germans within the American story, penning articles and citing the work of academics researching and writing in the inchoate field of German Studies, such as Albert Faust.[29] In addition, they defended Germany's geopolitical decisions principally through a practice of public-facing transnationalism. Germans paraded through Manhattan in front of Prince Henry of Prussia in 1902, hosted the head of Germany's Navy in 1909, and received Mayor William Gaynor's plaudits at a Manhattan-based dinner, in 1913, marking the silver anniversary of Kaiser Wilhelm's reign.[30]

Deutschtum, a selective and flattened representation of German American identity that elevated German high art, or *Kultur*, and promoted large-scale, highly visible civic events, served as the centerpiece for the elite-led program. This interpretation of Germanness lauded German-language performances at the Metropolitan Opera House and Oscar Hammerstein's Manhattan Opera House as well as the German-led New York Symphony's classical music offerings. Yorkville's cultural and commercial aesthetic, featuring theaters, saloons, and restaurants, presented a dilemma to *Deutschtum's* leaders. On one hand, Yorkville was emerging as a highly visible and vibrant beacon of the city's German life. However, elites worried that the neighborhood's comparatively plebian atmosphere

[29] They penned articles in local papers and cited as unassailable authority the work of Albert Faust, the Cornell academic who received awards in the U.S. and Germany his 1909 tome, *The German Element in the United States*. H.W. Boynton, "The Germans in America: Prof. Faust, in a Monumental Work, Considers the Political, Social, and Other Influences of the Germanic Element in This Country," *New York Times*, January 15, 1910, BR1; "The Modesty of German Professors," *New York Times*, January 17, 1916, 10; Albert Faust, *The German Element in the United States with Special Reference to Its Political, Moral, Social, and Educational Influence*, vol. 2 (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1909).

[30] Rippley, *The German-Americans*, 6; Charles T. Johnson, *Culture at Twilight: The National German-American Alliance, 1901-1918* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1999), 1-2; Frank Trommler, "Investing the Enemy: German-American Cultural Relations, 1900-1917," in *Confrontation and Cooperation: Germany and the United States in the Era of World War I,* 1900-1924, ed. Hans-Jürgen Schröder (Providence: Berg, 1993), 115-17; Richard O'Connor, *The German-Americans: An Informal History* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1968), 306; Clara E. Schieber, "The Transformation of American Sentiment towards Germany, 1870-1914," *Journal of International Relations* 12, no. 1 (July 1921): 50-74; Alfred R. Calhoun, "Our German-American Neighbors," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, January 16, 1910, 21; "Paraded for the Prince: German Societies to the Number of 320 Turned Out," *New York Times*, February 27, 1902, 3; Concert Audiences Greet Von Koester: Patriotic Demonstration for Germany's Grand Admiral at Metropolitan and Carnegie Hall," *New York Times*, September 29, 1909, 3.

might undermine claims about the superiority of German *Kultur*. In addition, *Deutschtum's* proponents favored grandiose pan-German events over existing festivals celebrating regional distinctions, such as those run by the Bavarians, Plattdeutschers, and others. Fêtes sponsored by the NGAA and UGS ranged from local affairs, such as dedicating Yorkville's Carl Schurz Park in 1910, to participating in citywide celebrations like the 1909 Hudson-Fulton festival, to diasporic affairs such as German Day, or *Deutscher Tag*, commemorating America's first German settlement in Pennsylvania.[31]

Hungarian Yorkville's political influence was still a work in progress during the early twentieth century, a period of significant growth for the enclave. As Hungarian Americans organized themselves into political clubs, office seekers came panning for votes. In 1906, newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst, in the midst of his unsuccessful gubernatorial bid, sought Hungarian support at a flag ceremony of the Yorkville Magyar Trasas es Betegs Egylet, an ethnic benevolent society, held at the New York Turn Verein on East 85th Street. Hearst appealed to the Hungarian Americans' homeland pride by praising Budapest as an exemplar of urban progressivism that was outpacing Gotham. He also leveraged their historical self-image by lauding fifteenth century Magyars for saving Western Europe from the Turks. This blend of modernity and antiquity provided a surefire method for scoring political points, suggesting the neighborhood's ethnic leadership, perhaps Dr. Arpad Gerster, one of the city's foremost surgeons, may have helped to craft Hearst's remarks.[32]

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[31] "Music in America," *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular,* 28, no. 527 (Ja. 1, 1887): 40-41; Carl Schurz Park Conservancy, "A Short History of Carl Schurz Park," accessed October 30, 2017, https://www.carlschurzparknyc.org/the-history-of-the-park; *New York Sun*, "Parade in Schiller's Honor," April 30, 1905, 14; *New York Sun*, "German Societies March Up the Avenue, 6,000 Strong," 12; *New York Sun*, "Leisler Oaks Set with Song," April 24, 1911, 9; *New York Sun*, "A Big Day for Germans," October 7, 1912, 9; *New York Sun*, "The Symphony Orchestra," November 11, 1907, 5. "Germans Dedicate Carl Schurz Park: Ninth Annual German Day Chosen by the United Societies for the Celebration," *New York Times*, October 3, 1910, 11; *New York Sun*, "For Williams' Removal," October 8, 1911, 13; *New York Times*, "German-Americans in Convention Here," May 27, 1912; *New York Times*, "German-Americans in Convention Here," May 27, 1912; *New York Times*, "Germans Celebrate the Deutscher Tag: United Societies Gather in Terrace Garden to See Hauptmann's "Festspiel 1813,"" *New York Times*, October 6, 1913, 16; Elliot Shore, "The *Kultur* Club," in *Confrontation and Cooperation: Germany and the United States in the Era of World War I, 1900-1924,* ed. Hans-Jürgen Schröder (Providence: Berg, 1993), 127-33.

[32] "Hearst at the County Fairs: Candidating Experience He Won't Try Again," *New York Sun*, October 8, 1906, 3; "Arpad Gerster and Max Thorek: Contributions to American Surgery," *Journal of Investigative Surgery* 22 (2009): 162-66. Gerster personifies the hybridity of Hungarian identity in many ways. He was born in 1848 in Kassa, Hungary, now Kosiĉe, Slovakia. In the nineteenth century, Kassa was a polyglot, with significant German, Hungarian, and Slovakian populations and Jews represented in each of these ethnic collectives. Gerster purportedly was of Swiss ancestry, although while studying in Vienna, Austria and after

Unlike its German counterpart, Yorkville's Hungarian enclave did not occupy the center of the wider community's ethnic network. Rather, the Upper East Side enclave shared influence with Little Hungary at a time when other micro-Hungarian neighborhoods sprung up in Harlem, the Bronx, Yonkers, Brooklyn, and Long Island. As late as 1910, seventeen thousand Hungarian-born New Yorkers lived in Yorkville while twenty-two thousand resided downtown. Little Hungary also continued to boast a more mature and robust commercial sector. Its signature restaurant and namesake, Little Hungary, where Teddy Roosevelt once broke bread with Hungarian Republicans, flashed its neighborhood pride with print ads proclaiming, "We do NOT move uptown. We are HERE TO STAY."[33] Still, a higher proportion of ethnic Magyars compared to Hungarian Jews migrated uptown in pursuit of expanded economic opportunities and better housing conditions, threatening to fracture the Jewish-Gentile coalition. As a result, Yorkville became increasingly associated with Christian Hungarians and downtown Manhattan with Hungarian Jewry.[34]

Coincident with these migrations, the collective image of Hungarian New Yorkers deteriorated during the years prior to the Great War. Since the mid-nineteenth century, Hungarian New Yorkers, whether Jews and Gentiles, tethered their identity to the image of Lajos Kossuth, the leader of the failed 1848 Hungarian rising against Austria. During Kossuth's visit to New York in the winter of 1851, city

migrating to the United States, he publicly affirmed his Hungarian ancestry by joining ethnic organizations. Gerster resided in Yorkville on East 75th Street. "Person Record: Gerster, Arpad Geyza," *Adirondack Experience*, accessed December 21, 2019, https://adirondack.pastperfectonline.com/byperson?keyword=Gerster%2C+Arpad+Geyza.

[33] "Little Hungary" 255-263 East Houston St., In the heart of the Ghetto," *New York Times*, October 30, 1915, 22.

[34] Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 991; Perlman, *Bridging Three Worlds*, 138-39; Russell A. Kazal, *Becoming Old Stock: The Paradox of German-American Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 221; Selma Berrol, *The Empire City: New York and Its People, 1624-1996* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997), 97; Thomas J. Shelley, *The Bicentennial History of the Archdiocese of New York, 1808-2008* (Strasbourg: Éditions du Signe, 2007), 244; "Of Aepfelwein Stubes: The Quaint Little Shops on the East Side of the City," New York Times, July 8, 1896, 4. Béla Vassady, Jr., "The "Homeland Cause," as Stimulant to Ethnic Unity: The Hungarian-American Response to Karolyi's 1914 American Tour," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 2, no. 1 (Fall 1982): 44. Around this same time, significant Hungarian enclaves started to develop in New Brunswick, New Jersey and Bridgeport, Connecticut forming a broad Hungarian network. David Listokin, Dorothea Berkhout, and James W. Hughes, "The People of New Brunswick, Population and Resident Profile over Time," in *New Brunswick, New Jersey: The Decline and Revitalization of Urban America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2016), 47-49; Ivan Greenberg, "Vocational Education, Work Culture, and the Children of Immigrants in 1930s Bridgeport," *Journal of Social History* 41, no. 1 (Fall 2007): 149-60.

leaders treated him to a hero's welcome, complete with parades, dinners, and speeches. They praised the Magyar leader as a virtuous and patriotic defender of democracy, ascribing similar qualities to the city's Hungarians. In 1894, the city formally mourned Kossuth's passing with a memorial parade in which multiethnic New York clasped hands with Hungarians.[35]

The Kossuth memorial notwithstanding, Hungarian New York's collective reputation faced new challenges in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries due primarily to material changes in immigration patterns and responses to them by national and local leaders. Landless peasants comprised a prevailing majority of newcomers from the Kingdom of Hungary during this time, drawing fresh critiques from multiple corners. As early as 1892, diplomat Charles Emory Smith painted such migrants as culturally unassimilable based on their relative lack of formal education and low literacy rates. He also declared them detrimental to the nation's delicate labor markets due to their alleged willingness to accept low wages for a two or three years only to return to the homeland "to stimulate a dozen others to try the same fortune."[36] Opponents of open immigration in the mold of Smith, fueled by the pseudo-science of eugenics, gained traction in the early years of the twentieth century. In 1907, immigration restrictionists in Congress passed legislation barring those classified as mentally and physically defective and establishing a commission to investigate the state of America's immigration schema. The resulting Dillingham Commission issued a report in 1911 characterizing Eastern and Southern European migrants

[35] "The Kossuth Dinner: Magnificent Banquet – Kossuth's Great Speech Doctrine of Non-Interference – Speeches of the mayor, Judge Edmonds, Col. Webb," *New York Daily Times*, December 12, 1851, 1; "The Welcome to Kossuth: Ceremonies at Staten Island – The Trip on the Bay," *New York Daily Times*, December 8, 1851, 1; "They Mourn for Kossuth: New York Hungarians Will Express Their Grief in a Great Memorial Meeting," *New York World*, March 22, 1894, 5; "The Columbian Bell May Toll: It Has Been Offered for the Kossuth Memorial Services Friday – Details to Be Perfected Tomorrow," *New York World*, March 24, 1894, 2; "To Fly the Flag of Hungary," *New York Times*, March 28, 1894, 3; "Tribute to Kossuth: New York Does Honor to the Memory of the Patriot," *New York Evening World*, April 4, 1894, 1; "In Memory of Louis Kossuth" Hungarian Societies Will Take Part in a Parade—Services at Cooper Union," *New York Times*, March 26, 1984, 1.

[36] "Immigration Problems: Earnest Advocates of Radical Changes in the Laws," *New York Times*, November 26, 1892, 5

as "undesirable" and recommending that the federal government implement literacy testing and adopt a quota system.[37]

As anti-open immigration forces embraced a racialized view of non-Western European groups, they recast the people of Kossuth as "Huns" and "Hunkies," terms connoting an uncivilized, dirty, unskilled, and even non-white lot. The *New York Times* ran multiple stories accusing the Hungarian government of unloading its basest element on an unwitting America during the first decade of the twentieth century. "Is the Kingdom of Hungary trying to turn to our shores the paupers, wastrels, and criminals of that country?" it asked.[38] Marcus Braun, a Hungarian-born immigration inspector and special envoy charged with investigating Hungarian emigration, echoed these claims, earning him a censure in *Amerikai Magyar Nepszasa*, New York's leading Hungarian daily. Other anti-immigration fearmongers pathologized all Hungarians as lawless, dishonest, disease-ridden, and lazy foreigners whose begging blighted commercial districts like Madison and Park Avenues. Yorkville Hungarians did not escape this anti-Hunky rhetoric. In 1896, the same year Hungary celebrated the millennial anniversary of the nation's monarchy, a group of Yorkville-based Hungarians filed a judicial application to incorporate the Yorkville Magyar Tarsas Egylet, or the Yorkville Hungarian Social Club. The club's raison d'etre was to preserve the Magyar language, literature, and customs. The judge assailed their goals as tantamount to "sequester[ing] a class of foreign-born citizens from the American community" and "giv[ing] predominance to their attachment to their native land."[39] The accompanying newspaper headline said it all: "A Yorkville Organization That Was Too Hungarian."[40]

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[37] Ibid.; Katherine Benton-Cohen, "The Rude Birth of Immigration Reform," *The Wilson Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (Sum. 2010): 16-22; Ran Abramitzky and Leah Boustan "Immigration in American Economic History," *Journal of Economic Literature* 55, no. 4 (Dec. 2017): 1311-45

[38] "Hungary and Emigration," *New York Times*, January 3, 1906, 8.

[39] "Social Clubs: A Yorkville Organization That Was Too Hungarian," *Hartford Courant*, December 24, 1896, 7.

[40] Emily R. Cabaniss and Abigail E. Cameron, "'Unassimilable and Undesirable': News Elites' Discursive Construction of the American Immigrant during the Ellis Island Years," *Discourse & Society* 28, no. 6 (2017): 614-34; "Hungary and Emigration," *New York Times*, January 3, 1906; *New York Times*, "Immigration Problems," November 26, 1892; Steven B. Vardy, "Image and Self-image among Hungarian-Americans Since the Mid-Nineteenth Century," *East European Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (Sept. 2001): 309-21. The *Amerikai Magyar Nepszasa*, one of New York's leading Hungarian-language newspapers, expressed the need to discern whether Braun was quoted accurately and whether he genuinely believed this position. In the end, that same publication

Hungarian New Yorkers navigated these turbulent waters in multiple ways. Some, like Hungarian American attorney Morris Cukor, sought to apply Magyarization locally by rebuilding a pan-Hungarian identity inspired by the old Jewish-Gentile collaboration once active within Little Hungary, the downtown enclave. Simultaneously, the Hungarian government devised a variegated approach to stem the tide of Magyar out-migration and to promote the return of its Magyar diaspora. This covert program, dubbed "American Action," called for the Magyarization of Hungarian American places of worship, school, and banks. Both the Cukor-vision and the Hungarian government's program promoted an exclusionary vision of Hungarianness that marginalized minority groups from the Kingdom of Hungary such as Slovaks and Rusyns. This closed sense of ethnic identity bore bitter fruit. In 1902, a Hungarian envoy arrived in New York to present two Hungarian flags to local ethnic organizations. Ten thousand Hungarian Americans attended the ceremony in which clerics representing Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, the Reformed Church, and Hungarian Jewry blessed the flags. The Slovak community protested the proceedings as the Hungarian government's blatant attempt to foment nativism and division within Hungarian New York. E.T. Kohyani, a Hungarian-language newspaper editor, fired back, accusing the Slovaks of subverting the will of the Magyar majority in the U.S. and Hungary.[41] Contests

accepted Braun's denials, but Braun found it difficult to fully recover his public reputation. At the height of this controversy, Braun authored a letter to the editor clarifying that his concerns were with the government not the people of Hungary, pressed charges of criminal libel against another leading Hungarian New Yorker, Lajos Steiner, and eventually resigned from his post as immigration inspector. "Immigration Post Abroad," *New York Times*, March 22, 1903, 3; "Alien Influx Increasing," *New York Times*, June 17, 1905, 2; "Braun to the Hungarians," *New York Times*, July 1, 1905, 4; Marcus Braun, Letter to the Editor, "Hungarian Immigration: The Home Governments, and Not the People Cause Trouble," *New York Times*, July 8, 1908, 8; *New York Times*, "Marcus Braun Cries Libel," December 10, 1905, 3; *New York Times*, "Marcus Braun Is Out," March 17, 1906, 4. "Pitiful Mendicant Gives Way to the Cunning Beggar: A Special "Slanguage" Used in the New Fraternity and the Old Threadbare Wiles Are Displaced These Days by Ingenious Trickery to Get Alms," *New York Times*, August 28, 1910, 11; Susan M. Schweik, *The Ugly Laws: Disability in Public* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 165-83; *Budapest and New York: Studies in Metropolitan Transformation: 1870-1930*, edited by Thomas Bender and Carl E. Schorske (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1994), xi; "Social Clubs: A Yorkville Organization That Was Too Hungarian," *Hartford Courant*, December 24, 1896, 7.

[41] Josef Zseni, a representative of the Hungarian government, sailed to New York to present two Hungarian flags to local Hungarian American organizations that the flags were given in gratitude for contributions by Hungarian New Yorkers to a commemorative statue in Budapest honoring poet Mihály Vörösmarty. *New York Times*, "Hungarians Arrive with Their Flag," August 31, 1902; *New York Times*, "Flag Is Presented to Hungarian-Americans," September 2, 1902.

over Hungarian identity persisted throughout the life of Yorkville's ethnic enclave and continue to play a role in the neighborhood's contemporary Hungarian heritage practices. [42]

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Contrary to the General Slocum origin thesis, German New Yorkers forged a relationship with Yorkville well before the turn of the century. At first, they used the space for festivals and social gatherings. Eventually, German-speakers migrated northward or settled directly in the Upper Manhattan neighborhood, giving Yorkville a decidedly German feel by the 1880s. These German migrants and their descendants planted German businesses, churches, and social clubs. The Lords of Lager constructed grandiose breweries that provided hundreds of jobs to newcomers. Hungarian émigrés made inroads into Yorkville during the late nineteenth century and came in larger waves in the first decade of the twentieth century. Ethnic Yorkville's contours took definitive shape during the early twentieth century with German Americans constituting the neighborhood's largest and most politically active constituency. Germans also impacted the built environment. In 1905, the German-run Yorkville Bank, originally established in 1893, rose anew. German-born architect Robert Maynicke redesigned the office building to accommodate the commercial and aesthetic needs of a growing ethnic community. The resulting four-story granite, limestone, brick, and terra-cotta structure came to dominate the corner of Third Avenue and East 85th Street, visibly proclaiming ethnic upward mobility. Soon, however, growing tensions in Europe would threaten to disrupt this vernal trajectory, ushering in the heat and light of ethnic Yorkville's summer season. During this period, extending from the Great War to World War II, ethnic Yorkville would face its starkest challenges and reach its most storied heights.

[42] Poznan, "Return Migration to Austria-Hungary from the United States," 651; Mark Wyman, *Round-trip to America: The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880-1930* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 11; Paula K. Benkart, "The Hungarian Government, the American Magyar Churches, and the Immigrant Ties to the Homeland, 1903-1917," *Church History* 52, no. 3 (Sept. 1983): 312-21; Susan Glanz, "Lives and Deaths of a Hungarian Bank in New York," *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies* 20, no. 1 (2014): 138-39.

CHAPTER 2
RECALLING ETHNIC YORKVILLE IN THE SUMMER HEAT: WORLD WAR I TO WORLD WAR II

TO THY CHEEKS THE FIRES OF SUMMER

To thy cheeks the fires of summer
A burning glow impart;
But winter, cold and frosty,
Lies in thy little heart.

But that will change and alter,
Beloved as thou art!
The winter will be on the cheek then
And the summer in the heart.

Heinrich Heine[1]

In mid-February 1917, two thousand German New Yorkers, including representatives of several Yorkville-based organizations, met at the headquarters of the Arion Society, one the city's august singing clubs, to discuss plans for an annual cultural bazaar. Organizers aimed to send funds raised by this event to the German Red Cross. Attendees debated a resolution that called on "German-Americans of New York [to] forego all affairs of a frivolous or entertaining nature."[2] The question presented was whether events like the bazaar could or should proceed in light of President Woodrow Wilson's decision to end diplomatic relations with Germany. Henry Weismann, speaking for the New York-based National German-American Alliance, a pan-Germanic socio-political organization, advised all of the city's institutional leaders present to speak openly about the matter. Ludwig Nissen, selected by Mayor John Mitchel to serve on the Congress for Constructive Patriotism, urged co-ethnics to postpone the bazaar in an effort "not to do or say anything that will cast the slightest suspicion on any American of German

[1] Harry Heine, subsequently known as Heinrich Heine, was born in 1797 to a German Jewish family in Düsseldorf, then in the Duchy of Berg. According to biographer Hanna Spencer, Jews and Gentiles mixed freely in that city during Heine's childhood. In his late twenties, Heine converted to the Lutheran faith and adopted a "Germanic" name, although he described this change as a necessary step in fully integrating into European society. Heine, who failed as a business apprentice eventually earning a doctorate in law, started writing verse in his teens. By the time of his death in 1856, he had produced approximately 700 poems. *Buch der Lieder* (Book of Songs), published in 1827, is considered his seminal work. Heine wrote most of the poems in this volume while in his twenties, including "Es liegt der heisse Sommer." Spencer calls *Buch der Lieder* the most widely read work in the German poetic cannon. Hanna Spencer, *Heinrich Heine* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982), 1-30.
[2] "German Americans in Loyal Outburst," *New York Sun*, February 5, 1917, 5.

birth or descent in this country."[3] Other German American leaders warned against unwarranted capitulation. Dr. Louis Haupt, the Arion Society's president, mocked state and local efforts to guard bridges and other sites against potential enemy attacks as "hysterical," and lamented that "people are losing their heads."[4] Dr. Gustave Scholer, head of the Yorkville-based New York Turn Verein, reminded the audience that German Americans had the right to oppose the war as a matter of free speech. These leaders reconvened in March. With the U.S. moving closer to entering the Great War, they canceled the bazaar and declared their loyalty to the American cause. Two months later, they issued a public statement that Steuben Day would replace the city's annual German Day celebration that October, summoning the heroic legacy of Baron von Steuben, the Prussian-born general who had trained many of Washington's troops during the Revolutionary War, to shield German New York from potential wartime opprobrium. Ultimately, there would be no Steuben Day in the fall of 1917, and no way to avoid waves of anti-German sentiment.[5]

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Recalling ethnic Yorkville's summer season, the period extending from World War I to the brink of America's entry into World War II, evokes notions of both light and heat. Light refers to popular tableaus of ethnic Yorkville's vibrancy, especially in the early thirties, typically associated with the commercial core on East 86th Street. It conjures visions of bierstubes and dance halls, German restaurants and bakeries, foreign-language films and plays, and shops carrying goods imported from Central Europe. Heat, on the other hand, connotes episodes of exogenous shock and existential threat, namely the century's two world wars. Dominant narratives of ethnic Yorkville rarely dwell on the Great War, deferring to truncated descriptions of coercive patriotism and accelerated assimilation. The

[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] "German Americans in Loyal Outburst," *New York Sun*, February 5, 1917; "United German Societies Meeting," *New York Times*, March 8, 1917; "No German Day This Year: Organizations Decide to Hold Celebration in Steuben's Honor," *New York Times*, May 27, 1917, 4.

standard story, instead, devotes most of its attention to the interwar years, and more specifically to the period when Nazism gained a foothold in Yorkville through the German-American Bund, which maintained a headquarters in the neighborhood. The mere mention of the Bund years calls to mind a sensational cache of images: swastika-laden flags adorning tenement windows, saloon patrons toasting to the Führer, and fully uniformed Bundists goose-stepping with impunity along Yorkville's streets. These two visions – light and heat – produce a jagged, dramatic, and German-centric social memory.

The interpretation offered here adds nuance, richness, and Hungarians to the story of ethnic Yorkville's heated summer days. It highlights the World War I-era's Great Hyphen Debate, which pitted ethnics proud of their cultures and community-building efforts against opponents ranging from deputized vigilantes to Gotham's nativist elite, both of whom equated hyphenated identity with disloyalty. Within this toxic environment, federal and city officials empowered by President Wilson's enemy alien executive order sought to bring a harsh brand of law and order and coercive patriotism to Yorkville's foreign element. The neighborhood's Germans bore the brunt of this wartime animus, as the city's mainstream print press used the war to openly envision a German-less Yorkville. Meanwhile, Hungary's fraught homeland politics and the postwar partition of most of that nation's territory sowed the seeds of division within Hungarian New York's ethnic networks as Yorkville's decidedly Christian element tended to support any action likely to remediate this tragedy.

Germans and Hungarians endured further challenges through the twenties, as Prohibition threatened to compromise the neighborhood's commercial scene and developers envisioned enhancing Yorkville's working-class profile in the name of profit and progress. Despite these obstacles, Yorkville's German and Hungarian enclaves persisted into the thirties, a period normally reserved for discussions of the pro-Nazi Bund. While the Bund's use of neighborhood damaged ethnic Yorkville's reputation, this period also featured the further blossoming of the district's ethnic commercial sector, led by the East 86th Street businesses. After the repeal of Prohibition, ethnic entrepreneurs increasingly marketed their

offerings to non-ethnics and those outside the neighborhood's footprint. Based on German Yorkville's curious coexistence of political extremism and commercial success, the ethnic Yorkville imaginary pays scant attention to the district's Hungarians during the thirties. As a result, the dominant narrative misses the fraught nature of Hungary's interwar politics and the extent to which homeland concerns, especially the goal of reconstituting the Kingdom of Hungary, continued to weigh on the hearts and minds of residents of Hungarian New York, especially those in Yorkville.

ETHNIC YORKVILLE DURING THE WORLD WAR I ERA: THE GREAT HYPHEN DEBATE

The Great War marked a crisis of ethnic identity for the city's Germans and Hungarians. National concerns over hyphenated identity took on special symbolic import within America's preeminent cosmopolis. The logic of anti-hyphenism dictated that subduing Gotham's foreigners at a time of conflict and coopting them to promote pro-war sentiment might catalyze assimilation processes elsewhere. Demonstrating uncommon faith in the marketplace of ideas, earned social capital, and the palatability of dissent, leaders of New York's German and Hungarian communities labored to define and defend pluralistic visions of belonging. They argued that ethnic difference strengthened rather than threatened the American whole. Ethnic elites deployed soft power approaches predicated on enhancing the visibility of carefully choreographed images that linked German and Hungarian cultural understandings to the broader American story. As the European War progressed and Americans chose sides, the city's Germans and Hungarians lost rhetorical ground in the intensified heat of the Great Hyphen Debate. When the U.S. broke off diplomatic relations with and then entered the war against Germany, German New Yorkers experienced a radical and rapid decline in their collective status. Hungarian New Yorkers worked to avoid a similar fate by attempting to translate their distinctive geopolitical perspective to those less familiar with the history and politics of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, positioning themselves as critics of the Hapsburg monarchy. The ethnic Yorkville imaginary presents only a cursory version of

this complex history of the Great War era. It myopically privileges the German experience to the exclusion of Hungarians, regurgitates tropes of the rebranding of German symbols, such as renaming sauerkraut "liberty cabbage," and barely touches on the key historical actors who tried to help these ethnic communities navigate this tempestuous period.

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The onset of armed conflict in Europe in late July 1914 and its rapid metastasis rendered the city's Great Hyphen Debate combustible. From the summer of 1914 through early 1917, Gotham's leading dailies warned of German atrocities in Belgium and U-boat attacks on passenger ships, raising moral questions about the combatants and casting doubt on America's ability to remain neutral. As German and Hungarian leaders spoke publicly on these matters, their constituencies came under greater scrutiny throughout 1915 and 1916 by opponents of hyphenated identity. In May 1915, a municipal judge, responding to concerns that a play about the Franco-Prussian War might foment German dissent in the city, expressed his refusal to pander to the sensibilities of dual identities. Former president Theodore Roosevelt took to the stump in New York in 1916 to denounce the NGAA as an un-American organization. Later that fall, scores of the city's upper crust gathered at Mrs. Vincent Astor's plush abode to formulate a strategy to combat the hyphen. Frances Kellor, the chair of the New York-based National Americanization Committee, used this occasion to announce that "as a subject of discussion, the hyphen is dead," a provocative statement meant to signal that anti-hyphenates wished to eradicate multiculturalism from the city's socio-cultural ecosystem.[6]

[6] "Belgians' Bitter Need of Our Aid: Sir Gilbert Parker Says That Only America Can Save Them from Starvation," *New York Times*, December 6, 1914, 11; "Shooting Belgian Refugees: Dutch Paper Says Germans Killed 27 Trying to Cross the Border," *New York Times*, February 13, 1915, 4; "Torpedo Rends Another U.S. Ship in Zone of Sinking of Lusitania," *New York Evening World*, May 26, 1915, 1; "The Lusitania's Destruction," *New York Times*, August 30, 1915, 6; "U-Boats Sank 568 Ships: Germany Declares Enemies Lost 734 Vessels Since Start of War," *New York Times*, December 21, 1915, 3; "Germany Declares Submarines Sink Thirteen Craft In One Day; Nine British Trawlers the Victims of Two U-Boats," *New York Times*, July 28, 1915, 1; "U-Boats Sink Three Ships: Swedish Vessel Destroyed: Five British Seamen Missing," *New York Times*, December 2, 1915, 3; Frederick C. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty: German-Americans and World War I* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974), xiii-xvii; Michael A. Lerner, *Dry Manhattan: Prohibition in New York City* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 31-32; Phyllis Keller, *States of Belonging: German-American Intellectuals and the First World War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 1-2; Russell A. Kazal, *Becoming Old Stock: The Paradox of German-American Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University

With the Great Hyphen Debate's lines of demarcation drawn, ethnic New Yorkers, especially those residing within concentrated enclaves, increasingly found themselves having to relitigate their rights to assemble and dissent. Some groups within German New York, such as the German Culture Society, urged members of the community to remain silent if not compliant on matters of foreign policy. Others marched into the discursive fray with bold strides. The German-language press unabashedly defended ethnic identity and continued interest in homeland politics, while also articulating the logic of American neutrality. In August 1914, the inaugural edition of *The Fatherland*, a weekly dedicated to the neutrality position, immediately sold out its ten thousand copies, with healthy sales at Yorkville's newsstands. Less than a year later, twenty-seven thousand people, the majority German American, attended a "peace rally" at Madison Square Garden where they asserted their patriotism by waving American flags while cheering on pro-neutrality speakers such as former Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan. Henry Weismann, chief defender of *Deutschtum,* with its tactics of visibility and volume, and prominent proponent of pan-Germanism, used the assembly to take a swipe at Teddy Roosevelt's pro-British war mongering while proudly asserting his adoration for "dear old Germany now and forever."[7] The neutrality campaign led directly to efforts to defeat Woodrow Wilson at the polls in 1916. The city's German-language press led the way by throwing their support to Republican Charles Hughes. At this point, Gotham's mainstream dailies tacked in an anti-German American direction. The *New York Times*, for example, marginalized a pro-Hughes rally attended by five thousand Americans of German and Irish descent as a mass meeting of "propagandists," while the *New York Evening World* warned readers about the "hyphenate campaign" against Wilson. German New Yorkers would soon experience the costs of organizing against the president, who won reelection in November 1916.[8]

Press, 2004), 6-10, 261-76; *New York Times*, "Court Lifts Hyphen Out of Citizenship," May 27, 1915; *New York Evening World*, "Mrs. Vincent Astor's Americanization Dinner for Benefit of Nation," November 16, 1916, 12.

[7] "27,000 Roar as Bryan Assails Press of N.Y.," *New York Sun*, June 25, 1915, 4

[8] "German Campaign on Wilson Begins," *New York Times*, October 6, 1916; *New York Evening World*, October 13, 1916, 22; "German Criticizes Embargo Agitator: Official of Culture Society Declares Loud Talk Hurts Fatherland's Cause," *New-York Tribune,* August 4, 1915, 8; Keller, *States of Belonging,* 140-49; "27,000 Roar as Bryan Assails Press of N.Y.," *New York Sun*, June

America's entry into the war transformed *Deutschtum*'s strategic plan of promoting *Kultur* with volume and visibility into a liability. The anti-hyphenate sentiment stoked by the war was reimagining the very cultural markers once elevated by the *Deutschtum* movement, such as opera and classical music, as wholly foreign. The *New York Times*, echoing the Committee on Public Information's national stance, added to this foreignization discourse by equating *Kultur* with the ruthless and dehumanizing German efficiency on display on the battlefields of Belgium and France. Locally, socialite Mrs. William Jay, a descendant of the nation's first Chief Justice and daughter-in-law of a Hanseatic merchant born in Hamburg, persuaded the board of the Metropolitan Opera to remove all German performances from the 1917 schedule. Thereafter, she set her sights on ridding Gotham's music scene writ large of German influence. Jay's actions were in line with those who saw German performances in the New York as an affront to American men fighting against Germany. A letter to the editor published by the *New York Times* asked rhetorically, "Is it possible that even the most rabid adherents of German opera can endure to hear, at this crisis, the unlovely guttural language of our enemy, hissed in their faces under the friendly guise of art?"[9] Despite these efforts to banish German high culture, a few concerts featuring Beethoven, Brahms, and Wagner occurred during the war. Those German American singers and musicians who continued to work in the city while the fighting raged in Europe, found it prudent to publicly affirm their patriotic credentials. In November 1917, Ernestine Schumann-Heink capped off her Carnegie Hall concert of German *lieder*, poems set to classical music, by singing "America" and told the audience about her four sons serving in the American armed forces.[10]

25, 1915, 1, 4; Wittke, *The German-Language Press in America*, 164, 238;, "German Weeklies Indorse Hughes: The Fatherland and Issues and Events Find Him Acceptable to Teutonic Sentiment" *New York Times*, June 16, 1916, 7; "German Campaign on Wilson Begins: Five Thousand Propagandists Hiss President and Cheer Hughes and O'Leary," *New York Times*, October 6, 1916, 3.

[9] Myra Maxwell, "German Arms, Not Art: Our Stage No Place for Hun Music While Sons and Brothers Fight," *New York Times*, November 11, 1917, 77.

[10] Committee on Public Information, *Conquest and Kultur: Aims of the Germans in Their Own Words* (Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office, 1917), 103-12, accessed October 24, 2017, https://archive.org/stream/conquestkulturai00note#page/112/mode/2up; Myra Maxwell, "German Arms, Not Art: Our Stage No Place for Hun Music While Sons and Brothers Fight," *New York Times*, November 11, 1917, 77; *New York Times*, "Kultur and Slavery," March 2, 1918. *New York Times*, "Schumann-Heink Sings," November 4, 1917; *New York Times*, November 7, 1917;

Yorkville constituted the epicenter of this wartime conflict of ethnic identity. The city's anti-German forces reimagined the neighborhood as inherently suspicious and potentially dangerous. As a result, Yorkville's German American residents were falling backward into otherness. The American Patriotic League, a civilian organization dedicated to vigilantly defending the anti-hyphenate precept of 100 percent Americanism, engaged in so-called "slacker raids," during which thousands of volunteers hunted for unregistered aliens in the city. Yorkville presented an especially inviting target. In one Manhattan raid, just three percent of nearly twelve thousand people seized, an overwhelming majority of whom were of German descent, turned out to be unregistered aliens.[11]

In addition to promoting voluntary vigilantism, President Wilson's executive order classifying all unnaturalized persons at least fourteen years old and born in Germany as enemy aliens, issued on April 6, 1917, unleashed the juridical power of the state. To government officials, Yorkville constituted the largest potential nest of enemy aliens. Manhattan-based federal marshals, accordingly, conducted multiple raids on Yorkville businesses. John Knox, Assistant U.S. Attorney for New York City, decried unregistered German Americans as "contemptible [for] taking all that we had to offer and giving nothing in return."[12] Gotham's mainstream print press used its coverage of the enemy alien registration process to add flavor to an unflattering image of Yorkville, which it dubbed "Little Teutonia," to suggest a den of foreignness and disloyalty. With gazes fixed on unregistered residents, these dailies implied that the entirety of German Yorkville qualified as enemy aliens. Moreover, they portrayed Yorkville's German

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New York Times, November 9, 1917; "German-Americans Form Patriotic Union: To Organize 15,000,000 Men, Women, and Children to Help America to Win the War, " *New York Times*, June 10, 1918, 11; "Halt German Opera at Metropolitan: Minority of Directors Understood to Oppose Giving Wagner's Works," *New York Times*, November 2, 1917, 13; Edmund A. Bowles, "Karl Muck and His Compatriots: German Conductors in America during World War I (and How They Coped)," *American Music* 25, no. 4 (Winter 2007): 405-40; "Mrs. William Jay Plays 'Trumps' in Fight to Bar Dr. Muck Here," *New-York Tribune*, March 14, 1918, 6; "German Music Stays on Symphony Program: Mrs. William Jay Says Her Protest Was Overruled by Orchestra Leader," *New-York Tribune*, May 1, 1919, 11; "No Wagnerian Music," *The Billboard* 31, no. 5 (Feb 1, 1919): 25; "Mrs. William Jay Dead of Apoplexy: Widow of Distinguished Lawyer --Founded Anti-German Music League in World War," *New York Times*, January 30, 1931, 21.

[11] *New York Sun*, December 9, 1917, 53; "Bayonet Arrests Land to DeWoody," *New York Sun*, September 7, 1918, 4; "Gregory Criticizes Slacker Raid," *New York Sun*, September 12, 1918, 4; "42,000 Caught in in Draft Raids; Many Set Free," *New York Sun*, September 4, 1918, 1; "Alderman Lee Threatened with Lynching," *New York Sun*, February 27, 1918, 1.

[12] "Fighting the German Spy System," *New York Sun*, December 9, 1917, 1.

American women, especially those married or older, as brooding, suspicious, and backward, mocking them as "stout haufbraus." While depicting German American women as more likely to succumb to state power than their male counterparts, such accounts paradoxically assailed them for being unwilling to participate in municipal celebrations of America's war effort. It appears that many of Yorkville's German American women drew a line at giving their fingerprints at the local precinct, distinguishing compliance with legal processes from public displays of coerced patriotism such as appearing at pro-war rallies or parades.[13]

German Yorkville's position deteriorated even more in 1918 and 1919. Gotham's newspapers openly envisioned a German-less Yorkville well before the November 1918 armistice. A *New York Times* article in the summer of 1918 offered a distorted interpretation of ethnic Yorkville's historical trajectory to forecast its future. This article made no mention of German American contributions to the neighborhood's development and growth, failed to list Germans among the area's contemporary ethnic groups, and located Yorkville's social core below East 72nd Street, the neighborhood's oft-cited southern boundary, a world away from the German businesses on East 86th Street.[14] According to this piece, Yorkville's ethnic composition included "the largest Bohemian settlement in the city" as well as "rapidly growing Hungarian and Greek centers."[15] The *Times* efforts to write German Yorkville out of existence

[13] "30 German Women an Hour Are Registered in Yorkville," *New-York Tribune*, June 19, 1918, 8; *New York Sun*, December 9, 1917, 53; "Bayonet Arrests Land to DeWoody," *New York Sun*, September 7, 1918, 4; "Gregory Criticizes Slacker Raid," *New York Sun*, September 12, 1918, 4; "42,000 Caught in in Draft Raids; Many Set Free," *New York Sun*, September 4, 1918, 1; "Alderman Lee Threatened with Lynching," *New York Sun*, February 27, 1918, 1; "President's Proclamation for State of War," *New York Sun*, April 7, 1917, 1; "U.S. Marshals Get 65 Aliens," *New York Sun*, April 7, 1917, 1; "Screws to Tighten on Enemy Aliens," *New York Sun*, May 5, 1918, 16; "Police to Register All Enemy Aliens," *New York Sun*, November 30, 1917, 5; "Many Teutons in Upper East Side," *New York Sun*, February 15, 1918, 4; "30 German Women an Hour Are Registered in Yorkville," *New-York Tribune*, June 19, 1918, 8; Christina A. Ziegler-McPherson, *Immigrants in Hoboken, One-Way Ticket, 1845-1985* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2011); "All Enemies Kept from Barred Zone," *New York Sun*, November 15, 1917, 3.

[14] In a similar vein, a 1924 article written by a settlement worker, which emphasized the working-class nature of Yorkville, lauded the Czechs as praiseworthy among the neighborhood's Central Europeans. This article fails to expressly mention Yorkville's German population. "'Seeing New York' Tour with Charity Workers," *New York Times*, May 11, 1924, 8.

[15] "A New Era for Yorkville," *New York Times*, July 28, 1918, 22.

belied the critical mass of German Americans committed to weathering this fraught period and maintaining their Yorkville enclave.[16]

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In contrast with German New York, once disparate facets of the city's Hungarians coalesced in the prewar years based not on common domestic concerns but on a shared vision of homeland politics. Just months prior to the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, Archduke of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Count Michael Károlyi, leader of the Hungarian Independence party visited New York on the invitation of two of the city's most prominent Hungarian Americans, Alexander Konta, a banker, publicist, and opinion leader, and Géza Kende, co-editor of Gotham's largest Hungarian newspaper, the *Amerikai Magyar Nepszava* ("AMN"). Károlyi's goals were twofold. He first hoped to gain American support generally for his party's platform of universal suffrage and termination of the dual monarchy by linking these goals to the legacy of Lajos Kossuth, the nineteenth century Hungarian revolutionary. Mayor Mitchel's full-throated endorsement of Károlyi's vision suggested some measure of success.[17] Károlyi also hoped to ignite a sense a nationalism among Hungarian Americans in order to mold them into an overseas diasporic support system capable of financially and rhetorically backing his party.[18]

Initially, the trip exposed disunity within prewar Hungarian New York. The old guard, represented by Kende, his co-editor, Géza Berko, and Konta, battled with Louis Tarcai, the editor of

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[16] Ibid.; "Sale of $7,000 in Bonds Saves Verein Concert," *New York Tribune*, April 28, 1919, 1; "Put the Anthem in Verein Program," *New York Times*, April 28, 1919; *New York Evening World*, "Spreading Americanism is New Voluntary Task of Patriotic American Legion," January 26, 1922, 3.

[17] It bears mention that the idea of a fully autonomous and democratic Hungarian state enjoyed wide support in New York's mainstream circles. In 1911, for example, Gotham's social and political elites rolled out the red carpet for Count Albert Apponyi, then head of the Hungarian independence movement. The city's first lady, Mrs. William Gaynor and Mrs. Samuel Untmyer, wife of one of New York's leading civic figures, arranged multiple events honoring the Count as the symbol of Hungary's quest for self-determination. "Big Reception for Count Apponyi," *New York Times*, February 12, 1911, 11. At one such event, Count Apponyi told the Hungarian migrants, "[I]t breaks my heart to see you away from the land of your birth." He continued, "I know there is not employment in Hungary for you all, but I hope that the time will come when we shall have such prosperity there that emigration will cease." "Send Apponyi Home with Silver Wreath: Gift Planned at Dinner at Which 850 Hungarian-Americans Cheer," *New York Times*, February 13, 1911, 20

[18] Béla Vassady, Jr., "The "Homeland Cause" as Stimulant to Ethnic Unity, 39-64; "To Seek American Sympathy for Hungarian Liberty: Remembering Kossuth's United States Visit, Members of the Independent Party Are Coming to Ask Our Aid for Democracy's Battle against Austrian Autocracy," *New York Times*, July 5, 1914, SM10; "Mitchel Praises Hungary's Fight," *New York Times*, July 14, 1914, 3.

Elöre, a Hungarian-language Socialist newspaper, and his coalition of Hungarian American institutions such as the United Magyar Christian Sick and Benefit Societies, for control of the Károlyi visit. Geographic and socio-economic class differences fueled this contest. The Tarcai faction, based on the Upper East Side, emphasized the needs and values of the working class, both in the city and the homeland. Károlyi and his entourage chose to set up shop in this group's Yorkville-based Magyar Christian Home. In the weeks following Károlyi's visit and after robust debate, the opposing sides found common ground by pledging support for all Hungarian parties committed to universal suffrage. They also developed a concrete scheme to establish "New Hungary Leagues" throughout the United States, with each local entity free to craft its own vision of what a reformed Hungarian homeland might look like. The Great War's poisonous air soon choked this plan as it would dreams of a "new" Hungary.[19]

News of fighting in Europe shook Hungarian New York's collective conscience and obscured the path forward. In August 1914, reservists in the Austro-Hungarian army residing in New York amassed in the downtown Hungarian Relief Society, known variably as the Magyar Ház, to prepare to travel overseas to report for duty. Some men expressly disapproved of the conflict while advocating for America to remain neutral. As combatants dug trenches on the Western front, the city's Hungarian leaders tried to balance pleas for constituents to remain loyal to the U.S. with public statements distinguishing Hungary's geopolitical position from those of Austria and Germany, and exclaiming the righteousness of Magyar rule over the Kingdom of Hungary. On the ground, Hungarian Americans wrestled with how to balance support for Wilson in 1916 while also defending the hyphen.[20]

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[19] Béla Vassady, Jr., 39-64; Michael Károlyi, *Fighting the World: The Struggle for Peace* (New York: Albert & Charles Boni, 1925), translated by E.W. Dickes, 87-91. Karolyi's memoir clarifies his frustration with this internecine feud. He wrote that, "[a]s soon as we drew near to American shores the first reverberations of the quarrels among the Hungarians in America reached us by wireless." He explained that "[o]ne paper telegraphed to request me on no account to speak to the reporter of another paper, as the latter was out to monopolize me." He continued that "a dispute was in progress meanwhile on the pier as to who should actually hand me the bouquet." Michael Károlyi, *Fighting the World: The Struggle for Peace* (New York: Albert & Charles Boni, 1925), translated by E.W. Dickes, 89.

[20] "Swann Warned Jury of Disloyalty: Told Foreman His Statement Would Be "Bullets in the Backs of Our Men,"" *New York Times*, September 16, 1917, 7; "Hungarians Pledge Loyalty to America: U.S. Senator James Brings Message to Mass Meeting from Wilson," *New York Times*, January 31, 1916, 3; "Hungarians Assure Wilson of Loyalty: President, in Reply, Tell Them He Never Doubted Their Allegiance," *New York Times*, February 24, 1916, 2; "Shut 15,000 Out of Bazaar: Madison Square Garden

The saga of Alexander Konta personifies this delicate dance. Konta cast a complex shadow over Hungarian New York during the early twentieth century. As a successful banker and lawyer, he amassed significant financial and political capital. During the war, he served as foreman to grand jury inquiries into allegedly seditious speech and worked closely with George Creel, the Committee on Public Information's chairman, to found and manage the Hungarian-American Loyalty League. In 1915, Konta used his platform to dismiss critiques of the Magyar majority's oppression of Hungary's minority communities. Near the war's end, facing accusations that he had conspired to assist German interests to covertly acquire an American newspaper, Konta changed his tune. Thereafter, he publicly supported self-determination for Hungary's minorities if his homeland enjoyed identical rights. Most Hungarian New Yorkers could not abide this about-face. Pro-Americanization interests, on the other hand, deployed the Konta story to buoy claims that the foreign-born, regardless of social status, could not be trusted. In trying to walk the wartime tightrope, Konta had displeased everyone. The Great War damaged his reputation and left Hungarian New York, including its Yorkville enclave, in an unsettled state.[21]

So Crowded None Admitted After 8 Last Night," *New York Times*, March 19, 1916; 16; "Hungary May Cause Rift in Teuton Ring: Magyar People, with Traditional Friendship for America, Are Not Unlikely to Insist upon Peace and Democratic Government," *New York Times*, September 16, 1917, SM4.

[21] "Servia's Claims Absurd, Says Konta," *New York Times*, January 8, 1913, 8; "Mr. Konta Bears Witness," *New York Times*, September 19, 1918, 12; "Konta Explains Letter He Wrote to Dernburg: Interested in Newspaper Deal Only as a Brother – Had No Connection with Brisbane's Purchase," *New York Evening World*, September 23, 1918, 15; "Konta Called Opponent of Wilson Policy: Hungarian Loyalty League Head Is Denounced by Magyars Here," *New York Tribune*, September 26, 1918, 1; "Form New League and Assail Konta: Present Loyalty Organization, Dissenting Hungarians Assert, Is "One-Man Affair,"" *New York Times*, September 26, 1918, 5; "Teuton Propaganda Inquiry to Resume," *New York Times*, September 27, 1918, 13; "Magyars Here Unite in Fight for Liberty," *New-York Tribune*, October 7, 1918, 2; "Konta Demands to Know Accusers at Senate Inquiry," *New York Evening World*, December 5, 1918, 13; "Alexander Konta, Banker, Is Dead: Had Served on State Board of Parole and as Foreman of Grand Juries," *New York Times*, April 29, 1933, 13. "Throng Mourns Alexander Konta: 1,000 Friends Attend Funeral of Banker and Hungarian American Leader," *New York Times*, May 2, 1933, 18. Despite his compromised reputation, the New York Times reported that over one thousand came to mourn his passing at the funeral conducted at St. Stephen of Hungary Catholic Church on East 82nd Street held on May 1, 1933. Several Hungarian American organizations honored the community leader, including Saint Stephen of Hungary Roman Catholic Church and Benevolent Society, the New York First Hungarian Social and Benevolent Society, and the New York Hungarian Young Men's Circle and Singing Society. It is worth noting that even after suffering through this ordeal, Alexander Konta tried to reestablish his public voice during the interwar years. In 1922, for instance, Konta used a lecture he delivered on Lajos Kossuth's legacy to decry the Treaty of Trianon. "decries Hungary's Division: Was Hacked to Pieces at Moment of Freedom, Says Konta," *New York Times*, January 11, 1922, 12.

ETHNIC YORKVILLE IN THE 1920S: A DECADE OF ENDURANCE AND PARTIAL RECOVERY

In 1926, a few years after the end of the Great War, Emery Deri, a *Times* reporter, in an article carrying the sensational title, "Alien Yorkville Re-enters the Union," noted ethnic Yorkville's persistence while simultaneously predicting its end. Deri's piece opened:

> Europe in miniature, which withstood for so long the encroachments of standardizing Americanization and gave a peculiar touch of quaintness and individuality to New York's kaleidoscopic east side, is yielding. Yorkville for well-nigh two decades known to connoisseurs of east side life as the exclusive domain of Czechoslovaks, Hungarians, and Germans, is slowly giving up its strongly accentuated Central European character and gradually merging into a state of colorless impersonality.[22]

In the middle of a decade of American opulence, Deri foresaw New York's Anglo-Americans marching victoriously into Yorkville "with giant stride" as the neighborhood's immigrants and their children fled across the East River. Native-born interests, Deri asserted, were reclaiming an allegedly underdeveloped part of Manhattan, a step toward putting the island's finite space to the highest and best use. This jeremiad was the first to track the demise of ethnic Yorkville while labeling it a foreign and backwards place unaware of or unconcerned with its full economic potential. Recurring themes of death and resurrection in portraits of this nature produced over the course of the next century have infused the ethnic Yorkville imaginary with drama, passion, angst, and lament: ingredients that when combined create a nostalgic dish consumed by ethnic insiders and non-ethnic outsiders alike.[23]

Despite journalistic interpretations to the contrary, ethnic Yorkville did not die on the fields of Flanders. Rather, Yorkville's German and Hungarian communities survived the Great War, albeit wounded and altered. Deri's article does evince, however, the extent to which outsiders salivated at the prospect of midtown Manhattan swallowing ethnic Yorkville during the 1920s. External business interests tended to view the neighborhood as desperately needing commercial modernization. Real

[22] Emery Deri, "Alien Yorkville Re-enters the Union," *New York Times*, October 24, 1926, SM6.
[23] Ibid.

estate developers planned to plant bright new apartment complexes in the heretofore working-class, largely ethnic neighborhood. For those seeking to maximize Yorkville's return on investment, the city's early twentieth century infrastructure projects added to the neighborhood's appeal. The Queensborough Bridge, completed in 1909, provided Yorkville's residents a route across the East River into Queens from East 59 Street. The opening of the Lexington Avenue subway line in 1918 made commuting to and from the Upper East Side easier than ever. In 1920, the city resumed ferry service between East 92nd Street and Astoria, Queens. Fueled by Gotham's transportation revolution, the buying, selling, and renting of residential space accelerated within a more connected Yorkville.[24]

Some German American entrepreneurs, such as Henry Mielke, the Hamburg-born seller of radios and phonographs, worked with non-German interests to determine the best ways to benefit from this renewed interest in the district while staving off a wholesale transformation of Yorkville's socio-economic and ethnic identities. Mielke helped found the Yorkville Chamber of Commerce, which, over the next several decades, fused together pluralism and profit in subtle and creative ways. Active participation of German business owners in the Chamber of Commerce helped promote the idea that Yorkville's ethnic enclaves could prove integral to the neighborhood's commercial rebirth. While Mielke and his Chamber partners helped preserve ethnic Yorkville, they also pushed the neighborhood away from its organized labor roots and toward a relatively conservative political worldview by, for example, actively lobbying against labor-friendly proposals such as workmen's compensation.[25]

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[24] E.B. White, "The Talk of the Town: Yorkville," *The New Yorker*, June 3, 1927, 13; "300,000 See Queens Linked To Old City: New Bridge Ablaze with Red Fire and Electricity in the Evening," *New York Times*, June 13, 1909, 1; "3,000 Children Help Hylan Open Ferry to Astoria: City-Operated Enterprise Wins Support of Business Men; Two Refitted Boats Inaugurate Service," *New-York Tribune*, September 28, 1920, 5; "Like Tunnel Zone: Many Speculators Adding to Their Holdings in Pennsylvania District," *New-York Tribune*, February 6, 1910, 12; "Three Are Found Dead in Gas-Filled Room," *New-York Tribune*, October 27, 1919, 3.

[25] "Henry F. Mielke: Yorkville Dealer in Phonographs and Radios Was 64," *New York Times*, June 16, 1935, 28; David Farber, *Everybody Ought to Be Rich: The Life and Times of John P. Raskols, Capitalist* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Hearing and Report on Workmen's Compensation in the District of Columbia, Sixty-Seventh Congress-Sixty-Eight Congress (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1926), Workmen's Compensation in the District of Columbia Hearing Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on the District of Columbia, House of Representatives, Sixty-Seventh Congress, First Session, H.R. 4089, February 29, 1924, "Attitude of Business Men's Organizations to Monopolize Funds," 490. Stern et al., New York 1930, 29, Architectural historian Robert Stern refers to the 1920s as the modern turn in Gotham's built environment as well as the period where New

As Yorkville's German American business leaders planned their next steps, the rank and file of the German enclave continued to feel the reverberating pings of the Great War. Vigilantism targeting German Yorkville constituted the most extreme threat to the community. In April 1919, upwards of three hundred former doughboys, strangely led by a man wearing a kilt, descended on a gathering of the Bayerischer Volksfest Verein at the Yorkville Casino. These veterans resolved to stop the German concert inside by any means necessary. Only the presence of Richard O'Connor, a plain-clothed police officer, prevented mob violence. O'Connor did, however, tacitly acquiesce to the veterans seizing control of the event. These men stormed into the meeting, planted the American flag on the stage and oversaw an impromptu and coercive Victory Loan drive that yielded pledges of $7,000. The *New York Herald* gleefully reported that Army yeoman, third-class, Lewis White, led a rendition of the national anthem when the German artist on the stage feigned his inability to play the standard.[26]

Yorkville's German Americans faced tough choices in this tense postwar environment and throughout the 1920s. Many pondered whether to remain in the neighborhood. While some migrated to the other boroughs, Northern New Jersey, and upstate, a critical mass of German Americans stayed put. During the early 1920s, an influx of newcomers bolstered their ranks, as the Weimar Republic's struggles and Germany's economic woes produced a postwar uptick in emigration. The fate of Yorkville's German American institutions reflected these crosscurrents, with some proving more durable than others. In June 1920, the New York Turn Verein celebrated its seventieth anniversary with an event featuring gymnastics, music, and dancing. More than sixty attendees had belonged to the club for at

York's service economy started to challenge the city's one-time industrial prowess. Given its prior reliance on light industry, Yorkville's path forward in this rapidly changing environment was uncertain.

[26] "Put the Anthem in Verein Program: Sailors Also Adorn Flagless Stage at Bavarian Volksfest with Stars and Stripes," *New York Times*, April 28, 1919, 11; "Sailors Revise Programme at Verein Concert," *New York Herald*, April 28, 1919, 1; "German Concerts to Be Held, Despite Protest," *New-York Tribune*, April 27, 1919, 22. In addition to blatant vigilantism, nativist groups such as the reconstituted Ku Klux Klan and an organization calling itself the Royal Riders of the Red Robe ("Royal Riders') rhetorically attacked the Steuben Society and protested against the teaching German in New York area public schools. "Demand for Royal Riders," *New York Times*, November 28, 1922, 23; "Klan Opens War on Paterson Germans," *New York Herald*, November 25, 1922, 3; "Jersey Klan Fights German in Schools," *New York Times*, November 25, 1922, 3.

least fifty years. On the other hand, the Deutsches Verein, a social club founded in 1874, was forced to sell its upper Manhattan property in December 1919. The club could no longer afford its overhead and mortgage payments due to declining membership. As emphasized by Barbara Wiedemann-Citera, the surviving grassroots institutions, especially the singing societies, "rebuilt the bridge to the American public" after the Great War.[27]

As German Yorkville dug in, pan-Germanism in Greater New York realigned. Congressional attacks had destroyed the NGAA ostensibly for its unflinching stance against Prohibition and highly visible support for American neutrality. In response to this loss, leaders of Gotham's German community founded the Steuben Society in 1919 to preserve German American culture by apolitical means and through English-language publications. Unlike its ex-partner NGAA, UGS, the New York-based German umbrella institution, survived the war. Under the leadership of Charles Oberwager, a well-respected city magistrate, UGS avoided taking public positions on potentially controversial topics such as the Treaty of Versailles or Germany's interwar government. Instead, the organization emphasized noteworthy German American achievements such as its celebration of swimmer Gertrude Ederle, the first woman to swim across the English Channel. The city's German Americans strongly supported German Day's return in the early twenties under UGS sponsorship. The success of the 1921 German Day held in the Männerchor hall, in fact, forced the 1922 version into the larger Hippodrome. Later in the decade, UGS reintroduced *Kultur* on a grand scale through events such as its 1928 Yankee Stadium ode to Richard Wagner's music. Based on these activities, the *New-York Herald* diagnosed *Deutschtum* as "scotched,

[27] Barbara Wiedemann-Citera, "The Role of the German-American Vereine in the Revitalization of German-American Ethnic Life in New York City in the 1920s," *Yearbook of German-American Studies* 29 (1994): 110; Lyn Wilkerson, "Yorkville," in *Historical Cities – New York City* (New York: Caddo Publications USA, 2010); Paul D. Cravath, "Impressions of the Financial and Industrial Conditions in Germany," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 92, (Social and Industrial Conditions in the Germany of Today) (Nov. 1920): 5-12; *New York Sun and New York Herald*, June 7, 1920, 18; "Trophy for Miss Gehrig: Woman Fencer Wins All Her Bouts in Turn Verein Tournament," *New York Times*, January 29, 1919, 10; "Schaeffler Takes Medal: Defeats Adversaries in Dueling Swords Competition at Turn Verein," *New York Times*, February 13, 1919, 12; "Gym Championships Draw Many Entries: New York Turn Verein Is Favored to Capture Met. Senior A.A.U. Title Friday Night," *New York Times*, April 11, 1926, S7; *New York Sun*, "Deutsches Verein Sells for $440,000," *New York Sun*, December 7, 1919, 12; "ALT Heidelberg Revived," *New York Times*, May 31, 1926, 10.

not killed," suggesting pan-Germanism could survive as a form of ethnic cultural expression provided it did not venture into the political domain.[28]

Episodic ruptures relating to homeland politics disturbed this cautious approach to rehabilitating German identity writ large in postwar New York, prefiguring the tumult of the thirties. The so-called "Horror on the Rhine" controversy in 1921 revealed that UGS could not prevent all of Gotham's German Americans from reacting to homeland politics. Claims that African colonial troops deployed by France in the Rhineland had engaged in a series of war crimes, including seemingly baseless allegations of murder and rape, provided a justification for politically minded German New Yorkers to express their displeasure with the Versailles treaty and French occupation of Germany. In February 1921, upwards of fifteen thousand people crammed into Madison Square Garden to hear speakers such as Dr. Edmund von Mach, a former Harvard art history professor, stir up ethnic outrage against the French for allegedly humiliating Germany by using black conscripts. The speakers' descriptions of these troops as "uncivilized" exposed the racist undertone of these complaints.[29]

Mayor Hylan, whose citywide campaigns had relied on German votes, issued a permit for the mass meeting over veterans' groups' vociferous objections. For hardcore anti-hyphenates, controversies such as the "Horror on the Rhine" demonstrated German Americans inability or refusal to distance themselves from Germany's concerns. A *New York Times* review of Lida Schem's *The Hyphen*, a work of fiction centered around German American immigrants in New York, drove this point home. The reviewer

[28] "Dinner for Oberwager: Friends Celebrate Magistrate's Appointment and Relief Work," *New York Times*, February 17, 1922, 29; "United German Societies Plan Welcome for Trudy," *New York Daily News*, August 11, 1928, 2; "United German Societies Announce Wagner Festival," *Brooklyn Standard Union*, July 5, 1928, 9; Wiedemann-Citera, "The Role of the German-American Vereine," 110; "German-Born in United States Help Berlin: Mass Meeting in New York Calls Attention to Financial Needs of Crumbling Reich," *Dunkirk (NY) Evening Observer*, October 22, 1923, 1; 5; "Scotched, Not Killed," *New-York Tribune*, April 27, 1921, 12.

[29] Rotem Giladi, "The Phoenix of Colonial War: Race, the Laws of War, and the 'Horror on the Rhine,'" *Leiden Journal of International Law* 30, no..4 (Dec. 2017): 847-875; Robert C. Reinders, "Racialism on the Left: A.D. Moreland and the 'Black Horror on the Rhine,'" *International Review of Social History* 13, no. 1 (Apr. 1968): 1-28; Edwin L. James, "French See German Propaganda Here In Protest on Blacks; None Now on Rhine," *New York Times*, February 12, 1921, 1; "Ask Ban on Protest Against Rhine Blacks: Veterans Call on Hylan to Stop Meeting Monday to Prevent Colonial Troops," *New York Times*, February 25, 1921, 4.

described the novel as "deal[ing] with that greatest of all our immigrant problems, the German community . . . a racial group determined to hold itself together and, instead of amalgamating with the life of the country, use its power for the benefit of the nation from which it came."[30] Those with similar views found German Americans' interest in European politics a stubborn obstacle to their full assimilation into America's political culture. This language of "race" and political assimilation implied that many Germans had failed to follow the rules of earned whiteness as delineated and monitored by New York's native-born elites, which, among other things, demanded that the foreign-born turn away from homeland politics and toward hostland concerns.[31]

Political concerns closer to home, especially the fight over Prohibition and its enforcement, proved just as fraught during the twenties. For E.B. White, the Eighteenth Amendment meant the unavoidable death of German Yorkville. In 1927, White, then only two years into his musings for the *New Yorker*, chronicled Prohibition-era Yorkville in this way:

> It was interesting to stroll east through Eighty-fourth Street and notice how the old order fadeth. The beer saloons are shoddy and unpainted; dachsunds mope under swinging doors, and in the windows are signs, "Cider Depot," and posters announcing German outings in the Bronx – which is evidently the Yorkville of today.[32]

Prohibition caused UGS to make an exception to their apolitical *Deutschtum* campaign. Emboldened by Governor Al Smith's vocal opposition to the Volstead Act, German Day speakers offered rhetorical attacks on the constitutional amendment a regular feature of the festival. Furthermore, there is ample evidence German Yorkville flouted the legal restrictions on alcohol. Robert Corradini, writing on behalf of the World League against Alcoholism, linked Prohibition and anti-immigrant sentiments succinctly. He described Yorkville during the 1920s as so completely dominated by "the German element . . . that one

[30] "Immigration Problems in Recent Fiction," *New York Times*, January 16, 1921, BR6.
[31] Ibid.; "1,000 Police Guard Rhine Rally; Eject 12 Protesters: Friends of Germany Are Interrupted in Speeches in Mass Meeting, but Order Is Finally Restored," *New-York Tribune*, March 1, 1921, 1; "The Referendum," *Brooklyn Citizen*, October 29, 1926, 4; "Legion Posts in Newark Protest 'Rhine' Meetings," *New York Daily News*, March 9, 1921, 5.
[32] E.B. White, "The Talk of the Town: Yorkville," *The New Yorker*, June 3, 1927, 13.

wonders at times if this is New York or Germany."[33] Corradini also noted several saloons still operating in the neighborhood well into the decade. Based on these kinds of reports, federal agents frequently raided Yorkville's gathering places, including the Yorkville Casino, throughout the twenties and early thirties.[34] In a single 1931 raid, more than a dozen Prohibition agents nabbed ninety-nine barrels of beer, the bulk of which came from six German American establishments on the northside of East 86th Street, in a single 1931 raid. In the process, German Yorkville's commercial sector started to accrue a reputation as a site of resistance. Eventually, such labels attached to the residents themselves, with the *Daily News* commonly reveling in the recalcitrance of the "jolly German burghers of Yorkville."[35]

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Meanwhile, Hungarian Yorkville's footprint and influence grew during the interwar years. By the early 1920s, over sixty thousand foreign-born and tens of thousands more second-generation Hungarians called Manhattan home, with Yorkville absorbing much of this growth. The neighborhood's Hungarian enclave now claimed numerical preeminence over Little Hungary, a demographic trend that continued through the thirties. In 1927, New York's national Hungarian Catholic church, St. Stephen of Hungary, relocated from its original downtown location to East 82nd Street, signaling the tipping point of uptown migration. In this same period, Hungarians carved out a special place in the neighborhood's sporting culture, a role they would continue to play for decades to come. They manned multiple soccer

[33] Robert E. Corradini, *Saloon Survey – New York City: Changes in Saloon Property after the First Three Years and after Five Years of Prohibition* (Westerville, OH: World League of Alcoholism, 1925), 6-8. "Malt Shops also Raided by Snoopers," *New York Daily News*, May 24, 1930, 2; "Yorkville's Stein Songs Stilled by Snoop Raids," *New York Daily News*, March 22, 1931, 8.
[34] Raids intensified in scope and frequency after the federal government interpreted a 1930 Supreme Court ruling as clarifying the illegality of beverages using malt and hops. James A. Morone, *Hellfire Nation: The Politics of Sin in American History* (New Haven: Yale University press, 2003), 320; "4 Malt Shops also Raided by Snoopers," *New York Daily News*, May 24, 1930, 2.
[35] Thomas Weiskopp, "Prohibition in the United States: The German-American Experience, 1919-1933." *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute*, no. 53 (Fall 2013): 31-53; Peter C. Weber, "Ethnic Identity During War: The Case of German American Societies During World War I," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (2014): 185-206; "Einstein Routs Musicians: Prohibition Agent Makes Seizures at Yorkville Casino," *New York Times*, September 29, 1921, 13; "Ethnic Identity during War: The Case of German-American Societies during World War I," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (2014): 185-206; Robert E. Corradini, *Saloon Survey,* 6-8. In 1928, UGS publicly protested and threatened to seek an injunction against a film depicting German soldiers executing a British nurse during the war. "Germans Here Fight Film of Edith Cavell," *New York Daily News*, April 13, 1928, 6.

teams, boasted some of the city's finest runners, and provided leadership to the trans-ethnic Yorkville Athletic League.[36]

Despite the Yorkville enclave's development and growth, Hungarians throughout the city continued to struggle to shake images of foreignness. In the early 1920s, Konrad Bercovici, a Romanian American journalist, wrote a series of sketches subsequently assembled into a single volume describing Manhattan's foreign-born enclaves for a largely white, old stock audience. He depicted Hungarians as New York's most distinct ethnic community, calling them "a kind apart." He asked rhetorically, "and what is one to say about the Hungarian quarter, where the children of Attila have kept their own tongue so pure that not a single Anglo-Saxon word has penetrated their speech?"[37] He based his assertion of Hungarian "otherness" on their Finno-Ugric language, their penchant for using vivid colors in home décor, the relatively equal status of women within Hungarian families, the emotive qualities of Hungarian music, and the atmosphere of Hungarian cafés, spaces where "one feels the air thick with passion, violent and active."[38]

News from Hungary's chaotic postwar political climate occupied the hearts and minds of Hungarian New Yorkers more than outsiders' characterizations during the interwar period. In the fifteen months from the Great War's armistice to spring 1920, former Hapsburg rulers, Allied governments, and the neighboring states of Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia had all interfered with Hungarian

[36] Robert Perlman, *Bridging Three Worlds: Hungarian-Jewish Americans, 1848-1914* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts, 1991), 136; "Operators Get Quick Return on Apartment: Dispose of Flat in West 184th Street Bought Last Week: Other Houses Sold," *New-York Tribune*, December 28, 1921, 11; "Klein Reelected Head of Yorkville Athletic League," *New-York Herald*, November 4, 1921, 16; "Hacs to Oppose Yorkville Booters," *Central New Jersey Homes News*, June 16, 1957, 26; "Hungarians Oust Brookhattan, 6-3," *New York Daily News*, March 3, 1958, 52; "HAAC to Hold Soccer Tourney," *Central New Jersey Home News*, June 1, 1958, 27. Nationally, the population of foreign-born population reporting Magyar as their native tongue increased substantially between the 1910 and 1920 censuses: 229, 094 to 290,419, an increase of 26.8 percent. The trend reversed itself in the following decade, during which this population fell to 250,393, or a decrease of 13.8 percent. U.S. Census Bureau, Table 6, "Mother Tongue of the Foreign-born Population: 1910 to 1940, 1960 and 1970, Release date March 9, 1999, https://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab06.html, accessed January 15, 2020.

[37] Konrad Bercovici, *Around the World in New York* (New York: The Century Company, 1924), 17.

[38] Ibid., 17, 347-66; *City of New York*, Map, "Persons Born in Hungary by Census Tract New York City, 1920," accessed November 29, 2017, https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/data-maps/nyc-population/historical-population/1920_hungary_fb.pdf;

sovereignty. During this period, the levers of power shifted from the Károlyi-led democrats to Béla Kun and his communist supporters. In March 1920, seeking some degree of stability, the Hungarian Parliament invited former head of the Austro-Hungarian Navy, Miklós Horthy, to assume the role of Regent. Hungary had become a kingless kingdom. Moreover, pursuant to the Treaty of Trianon, demanded by the Allies, Hungary lost two-thirds of its territory, including a sizeable swathe of Upper Hungary and the entirety of Transylvania.[39]

In New York, Count Albert Apponyi, a Hungarian politician who had visited during the prewar years to champion his nation's independence, returned to embark on a two-month goodwill tour aimed at winning popular support for amending the treaty. The fifty-year veteran of Hungary's parliament, evoking the mythology that Magyars had once saved Western civilization from the Turks, portrayed his country as "the furthest outpost of civilization" beyond which lies "semi-barbarism."[40] Only through revision of Trianon Treaty, he insisted, could Hungary play an integral role in assuring European peace. Apponyi's visit did not inspire an American outcry or even much general interest in the treaty controversy. In contrast, the Treaty of Trianon, more specifically a belief in its injustice, would animate Hungarian identity in the homeland and the diaspora to the present day.[41]

Despite this ethnic consensus on Trianon, Hungary's interwar politics tended to exacerbate existing fissures within Hungarian New York. These tensions boiled over in the Lajos Kossuth monument controversy of the late 1920s.[42] The social memory and symbolic capital of Kossuth had long been

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[39] Julianna Puskás, *Ties That Bind, Ties That Divide: 100 Years of Hungarian Experience in the United States*, trans. Zora Ludwig (New York: Holmes & Meier, 2000), 227-31; John Connelly, *From Peoples into Nations: A History of Eastern Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020), 365-89; Miklós Molnár, *A Concise History of Hungary*, trans. Anna Magyar (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 261-83. The *New York Times* reported about a rash of suicides in Budapest on New Year's Eve 1920, allegedly caused by Hungary's hopeless future. The suicide rate increased during the first few years of the 1920s. "12 Budapest Suicides on Eve of New Year: All Left Notes Telling of Hopelessness Over the Future of Hungary," *New York Times*, January 5, 1921: 14; "Vienna-Budapest Suicides Grow," *New York Times*, May 21, 1924, 3.

[40] Apponyi Pleads Cause of Hungary: His Country, Contented, Would Do Much to Preserve Peace in Europe, He Says," *New York Times*, September 30, 1923, 4

[41] Ibid.; "Count Apponyi's Farewell Message: What, In His Opinion, Is Wrong with the Peace Treaties, and Why They Should Be Enforced as Liberally as Possible," *New York Times*, November 13, 1923, 20.

[42] The Kossuth monument controversy was not the only intra-Hungarian squabble of the period. In the wake of the Great War, Eugene S. Bagger, a versatile writer of Hungarian Jewish ancestry who specialized in historical biographies, assailed the wartime

Hungarian New York's lodestar, uniting co-ethnics of different faiths who longed to see and possibly return to a truly democratic Hungarian state. Plans to erect a Kossuth monument on Riverside Drive in Manhattan, however, sparked a public dispute driven by contemporary Hungarian politics. Traditional leaders, such as newspaperman Géza Berko and author Dr. Imre de Josika-Herczeg, saw the Kossuth tribute as means to nurture Hungary-U.S. relations and indirectly remind Americans of the merits of revising the Trianon Treaty. Leading Hungarian Jews, on the other hand, had formed a coalition seeking to use the monument project's visibility to contrast Kossuth with the Horthy regime's allegedly antisemitic policies.[43]

The fraught politics of public commemoration resulted in these two groups battling during the groundbreaking ceremony in the fall of 1927, as traditionalists, linked closely to Christian elements within the Yorkville enclave, marginalized the anti-Horthyites as "Bolsheviks." The acrimony grew over the next few months, causing the city to deploy forty uniformed police officers augmented by a

Hungarian-language press for its disloyal and disingenuous approach. Bagger accused the New York-based *Amerikai Magyar Népszava* of being unprofessional, lacking creativity, and projecting an "evil" influence on its Hungarian American readership. Robert E. Park, *The Immigrant Press and Its Control* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1922), 73-76; Francis E. McMahon, "Review: An Interpretation of Our Time," *Review of Politics* 3, no. 4 (Oct. 1941): 504-505.

[43] During the early 1920s, leading Hungarian Jews in New York coalesced politically to raise awareness about what they saw as antisemitic policies in postwar Hungary. Operating as the Federation of Hungarian Jews in America ("FHJA"), they also fought against domestic signs of antisemitism, denouncing, for instance, rumors of a Henry Ford presidential run in the 1924 election cycle. "Hungarian Jews Plan Aid for Suffering Countrymen," *New York Daily News*, June 1, 1920, 7; "Jews Here Fight Ford for President," *New York Times*, May 31, 1923, 7; "Quiz Candidates on Hungarian Jews: Federation Asks Coolidge, Davis and La Follette If They Will Stop Persecution," *New York Times*, September 7, 1924, 27. This is not to suggest that all Hungarian Jews aligned with these projects. In fact, Samuel Schulman, Rabbi of Temple Beth-El, just outside of Yorkville proper, publicly criticized Samuel Buchler, head of the FHJA, for remarks allegedly made disparaging Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, eldest son of the former president and Republican nominee for Governor. "Rabbi Denounces Buchler's Letter: Rev. Samuel Schulman Calls It a "Dastardly Attempt to Appeal to Jews as Such," *New York Times*, October 30, 1924, 3. Hungarian New Yorkers formulated the idea of a Kossuth monument in the city in the late nineteenth century, going as far as creating the Kossuth Monument Association. It took them thirty years to be in the political and financial situation to make this dream a reality. "John Swinton Takes Suddenly Ill: He Was Addressing a Meeting of the Kossuth Monument Association," *New York Times*, September 17, 1894, 4. The Kossuth monument still stands at Riverside Drive and West 113th Street. New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, "Riverside Park: Louis Kossuth, History" https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/riverside-park/monuments/879, accessed January 6, 2020. On the advice and guidance of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (the "IHRA"), this dissertation used the term antisemitism without a hyphen. The IHRA explains that "the hyphenated spelling allows for the possibility of something called 'Semitism', which not only legitimizes a form of pseudo- scientific racial classification that was thoroughly discredited by association with Nazi ideology, but also divides the term, stripping it from its meaning of opposition and hatred toward Jews." International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, IHRA Committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial, "Memo on Spelling of Antisemitism, April 2015, https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/memo-on-spelling-of-antisemitism_final-1.pdf, accessed March 11, 2020.

mounted unit and bomb squad at the March 1928 dedication. Complicating this dispute further, a delegation of five hundred Hungarian officials journeyed across the Atlantic to partake in the dedication ceremony. Like Károlyi in 1913, these dignitaries witnessed firsthand the messiness of Hungarian New York's socio-political divisiveness. Twenty-five thousand supporters cheered while a smaller but vocal contingent of anti-Horthyites jeered. The words inscribed on the monument's pedestal underscore the link between this political fight and issues of identity: "Erected by a Liberty Loving Race of Americans of Magyar Origin to Louis Kossuth the Great Champion of Liberty."[44] The monument committee's use of the term Magyar rather than Hungarian narrowly defined ethnic identity, presaging a struggle that continued to reverberate throughout the twentieth century.[45]

ETHNIC YORKVILLE IN THE 1930S: A DECADE OF EXTREME HIGHS AND LOWS

As a matter of pure demographics, Yorkville seemed like an urban, working-class neighborhood in decline at the start of the 1930s. It had lost more than twenty percent of its overall population over the prior decade. At the same time, the percentage of unnaturalized immigrants in Gotham fell from thirty-six percent in 1910 to twenty-two percent in 1930, due to wartime pressure to file citizenship papers combined with the Immigration Act of 1924, otherwise known as the Johnson-Reed Act, which ended the era of open immigration.[46] For outsiders, these indicators spelled the end for ethnic Yorkville.

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[44] New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, "Riverside Park: Louis Kossuth, History" https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/riverside-park/monuments/879, accessed January 6, 2020.

[45] Ibid.; "Police Rout 'Reds' in Kossuth Meeting," *New York Times*, November 6, 1927, 27; "Hungarians Coming for Kossuth Fetes: 500 from Budapest Will Take Part in Unveiling of Statue Here on March 15," *New York Times*, February 26, 1928, 33; "Hungarian Group Protests: Asks Boycott of Kossuth Statue Ceremony in Behalf of Hatvany," *New York Times*, March 3, 1928, 36. "Hungarian Premier Is Assailed Here: Anti-Horthy League Denounces Imprisonment of Hatvany for Political Writings," *New York Times*, March 5, 1928, 10; "Protest Welcome to 525 Hungarians: Foes Here of Horthy Ask Mayor to Bar Fete for Delegates to Kossuth Celebration," *New York Times*, March 13, 1928, 8. Throughout the twenties, the Horthy regime cultivated a special relationship with the United States, often resorting to symbolic gestures. In 1928, for examples, Budapest celebrated the America's Independence Day on July 4th, capped off by Horthy himself placing a wreath on the city's George Washington monument. "Observes Fourth of July: Budapest Pays Tribute to George Washington at Monument," *New York Times*, July 2, 1928, 4.

[46] Mason Williams placed these demographic shifts within the wider rise of the children of the foreign-born, or second-generation. For Williams, the children of immigrants were neither a replica of their parents nor a severance from tradition, but "some new [yet] still identifiable." Mason B. Williams, *City of Ambition: FDR, LaGuardia, and the Making of Modern New York* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2013), 78.

O.O. McIntyre, a syndicated columnist whose "New York, Day-by-Day" reached a national audience in excess of one hundred million, pronounced "Yorkville's Bohemian atmosphere" moribund in 1929. The exotic cuisine, orchestral music, and "real" beer of the neighborhood's affordable German and Hungarian restaurants had been replaced, he claimed, by elevated prices, "near" beer, and a kind of "prop hokum" borrowed from "Bowery sawdust joints."[47]

McIntyre changed his tune just one year later, signaling that those external to Yorkville's ethnic enclaves sensed a turning point in the neighborhood's fortunes. He seemed ready to admit that he had underestimated the market for German kitsch. Sensing a business opportunity, a new class of German American entrepreneurs opened up "a dozen hoffbraus and rathskellers featuring deep drinking mugs, mottoed mats and German dishes" in a one block subsection in 1930.[48] East 86th Street's robust bar and restaurant scene was assuming its full form. This commercial district seemed capable of appealing to the ethnic old guard, German newcomers who entered the U.S. before the end of open immigration, as well as those curious whether the German lager flowing from the taps complied with the Volstead Act.[49]

As East 86th Street and its immediate surroundings continued to grow commercially, German Yorkville stood ready for the curtain to drop on the Prohibition era. On May 14, 1932, one hundred thousand men and women marched up Fifth Avenue with Mayor Jimmy Walker in an eleven-hour "Beer Parade," a bold statement about the need to legalize and tax alcohol. The *New York Daily News* estimated that upwards of two million people witnessed the procession. German Americans, deploying their parading experience, entered multiple floats in the procession. Almost a year later, New York

[47] O.O. McIntyre, "New York, Day-by-Day," *Greenville News* (SC), April 29, 1929, 4. McIntyre's success had brought him from the small town Ohio of his youth to a penthouse on Park Avenue, and he enjoyed nothing more, according to his editor and biographer, Charles Driscoll, than sharing "intimate glimpses into the strange places of the magic city." Charles Driscoll, *The Life of O.O. McIntyre* (New York: The Greystone Press, 1938), 17.
[48] O.O. McIntyre, "New York, Day-by-Day," *Reno Gazette-Journal*, June 3, 1930, 4.
[49] "Population Growth of New York City by Districts, 1910-1948," Consolidated Edison, 4; O.O. McIntyre, "New York, Day by Day," *Waterloo (IA) Courtier*, April 29, 1929, 6; O.O. McIntyre, "New York, Day by Day," *Honolulu Advertiser*, June 29, 1933, 14; William Gaines, "Seen and Heard in New York," *Appleton (WI) Post-Crescent*, February 22, 1932, 6; Driscoll, *The Life of O.O. McIntyre*, 18, 95-100;; Robert G. Massock, "About New York," *Havre Daily News (MT).* April 17, 1929, 4; Herbert Corey, "Manhattan Days and Nights," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat,* May 14, 1929, 17.

journalists ventured into ethnic Yorkville to discern its inhabitants' collective reaction to real beer's triumphant return. On April 7, 1933, the *New York Times* reported that:

> Yorkville will celebrate tonight, not with drunkenness nor unseemly hilarity, but with clinking steins and rollicking songs. Even the Hungarian colony in the upper Seventies, and the Czechs below them, will join in, although they feel chagrined that the government did not recognize their taste for a palatable wine.[50]

That evening, the Restaurant Franziskaner, located on Second Avenue near East 82nd Street, hosted a massive party attended by UGS representatives, Steuben Society dignitaries, members of German singing and shooting clubs, and public officials who the *Times* referred to as "regular customers." The proprietors of German Yorkville's bars and restaurants had creatively kept the doors open during Prohibition. As a result, their businesses were well-prepared for the neighborhood's next commercial rise once loosed by repeal.[51]

Just a few years later, Erich Posselt, a WPA writer and editor, referred to Yorkville as "perhaps the most colorful section of the city" based on "its famous Hofbraus, Beergardens, dance halls, etc. and its people."[52] Eighty-Sixth Street alone contained more restaurants, bars, and dance venues, according to Posselt, "than you can shake a stick at."[53] Diners at venues such as the Austrian Hall, Ivan Frank's Hofbrau, Gloria Palast (Cabaret) Restaurant, and Martin's Rathskeller could enjoy German fare while listening to a wide array of bands and orchestras. Places such as the Platzl Restaurant and Rudi & Maxl's 86th Street Brauhaus promoted a Bavarian aesthetic in interior design and wait staff costumes. The neighborhood also contained movie theaters showing German-language films, such as the Yorkville Theatre at the corner of East 96th Street and Third Avenue. German Yorkville's commercial florescence

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[50] "Yorkville, Where Beer Never Ceased to Flow, Will Celebrate Return of Legality Tonight," *New York Times*, April 7, 1933, 2.
[51] "100,000 Marchers in 11-Hour Beer-ade," *New York Daily News*, May 15, 1932, 2, 6; "Yorkville, Where Beer Never Ceased to Flow, Will Celebrate Return of Legality Tonight," *New York Times*, April 7, 1933, 2. Jimmy Walker's father emigrated from Ireland, making the mayor part of Gotham's second-generation subculture. Williams, *City of Ambition*, 81.
[52] "A Little Journey through Yorkville," WPA Federal Writers' Project, New York Municipal Archives, Department of Records and Informational Services, Record Sub-Series: German-Dutch Group, Erich Posselt, File 31.
[53] Ibid.; "German Shops, Restaurants, etc.," WPA Federal Writers' Project, New York Municipal Archives, Department of Records and Informational Services, Record Sub-Series: German-Dutch Group, H.W.G. Gurlitt, File 3.

exemplified a phenomenon replicated throughout New York during the interwar years. According to Mason Williams, "New York's ethnic communities, long segmented into occupational niches, developed diversified, relatively autonomous ethnic economies."[54] Social memories of pre-World War II ethnic Yorkville emphasize images from these venues. They evoke men in lederhosen and women in dirndls, usually decontextualizing these scenes from their specific commercial setting, in the process giving a distorted picture of the omnipresence of this folk aesthetic. To this day, the Heidelberg restaurant on Second Avenue, with its Bavarian adorned workers and architecture, leverages this remembered past to distinguish itself in the present.[55]

Yorkville's German Americans, buoyed by the success of this night life scene, explored methods for luring outsiders and co-ethnics from other parts of the city to the neighborhood's ethnic marketplace. The period's economic pressures demanded that Yorkville's ethnic commercial spaces transcend their traditional roles as businesses and social spaces meeting only the needs of the neighborhood residents. Butcher shops, booksellers, newsstands, and stores offering imported goods continued to cater to locals, but increasingly viewed the city's wider German diaspora, often tied to Yorkville through kinship networks, church affiliations, and social institutions, as a crucial customer base. Bakeries, cafés, and family restaurants, while relying on ethnic regulars, also attracted non-Germans hungry for an affordable foray into cultural tourism. In the latter part of the thirties, business leaders operating under the auspices of the Yorkville Chamber of Commerce published the *Blue Book*, a self-described Baedeker, or travel guide, for the neighborhood's commercial sector. German American

[54] Williams, *City of Ambition*, 79.
[55] Wanda Hale, "Yorkville Returns to First-run Films," *New York Daily News*, September 11, 1934, 46; H.T.S., "The Screen: A German Sherlock Holmes," *New York Times*, February 13, 1934, 23; H.T.S., "A Merry Hungarian Girl," *New York Times*, May 21, 1934, 20; David W. Dunlap, "In New York, a Worldwide Message of Humanity: German Life in the City Is Recalled In Pope's Visit," *New York Times*, April 19, 2008, B1; "Welcome to the Heidelberg," The Heidelberg Restaurant, http://www.heidelberg-nyc.com/#about, accessed November 11, 2019. The German restaurant scene was not exclusive to Yorkville, although on the Upper East Side it reached its apex. Hans Jaeger, for example, owner of one of Yorkville's most popular German venues, also operated the Black Forest Inn in Brooklyn's Bushwick section. "Sylvan Setting Succeeds," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, May 14, 1937, 23.

businesses predominated in the guide. Phrases such as "If You Can't Live in Yorkville, Shop in Yorkville," and "Going to Town – Should Be – Going to Yorkville," demonstrated the German American business leaders' desire to enlarge the enclave's target markets. German Yorkville's persistence through the Great Depression suggests the success of these multifaceted efforts.[56]

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As German Yorkville found its footing through an emphasis on retail shops and bars and restaurants, Hungarian Yorkville faced the twin threats of the Great Depression and divisive political events in Hungary during the 1930s. The economic calamity hit Yorkville's Hungarian community hard. Joseph Feher, head of the Hungarian branch of the International Workers' Order, an organization closely aligned with the city's Popular Front politics, told WPA researchers that many Hungarians could no longer afford to stay in the neighborhood. Some even returned to lower Manhattan, a phenomenon the WPA referred to as "going backwards," due, presumably, to the Lower East Side's reputation as an overcrowded district for initial immigrant settlement.[57] Claire Spitz of the Federal Writer's Project, implied that, at its current pace of emigration, Hungarian Yorkville might cease to exist in just a few years.[58]

Despite these dire forecasts, a critical mass of Yorkville's Hungarians remained committed to the enclave they had built. Hungarian families joined Germans and others in utilizing Central Park's democratized recreational spaces, such as the Hechscher playground, created in 1926. Worshippers filled masses at St. Stephen of Hungary, opened in 1929, as well as services at the First Magyar

[56] 1936 Blue Book, Address-Telephone-Directory, Yorkville Center," Published by Yorkville Service, Archives of the New-York Historical Society; 1938 Blue Book, Address-Telephone-Directory, Yorkville Center," Published by Yorkville Service, Archives of the New-York Historical Society; 1939 Blue Book, Address-Telephone-Directory, Yorkville Center," Published by Yorkville Service, Archives of the New-York Historical Society.
[57] "Radiation from New York, WPA Federal Writers' Project, New York Municipal Archives, Department of Records and Informational Services, Record Sub-Series: Hungarians in NY, Claire Spitz, Box 2, Folder 97, 1936-1940.
[58] Ibid.; Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmar, *The Park and the People: A History of Central Park* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), 442. In 1937, Feher founded the *Amerikai Magyar Világ*, the *Hungarian Daily World*. Operating from its Fifth Avenue offices, Feher intended for the paper to have a national reach and rise above party politics. "New Hungarian Daily: Paper Here Will Fight Fascism, Support Liberal Policies," *New York Times*, September 10, 1937, 8.

Reformed Church on East 69th Street and the First Hungarian Baptist Church on East 80th Street. Restaurants combining distinctly Hungarian fare and so-called "gypsy" music abounded in Yorkville. H. Roth, a Hungarian food shop near the corner of First Avenue and 82nd Street sold everything from sheep's milk cheese to obscure spices to rock candy. The neighborhood contained multiple movie theaters, led by the Tobis, showing Magyar language films ranging from the starkly political to the purely entertaining. Around 1935, Hungarian New Yorkers came together to celebrate a mid-summer event simply dubbed Hungarian Day. Much like the nineteenth century German American outings in Yorkville, Hungarian Day produced an eclectic mix of choral and orchestral music, plays, dancing (including the "Ellenzeki Kor-magyar," or oppositional round dance), food, and athletic contests ranging from soccer games to wrestling matches to sack races.[59] External audiences took notice of this socio-cultural activity. Journalist Todd Wright ventured to Hungarian Yorkville to introduce *Daily News* readers to the csárdás, a traditional Hungarian dance, as practiced at the Hungarian Inn on East 92nd Street. Wright squarely placed what he referred to as the city's new "Little Hungary" within the New York's larger cosmopolitan milieu, finding "Old World" tradition comforting in a time of hyper-dynamic change.[60]

The prominence of the Hungarian Workers' Home (HWH), located on East 81st Street, further challenges claims that Hungarian Yorkville was disappearing in the 1930s. Purchased in 1917 as a headquarters for Hungarian labor interests, the four-story HWH featured a ground floor restaurant, as

[59] Claire Spitz, describing the event for the Federal Writer's Project, claimed that "[h]uge cauldrons of goulash usually decorate the scene," with the contents ultimately "ladled out in almost unbelievable quantities." "Hungarian Day in New York," WPA Federal Writers' Project, New York Municipal Archives, Department of Records and Informational Services, Record Sub-Series: Oddities of NY, Claire Spitz, Box 1, Folder 946, 1939-1941, May 17, 1935.

[60] Rosenzweig and Blackmar, *The Park and the People*, 395-404; "The Screen: A Magyar Film," *New York Times*, June 5, 1934, 28; "The Screen: At the Tobis Theatre," *New York Times*, January 8, 1936, 22; "The Screen: At the 86th Street, Garden Theatre," *New York Times*, September 10, 1936, 29; Jane Holt, "News of Food; Old-Fashioned Yorkville Store Offers Hard-to-Get Spices and Unusual Goods," New York Times, June 13, 1944, 22. The Tobis Theatres Corporation was a German motion picture company with production studios in Berlin, Paris, and Wembley, England. In the early 1930s, Tobis opened nearly two dozen theatres in major metropolitan areas of the U.S. During much of the 1930s, New York-based attorney Milton Diamond ran Tobis. Diamond immigrated to New York from Romania, eventually graduating from NYU Law School. "Tobis to Open 19 Theatres: The Europa Presents Here "Two Hearts," a Foreign Film," *New York Times*, July 13, 1931, 20; "Leases the Vanderbilt: Tobis Theatre Corporation to Show German Films in House," *New York Times*, August 27, 1931, 25; "Milton Diamond, 66, Retired Attorney," *New York Times*, October 21, 1955, 27.

well as spaces that hosted concerts, art exhibitions, lectures, and English language classes. Moreover, a drama group headquartered at the HWH performed the acclaimed works of Shakespeare, George Bernard Shaw, and Henrik Johan Ibsen, and introduced Gotham to Hungarian playwrights such as Ferenc Molnár. Konrad Bercovici, a Romanian-born writer, stated that "[t]here is no similar institution in the whole city, and it is one of the most frequented places of the Hungarian colony." Bercovici's compliment notwithstanding, the HWH faced occasional attacks as a safe harbor for political radicals, including communists and socialists.[61]

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As the thirties progressed, Yorkville's German and Hungarian communities once more found themselves facing the local ramifications of a geopolitical storm. In January 1933 Adolf Hitler of the National Socialist party became German Chancellor. Following Germany's federal election in March, the Reichstag passed the Enabling Act, essentially granting Hitler unfettered political power. The Weimar Republic was dead, replaced by a fascist dictatorship fueled by Hitler's venomous hate speech. Coupled with the rise of authoritarianism in Italy and Japan, another large-scale war seemed possible if not imminent. It was within this context that a series of pro-Nazi movements emerged in the U.S., eventually making inroads in German Yorkville. More than eighty years later, the presence of pro-Nazi elements in Yorkville dominates social memories about the neighborhood, threatening to erase all that came before and taint all that came afterwards.[62]

In the late twenties and early thirties, Edmund Fürholzer, a right-wing Bavarian political activist, teamed up with Yorkville resident Edwin Emerson, a Saxon-born, well-heeled ex-war reporter, to

[61] "Hungarian Buy Clubhouse," *New York Sun*, June 20, 1917, 11; "Boos and Cheers at Karolyi Dinner: Count's Adherents Vie with Noisy Critics at Stormy Testimonial," *New York Times*, March 5, 1925, 19; "Admits Political Motives: Dr. Hartmann Says 130 Cities Have Affiliated Soviet Organizations," *New York Times*, February 11, 1922, 4; What Is Going on This Week," *New York Times*, December 27, 1931, 42; Bercovici, *Around the World*, 358.

[62] Benjamin Carter Hett, *The Death of Democracy: Hitler's Rise to Power and the Downfall of the Weimar Republic* (New York: Henry Holt, 2018); Sander A. Diamond, *The Nazi Movement in the United States, 1924-1941* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974), 38; Claus-Christian Szejnmann, "Nazi Economic Thought and Rhetoric During the Weimar Republic: Capitalism and its Discontents," *Politics, Religion & Ideology* 14, no. 3 (2013): 355–76.

promote the burgeoning Nazi cause through a local newspaper, the *Deutsche Zeitung*. Local disinterest and the onset of the Great Depression frustrated the venture. Hitler's power grab in early 1933, however, gave rise to an even bolder scheme. Heinz Spanknöbel, a recent immigrant from Hesse who had spent time within a Detroit-based Nazi cell, relocated to New York in late spring 1933. Viewing German New York as a top-down hierarchy with weak leadership, he planned to seize control of UGS so as to force the city's array of German social clubs and organizations to bend to Nazism. Spanknöbel and the pro-Nazi group Friends of New Germany ('FNG") conducted much of their planning in Yorkville. They viewed the neighborhood as the symbolic cultural and commercial hub of German New York, as well as fertile recruiting territory due to the presence of discontented migrants from Weimar Germany.[63]

Spanknöbel's brash tactics backfired. Soon after arriving in New York, he infuriated the Ridder brothers, principals of the *Staats Zeitung*, New York's largest German language newspaper, by insisting they turn Nazi propagandists. In the process, he gained ardent detractors within the local German language press. Spanknöbel also alienated leading German Jews with his effort to achieve "racial purity" within local organizations. His grand plan to refashion German Day into a clarion call for Nazism further divided locals and drew the ire of Mayor John O'Brien, who, concerned about potential violence, barred German Day just days before its scheduled start following a lengthy testimonial hearing at City Hall. As an outsider, Spanknöbel, displayed a fatal ignorance about the social architecture of German New York in this historical moment. Based on tradition and the ineffectiveness of Great War-era pan-Germanism, the community operated as a loose network of autonomous institutions with UGS reduced to playing a

[63] Arnie Bernstein, *Swastika Nation: Fritz Kuhn and the Rise and Fall of the German-American Bund* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2013), 25-34, 50, 67. An offshoot of Friends of New Germany led by Bavarian-born Joseph Schuster introduced the idea of a special unit of uniformed members meant to mimic German stormtroopers. Mark Sherwin, "Off the Record," *New York Daily News*, April 15, 1934, B29; Louis Nizer, *My Life in Court* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1944), 296; "Nazi Rally Set for Tomorrow, 4,000 Expected: Preparations for Mass Meeting at Ridgewood Grove Completed," *Brooklyn Citizen*, April 7, 1934, 2.

ceremonial role. In the end, UGS canceled German Day,[64] at least the event originally planned, as Spanknöbel slinked back to Germany to avoid American law enforcement.[65]

Spanknöbel's ultimate quest failed, but his actions destabilized German Yorkville by widening existing fissures and opening new ones. Tensions between German Gentiles and Jews were especially tense. Starting in the spring of 1933, several New York Jewish organizations boycotted merchants who sold German goods or supported the Nazi cause. In December 1933, UGS initiated a counter-boycott, establishing the German-American Business League (DAWA) to oversee the effort. DAWA mimicked the National Industrial Recovery Act by providing each member business with a "blue eagle" to adorn its front window. In Yorkville, DAWA rejected one German Jewish shopkeeper's application by marking it with the word "Jude" in red crayon. Carl Froehlich, the Austrian-born president of UGS, told the local press that his group was "anxious to keep any element of racial prejudice from being mixed in the DAWA," but added that he had no option but to "doubt the good faith of any Jewish business man who wanted a DAWA eagle, in view of the boycott action supported by the great body of Jews in New York."[66] Despite reports of waning attendance at Yorkville-based FNG meetings in the summer of 1934, a rash of vandalism aimed at Jewish businesses during the 1934 Yom Kippur holiday forced the NYPD to conduct special patrols through the neighborhood.[67]

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[64] Mayor O'Brien, concerned about potential violence, barred German Day just days before its scheduled start after a lengthy testimonial hearing at City Hall. Two months later, the city allowed the festival to go forward under the auspices of the Steuben Society. The twenty-thousand men and women who poured into Madison Square Garden heard Theodore Hoffmann, the Society's acting chairman, introduce a resolution condemning the mayor for his allegedly discriminatory stance. "Mayor Bars German Day Rally Here," *New York Daily News*, October 26, 1933, 2,8

[65] Bernstein, *Swastika Nation*, 25-28; "New York Group Plans German-Day Celebration," *Baltimore Sun*, November 2, 1933, 8; "Nazi Cheers Given by 20,000: Little Disorder in German Day in New York," *Boston Globe*, December 7, 1933, 36.

[66] "Bias Is Charged to German Group: Jewish Shopkeeper Says His Plea to Join DAWA Movement Was Refused," *New York Times*, May 11, 1934, 11

[67] Ronald H. Bayor, *Neighbors in Conflict: The Irish, Germans, Jews, and Italians of New York City*, 1929-1941 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 67-70; "Bias Is Charged to German Group: Jewish Shopkeeper Says His Plea to Join DAWA Movement Was Refused," *New York Times*, May 11, 1934, 11; "Yorkville Nazi Spirit Collapsing, Meetings Are Poorly Attended," *Jewish Daily Bulletin*, July 20, 1934, 1-8; "Police Guard Jews from Nazis in Yorkville," *The American Israelite (OH*), September 27, 1934, 5.

The 1936 formation of the Amerikadeutscher Volksbund ("the Bund") further complicated matters, forever altering ethnic Yorkville's reputation. Like earlier pro-Nazi movements, the Bund targeted Yorkville, renting space on East 85th street. Fritz Kuhn, the Bund's leader and self-described "American Fuehrer," had no prior connections to Yorkville. By fall 1936, however, Kuhn and his cronies had positioned the organization to achieve what Spanknöbel could not: control of German Day. Twenty-thousand people jammed Madison Square Garden to hear Avery Brundage, U.S. Olympic Committee chairman, and Karl Stroehlin, Stuttgart mayor and Reich plenipotentiary, praise Germany's progress under Nazi rule as a police detail of six hundred kept order. The internal struggle to shape German Day's imagery and messaging continued for the next two years. The Bund controlled the 1937 event, but self-described "moderates" presided over a 1938 version where no local brownshirts marched. Even at this event, however, a third of the audience saluted in the Nazi fashion and a swastika banner flew. Further, these modified optics did not stop speakers such as Theodore Hoffman, the Steuben Society's chief, from expressing support for the Nazi regime, at least "within the boundaries of Germany."[68]

From German Day 1936 to Pearl Harbor, the Bund's activities, real and imagined, served as a wellspring of sensational news for Gotham's print press. Much of this coverage described Yorkville in reductionist terms, as "the German enclave," while deemphasizing anti-Nazi sentiment among residents and ignoring the neighborhood's non-German ethnics. Walter Winchell, who by the late thirties privileged the hunt for fascists on American soil in his syndicated columns, painted with the broadest brush. He saw Yorkville as a fifth column, ignoring the neighborhood's diversity in identity and political persuasion. Winchell bolstered his perspective with colorful descriptions of "Nazi storm-troopers

[68] "Brundage Extols Hitler's Regime: At German Day Observance Here He Says "We, Too, Must Stamp Out Communism,"" *New York Times*, October 5, 1936, 9; "Brundage Puts Okay on Hitler," *New York Daily News*, October 5, 1936, 4; "Brundage Puts Okay on Hitler," *New York Daily News*, October 5, 1936, 4; "German Day Rally Splits with Nazis: Patriotic Program at Garden Marks Break in Ranks – Kuhn Routed in New Jersey," *New York Times*, October 3, 1938, 6 "German Day Rally Splits with Nazis: Patriotic Program at Garden Marks Break in Ranks – Kuhn Routed in New Jersey," *New York Times*, October 3, 1938, 6. In early 1936, FNG disbanded in the face of congressional scrutiny. Shortly after, the Bund was born at a convention in Buffalo, New York. Bernstein, *Swastika Nation*, 41, 46-49

scuttling homeward from Yorkville frankfurter and Fuehrer festivals" and warned that "handbills slandering the President are making the rounds in Yorkville's Nazi sector."[69]

Two Yorkville-based events during this period garnered above-the-fold headlines. In late October 1937, the Bund secured a permit from a reluctant Mayor Fiorella LaGuardia to parade through Yorkville. Memories of this parade water the myth that Nazis marched through Yorkville's streets regularly and with impunity, implying that a critical mass of the neighborhood's residents supported or at least tolerated the Bund. In fact, police outnumbered marchers in this parade.[70] Moreover, this was the only Bund street parade significant enough to reach the radar of Gotham's mainstream newspapers. A few months later, in April 1938, a Bund rally at the Yorkville Casino honoring Hitler's forty-ninth birthday turned violent, as Bundists clashed with members of the American Legion and other veterans who vocally opposed pro-Nazi speakers. *Life Magazine* ran a two-page spread of the fracas, including a photo of a smiling Otto Geisler, a Yorkville teenager arrested outside the venue while in full storm trooper gear. Winchell used the occasion to defend the veterans and cast Yorkville as a dangerous place, stating that "[t]he former doughboys took a shellacking in Yorkville that they didn't have to take in the Argonne . . . yes, they were defeated – not because they were outnumbered, but because they fought "American style" – with their bare fists."[71] The Bund years left Yorkville with a permanent stain.[72]

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[69] Walter Winchell, "On Broadway," *Tampa Times*, January 1, 1938, 4Walter Winchell, "On Broadway," *Waterloo Daily Courier* (IA), April 8, 1938, 4. Neal Gabler, *American Heritage* 45, no. 7 (Nov. 1994): 96.

[70] It bears emphasis that larger pro-Nazi events in the predominantly German American section of Ridgewood, Queens have largely faded from popular memory, perhaps due to Manhattan higher visibility and international reputation. "Nazi Rally Set for Tomorrow, 4,000 Expected: Preparations for Mass Meeting at Ridgewood Grove Completed," *Brooklyn Citizen*, April 7, 1934, 2.

[71] Walter Winchell, "On Broadway: The Private Papers of a Cub Reporter," *Tampa Times*, April 29, 1938, 8.

[72] "Only 307 in Nazi 'Big Parade,'" *New York Daily News*, October 31, 1937, 10; "Nazis Parade at Yorkville," *South Bend Tribune* (AP Story), October 31, 1937, 15; Arne Bernstein, *Swastika Nation: Fritz Kuhn and the Rise and Fall of the German-American Bund* (New York: St, Martin's Press, 2013), 101-103. Additionally, an iconic photo of this parade appears with great frequency in online stories making this claim. Alan Taylor, "American Nazis in the 1930s—The German American Bund," *The Atlantic*, June 5, 2017, https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2017/06/american-nazis-in-the-1930sthe-german-american-bund/529185/. Robert Rockaway, "Gangsters vs. Nazis: How the Jewish Mob Fought American Admirers of the Third Reich," *Tablet,* July 2, 2018, https://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-news-and-politics/265401/gangsters-vs-nazis; "1,300 Police Guard 800 Nazi Paraders," *New York Times*, October 31, 1937, 7; "Legion to Punish Boro Members Who Attended Riotous Nazi Rally," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 21, 1938, 1; "350 Vets, Nazis Riot in Yorkville; Seven in Hospital," *New York Daily News*, April 21, 1938, 2; "Nazis Send 10 to Hospitals in N.Y. Bund Riot," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 21, 1938, 1; Al Binder, "1,000 Nazis Mob 100 Veterans; 7 Sent to Hospitals," *New York Daily News*, April 21, 1938, 2; "U.S. Veterans Lose Battle with Germans in Manhattan," *Life Magazine*, May 2, 1938, 19; Walter Winchell, "On Broadway: The Private Papers of a Cub Reporter," *Tampa Times*, April 29, 1938, 8.

Yorkville was also the locus of significant anti-fascist activism, a fact rarely mentioned in the dominant narrative. The mainstream press's scant coverage of these activities commonly described them as the work of outsiders, implying that Yorkville itself could not abide or muster homegrown anti-Nazi sentiment. In May 1934, for example, the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* reported that approximately "2,500 anti-Hitlerites traveling under the Communist banner, took part in [a] demonstration, and it was their anxiety to parade through Yorkville, center of pro-German and pro-Hitler sentiment in Manhattan."[73] One year later, the *New York Times* announced that anti-Nazi paraders had "invaded" Yorkville, as if the neighborhood were a Nazi fortress. Speakers at the post-march demonstration issued explicit warnings about "German and Irish Fascists in Yorkville."[74] Characterizing anti-Nazi activities in Yorkville as being led by outsiders only strengthened notions that the neighborhood was a foreign, insular, fanatical, and dangerous colony.[75]

To redeem Yorkville's damaged reputation and counteract ongoing efforts to use their neighborhood as a setting for hate speech, community leaders and concerned citizens redoubled their efforts to show a different side of the community. During summer 1940, Joseph McWilliams, dubbed "Joe McNazi" by detractors, emerged as the latest threat to peace in Yorkville. He planned to normalize Bundist ideology at the ballot box by running for Congress. Like pro-Nazi agitators before him – Fürholzer, Spanknöbel, and Kuhn, -- McWilliams had no ties to Yorkville, just a faith that the

[73] "Foes of Hitler Stone Police; 41 Arrested: Riot Follows Parade in Yorkville without a Permit – 4 Cops Injured," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, May 11, 1934, 5.
[74] "Yorkville Invaded by Foes of Nazism" German Quarter Takes Parade of 500 Calmly, Having Only One Orange and a Bag of Water," *New York Times*, May 10, 1935, 12.
[75] Ibid; "Jewish Units Quit German Societies: Two German-American Clubs also Secede in Dissension over Nazi Issue," *New York Times*, September 22, 1933, 10; "Row over Hitlerism Splits German Society Wide Open," *New York Daily News*, September 23, 1933, 21; "Police Rout 3,000 in Anti-Nazi Riot: Patrolmen Are Stoned in Trying to Disperse Marchers in Parade in Yorkville," *New York Times*, May 11, 1934, 11; "Reds, Anti-Nazis Ready to March upon Yorkville," *New York Daily News*, May 11, 1934, 37; "Yorkville Invaded by Foes of Nazism" German Quarter Takes Parade of 500 Calmly, Having Only One Orange and a Bag of Water," *New York Times*, May 10, 1935, 12. The full extent of anti-Nazi activism is not clear. For instance, the press never reported on a 1939 speech by Gerhart Seger, former member of the Reichstag, who addressed 800 German Americans in Yorkville to clarify the threat posed by Hitler and the Nazi regime. As an outspoken critic of the Third Reich, a decorated fighter pilot during WW I, and a dedicated pacifist thereafter, Seger was a well-known and influential man. Yet, the New York Times did not communicate this meeting until Seger's death in 1967. "Gerhart Seger, 70, Fought Nazis; Ex-Reichstag Member Dies Here," *New York Times*, January 22, 1967, 76; "Refugee Details Escape from Nazis: Former Member of Reichstag Here for Lectures, Tells How He Deceived Camp Guards," *New York Times*, October 31, 1934, 6.

neighborhood was fertile ground for extremist politics. Inviting campaign contributions from Hitler, McWilliams pledged to use such funds "to save our country from Jewish-British domination, and to make it a Nationalist America."[76] After James Blaine Walker soundly defeated him in the GOP primary, McWilliams ran under the banner of the "American Destiny Party," ultimately failing to gather enough signatures to qualify for the ballot. At one point during the election cycle, a Harlem-based magistrate ordered McWilliams to undergo psychiatric evaluation at Bellevue Hospital for the chaos ensuing from one of his stump speeches.[77]

On a mid-September evening in 1940, amidst this noise, a group calling itself "We Americans of Yorkville" paraded from different points in Yorkville to denounce hate speech. The processions converged at the Yorkville Casino for a massive rally. By choosing this venue, the group symbolically reclaimed community space stained by the Bund. Assemblyman Robert F. Wagner, Jr., Senator Wagner's son, and Charles Ferry, president of the Yorkville Chamber of Commerce, were among the dignitaries who spoke at the rally. The terrain shifted radically for German Yorkville on December 7, 1941. U.S. entry into the war following Pearl Harbor demanded pledges of loyalty from German American institutions, which quickly followed. In early January, Victor Ridder, responding to Mayor LaGuardia's call to organize German New Yorkers for the war effort, held community meetings at the Yorkville Casino in furtherance of the quest to sanitize this iconic neighborhood space.[78]

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For members of New York's Hungarian American community, especially those in Yorkville, Europe's escalating tensions during the 1930s muddied homeland politics. During this period, increasing

[76] "Trojan Horse Prances as Christian Mobilizer Chief Appears Before Dies," *Dunkirk Evening Observer* (NY), May 2, 1940, 9.
[77] (No Title), *New York Times*, January 11, 1942, 27; Thomas M. Johnson, "Christian Mobilizer, Slated for Dies' Appearance, Called Lively Trojan Horse," *Elmira Star-Gazette* (NEA Service Staff Writer), June 26, 1940, 10; "McWilliams Gets 30 Days, Plans Appeal: Congress Candidate, Disorderly, Can Pay Alternative $50 Fine," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 7, 1940, 3; "Kicked by M'Williams When Down, He Says," *New York Daily News*, August 9, 1940, 14; "M'Williams in Bellevue for Destiny Party," *New York Daily News*, September 19, 1940, 46; "Bellevue Covered Wagon," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, September 22, 1940, 43; "National Affairs – New York: Mr. McNazi," *Time 36, no. 13* (Sept. 23, 1940): 19.
[78] "Rally in Yorkville: 3 Parades Precede Meeting at Which Americanism Is Stressed," *New York Times*, September 14, 1940, 6.

numbers of Yorkville-based Hungarians were completing the requisite steps to naturalization. The Yorkville Hungarian Democratic Club, through its lead instructor, Louis Gartner, made news for the scores of co-ethnics they shepherded through the citizenship process. Citizenship alone, however, did nothing to alter the extent to which Hungarians remained focused on matters abroad. Pan-Hungarian American organizations with a national reach rhetorically separated what was best for the Hungarian state from Nazi malfeasance. In March 1938, in response to Anschluss, Nazi Germany's annexation of Austria, Hungarian American leaders met in Niagara Falls to consider the ramifications of German aggression. These ethnic elites promulgated a statement supporting democratic reforms in Hungary and rejecting their homeland's possible Nazification. Later that year, the Hungarian-American Federation formally endorsed a proposal by U.S. Senator William King's (D-Utah) to sever diplomatic relations with Germany unless that country immediately reversed its antisemitic course.[79]

Incidents in Yorkville reinforced the limited influence of such pronouncements. Many Hungarian Americans pondered what their homeland might gain from working with Germany. Some even cooperated with pro-Nazi elements on the local level. In October 1937, for example, two New York-based anti-Nazi organizations charged John Szabo, a Hungarian-born American citizen, with desecrating the American flag. Szabo, who ran a shop on East 86th Street, agreed to display a placard advertising the upcoming Bund-led German Day. The Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi league and the German-American League for Culture criticized the placard's comingling of the American flag and the Prussian Eagle as contemptible and illegal. Magistrate Judge Leonard McGee of the Yorkville Court dismissed the charges, commenting that "[y]ou have not the right party when you have the storekeeper . . . [y]ou should have

[79] "Get Citizenship Diplomas: Refugees Among 50 Hungarians Who Complete Course, *New York Times*, January 29, 1940, 2.

the person responsible for the printing and distribution."[80] Whether or not Szabo had acted of his own free will or through coercion, this dispute offers a microcosm of Hungarian New Yorkers' dilemma.[81]

As the German war machine ripped through Europe in 1940, many in Yorkville's Hungarian enclave warmed to the idea of a German-Hungarian alliance of convenience as a path to meet the goals of the "Free Hungary" movement. At the nonnegotiable core of this ideology lay the hope of restoring, as much as possible, Hungary's pre-WW I boundaries through revision of the Treaty of Trianon. Paul Nadányi, a Hungarian-born journalist, authored an English-language pamphlet for non-Hungarian audiences that contextualized and qualified these complex homeland politics. He feared rightfully that any support for Nazi Germany might lead to labeling Hungarian Americans as disloyal. Writing after the U.S. had entered the WW II, Nadányi recollected a September 1940 special service of the Orthodox Hungarian Greek Church on East 82nd Street where a series of speakers informed parishioners that the Hungarian army, pursuant to the Second Vienna Award signed by Hitler and Mussolini, had advanced into the northern section of Transylvania. Hungary was taking concrete steps to reclaim its lost territory, albeit in league with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Of this gathering, Nadányi observed:

> This announcement caused great rejoicing. Several hundred people heartily applauded every word spoken about this award. These people are not Nazis. They never were contaminated with the Fascist germs, they never had any use for Nazi agitators who tried to stir up racial hatred . . . These people are ardent believers in American democracy . . . These people always believed that the treaty after the first World War, the so-called Trianon Treaty was unjust to Hungary. They believed this treaty violated the Wilsonian principles, the democratic right of people to self-determination.[82]

Nadányi was not the first Hungarian who struggled to translate diasporic politics for an American audience, nor would he be the last. Internal debates concerning homeland causes and efforts to render

[80] "Freed in Use of Flag of U.S. on Nazi Sign," *New York Times*, October 2, 1937, 11.
[81] "Hungarian Americans Opposed to Nazidom," *The Spokesman Review (Spokane, WA)* [AP Story], March 14, 1938, 3; "Senator King Urges U.S. to Rebuke Reich," *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, November 15, 1938, 1; "Freed in Use of Flag of U.S. on Nazi Sign," *New York Times*, October 2, 1937, 11.
[82] Paul Nadanyi, *The Free Hungary Movement* (New York: Amerikai Magyar Nepszava, 1942), 4-5.

these matters legible to outsiders would continue to animate Hungarian Yorkville's political culture for decades to come.[83]

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In 1938, near the end of ethnic Yorkville's summer season, eccentric travel writer William Seabrook, in his book, *These Foreigners*, set the tone for ethnic Yorkville's future public reputation.[84] Seabrook referred to Yorkville as the city's "famous German colony" and "the largest and most colorful "German" tourist showplace in the western hemisphere," focusing on East 86th Street's commercial corridor.[85] Lampooning the Bavarian atmosphere of this area as a contrivance, he contrasted it with the "substantial, serious, and respectable life" of local German-American clubs and societies hidden from the tourists. Importantly, Seabrook devoted most of his observations to the recent history of Nazism in Yorkville. He largely dismissed concerns that the Bund had enough support to pose a serious threat. Rather, he predicted, the "Melting Pot will boil them down,"[86] To a notable degree, Seabrook foreshadowed the ethnic Yorkville imaginary's future ingredients: a heavy dose of the East 86th Street bars and restaurants, a heaping portion of the Nazi past, a dusting of the social life of German Yorkville's rank and file, barely a taste of the neighborhood's Hungarians or other ethnic elements, and an abiding hunger for the melting pot. As ethnic Yorkville moved from the summer heat to the long shadows of its autumn season, the received story never strayed too far from this formula.[87]

[83] Ibid., 4-5, 9-16.
[84] Lewis Mumford, a public intellectual specializing in urban history and architecture, represented a different take on Yorkville of the late thirties and early forties. Mumford saw Yorkville as a tired and uninspired place in need of a new direction. While the city was in the process of tearing down the Second Avenue elevate train tracks, Mumford observed the "dreary mess of buildings that loitered beside the old "L" – much of it dating back to the seventies," which, he claimed, "has long been ready for demolition." Mumford never mentioned the people who lived and worked in those buildings. Lewis Mumford, "Growing Pains – The New Museum," in *Sidewalk Critic: Lewis Mumford's Writings on New York*, edited by Robert Wojtowicz (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 231.
[85] William Seabrook, *These Foreigners* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1938), 221.
[86] Ibid., 231
[87] Ibid., 221-232.

CHAPTER 3
RECALLING ETHNIC YORKVILLE'S AUTUMN COLORS: WW II THROUGH THE 1960S

AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER

The garden flowers still blossom in the vale,
Before our house the poplars still are green;
But soon the mighty winter will prevail;
Snow is already in the mountains seen.
The summer sun's benign and warming ray
Still moves my youthful heart, now in its spring;
But lo! my hair shows signs of turning gray,
The wintry days thereto their color bring.

Sándor Petőfi[1]

In 1947, Martin Lewis, an Australian-born artist who endeavored to reveal the extraordinary within Gotham's quotidian rhythms, produced a print entitled *Yorkville Night* (See Figure 5 below). This work depicts Yorkville as a place set apart and difficult to know. A fruit stand emits the only light as if to suggest that much of the surrounding area lies in utter darkness. The steel stanchion in the foreground symbolizes the Third Avenue El's role as a material boundary separating working-class Yorkville from the neighboring "Silk Stocking" district. It also hints at the intermittent but rumbling noise above, drawing an implicit contrast between the rapidly moving trains on the tracks and the pedestrian pace below them. The distant staircase offers a pathway to ascend from or descend into this seemingly subterranean world. The fruit stand's light washes out the details of all those nearby. No faces are perceptible in this mysterious slice of Manhattan.[2]

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[1] Sándor Petőfi was born in the village of Kiskörös on the Hungarian plan, approximately 135 kilometers south of Budapest, on New Year's Day in 1823. His father's name, István Petrovics, suggests Serbian lineage. However, his biographer, Enikő Molnár Basa, emphasized that the poet's ancestors "had lived in Hungary for generations and even possessed a patent of nobility . . . granted during the Turkish wars." Enikő Molnár Basa, *Sandor Petőfi* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980), 15. Petőfi gave voice to and ultimately his life for the Hungarian Revolution of 1848-49. He was killed in battle at the age of twenty-six. Ever since, Petőfi has served as political inspiration for Hungarians of all stripes. Miklós Vámos, "Hungarian Blues; or, Excavated Poets' Society, *New England Review* 13, no. 3/4 (Spring - Summer, 1991): 197-202. In 1922, supporters of a Hungarian republic used the centenary anniversary of the poet's birth to push their cause in the Hungarian parliament. "Republic Cry in Hungary: Shouts in Assembly Cause a Protest by Monarchists," *New York Times*, December24, 1922, 7. Petőfi Circles were gatherings of intellectuals, progressives, and reformers that are said to have sowed the seeds of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. András B. Hegedüs, "The Petofi Circle: The Forum of Reform in 1956," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 13, no. 2 (1997): 108-33.

[2] At the time he created this print, Lewis was near the end of his long and winding career. After traveling through his native Australia, neighboring New Zealand, and California's Bay Area, Lewis settled in Gotham in 1901. Lewis called New York home for the next sixty years. Thomas P. Bruhn, "Introduction," in *The Graphic Works of Martin Lewis: October 14-November 19, 1978*

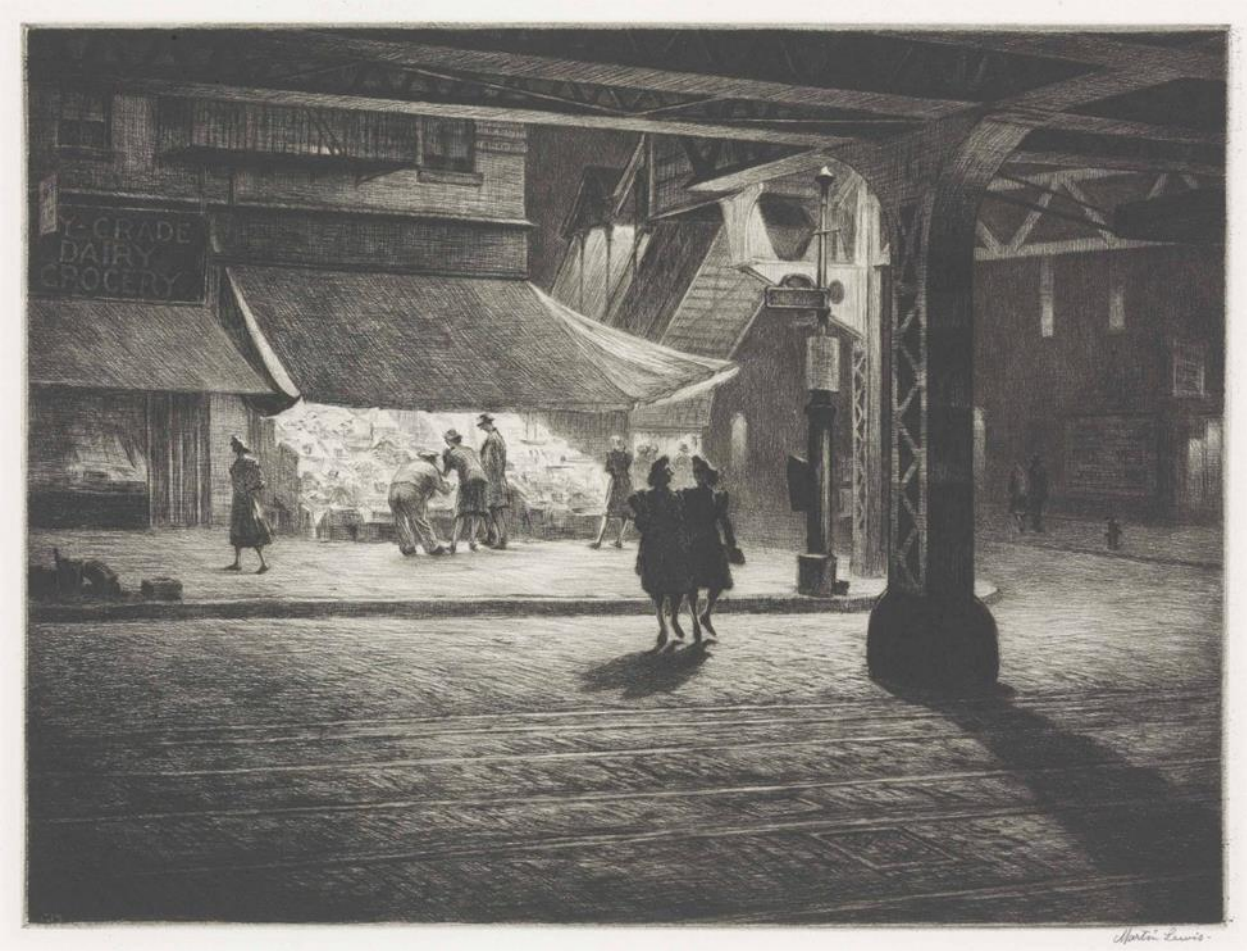

Figure 5. “Yorkville Night,” Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/2002709719/.

By casting Yorkville’s working-class men and women amidst shadows and darkness, Lewis reified tropes of the ethnic Yorkville imaginary. Popular recollections of ethnic Yorkville during and after the Second World War describe populations that, chastened by the Bund episode, slowly but steadily abandoned the district’s ethnic enclaves or retreated into its obscure, darkened corners. The dominant narrative holds that East 86th Street’s kitschy German bars and restaurants, deemed tolerable forms of cultural expression once they were drained of political extremism, produced the district’s radiance in

(Storrs, CT: The William Benton Museum of Art-University of Connecticut, 1978), 7-8. Thomas Bruhn described Lewis’s artistic technique and vision as “primarily tonal” in that it “is interested in and exploits the subtle gradations of light between black and white.” Bruhn, *The Graphic Works of Martin Lewis*, 8; Susan Dunne, “Artist Played in Shadows,” *Hartford Courant*, October 9, 2011, G-1; Maxwell McCrohon, “Martin Lewis’s Late Rise to Fame,” *Art Monthly, Australia* (1997): 22; Joan Stahl, *American Artists in Photographic Portraits* (New York: Dover Publications, 1995), 53.

the postwar period. Most recollections of ethnic Yorkville during its autumnal season depict the neighborhood, at least the areas beyond East 86th Street "safe zone" of ethnic identity, as static or even stale. An inability to keep up with the times, paradoxically seen as quaint and as an impediment to progress, distinguished Yorkville from other parts of Manhattan. Those who insisted on clinging to their ethnic identities, as faceless as the people in *Yorkville Night*, served as living evidence of the neighborhood's outmoded ethos.

While tropes of ethnic Yorkville's backwardness form one narrative thread during the neighborhood's autumnal season, the era from the 1940s through the 1960s, the historical record reveals a much more complex story. The geopolitics of globalized war once again rendered Yorkville's German and Hungarian populations suspicious in the eyes of outsiders, as the Great Hyphen Debate redux relitigated the merits of ethnic identity and questioned the loyalties of American citizens and legal residents who had maintained some connection to their ancestral homelands. In addition to the fighting in Europe, the Bund episode had a chilling effect on the neighborhood's German Americans throughout the forties. With public attention fixed on Nazi Germany's atrocities, residents of the Hungarian enclave operated under the radar as they wrestled with their own version of the homeland question, namely the relationship between revising the Treaty of Trianon and a pact with the fascists. As Gotham's print press treated ethnic Yorkville like a defeated enemy in the postwar years by focusing on the exodus and retreat of the district's German element, wartime refugees from Europe's displaced persons camps breathed new life into the Hungarian enclave, a development largely ignored outside the neighborhood.

New threats to the continuing viability of ethnic, working-class Yorkville emerged a decade after the war, as developers, bureaucrats, and elected officials championed the value of modernizing Yorkville. Gentrification, a looming threat to ethnic Yorkville since the 1920s, had finally reached the Upper East Side's mostly working-class neighborhood. This process would squeeze longtime ethnic residents and small business owners for the remainder of the twentieth century. The loss of ethnic

Yorkville's iconic spaces and structures, such as the Yorkville Casino and the Ruppert Brewery, symbolized this transformation. New York's mainstream media inflicted more damage by treating ethnic, working-class Yorkville as a convenient exemplar of racial intolerance during the city's racial tensions of the sixties. These trends set the stage for Yorkville's German enclave to pass from history to heritage, as memories of its heyday seemed to occupy more public attention than the life of its remaining ethnic residents. At the same time, Hungarian Yorkville extended its life through the contributions of another set of refugees, the 56ers, who fled a failed revolution to end Communist rule in Hungary.

WORLD WAR II COMES TO ETHNIC YORKVILLE

Historian Philip Gleason differentiates macro-level conceptions of ethnic identity that manifested during the Second World War from those that fueled Great War-era nativism. By the late thirties, he claims, a generation of reduced immigration, the decoupling of racial and cultural differences linked to the work of Franz Boas and like-minded anthropologists, and second-generation Americans drifting away from hyphenism created greater tolerance for diversity. U.S. entry into the war led to the state using ethnic difference, now repackaged as cultural pluralism, to make the case that American unity emerged from an organic "value consensus," not the kind of nationalism fomented within totalitarian systems. According to this logic, all Americans, regardless of race, ethnicity, creed, socio-economic status, or gender, understood the benefits accruing from the country's democratic principles and commitment to individual rights. In other words, many paths could lead to a shared sense of Americanness, situating ethnic difference within the overall project of social cohesion. Although

deemphasized by Gleason, the growing acceptance of European immigrants and their descendants as "white" played an essential role in this process of becoming "fully American."[3]

Gleason's big picture framing requires two crucial caveats. First, he understates the extent to which ethnicity continued to serve as a divisive subject. While greater tolerance existed for cultural difference around the edges, the global war's intensification during 1940 and 1941 spurred another contentious national debate regarding the efficacy of ethnic identity. Louis Adamic, a Slovenian-born writer and public intellectual, tried to get ahead of fears about hyphenates with a nuanced message distinguishing this period from World War I. In a *New York Times* piece entitled "No 'Hyphens' this Time," Adamic conceded that "[t]he hyphen is still with us," but differentiated ethnic identity from disloyalty.[4] Adamic advised ethnics to consider ceasing their use of the hyphen lest they be misunderstood, but, at the same time, asked other Americans to realize that "only a small fraction of what has been loosely called hyphenism at various times and various points of view is intentionally anti-American."[5] The vast majority of those who celebrate their ethnic heritage, he concluded, were making vital contributions to America's war effort.[6]

Despite appeals to moderation, many hardline xenophobes attacked hyphenism in ways reminiscent of the Great War-era, characterizing persistent ethnic identity as a public nuisance with no legitimate purpose and incongruous with a time of national emergency. In New Brunswick, New Jersey, a city with a substantial Hungarian American minority, Noel Cobb, a local newspaper editor, pulled no punches, proclaiming that:

> I dislike hyphenated Americans. By that I mean the use of the hyphen between the names of Polish American, Hungarian American and others of foreign nationality used with the word American . . . [T]he hyphen should be eliminated. They are now

[3] Philp Gleason, *Speaking of Diversity: Language and Ethnicity in Twentieth-Century America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 153-87.
[4] Louis Adamic, "No 'Hyphens' This Time: Instead of "Hyphenates' We Have 'Foreign Groups' That Are Contributing Much to Our War Efforts" *New York Times*, November 1, 1942, SM18.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid; Gleason, *Speaking of Diversity*, 153-87.

> Americans and the mere fact they came to this country a few years, decades, or a couple of centuries after the forefathers of many of us is no reason for them to use a hyphen.[7]

In Gotham, the *Daily News* editorial staff reminded its readers that "[i]n the last war, some of our much respected German-Americans were praying that Germany would win, and exercising all their influence to cut off the supply of munitions to the Allies."[8] They then warned that "[w]hen hyphenation and pro-alien sympathies get beyond the passive point . . . no one whose first loyalty is to this country can countenance them."[9] The "passive point" Cobb referred to remained conveniently undefined.[10]

Secondly, the particular ways in which local ethnic communities interacted with the new hyphen debate matter. In the summer of 1940, as the German Luftwaffe prepared to assault Britain by air, images of Yorkville as the Bund's former stomping ground and the place where Nazi spies conspired in dark bierstubes tarnished the neighborhood's reputation. The fact that only a small percentage of Yorkville's population had any direct connection to these transgressions was of little consequence. Accordingly, influential ethnics voices did not envisage the safe harbor Gleason described, but instead braced for the Great Hyphen Debate redux. The Ridder brothers, publishers of the German-language *Staats Zeitung und Herold* and principals of a budding media empire, addressed the potential intersection of the war and ethnic identity at multiple gatherings within Greater New York. Victor Ridder, speaking at the ninetieth anniversary of the Yorkville-based New York Turn Verein, predicted that animus against German Americans would resurface. While he encouraged the Turners to endure any such attacks "with fortitude," his twin brother, Joseph, told a printing trade union composed of Germans, Hungarian, Italians, and Jews, to demonstrate "backbone and courage" in the face of

[7] Noel C. Cobb, "No Hyphen Needed," *The Daily Home News* (New Brunswick, NJ), March 18, 1941, 4
[8] "The Big Bomb Plot," *New York Daily News*, January 16, 1940, 21.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Louis Adamic, "No 'Hyphens' This Time: Instead of "Hyphenates' We Have 'Foreign Groups' That Are Contributing Much to Our War Efforts" *New York Times*, November 1, 1942, SM18; Noel C. Cobb, "No Hyphen Needed," *The Daily Home News* (New Brunswick, NJ), March 18, 1941, 4; "Newsman to Offer New Housing Plan: Mayor, Authority to Hear Noel C. Cobb of New Jersey," *The Tennessean* (Nashville, TN), February 25, 1939, 3; "The Big Bomb Plot," *New York Daily News*, January 16, 1940, 21.

anticipated backlash against ethnic sociocultural expression and identity. Joseph Ridder boldly asserted that "when others have demonstrated their Americanism under conditions similar to those that have faced us, we will talk to them on an equal plane." His bravado incorrectly assumed a degree of socio-political capital on the part of ethnic communities that simply did not exist in the early forties.[11]

Assemblyman Robert F. Wagner, Jr., the U.S. Senator's son and a native of ethnic Yorkville, delivered a different message during a keynote address at the World's Fair's Hungarian Days. On a sun-drenched day on July 8, 1940, local Hungarian Americans poured into the fairgrounds at Flushing Meadows, Queens, to enjoy a rare moment of ethnic solidarity.[12] Acknowledging their interest in the fighting taking place in Europe, Wagner reminded his Hungarian American audience that their "first loyalties" were to America and implored each of them to let nothing "swerve you from the love and devotion [to] your adopted country."[13] Describing those who would cast doubt on their loyalty, Wagner pointed out that "[i]t is simple to suspect every foreigner of being a fifth columnist," but dismissed such "indiscriminate suspicion" as misplaced and counterproductive.[14] Soon thereafter, Rustem Vámbéry, a Hungarian criminology professor at the New School for Social Research, fell into line by organizing co-ethnics in Yorkville to support President Roosevelt's emerging anti-Axis foreign policy.[15]

Similarly, cautious members of German New York's leadership encouraged co-ethnics to proactively assert their loyalty to the United States as visibly and unequivocally as possible. Founders of

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[11] Gleason, *Speaking of Diversity*, 153-87; "Ridder Urges Fortitude: Tells German-Americans 1917 Situation Must Be Faced Again," *New York Times*, June 6, 1940, 13; "German Printers Warned by Ridder: Publisher Says Courage Will Defeat Return of Hostile Attitude of World War," *New York Times*, July 8, 1940, 15; "Joseph E. Ridder Is dead at 80; Chairman of Newspaper Chain," *New York Times*, April 21, 1966, 39. German-American units of A.F. of L. and C.I.O. quickly pledged their loyalty to the American war effort after the U.S. entered the war. "German-Americans Form Victory Group: Trade Unionists in Drive to Aid U.S. Win the War," *New York Times*, March 25, 1942, 16.

[12] According to the *New York Times*, more than 900,000 people entered the Fair during the first week of July 1940, marking only the second time attendance had reached this level since the Fair opened in 1939. Milton Bracker, "640,000 Throng Fair on 4-Day Week-End: 7-Day period is Second to Top 900,000 Mark This Season – Bright Day Lures Crowd," *New York Times*, July 8, 1940, 12.

[13] Milton Bracker, "640,000 Throng Fair on 4-Day Week-End: 7-Day period is Second to Top 900,000 Mark This Season – Bright Day Lures Crowd," *New York Times*, July 8, 1940, 12.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.; "Hungarian Fete Tomorrow," *New York Times*, July 28, 1939, 8.

the Manhattan-based German American Congress for Democracy urged all co-ethnics to coalesce around President Franklin Roosevelt's commitment to human rights and the defeat of Nazi barbarism. In October 1941, Magistrate Charles Oberwager appealed to Gotham's ethnics to support Mayor Fiorella LaGuardia's re-election bid. In an unmistakable sign of the times, Rev. Dr. William Popke, pastor of Yorkville's Zion Lutheran Church and a one-time supporter of Heinz Spanknöbel's effort to seize control of the city's pan-German institutions in the name of Nazism, now assumed a leading role on the committee dedicated to re-electing the mayor who had once publicly clashed with such extremists.[16]

America's entry into World War II in December 1941 rendered public loyalty non-negotiable for Yorkville's ethnics. In the wake of Pearl Harbor, Gotham's newspapers did their part to ensure ethnic loyalty by surveilling Yorkville, as reporters gazed upon the neighborhood as if it were a barometer of foreignness.[17] A *New York Times* story entitled "Yorkville Hushed as U.S. Enters War" read in part:

> War between the United States and the Axis . . . brought a sudden hush along Eighty-sixth Street, Yorkville's main thoroughfare. Little knots of troubled housewives stood in the windy cold, tensely dismissing the development long expected, but shocking nevertheless. Men stared at the newspaper headlines at corner stands and broke into excited conversation. Generally, it is assumed Yorkville will remain loyal to the United States. Here and there on the street, men and women were outspoken on this point. In other places, the men were silent and looked sullen.[18]

Even after the city's crippled pan-German organizations announced their complete fealty to the American war effort in early 1942, New York's leading newspapers continued to fixate on German Yorkville at each of the conflict's perceived inflection points.[19]

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[16] 'German-Americans to Aid LaGuardia: Ex-Magistrate Oberwager Heads Committee for Re-election," *New York Times*, October 20, 1941, 20.

[17] Print coverage during the eighteen months prior to Pearl Harbor tended to depict German Yorkville as inherently suspect. For instance, Sloan Taylor, a reporter for the *Daily News,* claimed that Yorkville residents, as well as "Nazi officialdom," hid their true feelings about President Roosevelt's decision to close all German consulates in June 1941 behind "[s]ilence and enigmatic smiles." Sloan Taylor, "Nazis in City React with Silence, Smiles," *New York Daily News*, June 17, 1941, 18.

[18] "Yorkville Hushed as U.S. Enters War: German-American District, However, Is Quick to Show Loyalty to America," *New York Times*, December 12, 1941, 22.

[19] Ibid.

From early 1942 through the end of the Second World War, Yorkville served as an inviting setting within which to reassure New Yorkers and the nation that everyone was rowing in the same direction. Pledge drives and rallies provided opportunities for ethnic Yorkville's business and social leaders to show their commitment to defeating the Axis powers. During one such traveling war bond pledge drive in June 1942, a Yorkville woman described as a "robust German-American matron" allegedly offered to complete a pledge form with her own blood if necessary.[20] The American motion picture industry, as part of a billion dollar pledge drive, sponsored a rally along Yorkville's East 86th Street in September 1942. Orchestras from five area restaurants, including the Gloria Plasast, Lorelei, and Platzl, joined Hungarian opera singer, Margit Bokor, to imbue the event with a sonic flare. Three months later, the *New York Times* reported on a Yorkville-based coalition comprising Germans, Hungarians, Czechs, and Italians that commemorated the one-year anniversary of Pearl Harbor by vowing to "weld an ever firmer unity among ourselves for the victory of the united nations."[21] Yorkville was listed along with other ethnic enclaves such as Chinatown and Little Italy to underscore the thoroughness of American unity in the immediate aftermath of D-Day. One month later, another *Times* article commending Yorkville's distinguished participation in the city's scrap metal collection drive noted multiple effigies of Hitler hanging from the neighborhood's lampposts.[22]

A November 1942 rally sponsored by the Yorkville Victory Committee (YVC) illustrates the neighborhood's value as a space of visible patriotism. Turning German Yorkville's tainted reputation on its head, Mayor LaGuardia told a crowd of more than three thousand lining East 86th Street that the loyal

[20] "Minute Men Get Welcome in Forty Tongues in City," *New York Times*, June 16, 1942, 1.
[21] "Pearl Harbor Day Finds Nation Sure of Japan's Defeat: Time for Surprise Is Past and America Is Taking the Offensive, Officials Note," *New York Times*, December 7, 1942, 1.
[22] "German Societies Pledge U.S. War Aid: 1,300 Groups in City Join a Program of Defense Donations and Service," *New York Times*, January 11, 1942, 27; Sloan Taylor, "Nazis in City React with Silence, Smiles," *New York Daily News*, June 17, 1941, 18; "Minute Men Get Welcome in Forty Tongues in City," *New York Times*, June 16, 1942, 1; "Yorkville to Hold Bond Rally Today: Stags, Radio Stars to Appear at Anti-Nazi Demonstration by German-Americans," *New York Times*, September 27, 1942, 44; "Effigies of Hitler Hung in Yorkville: Likeness Adorns Many Posts as Community Sets Pace in the Collection," *New York Times*, October 16, 1942, 16.

spirit of the area's residents was unrivaled. A banner emblazoned with the phrase "Yorkville Speaks Out – Americans All" flew high above Sauerkraut Boulevard. Mayor LaGuardia declared that the presence of "a few lousy Bundists . . . doesn't represent Yorkville."[23] Earlier that year, LaGuardia had become the first New York City mayor to take up residence in Gracie Mansion, making him a recent addition to Yorkville's foreign-born migrants, a status he used adroitly to connect with the audience. Other speakers included Mrs. Isabel Parschall, head of United Yorkville for Victory Committee, William Wener, president of the Yorkville Chamber, and two prominent members of Yorkville's German American community: Mrs. Edward Rickenbacker, mother of the celebrated WW I flying ace, and Theobald Dengler, one of the founders of the New York branch of the Yorkville-based Catholic Kolping Society. City officials and event sponsors hoped the sight of these German American icons pledging their undivided loyalty to America would hold sway among their co-ethnics in Yorkville and beyond.[24]

Efforts to refashion Yorkville as an expedient exemplar of patriotism did not wash clean the public reputations of the neighborhood's ethnic enclaves, especially the district's German American contingent. Media coverage of newly discovered disloyalty as well as legal proceedings stemming from older incidents kept alive memories of the Bund period and further stamped political extremism onto the ethnic Yorkville imaginary. During the first week of January 1942 news hit that a federal judge had sentenced thirty-three members of the so-called Duquesne spy ring to more than three hundred years in prison collectively for conspiring to engage in espionage for Nazi Germany. Few of those convicted had long-term connections to Yorkville; however, the conspirators utilized the neighborhood's bars and restaurants, as well as other Gotham spaces, to conduct their covert operations.[25] The Associated Press

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[23] "Yorkville in War Lauded by Mayor: He Says No Section of City Is More Patriotic Despite "a Few Lousy Bundists,"" *New York Times*, November 23, 1942, 15.

[24] Ibid.; "La Guardias Begin Moving into the Gracie Mansion," *New York Times*, May 27, 1942, 19. Leslie Hahner's concept of the "visual logic of Americanization" during the Great War era provides a useful analytical tool in evaluating how and why Yorkville served as a site of "visual patriotism" during World War II. Leslie A. Hahner, *To Become an American: Immigrants and Americanization Campaigns of the Early Twentieth Century* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2017), xxii.

[25] In *Double Agent*, a popular history focusing on William Sebold, a German immigrant who served as the FBI's chief informant in this matter, Peter Duffy dubbed Yorkville "de rigueur for Nazi spies." He also casually asserted that many of Yorkville's

and the city's mainstream papers chronicled other FBI searches in Yorkville, which yielded dozens of so-called "enemy aliens," a smattering of arms and ammunition, and sundry Nazi-themed paraphernalia.[26] The papers also closely followed legal proceedings of ex-Bund members. In January 1943, Ernst Schwenk, a waiter at a Yorkville restaurant who stood accused of spearheading the Bund's local propaganda campaign, declared that a "German can't be anything but a German."[27] With family still in the homeland, Schwenk added that "[b]lood is more important than citizenship," referring to his concern for his siblings in the homeland.[28] Two months later, the FBI arrested a former factory worker and Yorkville resident known as "Little Goebbels," who allegedly boasted about his close ties to the Reich in several of Yorkville's watering holes. There was even a story about an unregistered German national and Yorkville resident, Arthur Meissner, who had worn the blue of the New York police department for six years under an assumed name. A city employee claimed to have witnessed Meissner saluting Hitler in a Yorkville bierstube.[29] In addition to these sensational storylines, Hitler's suicide, Germany's surrender, and General Eisenhower's victory tour of the city all provided opportunities for news reporters to critique Yorkville residents' purported dearth of enthusiasm and troubling silence.[30]

German bars pitched themselves as "Nazi-friendly" and named the Café Hindenburg and the Lorilei as two spots the conspirators favored. Peter Duffy, *Double Agent: The First Hero of World War II and How the FBI Outwitted and Destroyed a Nazi Spy Ring* (New York: Scribner, 2014), 179.

[26] In March 1944, pursuant to the wartime alien property laws, the government allowed the public to purchase the items once owned by the German Railroads Information Office. The State Department ordered the closure of their Yorkville-based office. The public had the opportunity to purchase furniture, tools, and cleaning supplies, but not the pictures of Hitler and the copy of *Mein Kampf* the company allegedly left behind. "Ends Public Display of Seized Nazi Goods: U.S. Will Open Bids Tuesday on Effects by Propagandists," *New York Times*, March 25, 1944, 8.

[27] "Former Bundist Puts Germany Before U.S.: Holds Blood Worth More Than American Citizenship," *New York Times*, January 20, 1943, 40.

[28] Ibid.

[29] The *Times* even tracked a so-called "gray market" in German D-marks, said to have been thriving in Yorkville stores during the years immediately after the war. Many locals sent this currency to relatives in occupied Germany. There was nothing illegal about this practice, yet the coverage tended to raise the specter of impropriety. Will Lissner, "Yorkville Gray Market in Marks Is Thriving among Small Shops," *New York Times*, March 26, 1949, 1; Associated Press, "D-Mark Gray Mart Buds in Yorkville," *Baltimore Sun,* March 26, 1949, 2.

[30] Ibid.; Associated Press, "Yield Nazi Uniform," *Daily Oklahoman*, March 5, 1942, 11; "33 Aliens Seized in Yorkville Raids: 3 Italians and 30 Germans Are taken in Surprise Visits by Federal Agents," *New York Times*, March 5, 1942, 25; "64 German Aliens Seized Here by FBI: War Veterans All Are Members of Kyffhaeuser Bund, Active in Spreading Propaganda," *New York Times*, April 12, 1942, 31; "F.B.I. Seizes 24 Saboteur Aide Suspects: radio Sending Sets, Rifles and Other Arms Confiscated in Raids," *New York Times*, July 2, 1942, 1; FBI Round-up Nets More Aliens Here: 6 Employees of a Yorkville Restaurant Called Members of German organizations," *New York Times*, July 17, 1942, 7; "Swears Kunze Led Fight on Draft Act: Ex-Secretary of Bund Testifies Against Former Leader at Conspiracy Trial of 25," *New York Times*, September 24, 1942, 11; "6 More Nazi Aliens Seized in Week-

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Given that the mainstream press often reduced ethnic Yorkville to its German element, the ethnic Yorkville imaginary elides the actions of Hungarians in the district after Pearl Harbor. Recovering this history reveals the difficulties Hungarian Americans faced in this period. As hard as it was to strike a balance between publicly championing the Allied cause and safely expressing concerns about the fate of family and friends in the homeland, Hungary's Nazification during the latter stages of World War II threatened to subject Hungarian New Yorkers to public censure. Ethnic leaders favoring visible patriotism held war bond rallies at the Yorkville Casino and organized events designed to raise funds to benefit the Red Cross mission in aid of Hungarians displaced by the war. Despite these acts, certain elements of Yorkville's Hungarian community endured increased scrutiny from local officials. In 1943, for instance, police arrested leaders of the Hungarian Young Men's Circle, a singing society that met at space owned by the Hungarian Literary Society on East 79th Street. Law enforcement accused this group of operating an illegal gambling hall. Dr. Nicholas Winter, a Yorkville-based Hungarian American dentist, admitted that members sometimes played pinochle or rummy for five cents a hand. It appears city officials had used knowledge of low-stakes gaming, a common practice at clubs throughout the city, as a pretext to harass Hungarian Americans.[31]

End: 3 Attended Meeting at Which German Flier Was Present," *New York Times*, February 21, 1943, 8; "7 Enemy Aliens Held on 64 Search Raids: 3 Women among German Who Are Taken to Ellis Island," *New York Times*, February 28, 1943, 46; "'Little Goebbels' Is seized by F.B.I.: War Plant Employee Boasted in Yorkville about His Nazi Activities," March 28, 1943, 27; "31 Germans Here Arrested by FBI: One, a Former Salesman of Marks, Is Said to Have Been as Associate of Veireck," *New York Times*, September 5, 1943, 16; "On Probation for 3 Years: German Who Was Policeman Under False Name Is Sentenced," *New York Times*, July 8, 1943, 11; "Policeman Trapped by His 'Heil Hitler': Alien Who Got Job by Fraud Hailed Nazi in Beerstube," *New York Times*, March 18, 1943, 14; "Pearl Harbor Day Finds Nation Sure of Japan's Defeat: Time for Surprise Is Past and America Is Taking the Offensive, Officials Note," *New York Times*, December 7, 1942, 1; "City Greets News Quietly, Solemnly: No Noisy Outbursts, No Large Crowds, but Calm Confidence Marks Reaction to Invasion," *New York Times*, June 7, 1944, 10; "City Takes Report of Death in Stride: Many New Yorkers Skeptical, Others Are Unemotional – Service Men Pleased," *New York Times*, May 2, 1945, 9; Neal Patterson, "Cheers Give Way to Thanksgiving," *New York Daily News*, C3, C8; Meyer Berger, "City's Celebration Chilled by Mayor as New York and London Handled the News of the Unconditional Surrender of Germany," *New York Times*, May 8, 1945, 7; Frank S. Adams, "4,000,000 See Hero: Roar of Sound Greets Triumphal Procession in Jammed Streets," *New York Times*, June 20, 1945.

[31] "Events Today: War Rally, Hungarian-Americans: *New York Times*, March 15, 1942, 45; "Cavendish Club Gets Gambling Summons: Hungarian Singing Society also Is Haled to Court," *New York Times*, January 29, 1943, 21.

In addition to confronting multiple challenges on the home front, unfolding events in Europe increasingly placed Hungarian New Yorkers in a moral quandary. The dream of revising the Treaty of Trianon, which had drastically altered Hungary's borders, never died within the Hungarian diaspora. Hungarian New Yorkers, therefore, thirsted for the latest news about the conflict, always evaluating how it might redress this longstanding grievance. Placing emphasis on revising Trianon put many local Hungarians in the camp of tolerating Hungary's alliance with Germany, as a necessary evil.[32] There is evidence, however, that others focused more on democratic reform. In February 1943, fifteen hundred local Hungarian Americans gathered at the Yorkville Casino to hear members of the American-Hungarian Committee report about an "underground" anti-fascist movement supposedly poised to seize control of the government, sever all links to Nazi Germany, bring pro-Nazi officials to justice, and terminate antisemitic policies. In addition, Hungarian New Yorkers attended lectures by homeland politicians who railed against the Axis alliance while visiting New York.[33]

During the final thirty months of the European war, as factions within Hungary's government battled over which path to follow, the city's newspapers carried stories delineating a series of Hungarian setbacks. In January 1943, Red Army troops defeated the Hungarian Second Army near the Don River, allowing the Soviets to push westward through Ukraine. In March 1944, the Reich army executed Operation Margarethe, its full-scale invasion of Hungary. The Germans quickly captured Budapest. Hitler had long criticized Hungarian Regent Horthy for failing to implement a program to exterminate Hungarian Jews. With Hungary occupied by German troops, however, Adolf Eichmann, one of the chief

[32] Nadanyi, *The "Free Hungary" Movement*, 4-5. Likewise, throughout the early 1940s, many high-ranking Hungarian officials continued to back a loose affiliation with Germany in order to redress Trianon and because they loathed the Russians and Hungary's short-lived experiment with Communism after the Great War. They played a dangerous game of seeking German cover to retake lost portions of the Kingdom, such as the former Upper Hungary in western Slovakia and Romanian-controlled Transylvania, while hoping to keep the Reich at bay. Ultimately, their efforts failed on all accounts. Peter Kenez, *Hungary from the Nazis to the Soviets: The Establishment of the Communist Regime in Hungary, 1944-1948* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1-9; Marianne Szegedy-Maszák, *I Kiss Your Hands Many Times: Heart, Souls, and Wars in Hungary* (New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2013), 62-65.

[33] "Red Cross Concert: Rapes Conducts the Program at Hunter for Hungarian Unit," *New York Times*, April 12, 1943, 24; "Events Today: War Rally, Hungarian-Americans," *New York Times*, March 15, 1942, 45; "'Underground' Is Active: Document read Here Tells of the Movement in Hungary," *New York Times*, February 15, 1943, 3

architects of the Final Solution, and the newly installed fascist Prime Minister, Döme Sztójay, oversaw an accelerated program that transported Hungarian Jews en masse to death camps such as Auschwitz.[34] In mid-October 1944, Ferenc Szálasi , head of the Nazi-like Arrow Cross, gained power. Szálasi and his henchmen ordered the creation of the Budapest ghetto in November 1944 and initiated a series of death marches. The reign of terror continued until the Red Army moved into Budapest in January 1945. All told, in just a few months, an estimated 400,000 Hungarian Jews perished.[35]

As information about this genocide came to light, some Hungarian New Yorkers redoubled their efforts to use Gotham as a visible site to project their devotion to human rights and the fight against fascism to broader audiences. Longtime community leaders like attorney Morris Cukor, who had lived through almost the entire sweep of Hungarian Yorkville's historical trajectory, hoped old symbols of Hungarians' love of liberty might insulate the ethnic community from the homeland's malfeasance. In March 1944, Cukor led a portion of the city's Hungarian diaspora on a pilgrimage to the Lajos Kossuth monument on Riverside Drive and 113th Street. He along with the Hungarian American Committee, one of many impromptu pan-Hungarian wartime organizations, used the fiftieth anniversary of Kossuth's death as a backdrop to an audacious display of patriotism during which they donated twenty hospital service planes to the U.S. military. Three months later, in June 1944, a broad coalition of Hungarian

[34] Throughout the war, the Reich stoked preexisting antisemitism in Hungary, particularly prevalent among the nation's working classes. In the interwar period, the Hungarian legislature had passed a law limiting the number of Jews who could attend university. During the war, these laws obliterated the rights of Hungarian Jews to engage in any meaningful way in the nation's economy and restricted their political rights. John Connelly, *From Peoples into Nations: A History of Eastern Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020), 491-97; Ferenc Laczó, *Hungarian Jews in the Age of Genocide: An Intellectual History, 1929-1948* (Leiden: Brill. 2016). 1-24.

[35] "Battle of the Don: Allies Strive to Keep Russia Supplied," *New York Times*, July 12, 1942, E1; C.L. Sulzberger, "Germans Regroup Divisions For Supreme Gamble in Russia: 218 Axis Divisions Poised in Russia Stage Being Set on the Russian Front," *New York Times*, May 31, 1943: 1; George Axelsson, "Nazis Stage Coup: Hungarian Regent and Others Believed Held After Hitler Parley," *New York Times*, March 21 1944: 1; "Hitler Invades an Ally," *New York Times*, March 22, 1944, 18; Randolph L. Braham and Scott Miller, "Preface," in *The Nazis' Last Victims: The Holocaust in Hungary*, ed. Randolph L. Braham (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), 17-22; László Karsai, "The Last Phase of the Hungarian Holocaust: The Szálasi regime and the Jews," in *The Nazis' Last Victims: The Holocaust in Hungary*, ed. Randolph L. Braham (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), 103-18; Attila Pók, "German Hungarians, and the Destruction of Hungarian Jewry," in T*he Nazis' Last Victims: The Holocaust in Hungary*, edited by Randolph L. Braham (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), 45-53; Robert Rozett, "International Intervention: The Role of Diplomats in Attempts to Rescue Jews in Hungary," in *The Nazis' Last Victims: The Holocaust in Hungary*, ed. Randolph L. Braham (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), 137-52.

American organizations, churches, and synagogues met at a Manhattan-based conference sponsored by the Emergency Committee to Save the Jewish People of Europe. Specifically responding to Prime Minister Sztójay's grotesque boast that the anti-Jewish program had prepared the way for the return of the Hungarian diaspora, the conferees issued the following rebuke: "we came to the United States of our own free will, in search of a better land in which to make our homes and raise our children."[36] One month later, an interfaith coalition of Hungarian Americans orchestrated a multifaceted demonstration denouncing the genocide in Hungary. More than two thousand people gathered at a ceremony sponsored, in part, by the Yorkville-based New Light Temple. Meanwhile, the First Hungarian Reformed Church of New York, Hungarian Yorkville's oldest place of worship, conducted a special service in which congregants received yellow star armbands to symbolize solidarity with their Jewish co-ethnics. These multifarious efforts obscured internal fissures within the ethnic community, at least with respect to external audiences, and belied the fact that many local Hungarians continued to prioritize the homeland's quest to recover its lost territories whatever the cost.[37]

ETHNIC YORKVILLE IN THE WAKE OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR: A TALE OF TWO ENCLAVES

New York's mainstream newspapers and popular columnists, focusing almost exclusively on the German enclave, treated ethnic Yorkville as terminally ill in the wake of the Second World War. Despite the hyperbole in these reports, the German community did find itself hampered by out-migration as well as the chilling effect of its local Bund past coupled with Nazi Germany's war crimes. German Yorkville nevertheless survived in large part by leaning on its reputation as the city's headquarters for German heritage, and through a modified form of pan-Germanism: the German-American Steuben Parade. Conversely, the Hungarian enclave began to flourish, a development not addressed in popular

[36] "Hungary Policy Assailed: Group Meeting Here Denounces the Extermination of Jews," *New York Times*, June 18, 1944, 24.
[37] Ibid.; "Massacre of Jews in Hungary Scored: Special Services of Protest Held by 2,000 in Bronx and in Manhattan Church," *New York Times*, July 10, 1944, 9.

recollections about the neighborhood. The Cold War delivered opportunities for local Hungarians to resurrect their reputation as the freedom loving people of Kossuth, in part by rebranding themselves victims of Soviet oppression. After the unsuccessful Hungarian rising of 1956, the Cold War also brought an influx of refugees ready to breathe new life into Hungarian New York and its Yorkville core.

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The *Daily News* reported that May 8, 1945, V-E day, brought "[l]ittle joy in Yorkville."[38] Kurt Palser, identified as a proprietor of an East 86th Street restaurant, mentioned his brothers who had served in the German army and his mother living in Russian-occupied Silesia. "I haven't heard from any of them in three years."[39] Meanwhile, a group of fifty men and women crowded around a newsstand on the southwest corner of 86th Street and Lexington Avenue to hear President Truman announce Germany's surrender. According to the reporter the people were eerily void of affect. Rather, they simply "listened . . . [and] drifted off."[40] This story presaged postwar coverage of Yorkville, characterizing it as a gloomy place defined only by its German American residents, tainted by its flirtation with Nazism, and destined for a demographic overhaul.[41] New York columnist Mel Heimer, writing in 1947, compared Yorkville "to an abandoned Dodge City or Tombstone."[42] Heimer pondered "if perhaps the Axis defeat in the war wasn't more sharply proven in Yorkville more than anywhere else in the world."[43] A 1948 AP

[38] Neal Patterson, "Cheers Give Way to Thanksgiving," *New York Daily News*, May 9, 1945, 3, 38. Public intellectuals like Emil Lengyel contributed to these efforts. Lengyel, who immigrated from Budapest to New York during the interwar period, wrote twenty historical monographs, served as an authority on the rise of Hitler and German Nazism, taught at New York University, and remained active into the 1980s. In 1948, Lengyel published Americans from Hungary, bringing academic rigor to the subject of Hungarian immigration and Hungarian American identity. Nicholas Roosevelt, "Hungarian Americans: Americans from Hungary by Emil Lengyel, 319 pp., Philadelphia Pa., J.B. Lippincott Company, $4," *New York Times*, July 11, 1948, BR13; "Emil Lengyel, a Retired Professor and Authority on Rise of Nazism," *New York Times*, February 14, 1985, B12; Emil Lengyel, "Village View of World," *New York Times*, August 19, 1981, A23.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] In this atmosphere, even the name "Yorkville" itself could be disadvantageous insofar as it invoked negative memories of the Bund episode in German Yorkville. Thus, the local chamber, in 1947, elected to change its name from the Yorkville Chamber to the Mid-East Chamber of Commerce. While subsequent references to the group occasionally used the old name, the group seemed to be distancing itself from its ethnic Yorkville roots. "Civic Unit Changes Name: Yorkville Group to be Known as Mid-east Chamber of Commerce, *New York Times*, March 29, 1947, 21.

[42] Mel Heimer, "My New York" Column, *The Journal News* (Nyack, NY), July 21, 1947, 3.

[43] Ibid.

article with national circulation proclaimed that Yorkville's German Americans had "lost their hold on this neighborhood"[44] due to the Bund controversy, precipitating an exodus to Queens and other parts of Greater New York. The message was clear: German Yorkville was receiving its "just desserts" for wartime disloyalty.[45] The storyline of a humbled Yorkville suggested a neighborhood on the brink of liberation from otherness – an urban space ready to fully join Manhattan-style modernity. In this sense, this period resembled the years following the Great War when a similar anti-ethnic discourse gained currency.[46]

To be sure, the fifties did usher in a period of material change in Yorkville. Foreign-born heads of households trended down sharply. Single-family residential options were disappearing, as larger apartment complexes crept into the area. While Ruppert's Brewery still operated in Hellgate, the vacant lots now dotting the surrounding streets symbolized the area's decline. In the early 1950s, the city decided to terminate the Third Avenue El, one of Yorkville's defining material symbols. New subway lines and extensions, city planners argued, had rendered the elevated trains redundant. The Second Avenue El had ended service north of 59th Street just before the war, in June 1940. In August 1955, Yorkville's residents joined other New Yorkers living along the route of the Third Avenue El to bid farewell publicly to the last of the elevated trains before demolition crews arrived. The El's disappearance and renewed promises of a Second Avenue subway line seemed to signal that Yorkville

[44] Jean Meegan, Associated Press, "The Germans Surrender Yorkville," *Marshall News Messenger* (TX), June 3, 1948, B7.
[45] Around this same time, a defamation suit featuring Victor Ridder, former editor of the *Staats-Zeitung* and longtime member of German New York's elite, as the defendant kept the Bund story in the news cycle. Dr. Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster, a German-born academic who lived in New York City, sued Victor Ridder for libel. The cross-examination of Ridder by Louis Nizer, Dr. Foerster's attorney, raised questions about whether the Ridder brothers had acted as "Fifth Columnists" for Germany's Nazi government during the war. Nizer included the story as part of his memoir published in 1961. While the case and its aftermath did not fatally wound the Ridder family and their business interests, it did create a specter of impropriety. It is possible to draw parallels between the Ridder case and the ways the Bund period continues to haunt the memory of German Yorkville by creating a generalized sense of disloyalty. Louis Nizer, *My Life in Court*, 289-346; Grant J. Merritt, *Iron and Water: My Life Protecting Minnesota's Environment* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018, 152.
[46] Neal Patterson, "Cheers Give Way to Thanksgiving," *New York Daily News*, May 9, 1945, 3, 38; Mel Heimer, "My New York" Column, *The Journal News* (Nyack, NY), July 21, 1947, 3; Jean Meegan, Associated Press, "The Germans Surrender Yorkville," *Marshall News Messenger* (Marshall, Texas), June 3, 1948, B7.

was open for business and high-end resettlement, leaving many of the neighborhood's ethnic, working-class residents anxious about their fate.[47]

In 1954, journalist Gerard H. Wilk, writing for *Commentary,* a leading journal of Jewish American affairs, captured the cross-vectors of German Yorkville in flux. Empty German bookstores and record shops, fewer street-level conversations in German, and one-time German commercial spaces bearing signs reading Magyar Uzlet, or "Hungarian business," suggested the erosion of Yorkville's German enclave and the rising tide of its Hungarian counterpart. One longtime resident lamented that "[n]obody knows anything about German American history anymore, nobody is interested."[48] Wilk marshaled this evidence to advance an argument that would ossify into received wisdom in the decades to come: German immigrants had "Americanized themselves" with notable efficiency; they had "climb[ed] up the social ladder in the same motion," quickly passing through ethnic enclaves like Yorkville on their way to "disappear[ing] into the American environment."[49] At the same time, however, Wilk described Yorkville as "the ever-glowing hearth whither the true German American, as the Yorkvillers believe, must always return, knowing that only here 'is something of the Heimat [homeland] preserved.'"[50] This district, he observed, provided a suitable climate for the hundreds of German American Turn Vereins and ethnic societies continuing to serve co-ethnics throughout Greater New York. Wilk also point out how hate groups continued to find oxygen in the neighborhood, describing episodic manifestations of neo-Nazis using the area's "Bund legacy" to amplify their message.[51] Struggling to reconcile these various portraits

[47] Gordon D. MacDonald, *A Community Study of Yorkville: Upper East Side Manhattan*, Ph.D. dissertation, 1952; "Second Avenue Subway: Final Environmental Impact Statement and Final Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Evaluation," *MTA New York City Transit*, Vol. 1 (April 2004), 14; Andrew J. Sparberg, *From a Nickel to a Token: Journey from the Board of Transportation to MTA* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 1-5, 101, 111-16; James McGlincy and Sydney Mirkin, "Third Ave. Holds Wake for El: Parade, Band, Speeches, Sweat," *New York Daily News*, August 2, 1955, 3, 10C.
[48] Gerard H. Wilk, "Yorkville, Twenty Years After: The Brownshirts Are Gone – and Much Else," *Commentary*, January 1, 1954.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Wilk even portrayed these two camps as being locked in battle – "Today the demagogues are on the one side, and the Vereins-Deutschen (who the former described as "organized yodelers, clog dancers, and bowlers") on the other." Ibid.

of mid-fifties Yorkville, Wilk posed the ultimate question: "What, then is Yorkville in 1954?" His answer offered a linguistic snapshot of a time and place facing oblivion. Yorkville is, he offered:

> [a]n island of uncertain memories and fading daydreams, which the tide of history will one day wash over, a cultural relic of the only major ethnic group in the United States without political influence . . . To the sightseer, one of a dwindling number of colorful "foreign quarters" . . . [T]he Yorkville of today, in its token exoticism and ethnic nostalgia, seems as much an American as an alien, much less a German, phenomenon.[52]

Wilk's extended profile roughed out what would become ethnic Yorkville's orthodox ballad. Its verses sang of Germans, its chorus recalled Nazis, its tone evoked decline, and Hungarians would count themselves fortunate to receive a passing mention in the bridge.[53]

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Fallout from the Second World War as well as the emergence of America's ideological and political struggle with the Soviet Union in the postwar period powered the resurgence of Yorkville's Hungarian enclave, an epic tale deserving its own song. Passage of the 1948 Displaced Persons Act opened the door to the U.S. for a limited number of refugees from United Nations camps set up in Austria, Germany, and Italy.[54] Federal prohibitions on accepting immigrants who "had taken up arms against the United States of America" during World War II complicated the process for screening Hungarian displaced persons, or DPs. In addition, amendments to the law expressly barred admitting members of Communist party or those formerly associated with pro-Nazi groups such as the Arrow Cross Party-Hungarist Movement. Given Hungary's belligerent status, the complex nature of Hungary's wartime politics, and the presence of ex-Hungarian soldiers among the DPs, potential immigrants merited scrutiny throughout the migration process. Despite these hurdles, hundreds of DPs fleeing Hungary's chaotic postwar environment ultimately settled in New York, infusing the enclave with

[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Approximately one and a half million Hungarians fled the country before the U.S.S.R. gained control near the end of the war. Most of the refugees ended up in the U.N.'s camps. Louise W. Holborn, *The International Refugee Organization: A Specialized Agency of the United Nations: Its History and Work 1946-1952* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), 182.

renewed vigor and dogmatic faith in America's early Cold War rhetoric and aims. This group helped found enduring Hungarian heritage institutions, thereby recalibrating the Hungarian Yorkville's socio-cultural self-image. Former DP Viktor Fischer, for example, played an instrumental role in shaping the city's Hungarian Scouting program, an experience through which boys and girls enhanced their Hungarian language skills and learned decidedly pro-Christian and Magyar centric lessons about Hungary's history and culture. Róbert Harkay, a fellow DP, served as the well-respected and indefatigable director of the Hungarian House for many years. During his tenure, this one-time clubhouse for elite Hungarian political exiles increasingly opened its doors to co-ethnics across the socio-economic spectrum and sponsored cultural programming intended to translate Hungarian culture to non-ethnic audiences.[55]

The influx of DPs coincided with and reinvigorated efforts by the city's Hungarian Americans to project positive images of their ethnic identity. In August 1952, Hungarian New Yorkers celebrated St. Stephen's Day, a centuries-old national holiday marking the canonization of Hungary's first Christian king in the eleventh century, with a parade, a festival at Carnegie Hall, and a vesper service at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Both major party candidates competing in the 1952 presidential election, General Dwight Eisenhower and Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson, joined President Truman in sending messages supporting the event's theme: a free and autonomous Hungary. During the 1950s, commemorations of the 1848 Revolution, celebrated as a national holiday in Hungary each March 15th, served as the primary cultural vehicle to unite Hungarian New York while connecting the community to the ideals of liberty and democracy. At the 1954 celebration of Hungarian Independence Day, held at the Yorkville Casino,

[55] Puskás, *Ties That Bind, Ties That Divide*, 259-69; Kathryn M. Bockley, "A Historical Overview of Refugee Legislation: The Reception of Foreign Policy in the Land of Promise," 21 *North Carolina Journal Of International Law And Commercial Regulation*, no, 1 (Fall 1995): 253-92; Luke Kelly, "Humanitarian Sentiment and Forced Repatriation: The Administration of Hungarians in a Post-war Displaced Persons Camp," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 30, no. 3 (2016): 387-406; Julia Edwards, "Europe's Million D.P.'s," *Baltimore Sun*, June 13, 1948, A1; Holborn, The International Refugee Organization: 182-83. Cong. Rec. 80th Cong., 2nd sess. Ch. 647, 1948: 1009-1014. More in-depth sketches of these leaders of Hungarian New York are provided in Chapter 7, "Housing Heritage."

speakers leveraged the Eisenhower administration's rhetoric backing a liberating Eastern Europe to call for American and international support should their homeland compatriots take up arms against Soviet oppression. These public celebrations evince the degree to which Hungarian American opinion leaders sought to affix ethnic identity to easily digestible Cold War symbolism of good and evil.[56]

THREATS TO ETHNIC, WORKING-CLASS YORKVILLE: THE MID-FIFTIES AS A FULCRUM

Starting in earnest midway through the 1950s, the entirety of working-class Yorkville faced existential threats posed by developers and their political allies who saw the neighborhood as antiquated and underutilized. Similar to the 1920s, covetous profiteers sometimes cited the neighborhood's ethnic legacy as evidence of its pre-modern status. For these developers, affordable rents equaled unrealized gains. German merchants had helped stave off a class-based make-over three decades earlier by working with and within the Yorkville Chamber of Commerce and marketing East 86th Street's commercial corridor as an experience open not only to locals but to the ethnic Yorkville diaspora as well as non-ethnics. Developers operating in the years following World War II, however, had limited interest in the merits of Sauerkraut Boulevard. They had tapped into a pervasive mood of postwar progress powering a citywide construction boom. There was money to made and Yorkville's ethnic enclaves seemed to be in the way.

[56] "Kossuth Day Is Marked: Hungarian American Group Presents Planes to U.S. Army," *New York Times*, March 20, 1944, 19; "4,000 Attend Field Mass: Services Recall the Crowning of Hungary's First King," *New York Times*, September 4, 1951, 25; "Hungarians Mark St. Stephen's Day: 7th Avenue Parade and Rally in Carnegie Hall Stress Aim of Ousting Red Regime," *New York Times*, August 25, 1952, 15; Judith Fai-Podlipnik, "A Decade of Bedlam: Hungarian-American Émigrés Versus the Muscovites, 1945-1955," *East European Quarterly* 37, no. 3 (September 2003): 303-23. In September 1951, four thousand Hungarian Americans from as far away as Ohio gathered in Staten Island for a Catholic mass commemorating the 950th anniversary of the crowning of Saint Stephen as the first king of the Hungarian nation-state. "4,000 Attend Field Mass: Services Recall the Crowning of Hungary's First King," *New York Times*, September 4, 1951, 25; Toby Rider and Kevin Witherspoon, "Making Contact with the Captive Peoples: The Eisenhower Administration, Cultural Infiltration, and Sports Tours to Eastern Europe," *Journal of Sport History* 45, no. 3 (Fall 2018): 300-301.

The urban redevelopment craze, championed by Robert Moses and his disciples, swept uptown like a prairie fire, reaching Yorkville in earnest in 1956.[57] In that year alone, new construction in Yorkville tripled.[58] During the post-WW I era, builders had left Yorkville's interior relatively intact, instead erecting their grand apartment structures on Park Avenue to the west and along the East River. Things would be different after WW II. Upper middle-class families sought new options north of midtown Manhattan. West Siders departing areas increasingly populated by Puerto Rican migrants constituted a highly motivated segment of the real estate market. Many of ethnic Yorkville's inhabitants had been paying ten dollars a month per room for their units. By comparison, the new apartments and cooperatives fetched upwards of $100 per apartment. Peter Kihss of the *New York Times*, reporting at the start of this wave in 1955, explained that "the new apartments are breaking open the staid patterns of Yorkville . . . replacing the four and five story tenements and brownstones that for fifty years and more had sheltered Middle European workers and their sturdy scions."[59] Stanley Isaacs, whose City Council district included most of Yorkville, worried about longtime residents being "squeezed out" of their homes, and stressed the urgency of exploring ways to maintain Yorkville's traditional working-class character.[60]

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[57] Stephen M. Kolman, in his 2002 dissertation entitled "We'll Take Manhattan: The Appropriation of Immigrant Space and the Transformation of Urban Geography in New York City: 1925-1975," examines, in part, this period of Yorkville's development. Kolman argues that city planners, led by Moses, purposefully adopted a laissez-faire approach to Yorkville, whereby they eschewed direct governmental planning in favor of private development. Moses did not view Yorkville as a slum but saw the white ethnic working-class population as incongruous with the area's high land values. Kolman asserts, persuasively, that Moses et al. looked at Yorkville in much the same way as real estate developers did – as a neighborhood best served by going upscale like the affluent territory bordering it to the west. Although it took time, that transformation is now more or less complete. Stephen M. Kolman, "We'll Take Manhattan: The Appropriation of Immigrant Space and the Transformation of Urban Geography in New York City: 1925-1975," PhD diss. (University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2002), v, 1-8, 174-82.

[58] Yorkville had avoided this sweeping pattern of redevelopment in Manhattan for more than a decade after the war. Between 1947 and 1955, builders erected just sixteen apartment buildings in the neighborhood. However, in 1956 alone, nine such structures came online, nine others were in progress, and the municipal government was in the process of reviewing seventeen other plans. "Thomas W. Ennis, "Boom in Building Stirs Yorkville: Solid Rows of Brownstones and tenements Replaced by New Apartments," *New York Times*, December 23, 1956, 125.

[59] Peter Kihss, "Our Changing City: Upper and Middle East Side: U. N. Buildings and Big Apartments Remake Face of Four-Square-Mile District," *New York Times*, July 1, 1955, 23.

[60] Thomas W. Ennis, "Boom in Building Stirs Yorkville: Solid Rows of Brownstones and Tenements Replaced by New Apartments," *New York Times*, December 23, 1956, 125; Kihss, *New York Times*; Joel Schwartz, *The New York Approach: Robert Moses, Urban Liberals, and Redevelopment of the Inner City* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1993), xv, 274.

Longtime working-class and middle-class residents of Yorkville, including the district's white ethnics, desperately searched for options to remain in place. The state legislature offered a glimmer of hope for this population with passage of the Mitchell-Lama law in 1955, which attempted to increase affordable rental and cooperative housing by providing tax incentives and abatements for developers. In 1957, the Lenox Hill Neighborhood Association developed a plan to bring Michell-Lama projects to Yorkville, appealing directly to Mayor Robert Wagner, Jr. on the belief that he might take a special interest in his old neighborhood. Wagner was loath to interfere too aggressively with market forces, but he did favor the potential development of affordable housing on the sites of closed public schools. Two projects emerged directly from these efforts. The York Hill Apartments located at the junction of First Avenue and East 82nd Street welcomed residents in 1961. In 1967, the Rosalie Manning Apartments opened at 230 East 88th Street, providing over 100 units on a first-come, first-serve basis. These apartments provided some relief to ethnic Yorkville, whose constituents faced the squeeze about which Stanley Isaacs had warned. In the end, this modest remedy proved insufficient to stem the tide of gentrification.[61]

Thus, omnipresent construction crews worked feverishly throughout the sixties to replace brownstones and tenements with market-rate apartments rising eighteen to twenty stories, buildings offering office suites, and even an urban "shopping arcade" at the corner of East 86th Street and Third Avenue. In some cases, residential space disappeared via the wrecking ball, while at other times landlords summarily evicted tenants unable to pay jacked-up rents. Tenant agency took many forms. Some coalesced into tenants' rights groups. Others lobbied for more affordable cooperatives or for schemes that might prioritize longtime residents over "outsiders" in new construction. A few defiantly

[61] "Find Affordable Housing: Mitchell-Lama," New York City Department of Housing, Preservation & Development, https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/about/about-hpd.page, accessed March 8, 2020; Charles G. Bennett, "Yorkville Seeks City Housing Aid: Wagner Studies Proposals to Help Old Neighborhood – 2 Sites Suggested," *New York Times*, October 20, 1957, 48; Franklin Whitehouse, "Families with Modest Means Can Rent in Expensive East 80's," *New York Times*, July 23, 1967, 210.

refused to vacate their homes, forcing standoffs and court battles. But most just stepped awkwardly out of Yorkville and into the unknown.[62]

Proprietors who did not own or otherwise control the fate of their commercial space faced similar problems. Gustav Kerekes, the German-born owner of a shop selling books and stationery, watched helplessly as his largely ethnic clientele fled the area. Referring to East 86th Street, Kerekes told a *Times* reporter that "[t[his street isn't the same anymore – the old German people are moving out and everybody rich is moving in."[63] This apparently affluent "swinging set," to use the label favored by the local media, showed scant interest in foreign-language books and magazines, German and Hungarian pastries and cookies, or yodeling waiters. One young mother approvingly reported that "the cabarets are no longer stodgy and German, but young and swinging."[64] For those subscribing to this point of view, ethnic was passé.

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Despite developers seeking to demolish the old and journalists celebrating the new, ethnic Yorkville persisted. The German enclave's residential presence was rapidly disappearing, but a critical mass of its East 86th Street commercial core continued to offer German fare, Bavarian atmospherics, and imported goods. In addition, two citywide developments helped keep the notion of German Yorkville in the minds of New Yorkers: the political ascent of Robert F. Wagner, Jr. and the creation of a new form of pan-Germanism, the German-American Steuben Parade.

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[62] Thomas W. Ennis, "Boom in Building Stirs Yorkville: Solid Rows of Brownstones and Tenements Replaced by New Apartments," *New York Times*, December 23, 1956, 125; Edward C. Burks, "250 of Yorkville Protest Eviction: Picket Mayor's Residence Over Razing of Building for Luxury Apartments," *New York Times*, June 5, 1960, 57; "Yorkville Tenants Demand Protection," *New York Times*, January 18, 1956, 33; Paul Hofmann, "A Defiant Tenant Gets Fire Guard: Yorkville Woman Refuses to Move for Renovation," *New York Times*, June 18, 1961, 67; "'Swinging' Set Invades Old World of Yorkville," *New York Times*, June 9, 1968, R1; "Manhattan's Yorkville Section Gets Taste of Suburbia: Not Crabgrass or Car Pools, but a Shopping Center," *New York Times*, September 3, 1967, 190.

[63] "E. 86th Street's German Flavor Gives Way to the '60s," *New York Times*, October 2, 1968, 41.

[64] Ibid.

On May 4, 1953, Robert Ferdinand Wagner, Sr., the former newsboy turned New Deal warrior, died at his son's home at 520 East 86th Street, in the heart of German Yorkville. Six months later, Robert F. Wagner, Jr., was elected New York City's 102nd mayor.[65] Wagner, Jr. had grown up in Yorkville, the only son of the German-born U.S. Senator and an Irish American mother, the former Susan Edwards. Born in 1910, he had lived through the neighborhood's turbulent Great War years, as well as its rebuilding process of the twenties. From the time his mother died when he was only nine years old, Wagner, Jr. followed in his father's footsteps. He devoted his entire professional career to public service, including his years spent in the Air Force during World War II. In 1938, Wagner, Jr. was elected to represent Yorkville in the State Senate fresh out of Yale Law School, after which he served in numerous municipal posts, including the Tax Commission, the Housing and Buildings Commission, and Chairman of the Planning Commission. In 1949, Wagner, Jr. was elected Manhattan Borough President, where, among other things, he worked with the local Chamber of Commerce to lead a donation drive called "Yorkville Open Your Hearts," which yielded four tons of clothes for the people of West Berlin. Wagner, Jr. did not forget from whence he came, whether that pertained to his German roots or his German American neighborhood. "I don't kid myself that the reason I had the opportunity to represent the district my father represented was the fact that he was there first, and that I had lived there all my life," he acknowledged.[66] For an entire decade, German Yorkville would have one of its own residing at Gracie Mansion in Carl Schurz Park, just a little farther down East 86th Street. Whether the Wagner

[65] "Robert F. Wagner Dies at Age of 75: Senator Who Retired in 1949 Served in Post 23 Years – Champion of New Deal," *New York Times*, May 5, 1953, 1; Fred J. Sass, "America Honors War Dead; 35,000 in Main Parade Here: The Nation's Tribute to Its War Dead," *New York Times*, May 31, 1951, 1. Robert F. Wagner, Jr. defeated the incumbent mayor, Vincent R. Impellitteri, in the Democratic primary by a 2:1 margin. The *New York Times* hailed the result "as proof that the Democratic party machine in New York City has lost the last remnants of power." Leo Egan, "Control of Votes Upset by Primary, Power of District Leaders in Democratic Machine Now Viewed as fading in the City," *New York Times*, September 17, 1953.

[66] Edith Evans Asbury, "Career of Wagner Chosen in Boyhood: Democrats' Mayoral Nominee Prepared for Public Life in School and College," *New York Times*, October 17, 1953, 17.

administration yielded tangible benefits to Yorkville remains debatable, but its symbolic significance to a then-wounded community is not.[67]

As Wagner, Jr. took his seat atop city government, German Yorkville also started to host the German-American Steuben Parade, an invented tradition that helped the community rehabilitate its image damaged from the Bund years. The first official parade bearing the name of Baron von Steuben, the Revolutionary War hero who conveniently fused together German and American heritage, occurred in 1958. An estimated 150,000 onlookers refused to let threatening skies prevent them from witnessing marchers wearing lederhosen and dirndls, elaborate floats, and oom-pah bands march northward up Fifth Avenue. President Eisenhower and Theodor Heuss, the West German leader, donated flags from their respective countries, and the governors of New York and New Jersey joined Mayor Wagner as official parade dignitaries. Starting with this first Manhattan-based parade, event organizers stressed the importance of the parade route turning east on 86th Street, Sauerkraut Boulevard, to terminate at the site of a Yorkville street festival. The *New York Times* and *Daily News* described the inaugural Steuben parade in reverent terms, stressing the message of German American contributions to America without ever referencing the war years or the Bund. This event quickly gained favor as a central element of German New York's heritage practices and earned a special place on the city's annual events calendar.[68]

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Yorkville's Hungarian enclave did more than persist, it enjoyed a revival powered by postwar migration and the cultural politics of the Cold War. The failed Hungarian Revolution in the fall of 1956 brought even more refugees to the neighborhood and bolstered Hungarian Americans' collective

[67] Ibid.; "Wagner Jr. Enters the Senate Race, Setting Up Conflict with Harriman," *New York Times*, August 20, 1952, 1; Robert A. Caro, *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), 2-5; Edith Evans Asbury, "Career of Wagner Chosen in Boyhood: Democrats' Mayoral Nominee Prepared for Public Life in School and College," *New York Times*, October 17, 1953, 17; "4 Tons of Clothing for Refugees," *New York Times*, March 22, 1953, 12; "Wagner Fashioned Career in Politics: Began in State Assembly in 1937 – Was a Lieutenant Colonel in Air Force," *New York Times*, November 4, 1953, 16.

[68] Chapter 5: Marching Heritage explores the history of German American parading in New York, the Steuben parade's immediate origins and symbolism, its early development, and the event's evolution.

reputation as Cold Warriors. In October 1956. Hungary's Communist authorities aided by Soviet troops used deadly force to quell what had started as peaceful anti-communist demonstrations by university students and their supporters. As violence spread throughout the country, revolutionaries pleaded for Western assistance, especially from the U.S. None came. Instead, the Soviet army moved in to summarily crush the rebellion and restore the satellite government. More than 200,000 people escaped into neighboring countries. The revolutionaries earned the respect and sympathy of the American public, many of whom had closely followed these events on television. *Time* magazine named the "Hungarian Freedom Fighter" the man-of-the year in its January 1957 issue.[69]

The failed Hungarian Revolution unleashed a sizeable migration as well as greater American sympathy for those forced to find a new home.[70] The Eisenhower administration took steps to admit political refugees, ultimately leading to 38,000 Hungarians immigrating to the U.S. Many migrants settled in Greater New York after matriculating through at Camp Kilmer, a New Jersey-based Army facility. Those who found their way to Yorkville to join extended family and friends or to start anew among co-ethnics, infused the enclave with political energy, organization-building skills, and a zest for liberty. They had experienced the Cold War as a nightmarish reality, not a thought exercise. Thus, the 56ers, as they were known, amplified the anti-communist rhetoric already emanating from Yorkville.[71] They fortified the Hungarian National Council, the self-described Hungarian government in exile located in Yorkville on East 72nd Street, hosted exiled Hungarian officials and dignitaries, demonstrated in front of the United Nations and the Soviet embassy, and regularly commemorated the 1956 uprising. The

[69] Pastor, "The American Reception and Settlement of Hungarian Refugees in 1956-1957," 197-205; Donald Kerwin, "The US Refugee Resettlement Program — A Return to First Principles: How Refugees Help to Define, Strengthen, and Revitalize the United States," *Journal on Migration and Human Securit*y 6, no. 3 (Sep 2018): 207.

[70] By way of comparison, 26,377 DPs entered the U.S. whereas approximately 38,000 immigrated after the Hungarian Revolution. Peter Pastor, "The American Reception and Settlement of Hungarian Refugees in 1956-1957," *Hungarian Cultural Studies* 9 (2016): 201.

[71] Hungarian Yorkville's anti-Communist activities fit within the New York's broader Cold War environment. According to Lisa Davenport, in New York of the mid-fifties, "to voice appropriate political protest, activists had to forego criticism of race and anti-Communism." Therefore, "[i]deas of social advancement, ideological supremacy, and exceptionalism of American democratic traditions became the only suitable themes for public debate." Lisa E. Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy: Promoting America in the Cold War Era* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2009), 13.

56ers kept homeland politics at the forefront of Hungarian New York life for decades, ensuring that anti-communist ideology animated everything from worship services to cultural events.[72]

In March 1957, leadership of the Hungarian National Council organized a somber affair to honor victims of the Hungarian Rising six months earlier. Like many events before it, this commemoration centered around a pilgrimage to the Kossuth memorial. Increased volume and intensity marked subsequent versions of this homage to Hungarian conceptions of liberty. Five years later, fifteen hundred people attended a more raucous event at the Yorkville Casino where the impressive slate of speakers included Lajos Balogh, former Olympian and president of the American Hungarian Federation, Congressman and soon-to-be New York mayor, John V. Lindsay, and Sister Margit Slachta, a noted champion of women's rights and chief organizer of an effort to shelter nearly one thousand Hungarian Jews during the 1944 genocide.[73]

Hungarian emigres, both DPs and 56ers, also reinvigorated Hungarian Yorkville's social institutions, especially its faith communities, in the 1950s. They fortified the congregations of existing places of worship such as St. Stephen of Hungary, the Roman Catholic church on East 82nd Street, as well as the venerable First Hungarian Reformed Church on East 69th Street. They also led the movement to open another reformed church in in the Hungarian enclave's epicenter at 229 East 82nd Street between Second and Third Avenues. The Hungarian Reformed Church of New York City opened its doors in 1958. Rev. Gabor Csordas, the church's founding pastor, had immigrated to the U.S. from Szekesfehervar, a

[72] Pastor, 197-205; Kerwin, "The US Refugee Resettlement Program, 207; "'War of Subversion' against Reds Urged," *New York Times*, March 13, 1950, 3; "Gov. Lodge Warns of New Soviet Evil: He Joins Hungarian-Americans to Protest at Deportations in Eastern Europe," *New York Times*, July 8, 1951, 13; "Mindszenty Case Is Held Still Open: Dulles Tells Mass Meeting It Stays Before Conscience of Hungary and World," *New York Times*, December 28, 1953, 9; Kathleen McLaughlin, "Hungarian Exile's Plea to U.N. Warns of a Reprisal on People," *New York Times*, October 29, 1956, 8; "Budapest Ex-Chief Here: Former Mayor Plans to Ask U.N. for Help to City," *New York Times*, January 21, 1957, 10; "St. Patrick's Mass Remembers Victims of '56 Hungarian Revolt," *New York Times*, November 5, 1962, 28; "Dr. Tibor A. Weber, 82, Officer Of Hungarian Anti-Communists," *New York Times*, March 8, 1977, 32.

[73] "Revolution of 1848 in Hungary Marked," *New York Times*, March 15, 1954, 12.; John MacCormac, "Hungary Is Quiet on National Day: Kadar Regime's Preparation for Anniversary of 1848 Revolt Is Not Needed," *New York Times*, March 16, 1957, 6; "Hungarians Hold Fete: 1,500 Gather Here to Mark the Revolt of 1848," *New York Times*, March 12, 1962, 19; "Slachta, Margit (1884-1974)," *Biographical Dictionary of Women's Movements and Feminisms: Central, Eastern, and South Eastern Europe, 19th and 20th Centuries*, edited by Francisca Haan, et al. (Central European University Press, 2005), 521-24.

city approximately sixty miles southwest of Budapest, in 1947 when he was in his mid-twenties. Under Csordas's leadership, the church blended reformed theology with an unyielding anti-communist attitude. Cold War politics also provided instrumental in political exiles establishing cultural institutions. In 1955, these Hungarian elites founded the American Hungarian Library and Historical Society, the institutional progenitor for the Magyar Ház, which has claimed the mantle of headquarters of Hungarian cultural heritage in Manhattan for more than half a century.[74]

ETHNIC YORKVILLE'S LOST SYMBOLS AND DAMAGED REPUTATION: THE TUMULT OF THE 1960S

As Yorkville's working-class and largely ethnic residents and proprietors continued to contend with rapacious developers, vanishing brownstones, and empty stores, New York City passed the 1965 Landmarks Preservation Law. This legislation capped three decades of preservation activism in the city, a movement that finally found political daylight after a series of publicly unpopular demolition projects such as the Brokaw Mansion, located at East 79th Street and Fifth Avenue, and Penn Station. The Landmarks Commission, created to administer the preservation law, adopted a cautious approach in its early years designed to avoid constitutional challenges from the real estate industry or other commercial interests. Even accounting for its prudence, however, the Commission showed a bias toward preserving properties in affluent areas such as the "Silk Stocking" or "Gold Coast" district of the Upper East Side rather than in traditionally working-class, ethnic neighborhoods such as nearby Yorkville.[75]

[74] "Gabor Csordas, 71, of Hungarian Church," *New York Times*, January 10, 1992, B6; Steven Kurutz, "Church That Once Offered Refuge Sits at the Eye of a Storm," *New York Times*, September 19, 2004, CY6. *Chapter 8, Believing Heritage*, presents a more detailed examination of the Hungarian Reformed Church, as part of wider discussion of the intersection of ethnic religion and ethnic heritage. "The History of the Hungarian House, Magyar Haz," http://www.hungarianhouse.org/en/category/about-us/the-hungarian-house-of-new-york/, accessed March 1, 2020; Tom Szigeti, "Hungarian Heritage Festival Held in New York City!" Hungary Today, September 8, 2017, https://hungarytoday.hu/hungarian-heritage-festival-held-new-york-city-96291/, accessed March 3, 2020; Fanni Kaszás, ""On Tuesdays, the whole XX. century comes alive at the tables": Interview with Ildikó Nagy, Director of the Hungarian House of New York," December 30, 2018, https://hungarytoday.hu/on-tuesdays-the-whole-xx-century-comes-alive-at-the-tables-interview-with-ildiko-nagy-director-of-the-hungarian-house-of-new-york/, accessed March 3, 2020. The Magyar Ház is featured in *Chapter 6: Housing Heritage.*

[75] Even the name "Yorkville" seemed to be in jeopardy during this time of accelerated change. The Yorkville Chamber of Commerce contacted Mayor Wagner and the New York Planning Commission to expressed members' dismay at a map omitting Yorkville from the city's more than eighty neighborhoods. The Planning Commission tried to ease concerns by stating that "[w]e

Thus, ethnic Yorkville's built heritage had few defenders during Gotham's construction frenzy, even among the preservationist crowd. Few outsiders seemed concerned that ethnic Yorkville might fade away without a trace.[76]

Consequently, German Yorkville's primary symbols started to fall to the wayside during this period, a process marked by occasional eulogies in the local press. In 1965, the Yorkville Casino's new ownership group, the Yorkville Management Corporation, converted the building to accommodate a modern movie theatre, a night club, and offices. In the process, they eliminated the longtime German language theatre as well as the space that had welcomed political rallies and campaign speeches, organized labor meetings, and hundreds of gatherings of ethnic clubs and organizations, including those tied to German and Hungarian identities.[77] One year later, the Ruppert Brewery, founded in 1867 and once the nation's most productive brewing operation, shut down. Rheingold, a competitor, purchased the intellectual property rights relating to the company's primary brand, Knickerbocker, but sold the company's thirty-three buildings in the Hellgate section of Yorkville to a powerful developer, raising even more questions about the fate of the neighborhood's ethnic landscape.[78]

Along with the loss of its most notable sites, ethnic Yorkville faced new attacks on its reputation in the sixties. Gotham's mainstream press increasingly reinforced a vision of Yorkville as old-fashioned and static, and its remaining working-class, ethnic residents as close-minded and even bigoted. *New York Times* reporter Thomas Buckley's 1963 article "Changing Neighborhood: Yorkville's Flavor Giving

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can't imagine an official map of the city without Yorkville designated as Yorkville. When our official neighborhood map is issued, we're sure that Yorkville will be on it." "City Assured Yorkville" It's Still a Neighborhood," *New York Times*, July 26, 1962, 16.

[76] Rebecca Birmingham, "Smash or Save: The New York City Landmarks Preservation Act and New Challenges to Historic Preservation," *Journal of Law and Policy* 19, no. 1 (2010): 271-79; "The Disappearing Landmarks," *New York Times*, September 18, 1964, 34; Anthony C. Wood, *Preserving New York: Winning the Right to Protect a City's Landmarks* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 1-20.

[77] Despite the Yorkville Casino's complex and diverse history, the local press offered elegies foregrounding the pro-Nazi rallies which occurred within its walls. "Yorkville Landmark Will Be Razed," *New York Times*, March 2, 1965, 57; Thomas W. Ennis, "Yorkville Closing an Old Landmark: Casino Where Gaiety Thrived to Be Office Building," *New York Times*, August 2, 1965

[78] "Yorkville Landmark Will Be Razed," *New York Times*, March 2, 1965, 57; Thomas W. Ennis, "Yorkville Closing an Old Landmark: Casino Where Gaiety Thrived to Be Office Building," *New York Times*, August 2, 1965, 25; "Offices Invade Yorkville Section: Casino's Conversion to Give Beer Halls New Neighbor," *New York Times*, April 2, 1967, 407; Thomas Buckley, "Ruppert Brewery Is Close Here: End of the Landmark on East Side Won't Stop Flow of Beer," *New York Times*, January 1, 1966, 27.

Way to East Side Conformity" provides an apt example. In a story ostensibly about gentrification, Buckley presented a quasi-history lesson about Yorkville. He stated that "[u]ntil World War II the population of Yorkville was overwhelmingly German, Irish, Hungarian, Austrian, and Czechoslovak in origin, in about that order."[79] New construction, he predicted, would alter the neighborhood's demographics and strangle the ethnic commercial sector that caused former residents to return regularly to satisfy their ethnic fix. Buckley counter-balanced his sense of concern about the loss of cultural distinctiveness with an equal measure of criticism of Yorkville's ethnics, who he characterized as insular, distrusting, and racially intolerant. Buckley even rekindled visions of Yorkville's Nazi moment, musing about when "Fritz Kuhn was running the German-American Bund from an office on 85th Street and leading goose-step parades to more cheers than boos."[80] While acknowledging the displacement likely to flow from this transition, Buckley implied that the demographic turnover would ultimately lead to a more open and inclusive neighborhood. Buckley's piece captured the ambivalence that would plague ethnic Yorkville's legacy throughout much of the twentieth century. He painted the neighborhood as a place defined by a proud but stained ethnic past and populated by an antiquated lot naively trying to stop the rising tide of modernity.[81]

New York's 1960s racial politics helped cement ethnic Yorkville's public reputation as a bastion of intolerance. By rebuking working-class whites residing within what was left of ethnic enclaves, the mainstream press implicitly exonerated affluent sectors of the city from any culpability for existing racial tensions. Thus, news coverage of the National Renaissance Party (NRP), a white nationalist organization,

[79] Thomas Buckley, "Changing Neighborhood: Yorkville's Flavor Giving Way to East Side Conformity" 66 New Buildings Go Up in 10 Years," *New York Times*, October 17, 1963, 29.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid. Jeanine Larmoth, writing for Harper's Bazaar, hit this point squarely in a 1965 article about Third Avenue. Larmoth wrote that "Third Avenue makes its way through Yorkville, intersects "steak row," sobers up with business machine corporations, gets touched by Irish, Armenians, Czechs, Hungarians and Poles. It had an "El" once. To canopy it, to hide from the sky its less seemly aspects. Now, it is wide and bare of shadows or illusions. It could be nowhere in the world but New York. For nowhere is internationalism so homely a proposition, where import means, not luxury, not sophistication, but a sustaining link with a lost home." Jeanine Larmoth, "Three Days on Third Avenue," *Harper's Bazaar* 98, no. 3042 (May 1965): 168.

focused on the group's occasional activities in Yorkville. The NRP, based on the Upper West Side, used Yorkville as one setting for its campaign of hate and bigotry. James Madole, the party head, delivered stump speeches laced with racist and antisemitic rhetoric, at one point claiming that Jews had conspired to dominate the Yorkville-Mid-Manhattan Chamber of Commerce. NRP members, some wearing Bund-like uniforms, tried to distribute literature carrying similar messages. Journalists deemphasized locals' attempts to drive out the hate-mongers, preferring instead to pick the scab of the Bund days. Syndicated columnist Max Freedman, for instance, compared Yorkville to Birmingham, Alabama. "In both places," he wrote, "there are prejudices ready to leap out from the dark regions of the human spirit."[82]

As Freedom Summer unfolded in Mississippi in 1966, civil rights protests erupted in the heart of Yorkville following a deadly shooting by a white, off-duty police officer, Lt. Thomas Gilligan, of James Powell, an unarmed, fifteen-year-old black student. Gilligan, fired two shots and alleging that Powell had rushed him with a knife, claimed self-defense. Powell, a resident of the Bronx, had enrolled in a summer reading course at Robert F. Wagner Junior High School on East 76th Street. The day of the shooting, approximately three hundred young people demonstrated in Yorkville in what the local mainstream press described as a "riot." As local African American civil rights leaders called for a full and immediate investigation, the U.S. Nationalist Party, the latest mutation of white nationalism to use Yorkville as a convenient backdrop, tried to leverage the tragedy to advance its hate agenda. The group called on Mayor Wagner to immediately halt the city's busing program, disband the city's Human Rights Commission, and arrest civil rights leaders such as Bayard Rustin and James Farmer for inciting a riot. Despite the group having no connection to Yorkville and failing to garner local support for its views, Gotham's media used the U.S. Nationalist Party to reinforce a racial binary between black Harlem and

[82] Joseph Cassidy and Lester Abelman, "4,000 Rout Hatemen in a Yorkville Gutter," *New York Daily News*, May 26, 1963, 2C; Arthur Noble, "He Goosesteps Himself Into a Pail of Jail," *New York Daily News*, May 27, 1963, 3; Associated Press, "Storm Trooper Put in Jail," *New Brunswick Daily Home News*, May 27, 1963, 17; "Trooper of Yorkville Wins, Loses in Court," *New York Daily News*, June 5, 1963, 30; Joseph Cassidy and Lester Abelman, "Nazi Punks at Diner; Nab 8, Two Arsenals," *New York Daily News*, July 15, 1963, 3; Max Freedman, "Hate Merchants Pose Grave Danger," *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 29, 1963, 14.

white Yorkville. A headline published by the *Daily News* in the middle of this controversy played on this trope: "A Boy Mourned in Harlem; Hate Peddled in Yorkville."[83]

Notwithstanding the *Daily News's* penchant for sensational headlines, there was no denying the racial chasm that had separated East Harlem and Yorkville for decades. Yorkville, despite its reputation as an ethnically diverse district had fewer residents of color than any other Manhattan neighborhood, save perhaps the Upper East Side's Gold Coast. Those committed to keeping it that way bristled at any potential change in Yorkville's racial demographics. In 1947, the city had made affordable housing in north Yorkville available to a few black families.[84] Mrs. Hermina Baumgartner, the owner of multiple tenements on East 95th Street, complained that introducing African Americans would drive down property values and drive away tenants. A group of school-aged white boys threatened to greet the black children with violence. "Why can't they go to Harlem?" one of them yelled.[85] Despite these issues, the East Harlem Project and the Commission on Human Rights of New York worked with the city's public school system to integrate Yorkville's schools.[86] The integration projects of the late fifties and early sixties enjoyed modest success, bringing in a few hundred students from East Harlem. Parents of the bused students registered general approval of the program, citing improvements in academic success and attendance. Persistent lobbying by a vocal set of white parents, however, eventually convinced the

[83] John Mallon and Leeds Moberly, "A Boy Mourned in Harlem; Hate Peddled in Yorkville," *New York Daily News,* July 19, 1964, C5; Theodore Jones, "Negro Boy Killed; 300 Harass Police: Teen-Agers Hurl Cans and Bottles After Shooting by Off-Duty Officer," *New York Times*, July 17, 1964, 1 ; Leonard Buder, "East Side School Upset by Tragedy: Attendance Off 25% Since Shooting of Negro Boy*," New York Times*, July 25, 1964, 8.

[84] These families were originally slated to live in housing in Brownsville, an area of Brooklyn. When that project encountered a serious construction problem, the City Housing Authority responded by finding them space in Yorkville. Yorkville's predominantly white population may have been the reason the neighborhood was treated as only an emergency solution rather than the original plan. "First Family Moved into Building Refurbished for Project Victims: Housing Authority Cites Anti-Bias Policy as Negroes Enter Yorkville Structure – Brownsville Houses Inspected," *New York Times*, March 7, 1947, 27.

[85] Ibid.

[86] The East Harlem Project and New York's Human Rights Commission's joint report on school integration issued in 1962 referred to Yorkville as "solid white." "Releasing Human Potential: A Study of east Harlem-Yorkville School Bus Transfer," *East Harlem Project and the City Commission on Human Rights of New York*, August 1962.

city to create an East Harlem school district, thereby eventually reversing many of the gains achieved through integration.[87]

Similar divisions surfaced three years later in connection with the El Barrio riot of 1967. El Barrio, or Spanish Harlem, referred to the large community of first- and second-generation Puerto Rican Americans residing in an area of East Harlem extending from East 116th to East 97th Streets north to south and from First to Fifth Avenues east to west. The city's Puerto Rican population surged from approximately 60,000 in 1940 to over 610,000 in 1960 and 860,000 in 1970. In July 1967, an off-duty police officer shot and killed Reinaldo Rodriguez, who allegedly stabbed another man over a craps game near the corner of Third Avenue and East 111th Street, about fifteen blocks north of Yorkville. The incident inspired legitimate protests but also ignited violent reactions. Two residents of the neighborhood died over the course of five days of disorder. Many residents of El Barrio criticized the NYPD for escalating the incident through its "riot squadron," while some business owners who lived outside of the neighborhood lambasted Mayor Lindsay for failing to prevent looting.[88]

The *New York Times* used the incident as an opportunity to highlight the clear divisions between Spanish Harlem and Yorkville. Reporter Deidre Carmody called East 96th Street, recognized as Yorkville's northern boundary, "as divisive a line as the wall that separates the two Berlins."[89] More than twenty years after World War II, she described Yorkville as "a polyglot area of German, Irish, Hungarian, Austrian, and Czechoslovakian residents" who felt raw contempt for their northern neighbors.[90] A Yorkville-based police officer, speaking on an assurance of anonymity, derided Spanish Harlem's Puerto

[87] Ibid.
[88] Virginia E. Sanchez Korrol, *From Colonia to Community: The History of Puerto Ricans in New York City* (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 1983), 3-62, 221-14; Vincent J. Cannato, *The Ungovernable City: John Lindsay and His Struggle to Save New York* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 132-35; Jose E. Cruz, "Puerto Rican Politics in New York City during the 1960s: Structural Ideation, Contingencies, and Power," in *The Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion: Identity Politics in Twenty-First Century America*, edited by David F. Ericson (New York: Routledge, 2011), 67-90.
[89] Deirdre Carmody, "East 96th: Wall Between Worlds," *New York Times*, July 27, 1967, 20.
[90] Ibid.

Rican residents as "inherently lazy" and on the dole.[91] "They stay in bed until the middle of the afternoon," he insisted, "then they wake up, play their radios, drink beer on the streets and throw the cans into the gutters."[92] Marvin Sicherman, executive director of the Stanley Isaacs Community Center in north Yorkville, claimed that many of the aging white ethnics for whom the facility served as a lifeline held similar opinions.[93] These views gestured at the moral and intellectual inconsistencies of white ethnic identity in New York City during the 1960s. Many of Yorkville's Euro-Americans, Germans and Hungarians included, were quick to distinguish themselves culturally and socio-economically from one another, and, especially, from what they perceived as dominant elements of Old New York. On the other hand, they were at least equally committed to their status as white Americans and proud to have held the geographic color line for so long. To many of the neighborhood's white ethnics, civil strife in East Harlem did not represent evidence of racial inequality and the need for social justice. Rather, they construed these events as another threat to their way of life.[94]

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Kathryn Jolowicz, an amateur historian and storyteller who came of age within Yorkville's German enclave during its autumnal season, often tells her audiences they should consider ethnic Yorkville's tale complete as of 1960. For Jolowicz and others who experienced the steady decline of German American spaces, structures, and institutions as well as the out-migration of family and friends, the narrative of working-class, ethnic Yorkville's post-1960 narrative may be too difficult to bear. Moreover, those focused myopically on the German American community fail to recall the resurgence of Yorkville's Hungarian enclave that carried on through the sixties. Regardless of what drives historical interpretations of ethnic Yorkville that fixate on German Yorkville and avoid discussions or displacement

[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.

and gentrification, such treatments miss opportunities to explore ethnic Yorkville's transition from a place that harbored living enclaves to one more associated with collective memories of a bygone era. Ironically, this transformational process, through which the contemporary ethnic Yorkville imaginary assumed discernible form, inspired the very ethnic heritage practices of which Jolowicz is a vital part. To remediate this omission, ethnic Yorkville's journey from history to heritage constitutes the dominant thematic backdrop of the neighborhood's final historical chapter, its winter season, and lays the groundwork for critical examinations of ongoing German and Hungarian ethnic heritage practices taken up in Book II.[95]

[95] Kathryn Jolowicz, known as ***the*** Yorkville Historian, is featured prominently within *Chapter 5: Telling Heritage.*

CHAPTER 4
RECALLING ETHNIC YORKVILLE IN WINTERTIME: THE 1970S TO THE PRESENT

WINTER NIGHT

In this winter night a freight train–
itself a small winter night–streaks out onto the plain.
Its smoke ready to extinguish,
in an arm span infinitely,
the stars that revolve and languish.

On the frozen tops of boxcars
scurrying like a mouse, light flies,
the light of this winter night.

Attila József[1]

In the early 1970s, Bruce A. Gimbel, chairman of Gimbel Brothers, Inc., foresaw the company's newest department store on the corner of Lexington Avenue and East 86th Street, as the cornerstone of a neighborhood renaissance. Gimbels East, as it was known, wiped out a popular movie theater and working-class housing. To Gimbel, Yorkville, with its frenetic construction of new luxury apartments and growing inventory of available high-rent commercial space, stood on the verge of realizing its full potential. Where others bemoaned forced residential relocations and the closures of ethnic shops and restaurants, Gimbel envisioned a tectonic event at the fault line separating working-class Yorkville and the Upper East Side, which he called "the richest suburb in the world."[2] According to this vision, the latter would bury the former in the name of progress and profit. Gimbel's gamble failed; his geological forecast never came to pass. Fourteen years after its bombastic opening, Gimbels was just another

[1] The life of Attila József, one of Hungary's greatest twentieth century poets, was like a shooting star, brief but a spectacular site to behold. Born in an industrial suburb of Budapest in 1905, he grew up in a series of foster homes after his father abandoned the family to immigrate to the United States and his mother died of cancer a decade later. Critics note Freudian influence in his poetry, especially its focus on the importance of childhood. Michael Slipp called József "the outstanding proletarian poet of the twentieth century." Michael Slipp, "Four Poems by Attila József," *The Hopkins Review* 7, no. 3 (Summer 2014): 347. József's death at the age of thirty-two remains controversial, although many believe he committed suicide. In 2011, rumors spread that the Viktor Orbán-led government planned to remove the statue of a seated József located near the Hungarian Parliament building, presumably because of the poet's temporary affiliation with the pre-World War II communist party. However, József's likeness continues to sit facing the Danube. Ibid, 346-47; "Hungarians and Poetry: Attila József and His Endangered Statue," Hungarian Spectrum, https://hungarianspectrum.org/2011/11/21/hungarians-and-poetry-attila-jozsef-and-his-endangered-statue/, accessed March 11, 2020.

[2] "Yorkville Site Is Prepared for New East Side Gimbels," *New York Daily News*, October 2, 1968, 4; Albert Scardino, "Gimbels at 86th: A Born Loser," *New York Times*, June 7, 1986, 33.

struggling retailer desperately seeking to unload its uptown property, at a loss if necessary. The *New York Times* lampooned the entire affair, calling the Gimbels store on East 86th Street a "born loser."[3] Gimbels East did not transform Yorkville into a shopping mecca but its owner's efforts to do so fueled nostalgic recollections of the time of lager and sauerbraten.[4]

The meteoric rise and fall of Gimbels East offers an entry point into ethnic Yorkville's winter season, an epoch marked by the accelerated erosion of its German and Hungarian residential enclaves, further conflation and ossification of the ethnic Yorkville imaginary, and the advent of an uneven memory culture struggling to preserve intangible and material elements of the district's ethnic past. By the time Gimbels pulled up stakes in 1986, only a few thousand German Americans and Hungarian Americans continued to call Yorkville home and just a handful of ethnic stores and institutions remained. Echoing the sentiments of many of Yorkville's white ethnics, Heinz Schlenker, manager of the then-popular Karl Ehmer Wurst Haus, drew correlations between the disappearance of ethnic Yorkville and the appearance of the giant department store. For Schlenker, Gimbels stood as a monument to emptiness, to the destruction of community, and the loss of place-based identity. Just a few years later, unsurprisingly, the Karl Ehmer franchise pulled up stakes, no longer able to justify maintaining its Yorkville branch.[5]

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Two distinct periods comprise ethnic Yorkville's winter season: the Gimbels years during the seventies and eighties followed by the neighborhood's final turn toward gentrification from the 1990s to the present, during which the imagined history of the neighborhood's ethnic past hardened. This season's defining features included the phenomenon whereby many of the district's white ethnics adopted politically conservative interpretations of what ailed the city and the nation, often leaning into

[3] Albert Scardino, "Gimbels at 86th: A Born Loser," *New York Times*, June 7, 1986, 33.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.

a self-image as America's forgotten and unappreciated constituency. Big box retail, exemplified by Gimbels East, and large-scale infrastructure projects, such as the planned Second Avenue Subway, represented the latest series of threats to German and Hungarian residents and the extant spaces and structures on which they relied. The failure of housing schemes to live up to promises to help aging working-class ethnics stay in their home district only exacerbated frustrations. Within this atmosphere, Yorkville morphed into a place of ethnic heritage, where a shrinking cadre of Hungarian and even fewer German residents remained rooted while their co-ethnics, including a sizeable diaspora, returned to the neighborhood to visit friends and family, worship, purchase groceries and imported goods, or attend meetings of the few enduring ethnic clubs and associations. Yorkville's role as a place of reunion and ritual made the sustainability of ethnic shops and restaurants a high priority for these German and Hungarian diasporas. Every closure of an ethnically owned business, therefore, received inordinate attention as a tragedy bringing ethnic Yorkville ever closer to death.

Starting in the 1990s, with ethnic Yorkville's materiality disappearing at an accelerated rate, Gotham's mainstream press coopted what had been an internal lament. With the residential and commercial takeover of the neighborhood a fait accompli, it now appeared safe to lionize ethnic Yorkville's past. The press, therefore, called on calcified social memories of Yorkville's ethnic communities on special occasions such as the visit of Pope Benedict XVI, the German-born pontif, in 2008. The ethnic Yorkville imaginary also helped fill up the melting pot thesis, America's heavily guarded national immigration myth, with German Americans playing the role of the good migrants who dutifully assimilated into generalized American whiteness. The Bund episode now tended to appear as a decontextualized oddity, adding flavor to the broth. Finally, ethnic Yorkville's post-mortem reputation fed into New York's self-aggrandizing image as the quintessential city of immigrants, as long as one did not dwell on or look too deeply into the discrimination, harassment, and surveillance ethnic communities endured during the nation's two world wars.

DISPLACING ETHNIC YORKVILLE DURING THE GIMBELS YEARS: THE 1970S AND 1980S

Ethnic Yorkville entered its winter season amidst a maelstrom. In the early 1970s, New York's bond rating collapsed leaving the city on the brink of municipal bankruptcy. In October 1975, President Gerald Ford announced his refusal to use federal resources to bail out the city, prompting the *Daily News* to proclaim: "Ford to City: Drop Dead."[6] A two-day electricity blackout in July 1977 affected almost all parts of Greater New York including Yorkville. Opinion leaders ranging from Hollywood to the national press corps assailed Gotham as a cesspool of drugs, homelessness, prostitution, police corruption, and violent crime. As stated by historian Roberta Brandes Gratz, "[i]n the 1970s, New York was probably the most unloved city in the country."[7] This environment sparked debates about America's problematic cities that reflected the larger, national political shift toward conservative ideologies and policies. Consistent with the prevailing mood, Yorkville's white ethnic residents contributed to an angry coalition that condemned Mayor John V. Lindsay as an irresponsible liberal during the early seventies. They often assessed Lindsay through zero-sum thinking, judging his focus on minority rights and populations as betraying a lack of concern for or commitment to white ethnics. Accordingly, Yorkville's remaining German and Hungarian communities strongly supported Ed Koch over Mario Cuomo in the contentious 1977 mayoral race, finding common cause with Koch's pledge to root out corruption in anti-poverty programs as well as his adherence to neoliberal solutions to New York's fiscal crisis.[8]

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[6] "Ford to City: Drop Dead: Vows He'll Veto Any Bailout," *New York Daily News*, October 30, 1975, 1; Kim Phillips-Fein, *Fear City: New York's Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of Austerity Politics* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2017), 177-89.

[7] Roberta Brandes Gratz, *The Battle for Gotham: New York in the Shadow of Robert Moses and Jane Jacobs* (New York: Nation Books, 2010), 23.

[8] Kim Phillips-Fein, *Fear City*, 34-44, 177-89; Frank McLaughlin, "Protest Yorkville Apt. Squeeze," *New York Daily News*, May 14, 1969, 22; Sam Roberts, "Backlash Is a-Buildin' on the Upper East Side," *New York Daily News*, February 12, 1973, 5, 34; "Primary Runoffs – Results at a Glance," *New York Daily News*, September 21, 1977, 17; Peter W. Colby, "Ed Koch and the New York City Political Tradition," in *New York State Today: Politics, Government, Public Policy*, 2nd Edition, edited by Peter W. Colby and John K. White (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 51-59; Jonathan Soffer, *Ed Koch and the Rebuilding of New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 146-52; Lee Denbatt, "Koch, in Inaugural, Asks That 'Pioneers' Come East' to City: Key Officials also Sworn In," *New York Times*, January 2, 1978, 1, 13; "Text of Address Delivered by Koch at His Inauguration as Mayor of New York City," *New York Times*, January 2, 1978, 13.

Although these convulsions touched all New Yorkers, two specific events in the early seventies directly threatened ethnic, working-class Yorkville. Despite construction delays and cost-overruns, Gimbels East planned to open its doors in early 1972. Around the same time, the city broke ground on a Second Avenue subway line to run from the Financial District to the Bronx with multiple stations in Yorkville. The Yorkville Chamber of Commerce had lobbied city officials for this line as far back as the late twenties, believing it would promote local business and provide residents with a transportation option other than the congested subway station at Lexington Avenue and East 86th Street. The idea resurfaced periodically in subsequent decades, usually generating public dialogue about how it might affect Yorkville's ethnic character. Now, combined with Gimbels East, the Second Avenue subway appeared to pose a serious threat to longtime residents by making the neighborhood a more viable option for professionals with downtown jobs.[9]

Considering these circumstances through the lens of Yorkville's white ethnics, Carter Horsley of the *New York Times* described the neighborhood as standing "at a crossroads,"[10] with each path forward obscured by doubt and fear. "Once one of the city's most cohesive ethnic communities, with Germans and Eastern European people predominating," he wrote, "Yorkville has felt the expansionary pressure from the wealthier Upper East Side on the south [and west] and the poorer East Harlem on the north."[11] For proponents of development, on the other hand, change could not come soon enough. "Right now, the area is at a kind of standstill and unless conditions change no one is going to invest" warned David Ornstein of Yorkville Management, one of the entities seeking to benefit from the reimagined neighborhood.[12] "But sooner or later the old stuff must deteriorate," he bluntly added.[13] Ornstein

[9] "Second Av. Chosen for Next Subway; Cost $800,000,000: Program to Be Announced Soon Calls for Four-Track Line from Houston St. to the Harlem," *New York Times*, August 30, 1929, 1;"Seeks Subway Relief: Yorkville Body Urges Building of Second Avenue Line," *New York Times*, December 29, 1929, RE2
[10] Carter B. Horsley, "Yorkville at Crossroads in Development," *New York Times*, January 30, 1972, R1.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.

remained confident that "[i]n the long run, sense will prevail, and development will continue."[14] Other members of the unofficial redevelopment alliance couched their positions in more politic formulations. Martin Swarzman, a principal of Glenwood Management, a firm controlling multiple Yorkville properties, assured locals that the neighborhood's distinctive qualities and colorful flavor would endure. Henry Sturman, who owned several properties on or near the corner of Third Avenue and East 86th Street promised that Yorkville's growth would honor its "continental flair" by making it even "more cosmopolitan."[15]

Real estate developers were not the only group who saw Yorkville as a business proposition. Throughout the seventies, prostitution gained a foothold in and around the former Sauerkraut Boulevard, signaling the deterioration of the district. Writing two months prior to the 1977 municipal election, columnist Beth Fallon, known for speaking truth to power, reported that "[f]ive blocks from [the mayor's] mansion, hookers flaunt themselves in the doorways of Yorkville."[16] She commented that "watching E. 86th St., with its marzipan stores and airy Bavarian castles in café windows, slowly infiltrated by prostitutes, by addicts, by fear" left one with a "blinding sadness."[17] Local merchants such as Mihaly Vestergom, the owner of Café Geiger, one of the few remnants of East 86th Street's Germanic heyday, blamed the neighborhood's slide on Gimbels East, which, he insisted, precipitated the incursion of street vendors, fast food venues, and higher volumes of garbage. Vestergom's daughter, Penny, a lifelong resident of Yorkville, expressed outrage over the situation. "We've lived on this block for 20 years [and] it's a good neighborhood [with] good schools," she explained.[18] But now, prostitutes "openly solicit, while their pimps double-park in their big cars."[19] Community Board 8, charged with communicating the needs and concerns of residents and businesses to the Borough President,

[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Beth Fallon, "Battle Lines Are Drawn in Beame," *New York Daily News*, September 1, 1977, 14.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.

complained bitterly to city officials and law enforcement. Its president even accompanied police officers on nighttime observations of the area. Locals saw the prostitution problem as a byproduct of the central issue: the erosion of a rooted, family-based sense of place. What they perceived as officials' inadequate response only reinforced concerns that the city had deprioritized the area's working-class residents. Conversely, the redevelopment crowd used prostitution and the general uptick in crime as evidence that only a holistic make-over could save the neighborhood. Expanding the Upper East Side's affluence, this logic held, would cure ailing Yorkville. Even Yorkville's name became a debatable topic during the 1980s. Real estate developers tended to favor the term the "Upper East Side" over "Yorkville," believing that such a rebranding exercise might boost property values, and erase memories of the district's grittier days. Throughout the seventies and well into the eighties, these competing viewpoints clashed in a chaotic war that played out in multiple venues ranging from city streets to City Hall.[20]

Yorkville's white ethnics faced the trials and tribulations of the 1970s while Americans engaged in an uneven, contentious, and politicized debate about the salience of Euro-American identity.[21] This discourse played out in New York in an amplified fashion due to the city's multicultural past and present. As ethnic Yorkville faded further from immediate sight, it often became fodder for the debate. One member of the ethnic Yorkville diaspora, for example, summoned Americanization rhetoric from the Great War-era to critique increased Hispanic migration. In an editorial entitled "Melting Pot," the writer, simply identified as "M. Suva," weaponized his or her family's immigrant legacy, stating:

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[20] Thomas Lueck, "Beth Fallon, 64, Columnist Who Needled the Powerful, Dies," *New York Times*, January 30, 2006, A21; Beth Fallon, "Battle Lines Are Drawn in Beame," *New York Daily News*, September 1, 1977, 14.

[21] Commentators produced voluminous writings about the subject of white ethnicity during the 1970s. The second edition of *Beyond the Melting Pot*, co-written by sociologists Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, was published in 1970. In considering the durability of white ethnic identity almost a half century after the end of mass immigration from Europe, Glazer and Moynihan wrote that "[t]he initial notion of an American melting pot did not, it seems, grasp what would happen in America." Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City, Second Edition* (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1970), 13. At the same time, Glazer and Moynihan described a kind of diffusion of some white ethnics into a category they labeled W.A.S.P.s (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants). Specifically, they lumped Germans and Hungarians, at least those belonging to Protestant denominations and who had improved their socio-economic status, into this socio-ethnic category. Ibid., 181-216. Glazer and Moynihan opined, "[t]he Germans, who formed along with the Irish the dominant ethnic groups of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in the city," have not maintained, as a group, a prominence in the city proportionate to their numbers." Ibid., xxxii.

> I am really disappointed with this double standard. My family immigrated from Czechoslovakia, located in Yorkville, and had to learn English in order to survive. The same thing happened with the Italians, Germans, and Hungarians in our neighborhoods. So, what's with this Spanish stuff. Aren't we all Americans? There is one language for all the people of this great country.[22]

On a less overtly political note, writers from the *New York Times* used the nation's Bicentennial to consider how urban neighborhoods such as Yorkville, and its once prominent white ethnics, fit into the ethnicity debate. Journalist Richard F. Shephard described New York as "the ultimate mammoth cliché of American immigration" with migrants "becoming old-stock [and] new waves displacing old waves."[23] Shephard emphasized, however, that this process leaves behind "archeological strata."[24] In the case of Yorkville, he argued, this residue assumed the shape of surviving ethnic restaurants and shops, which whispered clues about the past to those willing to listen. Richard Peck, another *Times* writer, also provided the obligatory delineation of the German and Hungarian restaurants and shops but placed them within a deep and thoughtful historical account. He complicated the myth of Yorkville as a "boozy, all-German cuckoo-clock land on the last Alpine meadow before Harlem, [a place] somehow remote from the temporary chic of the essential Upper East Side."[25] Peck worried that this vision elided a fascinating multi-cultural history featuring Weckquaesgeek Indians, Dutch settlers, the East River landed gentry, and the ethnic communities of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For Peck, this history demonstrated not only that "Yorkville thrives on change,"[26] but that each group which once called it home helped to construct its sense of place. Thus, Peck's interpretation of ethnic succession in Yorkville stands as a rare testament to the merits of connecting ethnic identity with a sense of place at a time when scholars increasingly theorized ethnicity as a matter of individual perception and choice.[27]

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[22] M. Suva, "Melting Pot," *New York Daily News*, September 19, 1974, 61.
[23] Richard F. Shephard, "A Guide to the City's Melting Pot," *New York Times*, July 9, 1976, 60.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Richard Peck, "Bubble On, O Melting Pot!" *New York Times*, January 12, 1975, 252.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.; Shephard, "A Guide to the City's Melting Pot."

As opinion leaders tried to understand the place of ethnic identity in New York's changing cityscape, battles raged on between locals and developers. Within this chaotic atmosphere, even French pastry could symbolize Yorkville's problematic turn toward the "chic and costly."[28] The *New York Times* characterized the arrival of the croissant at Glazer's Bake Shop in 1983 as an implicit threat to the family-owned business's German traditions. One year later, the New York Turn Verein, one of the social pillars of German Yorkville, sold its building at the corner of Lexington Avenue and East 85th Street. Merging with a Westchester County club, the amalgamated American Turners constructed a new clubhouse in the Bronx, installing a few interior elements from their old Yorkville haunt.[29]

In 1985, Bill Reel, a columnist for *Newsday* and the *Daily News* who championed working-class causes, used the plight of Yorkville's residents and small shopkeepers to exclaim that "[p]rosperity is killing the city."[30] Real estate magnate Peter Kalikow was in the processing of evicting more than 1,200 residents from rent-regulated housing on East 78th and East 79th Streets with a playbook as familiar as the fallout: increase rents, evict, rebuild or renovate, and then increase rents some more. The projected victims in this case included a neighborhood butcher shop owned by Ed Kloos, Sr., a second-generation German American. His son, Ed Kloos, Jr., a minister with the United Church of Christ in Long Island and part of the ethnic Yorkville diaspora, evoked the fears and frustrations of many when he said:

> My grandfather came to this country from Europe. He built this business. Sometimes it seems like foreigners built America and Americans are destroying it. Does raw capitalism replace the ethics this country was built on? Have we lost our humanity to economic considerations? It's better to be the screwer than the screwee – Is that our philosophy?[31]

[28] Sara Rimer, "Yorkville Turns Chic and Costly," *New York Times*, November 6, 1983, R1.
[29] Ibid.; Shawn G. Kennedy, "Ethnic Makes Way for Modern," *New York Times*, September 16, 1984, A1.
[30] Bill Reel, "Yorkville or Yuppieville?" *New York Daily News*, May 2, 1985, 50; Bill Mason, "Former Newsday Columnist Bill Reel Dies at 71," *Newsday*, May 4, 2010, https://www.newsday.com/long-island/obituaries/former-newsday-columnist-bill-reel-dies-at-71-1.1895894.
[31] Ibid.

Yorkville's gentrification during the 1980s seemed to suggest an affirmative answer to each of these rhetorical questions.[32]

Yorkville's residents did band together during the Gimbels years in response to many of these challenges. They tried to stop or slow the pace of evictions, influence the manner of new construction, and advocated for green space as well as the preservation of local businesses and affordable housing. These collective efforts yielded sporadic victories but also exposed fault lines within the resistance related to socio-economic class and ethnic identity. For instance, a group of upper middle-class residents rallied to save Asphalt Green, a community space created by locals on a former industrial site near East 90th Street and York Avenue, from the fate of hosting yet another apartment building. This complex, however, had been slated to include the kind of affordable housing sought by older white ethnic evictees. Prioritizing a park over peoples' homes did not bode well for ethnic Yorkville. [33]

Plans to erect residential towers at the north Yorkville site where Ruppert Brewery once dominated yielded more widespread opprobrium, manifesting in editorials, petitions to city officials, protests, and lawsuits. At a minimum, longtime locals wanted this project to create more affordable units. Over the course of a decade, from the mid-70s to the mid-80s, Glenwood Management, the developer of the Ruppert Towers project, deftly negotiated all such obstacles. Once completed, the 37-story towers fetched rents ranging from $1,300 to $2,700. While Glenwood agreed to designate a few apartments for seniors and those with limited financial means, this paltry concession failed to reverse the serial displacement of Yorkville's working class. In fact, the towers, in their grandiosity, served as an unmistakable monument to the close of an era.[34]

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[32] Ibid.

[33] "Legion Honors Yorkville Activist," *New York Daily News*, June 14, 1984, M3; "Youth Center Now Landmark," *New York Daily News*, September 26, 1980, 48; "Community to Refloat E. River Fire-Boat House," *New York Daily News*, January 22, 1980, 7; Former Asphalt Plant Now Recreational Green," *New York Daily News*, September 30, 1979; Hugh Wyatt, "26,000 Petition to Save Park," *New York Daily News*, March 12, 1974, 61.

[34] Eleanor Swertlow, "Deluxe Ruppert Towers Put Poor in Shadows," *New York Daily News*, September 22, 1974, 281; Jean Crafton, "An Old Brewery Site Sprouts Fresh Roots," *New York Daily News*, September 6, 1971, 146; Alan S. Oser, "About Real Estate: Ruppert Towers Holds Special East Side Place," *New York Times*, January 10, 1975, 61; Alan S. Oser, "Ruppert Renewal

By the mid-eighties, binarism – in the form of old versus new Yorkville – dominated public discourse about the neighborhood's changing face. The local real estate sector's elevator pitch maintained that, "the old Yorkville, a working-class neighborhood of mostly Germans, Hungarians and other Central European immigrants, gradually lost most of its ethnic character after the Third Avenue El was demolished in the 1950's."[35] The new Yorkville epoch commenced in the mid-seventies, according to this perspective, when the tony Upper East Side absorbed its struggling neighbor to its east. Recent transplants bolstered this interpretation by characterizing their new Yorkville as safer, cleaner, and more orderly. This perspective concealed thirty years of private and public sector decision making that made it nearly impossible for working-class residents to remain in their homes. As a sanitized story, it also suggested that ethnic Yorkville died by natural causes, which, in turn, cleared the way for economic progress and modernization. These narrative threads live on in the contemporary ethnic Yorkville imaginary, which avoids the messiness of the Gimbels years, especially the class-based displacement of long-time residents.[36]

Claims that Yorkville had collectively embraced its shiny and modern future curiously coexisted with refrains to salvage what remained of the neighborhood's ethnic commercial presence. In 1974, the Board of Estimate, responding to a vigorous local lobbying effort, amended zoning regulations on and near East 86th Street, ostensibly to preserve the area's "old world charm."[37] Proponents of the zoning restrictions cited the need to assist "the owners of the quaint boutiques [that] helped give the area its Middle European quality," which faced higher property taxes and increased rents.[38] The new rules barred large-scale department stores and office buildings on the main stretch of German Broadway extending from First to Park Avenues. This decision reversed course on plans to convert the area into a

Plan Revised Drastically: Ruppert Renewal, With Plan Revised, Faces Hearings Next Month," *New York Times*, August 15, 1971: R1

[35] Kirk Johnson, "2 Rental Luxury Towers Rise in the New Yorkville," *New York Times*, June 28, 1985, A15.

[36] Ibid.; Kirk Johnson, "If You're Thinking of Living in: Upper Yorkville," *New York Times*, December 1, 1985, R9.

[37] John Toscano, "Approve Zoning for Yorkville to Keep Old Look," *New York Daily News*, May 30, 1974, ML7.

[38] Ibid.

high-density regional shopping district, thereby giving ethnic Yorkville's surviving German and Hungarian shops and restaurants a reprieve. City Council President Paul O'Dwyer, the only dissenting vote on the rezoning scheme, believed the changes inadequate to remediate the most pressing problem, the need for affordable housing options for Yorkville's working-class and elderly residents.[39]

While members of the Board of Estimate sympathized with O'Dwyer's concern, they subscribed to a local version of realpolitik.[40] Seeing few viable options for stemming the tide of working-class out-migration, the Board believed that preserving the ethnic commercial spaces might help prevent total forfeiture of Yorkville's distinctiveness. The results were mixed. Chain restaurants and take-out joints wedged next to ethnic butcher shops and cafés produced what Thomas Janes of the *New York Times* called "the East 86th Street jumble."[41] Nonetheless, the endurance of ethnic Yorkville's shops played a vital role in Greater New York's white ethnics envisioning the neighborhood as an essential pilgrimage site. Sojourners poured into Yorkville during the holidays to purchase Easter treats at Elk Candy, renowned for its marzipan, and Christmas gifts at Bremen House, featuring an eclectic medley of foreign-language LPs, assorted European breads, and porcelain figurines. Paprikás Weiss pulled in Hungarian Americans seeking imported varieties of paprika as well as other Hungarian delicacies such as salami and goose liver. Its owner, Ed Weiss, the "Paprika Prince," operated a shop established by his grandfather, Isadore Weiss, a Hungarian Jewish migrant, in 1910. In its heyday, the store's customers included famed Hungarian playwright Ferenc Molnár and actress Zsa Zsa Gabor.[42]

While the number of German and Hungarian restaurants in Yorkville declined during the Gimbels years, a proud set of survivors endured. Mainstays such as the Bavarian Inn, the Ideal

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[39] Ibid.

[40] For example, Manhattan Borough President, Percy E. Sutton, who voted for rezoning, noted his skepticism about the likelihood of affordable housing solutions. Yet, explained his affirmative vote for rezoning by stating that "I am concerned with stabilizing the neighborhood." Edward Ranzal, "Estimate Board Votes Rezoning to Preserve Yorkville's Flavor," *New York Times*, May 30, 1974, 1.

[41] Thomas W. Janes, "Winning While Losing Along East 86th Street," *New York Times*, April 16, 1978, 275.

[42] Ibid., "Easter on 86th Street," *New York Magazine* 7, no. 14 (April 8, 1974), 75; George Lang, "the Many Tastes of Christmas," *New York Times*, December 18, 1977, 243; Bob Cooper, "Paprika Is in His Blood," *New York Daily News*, April 6, 1980, L26.

Restaurant, and Kleine Konditorie, a fusion of pastry shop and full-fledged restaurant which opened in 1923, offered German fare. The *Times* hailed the Lorilei as both "a holdout for old-style comfort and family-style cheer" as well as a refuge from the disco craze.[43] It offered not only German-Austrian food, but a ballroom where patrons could dance to the sounds of Erwin Holl and the Royal Bavarians, with their mix of German "Oom-pah" and Americana music. Hungarian restaurants such as Csarda, dubbed "cuisine de femme" due to its all-female chefs and ownership, and the Red Tulip, with its embroidered tablecloths, elaborately carved woodwork, and raucous bands, garnered positive reviews from food critics. Despite the success of these venues, Café Geiger's fall from grace during the Gimbels years envisaged changing tastes and changing fortunes. For decades, Café Geiger had enjoyed an exulted place within Yorkville's German food hierarchy. It combined a konditorie, or pastry café, with a full-service restaurant. In 1976, *Times* food critic Mimi Sheraton bestowed on Café Geiger a "very good" rating, commenting that "[c]onsidering the costs and logistics of running a restaurant in New York today, the job turned out by the management here borders on the amazing, with . . . moderate prices and a number of dishes consistently close of excellence."[44] Just seven years later, she bludgeoned the German-style establishment, giving it a rating of "poor" due to erratic service, tasteless pastries, dried out veal, and uninspired goulash. Even the stained menus reflected the downfall.[45]

THE ETHNIC YORKVILLE IMAGINARY CALCIFIES: THE 1990S TO THE PRESENT

In the spring of 2007, excavators started a decade long assault on Second Avenue. Nearly eighty years after the Yorkville Chamber lobbied city officials for a line closer to home, the long anticipated Second Avenue subway project had broken ground. The cacophony of machines, the pylons and

[43] "Going Out Guide," *New York Times*, May 26, 1977, 69.
[44] Mimi Sheraton, "From Gemultlichkeit to a Fairy Tale Trip," *New York Times*, September 10, 1976, 59.
[45] Ibid., "Going Out Guide," *New York Times*, May 26, 1977, 69; "Dining Out Guide: Mitteleuropa Restaurants," *New York Times*, March 15, 1981, TG14; Mimi Sheraton, "Bright American and Faded German," March 4, 1983, *New York Times*, C20.

barricades disrupting shops and restaurants, the scarred urban landscape – it was all part of Yorkville's latest transformation. The *Wall Street Journal* quipped that "Yorkville has come a long way since emerging from the shadows of the elevated trains that once ran above its avenues," suggesting demolition of the Third Avenue El opened the community to the purifying rays of sunshine.[46] This same article ticked off a litany of upscale housing projects that had revamped the neighborhood during the first few years of the twenty-first century. Located at the junction of East 83rd Street and York Avenue, Cielo, Italian for "sky," boasted floor-to-ceiling windows, a concierge, and its own uniformed doorman. Studios started at $640,000. The Brompton, a 22-story luxury condominium unit on East 85th Street named for an exclusive section of London, listed four-bedroom apartments carrying an eye-popping price tag of $4 million. Some units in the Azure, located at East 91st Street and First Avenue, featured East River views. During the Azure's construction, two workers died in a crane accident. A few months later, the *Wall Street Journal* matter-of-factly reported that "[a]ll signs of damage are gone, and buyers are now moving into the 128-unit building."[47] There was no time to count the costs of progress. Yorkville, once home to vibrant German American and Hungarian American enclaves, now appeared to be something else entirely. As the development community savored its conquest and ethnic Yorkville's built environment dwindled to a scattered set of structures, a crucial question hung in the air: how would ethnic Yorkville be remembered?[48]

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Indeed, ethnic Yorkville's final journey from lived experience to subject of social memory occurred during one of New York City's most pivotal periods, running from the 1990s through the first two decades of the twenty-first century. During the nineties, more than 1.2 million foreign-born migrants moved into New York while a slightly greater number of long-term residents left the city. Put

[46] "Yorkville: Growing Above and Below Ground," *Wall Street Journal*, October 1, 2010.
[47] Ibid
[48] Ibid.

another way, as New York's native-born population declined by two percent during the 1990s, foreign-born residents increased by thirty-eight percent. By the turn of the century, the foreign-born comprised forty-five percent of the city's population. New York's mayoral races during this span proved as spirited as ever. In 1989, New Yorkers elected David Dinkins, the city's first African American mayor. In 1993 and 1997, they abruptly switched course electing Rudolph Guiliani, who advanced a "tough on crime" agenda.[49] On September 11, 2001, during the final months of Guiliani's second term, terrorists flew two passenger jets into the World Trade Center towers, killing nearly three thousand people, as part of a coordinated attack that shocked the nation.[50]

9/11 left an indelible mark on New York. During the city's long and painful recovery, commentators, such as *The Daily Beast's* John Avlon, anointed Gotham as "the nation's symbol of resilience [and] indomitable heart of America."[51] Steven Salaita, adopting a more critical stance, argued that the tragedy imposed on the nation and the city an "imperative patriotism," a strain of rigid nationalism reflecting, at times, xenophobic intolerance.[52] Under this paradigm, commentators were just as likely to use early-twentieth century New York to symbolize foreignness as resilience. Thomas Ross, analyzing post-9/11 constructions of nationalism, said:

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[49] In his inaugural, Giuliani specifically referenced his grandfather's immigrant experience, connecting his personal narrative to the white ethnics who helped elect him: "My grandfather, Rodolfo, came to New York almost 100 years ago. He came here with $20 in his pockets. Like so many of you and your ancestors, he knew fear -- fear of a strange land, fear of learning to speak a new language, fear of the unknown. But he didn't let that stop him. He dreamed that life could be better for him and his children in New York City and he lived that dream." "The New Mayor; Transcript of Inaugural Speech: Giuliani Urges Change and Unity," *New York Times*, January 3, 1994, A18.

[50] Rae Rosen, Susan Wieler, and Joseph Pereira, "New York City Immigrants: The 1990s Wave," *Current Issues in Economics and Finance: Second District Highlights, Federal Reserve Bank* 11, no. 6 (June 2005), https://www.issuelab.org/resources/12000/12000.pdf, accessed February 29, 2020; "The Role of Immigrants in the New York City Economy," New York State Comptroller, Report 17-2010 (January 2010), https://www.osc.state.ny.us/osdc/rpt17-2010.pdf, accessed February 29, 2020; "Immigration and New York City: The Contributions of Foreign Born Americans to New York's Renaissance, 1975–2013," Americas Society/Council of the Americas (April 2014): 2-5; Alison Mitchell, "The 1993 Elections: The Transition; Dinkins and Giuliani Join in a Call for Healing and Unity," *New York Times*, November 4, 1993, A1; Alan Feuer and Benjamin Weiser, "Working for Trump, Giuliani Attacks His Law-Enforcement Roots," *New York Times*, May 4, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/04/nyregion/giuliani-trump-fbi-law-enforcement.html, accessed February 28, 2020; N.R. Kleinfield, "A Creeping Horror: Buildings Burn and Fall as Onlookers Search for Elusive Safety," *New York Times*, September 12, 2001, 1.

[51] John Avlon, "The Resilient City: New York After 9/11," *The Daily Beast*, September 11, 2014, https://www.thedailybeast.com/the-resilient-city-new-york-after-911, accessed February 29, 2020.

[52] Steven Salaita, "Ethnic Identity and Imperative Patriotism: Arab Americans Before and After 9/11," *College Literature* 32, no. 2 (Spring, 2005): 146-68.

> The nationalism of our time, unlike that of Theodore Roosevelt's, cannot be explicitly racially carved. Yet, in its demand for unconditional loyalty to country and in its use of the flag and references to our "fathers' commitment," this nationalism summons the old stories of what "America" meant. We are all draped in the flag and expected to be simply Americans. This is a form of "patriotism" that brooks no dissent, no whining, no place for the claims of the marginalized, a "melting pot" conception that leaves no doubt that the America that emerges is quintessentially White and Christian and engaged in a contemporary crusade.[53]

Following this logic, stories about Euro-American immigration and acculturation needed to comport with the melting pot mythology. Put another way, historical narratives of cultural pluralism proved useful only so far as they juxtaposed the "good" European immigration of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries against the "problematic" post-1965 immigration from Mexico, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East. Accordingly, 9/11 and its aftermath influenced the extent to which nationalist visions, values, and metaphors gained currency within the ethnic Yorkville imaginary.[54]

People identifying according to their Hungarian and German ancestry have continued to call Yorkville home during the past thirty years, albeit in modest numbers, despite gentrification. New York's mainstream press has profiled these groups sporadically, often in response to international or transnational events. For example, communism's collapse in the Eastern Bloc momentarily placed Hungarian Yorkville in the spotlight in the early nineties. Maggie Jackson of the *New York Times*, writing in 1991, observed that "[w]ith the fall of the Communist government in Hungary, there's new movement in Yorkville, the corner of Manhattan's Upper East Side where Hungarians have flocked for more than a century."[55] According to Jackson, the Hungarian section of Yorkville was "the most vibrant ethnic community in the half-square-mile area," with five Hungarian churches, a selection of Hungarian restaurants, and the Hungarian House on East 82nd Street pulling together locals and their extended

[53] Thomas Ross, "Whiteness: Some Critical Perspectives: Whiteness After 9/11," 18 *Washington University Journal of Law & Policy* (2005): 240.
[54] Salaita, "Ethnic Identity and Imperative Patriotism," 146-168; Ross, "Whiteness: Some Critical Perspectives," 240.
[55] Maggie Jackson, "Changes in Hungary Echo through N.Y. Neighborhood," *New York Times*, December 22, 1991, A32.

families as well as ethnic pilgrims.[56] Hungary's seismic shift reverberated through Hungarian Yorkville. Many of those born in Hungary weighed the costs and benefits of returning to their homeland. The presence of family in both the host country and the homeland often made these decisions wrenching. Exiles explored legal avenues for recovering real property lost as a result of their exodus. The First Hungarian Reformed Church even arranged to transport the ashes of deceased parishioners who left explicit directions to repatriate their remains upon Hungary's liberation. Simultaneously, Yorkville began to experience an influx of Hungarian visitors – including artists, entertainers, and politicians – as well as young migrants seeking opportunities in New York's recovering economy. This latter group evoked memories of those Hungarian immigrants who had journeyed to New York during the early twentieth century in search of short-term profits.[57]

In 2005, changes at the top of the Roman Catholic Church's hierarchy brought German Yorkville back to the fore, if just for a moment. On April 25th, the Vatican broadcast globally the elaborate installation of Pope Benedict XVI as the successor to the ultra-popular John Paul II. Born Joseph Aloisius Ratzinger in the Bavarian town of Marktl, Pope Benedict was only the second German to lead the Church. Like German Yorkville itself, questions about Nazi connections dogged him before and after his installation. He had joined the ranks of the Hitler Youth at fourteen in accordance with then existing German legislation and served in the German military during World War II as a teen-aged conscript. These concerns did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of Yorkville's German Catholic community. Julia Winter, a leader of St. Joseph's laity and a veteran of Yorkville's German American community, exclaimed that "I'm proud – he's Bavarian, and I come from northern Bavaria," after watching the televised ceremony at 4:00 a.m.[58]

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[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.; Clifford J. Levy, "East Europeans in U.S. Reclaiming Lost Estates," *New York Times*, August 13, 1991, A11; "Hungaria Dancers to perform at MSC Nov. 7," *Paramus Shopper News*, November 4, 1987, 14.
[58] Bill Egbert and Nicole Bode, "New Yorkers Wake Up at 4 a.m. to Celebrate," *New York Daily News*, April 25, 2005, 4; Susan Donaldson James, "Pope Benedict Dogged By Hitler Youth Past, Despite Jewish Support Pope Urged Beatification of Pope Pius

Three years later, Pope Benedict XVI visited the United States. In between meetings with politicians and dignitaries, he made time for a special trip to Yorkville. German Yorkville's leading voices expressed the significance of the moment for the roughly seven thousand German Americans who continued to reside in the neighborhood. Ralph Schaller, whose butcher shop Schaller & Weber had weathered the commercial storms of the preceding thirty years to stand as one of the only German American shops in Yorkville, called the Pope's pending visit "good for the neighborhood . . . especially the older German immigrants."[59] Kathy Jolowicz, *the* Yorkville historian, characteristically used the occasion to wax nostalgic, reminding reporters about the neighborhood's "golden days" when theaters played German-language films, bars poured German lager, and restaurants served sauerbraten. Pope Benedict XVI "obviously picked this neighborhood for a reason," Jolowicz reasoned.[60] "We are thrilled that somebody remembers us."[61] They were remembered, but for how long?[62]

Writing in the wake of this monumental event, David Dunlap of the *New York Times* wrote an article comingling Yorkville's German Catholic past with a jeremiad about the disappearance of ethnic Yorkville. "The Yorkville that the German-born Pope Benedict XVI visited on Friday," Dunlap commented, "bears almost no resemblance to the German enclave around Saint Joseph's Roman Catholic Church on East 87th Street from the late 1800s through the mid-20th century."[63] One now needed but a single hand to count the remaining German shops, mass said in the German tongue occurred but once a month at St. Joseph's, and the church's then-lead priest, Monsignor John Sullivan, needed Ms. Winter's coaching to improve his German pronunciation.[64]

XII, Who Was Silent during Holocaust," *ABC News*, February 11, 2013, https://abcnews.go.com/International/pope-benedict-dogged-nazi-past-achievements-jewish-relations/story?id=18469350, accessed March 3, 2020.

[59] Peter Cox and Dan Mangan, "Visit to be Teu-tonic for Famed District," *New York Post*, April 15, 2008, 19.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid.

[63] David W. Dunlap, "In New York, a Worldwide Message of Humanity: German Life in the City Is Recalled in Pope's Visit: In the Heart of Yorkville, Life Has Changed for German Catholics," *New York Times*, April 19, 2008, B1.

[64] Peter Cox and Dan Mangan, "Visit to be Teu-tonic for Famed District"; David W. Dunlap, "In New York, a Worldwide Message of Humanity: German Life in the City Is Recalled In Pope's Visit: In the Heart of Yorkville, Life Has Changed for German Catholics," *New York Times*, April 19, 2008, B1.

While ethnic Yorkville gained momentary visibility on these special occasions, it was the German and Hungarian restaurants and shops that continued to play an outsized role in representing the neighborhood's ethnic legacy throughout the accelerated gentrification process of the 1990s and beyond. Unfortunately, these repositories of ethnic identity made their deepest impression when exiting the stage. German favorites such as the Ideal Restaurant, the Bremen House, Kleine Konditorie, and Café Geiger, closed their doors in the nineties. Occasionally, the passing of these neighborhood businesses provided a moment to reflect on the past. In the summer of 1999, Joann Hierl placed a simple sign on the front door of Kramer's Pastries notifying customers of the business's imminent closing. Soon thereafter, a loyal patron arrived to purchase a cache of marzipan valued at three hundred dollars. Ms. Hierl explained that Yorkville's last German pastry shop, started by her father in 1950, would have closed long ago had she not owned the four-story walk-up it anchored. The costs of renovating the store's gas-powered ovens to assuage city inspectors proved too much to bear. In a sign of the times, a local chain bakery, Hot & Crusty, sought to employ Ms. Hierl, a master pastry chef who turned out such labor intensive delights as baumkuchen, a buttery layer cake resembling tree rings, and stollen, a classic German fruit cake. She summarily rejected the offer.[65]

Hungarian shops and restaurants in Yorkville faced similar economic pressures during the 1990s and the early twenty-first century. In 1988, Carla De Silva, a *Newsday* food writer, presented a snapshot of Hungarian Yorkville's restaurant scene on the brink of a rapid decline. De Silva admitted to knowing little about the area despite being born and raised in New York. Upon visiting the micro-neighborhood, she discovered a triad of enduring Hungarian restaurants – the Red Tulip, Csarda, and Mocca –

[65] "Ach du Lieber! It's a Schnitzel Kind of Christmas," *New York Daily News*, December 13, 1991, 72; "Manhattan Dining Guide," *New York Daily News*, August 18, 1989, MJ5; Arthur Schwartz, "Restau-raters Speak Up: Here's What Readers Say Are Their Favorite Spots – From the Inexpensive to the Chi-Chi," *New York Daily News*, May 6, 1990, 11; Howard Kissel, ""Lost In America: East Side, Midwest Side, Mall Around the Town – N.Y.'s European Charm Is Vanishing," *New York Daily News*, April 26, 1998, 18; Dave Saltonstall, "Past Fading in Yorkville," *New York Daily News*, July 17, 1994, 11C; Corey Kilgannon, "Old- Style German Bakery Closes, and So Does an Era," *New York Times*, August 8, 1999, CY7; Karl Peterson, "Yorkville," in *Savoring Gotham: A Food Lover's Companion to New York City*, ed. Andrew F. Smith (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 655-57.

Hungarian butcher shops on Second Avenue, dozens of Magyar-language newspapers and magazines at the Puski-Corvin Bookstore, and devoted congregants worshiping at St. Stephen's of Hungary. Hungarian foodstuffs even appeared in a Korean-owned grocery store at the corner of Second Avenue and East 82nd Street. Commenting about Hungarian Yorkville's diminishing commercial footprint, George Lang, a renowned Hungarian-born restauranteur, consultant, author, and Holocaust survivor, observed that "Hungarians are like paprika . . . [e]ven when there's just a little bit in a dish, the taste is everywhere."[66]

By the early twenty-first century, much of the ethnic cityscape De Silva described had disappeared. During the 2004 Christmas season, the proprietors of Mocca, a Hungarian restaurant located on Second Avenue near East 82nd Street, announced its departure via a handwritten note taped to its locked entrance. Its owners could no longer keep pace with rising rents. The historical trajectory of this eatery encapsulates Hungarian Yorkville's erosion over the last quarter of the twentieth century. It also emphasizes the central role food culture plays in reflecting and shaping place-based ethnic identity. Cuisine from the homeland brings comfort and familiarity to diasporic communities, creates an internal sense of unity while accommodating regional variety, and serves as a vehicle for rendering one's culture legible to outsiders and inviting them to partake in a cross-cultural experience. Consequently, the loss of one of an enclave's anchor restaurants, such as Mocca, creates an immense socio-cultural chasm and tears down a bridge between the ethnic group and external communities.[67]

In the early 1980s, Mocca had replaced another Hungarian bakery and restaurant, reflecting the owners' then-existing optimism about Hungarian cuisine's viability despite Yorkville's gentrifying

[66] Carla De Silva, "The Flavor of the Neighborhood: Little Hungary," *New York Newsday*, September 7, 1988; Molly O'Neill, "George Lang Tells His Story, Bottom to Top: A Restaurant Impresario Separates Real from Apocryphal." *New York Times*, April 22, 1998, F3.

[67] Matthew von Unwerth, "The Rise and Decline of a Hapsburg Empire," *New York Times*, December 26, 2004, CY10; Kwang Ok Kim, "Introduction," in *Re-Orienting Cuisine: East Asian Foodways in the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Kwang Ok Kim (New York: Berghahn, 2015), 1-9. Guojun Zeng, Yongqiu Zhao, and Shuzhi Sun, "Sustainable Development Mechanism of Food Culture's Translocal Production Based on Authenticity," *Sustainability* 6, no. 10 (2014): 7030-7047; Richard W. Hallett, "'A Taste of This Lively Language': Attitudes Towards Languages Other than English in Lonely Planet Phrasebooks" *Journal of Multicultural Discourses* 12, no. 3 (2017): 214–30; Carole M. Counihan, *A Tortilla Is Like Life: Food and Culture in the San Luis Valley of Colorado* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2009), 7-9.

climate. Pre-merger Mocca, with its tin ceiling and Danubian antiques, consistently earned "very good" ratings from food critics. The same Mimi Sheraton who downgraded Café Geiger in the early eighties touted Mocca as a rare combination of quality and affordability. She described the eatery as a "casual café at midday, when a complete three-course lunch is $4.95, [that] takes on more intimate overtones at night with candles at the table."[68] Sheraton concluded that "[a]t these prices, one can forgive the paper napkins, the glass tops covering the tablecloths and the slightly cramped seating."[69] In the 2004 *New York Times* eulogy of Mocca, entitled "The Rise and Decline of a Hapsburg Empire," Matthew von Unwerth wrote:

> Mocca, which spent more than 40 years on the same block, as a vestige of old Yorkville, the neighborhood of mostly German and Eastern European immigrants who settled the area more than a century ago. Even 20 years ago, the neighborhood was a thriving country unto itself, with its own restaurants, churches, and schools, all filled with the sounds of the Old World.[70]

Von Unwerth inaccurately placed Mocca's opening in the early 1960s, possibly confusing it with the earlier establishment. Accordingly, he described Mocca as a "vestige of old Yorkville," missing an opportunity to explore how and why entrepreneurs opened a Hungarian restaurant at a time when others saw the death of so-called "old Yorkville" as inevitable.[71]

Despite these deficiencies, Hungarian Americans in Greater New York appreciated this homage to one of their most cherished places. Paul Kutscera and Jan and Carole Gaydos, in a joint editorial wrote

> Rather than simply being a haven for a dying breed of locals, Mocca and Yorkville were also destinations for the wider metropolitan area Hungarian-American community. They were places where we could take older family members for a visit to the old country, through dishes they (and we) grew up with, and also introduce our children to the delights of this incredibly rich culture.[72]

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[68] Mimi Sheraton, "Restaurants: Hearty Hungarian and Old Steakhouse," *New York Times*, April 29, 1983, C20.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Unwerth, "The Rise and Decline of a Hapsburg Empire," CY10.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Paul J. Kutscera, Jan Gaydos, and Carole Gaydos, "Yorkville Has Lost More Than a Restaurant," *New York Times*, January 16, 2005, R13.

Their message was powerful. Mocca was more than a neighborhood restaurant. It, like Yorkville itself, was part of a multi-generational diasporic network. It was a homecoming venue and a place of cultural transmission. It was irreplaceable as a material object but unforgettable as a cultural heirloom.[73]

After closing its Second Avenue location in 2004, Mocca merged with Frankie's, an American-style diner a couple blocks south on Second Avenue. At this venue, chicken paprikás and stuffed cabbage cohabitated with burgers and fries, a strategy to deploy familiar American fare to introduce non-Hungarian customers to the possibilities of ethnic cuisine. Eventually, the amalgamated enterprise closed, permanently vanquishing Mocca to the nostalgic realm.[74]

As Yorkville's ethnic restaurants struggled to survive or closed their doors, the mainstream media stopped questioning the forces of gentrification that had driven out almost all the neighborhood's working-class residents. Rather, they myopically focused on Yorkville's commercial aesthetic and increasingly defined that area as being limited to East 86th Street and its immediate environs. The restrictive zoning scheme of the 1970s had failed to ensure the sustainability of ethnic Yorkville's shops and restaurants on the former German Broadway. As their numbers decreased, the street assumed an indistinct and unstable countenance. In the fall of 2000, the *New York Times* painted an unflattering picture of East 86th Street, dismissing it as "a noisy tangle of traffic, pedestrians, shoppers and street vendors" most recently infiltrated by a "mishmash of banks, clothing stores, pizza parlors [and] piles of garbage."[75] Developers of upscale residential space such as William Lie Zeckerdorf argued

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[73] Ibid. Joseph Berger, "My Manhattan: On the Upper East Side, Memories Fueled by Strudel," *New York Times*, April 7, 2006, E29; Irene Sax, "If You're Hungry for Some Hungary," *New York Daily News*, May 27, 2005, 74; Mimi Sheraton, "Restaurants: Hearty Hungarian and Old Steakhouse," *New York Times*, April 29, 1983, C20; "Dining Out Guide: Hearty Fare," *New York Times*, January 9, 1987, C24; John R. Levine, "Chrome Dome: The British Have the Pub, the French the Café: Americans Have the Diner and Its Benefits Are Social as well as Gastronomic," Editorial, *Boston Globe*, July 18, 1993, 53-54; Arthur Schwartz, "Stokin' Up the Stove: Chefs Are Rib-sticklers for Hearty Winter Dishes," *New York Daily News*, January 5, 1992, 21; Unwerth, CY10.
John R. Levine, "Chrome Dome: The British Have the Pub, the French the Café: Americans Have the Diner and Its Benefits Are Social as well as Gastronomic," Editorial, *Boston Globe*, July 18, 1993, 53-54; Arthur Schwartz, "Stokin' Up the Stove: Chefs Are Rib-sticklers for Hearty Winter Dishes," *New York Daily News*, January 5, 1992, 21; Unwerth, CY10.
[74] Irene Sax, "If You're Hungry for Some Hungary," *New York Daily News*, May 27, 2005, 74.
[75] "Trying to Tame the Mishmash That Is East 86th Street," *New York Times*, October 29, 2000, CY10.

that ending the protective zoning measure represented a prerequisite to unlocking East 86th Street's potential. The city listened and acted accordingly.[76]

Meanwhile, a merchant-led coalition, the Yorkville East 86th Street Business Improvement District (Yorkville BID), banded together to upgrade a section bounded by East 85th Street to the south, East 87th Street to the north, Lexington Avenue to the west, and Second Avenue to the east. Yorkville BID developed a beatification and sanitation plan, worked to earn community support, and shepherded its vision through Community Board 8 and the City Planning Department. Yorkville BID expressed no concern about working-class or even middle-class residents who remained in the neighborhood. Nor did it dwell on the roles developers and cutthroat landlords had played in creating the chaos the group now sought to abate. They hoped to go with the grain of development, not against it. Nevertheless, influential developers concerned with regulatory hurdles and high-income residents balking about tax increases executed an end run to City Hall to halt the modest movement in its tracks. By May 2001, seeing no path forward, Yorkville BID withdrew its plan. As a result, the East 86th Street area was wide open to unfettered development. In this environment, big box stores such as Barnes and Noble, H & M, Sephora, and Shake Shack looked like saviors. Eventually the giant retailers and new waves of affluent condominium dwellers who followed them demanded many of the changes Yorkville BID had pursued, such as enhanced security and waste disposal. The time had come for East 86th Street to be beautiful and exclusive.[77]

Most contemporary profiles of Yorkville generally, and East 86th Street specifically, describe the neighborhood's recent period of soaring rents and proliferating high rises as a success story, with affluence serving as the preeminent measuring stick. For the *Daily News*, the dramatic rise in median

[76] Ibid., Shawn G. Kennedy, "A New Cachet for Old East 86th Street: Condos, Upscale Shops Reviving Neighborhood," *New York Times,* April 15, 1990, R1.
[77] "Trying to Tame the Mishmash That Is East 86th Street," *New York Times*, October 29, 2000, CY10; Bruce Lambert, "And Now, for 86th: Maybe Not a B.I.D., After All," *New York Times*, May 7, 1995, CY8.

household income – from $58,000 in 1999 to $80,000 in 2013 – signaled that Yorkville was "getting hipper."[78] Realtor Joanna Siegel, in 2014, boasted that Yorkville offered "a bank on every corner [and] a supermarket on every block."[79] As the Second Avenue subway project moved closer to completion, the upscale housing market exploded. Available apartments yielded scores of inquiries to real estate agents and bidding wars became commonplace. Beth Fisher, a senior managing director of Corcoran Sunshine Marketing Group, a company projecting itself as an "industry leader in the planning, design, marketing, and sale of new luxury residential development,"[80] commented that a genuine "sense of discovery and adventure is something that has come back to the east side" effectively treating the latter stages of Yorkville's working-class history as a kind of dark ages.[81] Jessica Dailey of the *New York Post*, writing in the summer of 2019, commented that "[f]or a long time, East 86th Street was considered . . . as desirable a place to live as 42nd Street."[82] Now, however, "[t]he beautification measures — alongside a host of new condo and rental developments — have and will bring more people, and a more upscale vibe, to the area."[83] According to attorney Robert Hacker, a Yorkville resident for twenty years, chain retailers replacing mom and pop shops is "a normal evolution in neighborhoods like this."[84] His fourteen-year-old daughter, he emphasized, adores the new Ulta at the southwest corner of East 86th Street and Third Avenue.[85] These vignettes conveying Yorkville's hip revival and celebrating passive consumer consumption as an evolved form of free market citizenship sometimes tapped into the area's ethnic past to add color but tended to steer clear of reopening the wounds of residential and commercial displacement. This general pattern fortified a basic tenet of the ethnic Yorkville imaginary:

[78] "Away from Park and Fifth Aves., it's Getting Hipper," *New York Daily News*, April 25, 2014, 2.
[79] Ibid.
[80] "About Us," Corcoran Sunshine Marketing Group, https://www.corcoransunshine.com/about.php#, accessed March 1, 2020.
[81] Kathleen Lucadamo, "Open House Saturday: Yorkville Is Chugging Along – The Upper East Side's More Affordable Neighborhood Sees Its Star Rise as It Eagerly Awaits the Second Avenue Subway," *Wall Street Journal*, January 30, 2016, A16.
[82] Jessica Dailey, "The Upper East Side's Once-humble Main Drag Gets Upscale," *New York Post*, June 5, 2019, https://nypost.com/2019/06/05/the-upper-east-sides-once-humble-main-drag-gets-upscale/, March 1, 2020.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid; Andrew Friedman, "Upper East Side: Opposition By Big Owners Dooms a BID," *New York Times*, May 6, 2001, CY4; Bruce Lambert, "And Now, for 86th: Maybe Not a B.I.D., After All," *New York Times*, May 7, 1995, CY8.

ethnic Yorkville died of natural causes and evoking its ghosts need not interfere with celebratory descriptions of the neighborhood's contemporary progress nor optimistic visions of its future.[86]

Until recently, New York's preservation community, which depends on financial support from affluent donors, avoided actions that might challenge this rule of thumb. In the early years of the Landmarks Act, only three Yorkville properties achieved designation: Gracie Mansion in 1966; the New York Public Library, Yorkville Branch in 1967; and structures affiliated with the Holy Trinity Church also in 1967. As preservationists worked to save these properties, they barely seemed to notice or care that Yorkville's frenetic present was burying its ethnic past. Accordingly, in 1980, these defenders of the built environment set their sights on convincing the city's Landmarks Commission to designate a broad swathe of the Upper East Side, extending from East 59th Street northward to East 79th Street and westward from Lexington to Fifth Avenue, as an historic district. Jane Trichter, co-chair of the Committee for the Upper East Side Historic District, after celebrating the Gold Coast's many architectural points of interest in a *New York Times* op-ed, made an emotional appeal therein to defend the designation proposal, stating:

> A historic district, however, is more than a concentration of quality architecture. It is an area where a distinct sense of place exists. This district has a special character that is both of historic and esthetic interest. This is an identifiable living and historic community, an exhibit in defense of urban living, and a physical context for the history of the city.[87]

These words could just as easily have described the Yorkville section of the Upper East Side, but for the working-class neighborhood's lack of political clout. Trichter and her allies won the day; the Upper East

[86] Steven Miles, "The Neoliberal City and the Pro-active Complicity of the Citizen Consumer," *Journal of Consumer Culture* 12, no. 2 (2012): 216-30; Dallas Rogers and Michael Darcy, "Global City Aspirations, Graduated Citizenship and Public Housing: Analysing the Consumer Citizenships of Neoliberalism," *Urban, Planning and Transport Research: An Open Access Journal* 2, no. 1 (2014), http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21650020.2014.906906. Bruce Lambert of the *New York Times* provides a standard way to discuss the modern history of East 86th Street: "For better or for worse, 86th Street has gone through major transformations as Yorkville's hub. In its heyday of middle European immigration, flourished with Continental flair. But as that era faded, the street became populated by drug pushers, peddlers, prostitutes, and panhandlers." Bruce Lambert, "And Now, for 86th: Maybe Not a B.I.D., After All," *New York Times*, May 7, 1995, CY8.

[87] Jane B. Trichter, "Designation? Certainly, How Much? The Debate: For an Upper East Side Historic District Now for Landmark Designation of Individual Buildings Only," *New York Times*, May 4, 1980, R1.

Side Historic District was born in 1981. Friends of the Upper East Side (FRIENDS) emerged the following year, in part, to advocate for the newly protected zone. There are now a total of seven historic districts in the Upper East Side. None of these includes any portion of Yorkville.[88] While urban preservation may not be a zero-sum game in the strictest sense, it can resemble one at times. By protecting such a large section of the Upper East Side over the objections of the city's real estate industry, the future possibilities of designating parts or individual elements of Yorkville seemed slim. Something had to be sacrificed at the altar of development.[89]

Within the past ten years, Gotham's preservation community, led by FRIENDS, has increased its commitment to protecting Yorkville's history and heritage, including an emphasis on its ethnic legacy. With the gentrification process more or less complete, remembering Yorkville's ethnic past could now avoid the thorniness of acknowledging ongoing displacement. Additionally, boasting about the neighborhood's ethnic history gave it an interesting backstory, which promised to increase interest and even rents in the increasingly affluent district. In 2012, the Yorkville Bank Building, located on Third Avenue near East 85th Street, earned landmark status. The four-story Italian Renaissance Revival-style structure was erected in 1905 to house the bank, originally incorporated in 1892.[90] August Zinnser, a second generation German American, served as the bank's president from 1909 to 1926, a period during which the institution helped develop Yorkville's commercial sector including the East 86th Street zone. For eighty-five years the bank served not only the German American community but the entirety of Yorkville. Oswald Ottendorfer, publisher of the *Staats-Zeitung*, New York's preeminent German-

[88] These historic districts are Carnegie Hill, Hardenbergh/Rhinelander, Henderson Place, Metropolitan Museum, Park Avenue, Treadwell Farm, and the Upper East Side (this being the designation achieved in 1981). "Learn about the Upper East Side's Seven Historic Districts," Friends of the Upper East Side, https://www.friends-ues.org/historic-districts-and-landmarks/, accessed March 1, 2020.
[89] Trichter, "Designation?" R1; "East Side Landmark Group Set," *New York Times*, September 16, 1982, C5; "Goodbye, Rolls: Hello to 'Quality' On Third Avenue," *New York Times*, December 5, 1982, R1.
[90] Today, the building houses Gap and Equinox Fitness. "Postings: Renaissance Revival; A New Gap for an Old Bank," *New York Times*, March 17, 1991, 10-1; "Building Location, Yorkville Bank Building, 1511 York Avenue, Block 1531 Lot 1," FRIENDS of the Upper East Side, https://www.friends-ues.org/advocacy/yorkville-go-game/yorkville-survey-images/yorkville-bank-building-page/, accessed March 6, 2020.

language newspaper, and Jacob Ruppert, Jr., the son of Yorkville's best-known brewer prince, were among the bank's noteworthy stockholders, connecting the building to the scions of German Yorkville. In addition to protecting the building itself, designation of the Yorkville Bank inspired new research into the neighborhood's ethnic past. The Yorkville Bank's designation report, drafted by Olivia Close a researcher for the Landmarks Preservation Commission, included a one-page historical sketch of German Yorkville up to World War II. Unfortunately, it also parroted some of the common tropes privileged by the ethnic Yorkville imaginary, including the Great War decline of German Yorkville as well as an implication that the Bund period was the enclave's final act. The report makes only a passing reference to Yorkville's Hungarian, Czech, and Slovak communities. Such historical resuscitations have contributed to the imaginary's privileging of Yorkville's German past above all others.[91]

Efforts to preserve ethnic Yorkville's history intensified after the success of the Yorkville Bank designation. In 2015, Tara Kelly, then-executive director of FRIENDS, expressed her organization's intent "to find what is left of the distinct architectural features in the neighborhood and use it to tell the stories and heritage of the immigrants in Yorkville."[92] Toward this end, FRIENDS initiated a comprehensive survey of Yorkville from its antiquated southern boundary of East 59th Street to its long-standing northern marker of East 96th Street in order to prioritize preservation goals for the area. As mentioned above, in 2018, FRIENDS published *Shaped by Immigrants: A History of Yorkville*, the first historical account of ethnic Yorkville. In 2019, FRIENDS played an instrumental role in backing an application to designate as a landmark the First Hungarian Reformed Church, located at 346 East 69th Street. In June, the Landmarks Commission unanimously approved this designation request. Sarah Carroll, the Commission's chair, saluted the church as an exemplar of cultural history and architectural

[91] Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Yorkville Bank*, Designation List 456 LP-2510, City of New York, June 12, 2012, Prepared by Olivia Klose, accessed June 12, 2020, http://s-media.nyc.gov/agencies/lpc/lp/2510.pdf.
[92] "In Search of Yorkville's Hidden Gems," February 17, 2015, *Straus Media*, http://www.nypress.com/news/in-search-of-yorkvilles-hidden-gems-IXNP10201211213112199 81, accessed March 10, 2020.

significance. As with the Yorkville Bank and German Yorkville, the First Hungarian Reformed Church's designation report prompted historical research into the Hungarian enclave and the Hungarian presence in New York more generally. The report's historical sections constitute a modest attempt to complicate the story of ethnic Yorkville, stating in part, "[a]lthough Yorkville was primarily known as a German-American (Little Germany) community during the first half of the 20th century, there were also large numbers of residents who came from Austria-Hungary forming communities of their own . . . includ[ing] Hungarians or Magyars (Little Hungary) and Slavs (Little Bohemia)."[93]

Notwithstanding this preservation pivot, ethnic food still reigns supreme in conjuring memories of ethnic Yorkville. Thus, almost any inquiry into Yorkville's ethnic past will lead toward an area of Second Avenue immediately south of East 86th Street, where one finds Schaller & Weber, the traditional German-style butcher shop, and its neighbor, the Heidelberg, the home of schnitzel and clanking beer steins.[94] Jeremy Schaller, grandson of one of Schaller & Weber's founders, owns the two four-story structures that house the store and a related business. He has refused every offer by developers to purchase the spaces, even those willing to accommodate his business in a renovated building. In the summer of 2019, he revealed that one developer had offered him $24 million, triple the market rate. Schaller explained that "[t[his store is iconic and its aesthetic would be compromised if we knocked down the buildings."[95] Schaller's decision not to sell is more than a straightforward business decision; it is intertwined in his understanding of ethnic Yorkville's history and heritage.[96]

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[93] New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission Designation Report, First Hungarian Reformed Church, June 11, 2019, Designation List 512, LP- 2601, https://a860-gpp.nyc.gov/bitstream/gpp/22205/1/2601.pdf, accessed March 1, 2020.
[94] Glaser's Bake Shop, which used to be recognized as one ethnic Yorkville's holdouts, closed in the summer of 2018 after 116 years of operation. Stefanie Tuder, "116-Year-Old UES Bakery Glaser's Will Close This Summer: The owners of Glaser's Bake Shop Want to Retire," *Eater New York*, March 2, 2018, https://ny.eater.com/2018/3/2/17072872/glasers-bake-shop-closing-nyc, accessed March 11, 2020; Micheline Maynard, "Beloved New York Bakery Glaser's, Famous for Its Black And White Cookie, Planning To Close," *Forbes*, May 6, 2018, https://www.forbes.com/sites/michelinemaynard/2018/05/06/the-beloved-nyc-bakery-with-the-famous-black-and-white-cookie-is-planning-to-close/#48e5c8cf305d, March 11, 2020; Stephanie Ott and Helen Corbett, "German Gem: Bavarian Bakery in New York Closes After 116 Years," *DPA International*, June 30, 2018.
[95] Joseph Berger, "Towers Crowd Yorkville: 'We Could be Living Anywhere Now,'" *New York Times*, July 30, 2019, A24.
[96] Ibid; Eric Asimov, "$25 and Under; German Fortification, at an Outpost in Yorkville, *New York Times*, December 25, 2002, F7; Cynthia Kilian, "Yodel Yum! Here's the Cream of the Bavarian Crop This Oktoberfest," *New York Post*, October 6, 2007, 23.

Gary Barnett sees the world differently. The man *New York Magazine* dubbed "the Anti-Trump" for his relatively low-key lifestyle, has an affinity for towers. Extell, the company he runs, built One57, a residential skyscraper jutting more than one thousand feet above midtown Manhattan, and is in the process of constructing Central Park Tower, which is slated to be the tallest residential building in the world at 1,550 feet. Barnett sees no logic in a city of eight million people pining for a lost past when demand for housing is high.[97] He also rails against "wealthy Upper East Siders who want to keep everybody else out."[98] Ben Kallos, Yorkville's representative on the City Council, is troubled by Barnett's vision. Kallos, who has familial ties to Hungarian Yorkville, has warned that "[e]veryone in the city who cares about the cultural identity of their neighborhood should be watching Yorkville."[99] Among the many questions ethnic Yorkville's latest chapter engenders, three assume prominence. How long might Jeremy Schaller or his descendants decline lucrative offers to purchase their buildings? To what extent would the disappearance of Schaller & Weber and the Heidelberg affect how ethnic Yorkville is remembered? Finally, what "cultural identity" is Councilman Kallos and his allies trying to save by resisting the kind of mega-development favored by Barnett and his ilk? These are difficult questions subject to variable answers. They touch on connections between the built environment and social memory, the material and the imagined, and place and identity. Perhaps, the foregoing historical interpretation of ethnic Yorkville is one modest effort to keep the story alive no matter what happens to the neighborhood's materiality in the future.[100]

[97] According to its website, Extell, Barnett's development company, "has redefined the New York City skyline with an impressive portfolio of residential, office, hospitality, and mixed-use properties. These iconic properties have raised the benchmark and continue to set the standards of real estate development." "Shaping the Skyline," *Extell Development Company*, https://extell.com/, accessed March 10, 2020.
[98] Berger, "Towers Crowd Yorkville," A24.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.,; Gabriel Sherman, The Anti-Trump," *New York*, September 22, 2010, https://nymag.com/news/features/establishments/68503/, accessed March 11, 2020; "The One to Look Up To," *One57*, https://one57.com/, accessed March 11, 2020; "Design Vision," Central Park Tower, https://centralparktower.com/tower#design-vision, accessed March 11, 2020.

BOOK I: IN CONCLUSION

The foregoing historical account set forth in Book I presents an archivally-driven narrative of ethnic Yorkville's past. It also identifies the creation and reproduction of the received wisdom and dominant narratives less rooted in historical evidence, that is, the ethnic Yorkville imaginary. The major points of deviation between these two ways of knowing and communicating Yorkville's ethnic past warrant reiterating before the story continues in Book II, which takes up questions of how Yorkville's ethnic past gave birth to and informed contemporary German and Hungarian heritage practices.

The imagined past situates ethnic Yorkville's origins within the General Slocum tragedy of the early twentieth century, thereby bringing a high degree of drama to the story and artificially stacking Yorkville's ethnic history atop that of the lower Manhattan enclaves of *Kleindeutschland* and Little Hungary. The record shows, however, that German migrants gravitated to Yorkville's open spaces decades before the turn of the century, seeing it as an ideal spot in which to gather for festivals and social gatherings. Further, German-speakers started to relocate to the area in the period after the Civil War, thereby creating an ethnic enclave capable of beaconing new migrants during the 1880s and 1890s. Similarly, the Hungarian settlement in Yorkville predated the General Slocum incident. Recovering and articulating a more complex history of ethnic Yorkville's spring season underscores the prominent role these ethnic groups played in the neighborhood's social, cultural, economic, and even political development.

The standard account of how the twentieth century's two global wars affected Yorkville's German and Hungarian enclaves, the primary subjects of its summer season, elevates local versions of political extremism to the exclusion of other subjects. To be sure, the Bund's presence drew negative attention to Yorkville in the thirties and subsequently chilled ethnic political expression. Fascism in German Yorkville, accordingly, deserves attention as a major part of ethnic Yorkville's past. Bund myopia, however, presents several problems. It overshadows the preceding Great War era, a period

which constitutes a foundational predicate for understanding the relationship between ethnic identity and times of national emergency. It also elides the experiences of the district's Hungarian Americans, who not only navigated nativist animus and questions of loyalty during the first half of the twentieth century but engaged in contentious internal debates concerning the intersections of Hungarian identity and homeland concerns.

Book I's account of ethnic Yorkville's autumn season pushes against simplistic tropes of a place and people stuck in the past from the forties through the sixties. Flattened social memories miss how the second Great Hyphen Debate affected local Germans and Hungarians and disregard the agency of ethnics who worked to preserve their enclaves, protect their reputations, and create new cultural outlets, such as the Steuben Parade, despite the stain of the Bund's Yorkville activities. Moreover, the accepted narrative fails to account for the juxtaposition of the two enclaves. While German Yorkville waned, Hungarian Yorkville waxed as waves of Cold War-era refugees resettled in the neighborhood and bolstered its existing cultural institutions and built new ones. From the mid-fifties through the sixties, developers descended on Yorkville, often painting its residents as impediments to progress. New York's major newspapers backed up this line of argument by, in part, portraying these populations as stubbornly foreign and racially intolerant. This focus on Yorkville's antiquated character tended to obscure the loss of core aspects of the neighborhood's materiality, such as the Yorkville Casino and the Ruppert Brewery.

Common narratives of ethnic Yorkville's past would prefer not to dwell on the protracted decline of the German and Hungarian enclaves from the 1970s to the present. Freezing the story in the fall and avoiding the winter chapter's messiness reinforces the timeless tableaus of the ethnic Yorkville imaginary, such as de-contextualized images of East 86th Street's German signing waiters and Bavarian aesthetics. In contrast, Book I's periodized interpretation of this stage of ethnic Yorkville's history carefully tracks the process of gentrification, the loss out of iconic ethnic businesses and anchor

institutions, and the hardening of the ethnic Yorkville imaginary. Put simply, failure to acknowledge the German Americans and Hungarian Americans who lived in, fought for, and maintained ties with Yorkville well after its active enclaves perished omits a vital part of the story and underestimates the power of a place where hyphenated identity persists.