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## **Geographies of Holocaust rescue: Spatial patterns and social geographies of Jewish rescue in Budapest, 1944**

### **Abstract**

In this article we seek to extend the literature on Holocaust geographies through a case study of geographies of rescue in Budapest in 1944. Drawing on mixed qualitative and quantitative methods, we place Raoul Wallenberg and the Swedish legation's rescue work within the multiple geographies of wartime Budapest, as well as offer broader reflections on the value and limits of spatial analytical methods within geographies of the Holocaust. Working with an historical GIS of the Budapest ghetto, a database created from the largest surviving Swedish list and a post-war count of survivors, as well as the personal narratives of survivors, the article examines how social status and social networks may contribute to explain the profiles of those rescued. Rather than topographic distance being key, the article argues that another geography—one of socioeconomic power—was more significant. We see this article making two main contributions to the current literature. Firstly, it interrogates ideas of distance as both a topographic and a topological category, as well as signaling the need to consider both abstract space *and* lived place in developing 'integrated' geographies of the Holocaust. Secondly, in doing this, it explores the possibilities and limitations of a range of spatial-analytical tools and approaches to interrogate geographies of rescue, and other areas of interest to historical geographers.

Keywords

Mixed methods

Holocaust

Rescue

Distance

Topography and topology

Budapest

Raoul Wallenberg

It is now almost three decades since Andrew Charlesworth issued a call to historical geographers to turn their attention to the Holocaust in the pages of this journal. He was particularly troubled by this lack of interest given the role played by geographers in the Nazi German state, where for example Walter Christaller saw German wartime expansion eastwards as an opportunity to implement his ideas in central place theory.<sup>1</sup> In the last two decades, Charlesworth's call has been taken up by the discipline. There have been important studies of urban and regional planning during the Third Reich,<sup>2</sup> as well as the application of methods from historical GIS in analysing the spatiality of the genocide.<sup>3</sup> Others have drawn on the insights of Henri Lefebvre and Giorgio Agamben to interrogate the exercise of power in and through the spaces of ghettos and camps respectively.<sup>4</sup> The contours of this growing engagement can be seen in the different editions of the influential *Dictionary of Human Geography*. Absent from the first four editions, a discrete entry for the Holocaust can be found in the fifth edition published in 2011.<sup>5</sup> This maturing of a subfield can be seen in the editors' choice to include a discrete chapter on 'Geography and the Holocaust' in a forthcoming *Handbook of Historical Geography*.<sup>6</sup> As a result of this scholarship we are

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<sup>1</sup> A. Charlesworth, Towards a Geography of the Shoah, *Journal of Historical Geography* 18 (1992) 464-469.

<sup>2</sup> M. Bassin, Race Contra Space: The Conflict between German Geopolitik and National Socialism, *Political Geography* 6 (1987) 115-134; M. Rössler, Applied Geography and Area Research in Nazi Society: Central Place Theory and Planning, 1933 to 1945, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 7 (1989) 419-431; T.J. Barnes and C. Minca, Nazi Spatial Theory: The Dark Geographies of Carl Schmitt and Walter Christaller, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 103 (2013) 669-687; T. J. Barnes, "Desk Killers": Walter Christaller, Central Place Theory, and the Nazis, in: P. Meusbürger, D. Gregory and L. Suarsana (Eds), *Geographies of Knowledge and Power*, Heidelberg, 2015, 187-202; P. Giaccaria and C. Minca (Eds), *Hitler's Geographies: The Spatialities of the Third Reich*, Chicago, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> W. Beorn et. al., Geographies of the Holocaust, *Geographical Review* 99, 4 (2009) 563-74; A. K. Knowles, T. Cole and A. Giordano (Eds), *Geographies of the Holocaust*, Bloomington, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> T. Cole, *Holocaust City. The Making of a Jewish Ghetto*, New York, 2003; P. Giaccaria and C. Minca, Topographies/Topologies of the Camp: Auschwitz as a Spatial Threshold, *Political Geography* 30 (2011) 3-12; P. Giaccaria and C. Minca, Nazi Biopolitics and the Dark Geographies of the Selva, *Journal of Genocide Research* 13 (2011) 67-84.

<sup>5</sup> D. Gregory, R. Johnston, G. Pratt, M. Watts and S. Whatmore (Eds), *The Dictionary of Human Geography. Fifth Edition*, London, 2011, 337-340. See also D. Gregory's reflections on this inclusion in <https://geographicaliminations.com/2014/08/06/geographies-of-the-holocaust/> last accessed 18 May 2020.

<sup>6</sup> A. K. Knowles, Geography and the Holocaust, in: M. Somosh, M. Heffernan and C. Withers (Eds), *Sage Handbook of Historical Geography*, London, 2020, 497-520.

coming to better understand the varied ways that genocide had a complex spatiality both as it was implemented and experienced.

However, while the Holocaust has become an historical event of growing interest to geographers, the tendency has been to focus in the main on the perpetrators—geographies of persecution—with far more limited attention given to the victims—geographies of survival.<sup>7</sup> Evasion remains a relatively understudied aspect of the Holocaust more generally, although some recent work on hiding that draws on oral history accounts includes attention to its spatiality.<sup>8</sup> Even less has been written on the geographies of rescue. The existing historical literature on the topic has tended to focus on the motivations of ‘heroic’ rescuers, in particular Raoul Wallenberg, rather than examining the spatiality of rescue as a process or the geographies of those who were—and were not—rescued.<sup>9</sup> In this article we seek to extend the literature on Holocaust geographies through empirical analysis of a single case study of the geographies of rescue in Budapest in 1944 that was one of the largest coordinated rescue efforts during the Holocaust. Drawing on mixed qualitative and quantitative methods,<sup>10</sup> we seek both to place Raoul Wallenberg and the Swedish

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<sup>7</sup> T. Cole, *Holocaust Landscapes*, London, 2016.

<sup>8</sup> See for example, Cole, *Holocaust Landscapes*; S. Schrafstetter, The Geographies of Living Underground: Escape Routes and Hiding Spaces of Fugitive Jews in Germany, 1939–1945, in: T. Cole and S. Gigliotti (Eds), *Lessons and Legacies XIV: The Holocaust in the Twenty-First Century: Relevance and Challenges in the Digital Age*, Evanston, 2020, 111-138.

<sup>9</sup> See for example, K.R. Monroe, *The Hand of Compassion: Portraits of Moral Choice during the Holocaust*, Princeton, 2004. This is perhaps particularly true of Raoul Wallenberg given his post-war disappearance. On Wallenberg, see for example, John Bierman, *Righteous Gentile: The Story of Raoul Wallenberg, Missing Hero of the Holocaust*, Harmondsworth, 1995; Bengt Jangfeldt, *The Hero of Budapest. The Triumph and Tragedy of Raoul Wallenberg*, London, 2014.

<sup>10</sup> Mixed methods analysis is fundamental to the idea of qualitative GIS and the spatial humanities. See, for example, M. Cope and S. Elwood (Eds), *Qualitative GIS: A Mixed Methods Approach*, London, 2009; P. Bazeley, *Integrating Analysis in Mixed Methods Research*, London, 2018; J.G. Stell, Qualitative Spatial Representation for the Humanities, *International Journal of Humanities and Arts Computing*, 13(1-2), 2-27, 2019; C. Travis, *Abstract Machine: Humanities GIS*. Redlands, 2015; A. Giordano, S-L. Shaw and D. Sinton (Eds), The Geospatial Humanities: Transdisciplinary Opportunities, Special Issue of the *International Journal of Humanities and Arts Computing*, 14(1-2), 2020.

legation's rescue work within the multiple geographies of wartime Budapest, as well as offer broader reflections on the value and limits of spatial analytical methods within geographies of the Holocaust in particular and historical geography in general.<sup>11</sup>

As well as drawing on qualitative sources of oral history and memoir accounts, we place these individual narratives within—and in tension to—the broader geographical contexts suggested by three databases developed by the authors. The first is a historical GIS of ghettoization in wartime Budapest drawn from the various lists of addresses issued by the city authorities in 1944.<sup>12</sup> This enabled us to map out where Jews lived in this segregated city, as well as those sites where Jews were permitted to leave their homes to access foodstuffs, medical treatment, and—of relevance for this article—the protective paperwork offered by the neutral legations in the second half of 1944. Critically important for our analysis, a map layer showing the historic street network in Budapest allowed us to undertake network analysis in ArcGIS to understand the importance of distance within this highly dispersed ghetto.<sup>13</sup> The second is a database created by the authors that details the names of 6,686 Jews given protective paperwork by the Swedish Legation in 1944 contained in a bound copy of this list.<sup>14</sup> This does not include all Jews rescued by the Swedish legation, nor does it include Jews given paperwork by other neutral powers, but it is a uniquely rich source to understand some of those who received Swedish paperwork in the summer and autumn of 1944. The third is a database created by the authors that contains over seventy thousand Jews recorded

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<sup>11</sup> On this, see for example A. Giordano and T. Cole, The Limits of GIS: Towards a GIS of place, *Transactions in GIS* 22 (2018) 664-676; A. Giordano and T. Cole, Places of the Holocaust: Towards a model of GIS of place, *Transactions in GIS* 24, 4 (2020) 842-857.

<sup>12</sup> The interested reader can explore the contents of the first and third databases described here in the Data section of the website of the Holocaust Geographies Collaborative at [www.holocaustgeographies.org](http://www.holocaustgeographies.org). The GIS software that powers all three databases is ESRI's ArcGIS (different versions were used over the years).

<sup>13</sup> For more on this see Knowles, Cole and Giordano, *Geographies of the Holocaust*, 120-157.

<sup>14</sup> 'Name list of those persons who had Schutzpasses and were under the protection of the Swedish Embassy', 1944, 447 pages. RWP A F3A:18. See copy available at USHMM Archives RG-50.244, Reel 3.

living in post-war Budapest. This draws on a door-by-door survey undertaken by a number of Jewish organisations in the summer of 1945 and published in book form in 1946 to enable family members to find out the fate of loved ones.<sup>15</sup> These three databases all contain geographical information in the form of addresses, and we draw on this throughout our analysis of the geographies of rescue to map out the context described by survivors. Rather than seeing close and distant reading as opposed, we intentionally adopt a mixed methods approach throughout.

We therefore see this article making two main contributions to the current literature beyond the more narrowly focused scholarship on the rescue work of the neutral legations in Budapest that we outline below, which focuses on what was a rather exceptional story within an exceptional chapter in the Holocaust. Firstly, it interrogates ideas of distance as both a topographic and a topological category, as well as signaling the need to consider both abstract space *and* lived place in developing ‘integrated’ geographies of the Holocaust.<sup>16</sup> Secondly, in doing this, it explores the possibilities and limitations of a range of spatial-analytical tools and approaches to interrogate geographies of rescue utilizing an historical GIS of the Budapest ghetto. Throughout we are concerned with examining the interplay between quantitative analysis of spatial patterns and spatial networks and close reading of qualitative sources such as oral histories and memoir accounts: both potentially shed light on, nuance, and critique each other.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Hungarian Section of the World Jewish Congress, American Joint Distribution Committee and Jewish Agency for Palestine Statistical and Search Department, *Counted Remnant. Register of the Jewish Survivors in Budapest* Budapest, 1946.

<sup>16</sup> A.K. Knowles, P.B. Jaskot, T. Cole and A. Giordano, Mind the gap: reading across the Holocaust testimonial archive, in: Cole and Gigliotti (Eds), *Lessons and Legacies XIV* 216-241.

<sup>17</sup> M.P. Kwan, Beyond difference: from canonical geography to hybrid geographies, *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 94 (2004) 756-63; M. Madden and A. Ross, Genocide and Giscience: integrating personal narratives and geographic information science to study human rights, *The Professional Geographer* 61 (2009) 508-526.

In the opening section we briefly introduce the history and historiography of Swedish rescue efforts in Budapest in 1944, noting in particular the suggestion in the existing literature that geography mattered. In the second section we draw on this historiography to explore the importance of topographic distance and physical proximity to Jewish experiences. In the third section we draw on oral history and memoir accounts to nuance and critique the model of abstract space and consider the lived experiences of place of those Jews who sought aid from representatives of the neutral powers in the city. In the final section, we extend ideas of distance to explore the importance of geographies of social networks and socioeconomic power in the geography of rescue. As we suggest, in developing spatial histories and geographies of the Holocaust, we do well to think topologically as well as topographically.

### **Ghettoization and ‘international ghettoization’ in Budapest, 1944**

Raoul Wallenberg arrived in Budapest in the summer of 1944.<sup>18</sup> His presence in this European capital in the last full year of the war signals the lateness of the implementation of the Holocaust in Hungary. While there had been a longer history of antisemitic legislation in the country, it was not until the aftermath of the 19 March 1944 German occupation of their rather reluctant ally, that Hungarian Jews were marked with a yellow star, concentrated into ghettos, and deported.<sup>19</sup> The speed with which this ‘last chapter’ of the Holocaust took place was unprecedented.<sup>20</sup> Only 56 days separated the German occupation and the beginning of deportations. Another 56 days

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<sup>18</sup> On Wallenberg’s rescue work in Budapest in 1944, see in particular P.A. Levine, *Raoul Wallenberg in Budapest. Myth, History and Holocaust, 1944-1945*, London, 2010.

<sup>19</sup> For a comprehensive classic overview of this process, see R.L. Braham, *The Politics of Genocide. The Holocaust in Hungary*, New York, 2016. See also G. Kádár, L. Csösz and Z. Vági, *The Holocaust in Hungary: Evolution of a Genocide*, Lanham, 2013.

<sup>20</sup> C. Gerlach and G. Aly, *Das letzte Kapitel. Realpolitik, Ideologie und der Mord an den ungarischen Juden 1944-1945*, Stuttgart, 2002.



separated the beginning and halting of deportations. The halting of deportations by the Hungarian regent, Miklós Horthy—in part under international pressure—meant that while Jews outside of the capital had been deported, in the main to Auschwitz-Birkenau, Budapest’s sizeable Jewish population remained in situ. During the summer and autumn of 1944 they lived in a dispersed ghetto made up of just under two thousand apartment buildings marked with a yellow-star (hence the name ‘yellow-star houses’) spread across the city (Figure 1).<sup>21</sup> In October, Horthy was replaced by a puppet government led by the *Nyilas* (the Hungarian Arrow Cross fascist party) leader Ferenc Szálasi. Deportations of some Jews of working age from Budapest—this time on foot westwards to Austria—commenced, and the city’s Jews were placed into two more concentrated ghettos on the Pest side of the river: ghettos that were ultimately liberated rather than liquidated, with the entry of the Soviet army into the city in the middle of January 1945 (Figure 2). One, known as the Pest ghetto, housed around seventy thousand Jews. The other, known as the International ghetto, housed around thirty-five thousand ‘protected’ Jews, some of who form the focus of our interest in this article.<sup>22</sup> Taken together, they formed the largest single concentration of Jews still alive in any city in occupied Europe.

[Figure 1 about here]

[Figure 2 about here]

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<sup>21</sup> On the highly dispersed nature of ghettoization in Budapest see T. Cole and G. Smith, ‘Ghettoization and the Holocaust: Budapest 1944,’ *Journal of Historical Geography* 21 (1995) 300-316; Cole, *Holocaust City*.

<sup>22</sup> See the estimates of Raoul Wallenberg in his 12 December ‘Memorandum concerning the Situation of the Hungarian Jews,’ in R. Wallenberg, *Letters and Dispatches, 1924-1944*, New York, 1995, 265-266.

Most Jews living in the International ghetto in the winter of 1944 held protective paperwork issued by the neutral legations in the summer, autumn, and winter of that year during what was a concerted rescue campaign for this large remaining Jewish community. Many had received so-called *Schutzpässe* issued by the Swiss and Swedish legations as proof that these individuals were under their protection until the time that they could leave Hungary.<sup>23</sup> Alongside issuing protective paperwork, it is clear that plans to protect Jews with bricks and mortar and not simply paperwork were being actively discussed in Budapest by the neutral legations in the summer of 1944.<sup>24</sup> It was only after the *Nyilas* Party puppet government was installed, however, that plans were unveiled over what to do with Jews remaining in the country: six categories—each receiving separate treatment—were delineated and one of these was Jews under foreign protection who by mid-November were to move into a loose collection of around 120 apartment buildings scattered over a small number of streets in Új-Lipótváros in the fifth district of Pest.<sup>25</sup> Jews without protective papers who remained in the capital were to move to a fenced ghetto established in the heart of the traditional Jewish quarter in the seventh district of Pest at the end of November.

In the International ghetto, Jews under the protection of the different neutral powers were housed in separate Swiss, Swedish, Spanish, Vatican, Portuguese and Red Cross buildings according to the proportions of Jews officially permitted to receive protection from the different neutral power. This decision was taken, Asher Cohen suggests, in part to counter the inflation of protective paperwork in circulation, which could not exceed the number of apartments made

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<sup>23</sup> Levine, *Raoul Wallenberg in Budapest*, 324; Uppsala University Library, Raoul Wallenberg Project Archive (hereafter RWPA), FC2 002, Interview with Per Anger.

<sup>24</sup> Cole, *Holocaust City*, 197-201.

<sup>25</sup> Cole, *Holocaust City*, 203-204.

available.<sup>26</sup> Those receiving *Schutzpässe* were supposed to have at least a ‘vague relationship’ with Sweden,<sup>27</sup> although it is clear that in practice these relationships could be extremely loose and over the course of time ‘became thinner and thinner,’<sup>28</sup> with the result that survivors recall these houses as terribly overcrowded.<sup>29</sup>

Just who received protection from the neutral powers in the late summer, autumn and winter of 1944 and why continue to be important questions. Both survivors and historians have suggested that protected Jews in Budapest were a privileged elite, although these claims remain unsubstantiated and form the focus of our attention here. In his post-war journalistic accounts, Jenő Lévai stated that ‘wealthy Jews were able to save their lives in a number of different ways, whereas the poor ones were unable to do anything whatsoever.’<sup>30</sup> According to historians Laura Palosuo and Attila Lajos, Jews of higher social class and with connections were more likely to get hold of documents from the neutral powers,<sup>31</sup> although Palosuo suggests that ‘during the autumn, the neutral legations differentiated less between individuals seeking help, and the social background of the protected became more diverse.’<sup>32</sup> The authors of a study of Jewish Budapest, straightforwardly linked the designating of the International ghetto in the streets of Új-Lipótváros in the fifth district of the city with the fact that those Jews living there ‘were generally wealthier

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<sup>26</sup> A. Cohen, *The Halutz Resistance in Hungary 1942-1944*, New York, 1986, 185. On the lack of certainty on ‘primary responsibility’ for the International ghetto coming into existence, see also Levine, *Raoul Wallenberg in Budapest*, 323.

<sup>27</sup> RWPA, FC2, 002, Interview with Per Anger.

<sup>28</sup> RWPA, FC2, 002, Interview with Per Anger.

<sup>29</sup> RWPA, FC2, 310, Interview with Mrs Jozsefné Koltai; Cole, *Holocaust Landscapes*, 151-172.

<sup>30</sup> J. Lévai, *Black Book on the Martyrdom of Hungarian Jewry*, Zurich, 1948, 316.

<sup>31</sup> L. Palosuo, *Yellow Stars and Trouser Inspections. Jewish Testimonies from Hungary, 1920-1945*, Uppsala, 2008, 158, 181-182, 235-236; Attila Lajos, *Hjälten och offren. Raoul Wallenberg och judarna I Budapest*, Växjö, 2004, 220.

<sup>32</sup> Palosuo, *Yellow Stars*, 236.

than say the Jews living in the neighborhood of Garay utca [in the seventh district],<sup>33</sup> an observation also made by survivors, with one noting that both the Swiss and Swedish protected houses were in one of the wealthiest parts of Budapest.<sup>34</sup>

However, as the late Paul Levine noted in his study of Wallenberg, ‘Swedish documentation, perhaps naturally enough, makes no mention of the notion that in some way the Swedes, and Wallenberg, were favoring Jews who were more affluent than others,’<sup>35</sup> although he did point to one letter where Wallenberg complained of the ‘small stream of particularly unpleasant people, mostly of high social status, who elbow their way into my office.’<sup>36</sup> In his study, Levine cited one survivor who corresponded with the oral history project team that he led some three decades ago, who told him, ‘I’d like to be able to praise Raoul Wallenberg, but alas, I’m unable to...the people [he] saved...were wealthy Jews, those of high intellectual level, foreign speaking people with...international ties...Nobody in my community were saved by Swedish Papers.’<sup>37</sup> Tellingly, Levine wrote that, ‘hers is unlikely to be a solitary experience,’ although he suggested that ‘there is no widespread evidence that Wallenberg and the Swedes discriminated against poorer or less assimilated Jews’.<sup>38</sup> Of particular interest to us is Levine’s hypothesis that this survivor’s claim of a lack of Swedish help for Jews living in the northern district of Óbuda in the third district, ‘may have an element of geography’ given that this neighborhood ‘was relatively distant both from the Swedish Legation on Gellért Hill in the eleventh district, and from Wallenberg’s other important location(s), established at almost the

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<sup>33</sup> K. Frojimovics, G. Komoróczy, V. Pusztai and A. Strbik, *Jewish Budapest. Monuments, Rites, History*, Budapest, 1999, 338.

<sup>34</sup> RWPA, FC2 144, Interview with Ahava Feldberg.

<sup>35</sup> Levine, *Raoul Wallenberg in Budapest*, 283.

<sup>36</sup> Wallenberg, *Letters and Dispatches*, 275.

<sup>37</sup> Naomi Reuki cited in Levine, *Raoul Wallenberg in Budapest*, 250.

<sup>38</sup> Levine, *Raoul Wallenberg in Budapest*, 282.

other end of the city in Pest's eighth district'.<sup>39</sup> In the next section of this article, we seek to test Levine's hypothesis of the significance of physical proximity and topographic distance in explaining who did and did not receive protective paperwork in Budapest in 1944.

### **Geographies of topographic distance and physical proximity**

In order to test Levine's hypothesis, we draw on an historical GIS of the Budapest ghetto developed by the authors that reconstructs the 1944 city's street network and maps the location of individual Jewish-designated residences as listed on official documents dated June 16 and June 22, as well as public places that Jews could access in the city.<sup>40</sup> The historical GIS also includes—crucially for our purposes here—the location of the two main Swedish legation buildings on either side of the Danube. Being physically present at Swedish legation buildings was certainly important, given the central role of individual officials on the ground in making decisions on a case-by-case basis.<sup>41</sup> It is the June 22 list of just under two thousand addresses that we focus on in the first section of this paper (Figure 1), given that it represents where Jews lived during the summer and autumn of 1944.

The importance of material geographies of physical proximity and topographic distance was critical in this dispersed ghetto given that there were temporal limits on when Jews could leave their homes to access sites where lines rapidly built up.<sup>42</sup> When they were first placed into just under two thousand ghetto houses across the city at the end of June 1944, Jews could

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<sup>39</sup> Levine, *Raoul Wallenberg in Budapest*, 282.

<sup>40</sup> For details on the process, see Knowles, Cole and Giordano, *Geographies of the Holocaust*, 120-157.

<sup>41</sup> P.A. Levine, *From Indifference to Activism. Swedish Diplomacy and the Holocaust, 1938-1944*, Uppsala, 1996, 264.

<sup>42</sup> E Szép, *The Smell of Humans. A Memoir of the Holocaust in Hungary*, Budapest, 1994, 40; RWP, FC2, 002, Interview with Per Anger; J. Brody, Unpublished memoir (n.d.) recalls, "I will never forget the day and my mother's distress when I stood in line for several hours only to find that the stock of sugar ran out and the curfew started by the time I got to the head of the queue."

initially only leave these buildings for three hours each afternoon (2-5pm) in order to shop and access health care, resulting in practice in internal “invisible walls” within this dispersed ghetto.<sup>43</sup> These spatiotemporal limits lessened during the course of the late summer and early autumn of 1944.<sup>44</sup> During the earlier period, when Jews were only permitted to leave their homes for three hours, there were severe restrictions on where Jews could physically go within this dispersed ghetto. Given that Jews could not use private transport, the only way to travel further distances than could be undertaken on foot, was to make use of the single tramcar reserved for Jews. However, it seems that in practice, Jews were reluctant to make use of this concession to the severe limits placed upon Jewish movement around the city.<sup>45</sup> In the later period, the increased number of hours when Jews could leave their homes meant that the question of where Jews could get was less pressing than the speed with which they could get there. In short, distance within the dispersed ghetto in the fall of 1944 was not simply about getting there, but most importantly about getting there before others did. The sheer numbers of Jews physically making their way to the legation buildings in the late summer of 1944 appears to have been one reason for Wallenberg moving his offices away from the original Gellért Hill location in Buda’s eleventh district, as his colleague Per Anger indicated.<sup>46</sup> The specific location chosen—in Pest’s eighth district—may well have been, in part at least, about bringing the services of the Swedish

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<sup>43</sup> A. Giordano and T. Cole, On place and space: calculating social and spatial networks in the Budapest ghetto, *Transactions in GIS* 15 (2011) 143-170; T. Cole and A. Giordano, Rethinking segregation in the ghetto: invisible walls and social networks in the dispersed ghetto in Budapest, 1944, in: H. Earl and K. Schleunes (Eds), *Lessons and Legacies XI: Expanding Perspectives on the Holocaust in a Changing World*, Evanston, 2012, 265-291.

<sup>44</sup> Braham, *Politics of Genocide*, 856; E. Munkácsi, Hogy történt? XXXI A Budapesti Zsidóság Összeköltöztetése, *Új Élet* II/32 (8 August 1946) cited in I. Benoschofsky and E. Karsai (Eds), *Vádirat a Nácizmus Ellen. Volume 2*, Budapest, 1960), 348; RWP A F2C 21/535, Interview with Alfred Schomberger.

<sup>45</sup> E. Gottlieb, *Becoming My Mother’s Daughter: A Story of Survival and Renewal*, Waterloo, 2008, 62; Szép, *The Smell of Humans*, 39; Authors’ correspondence with Judit Brody, 21 July 2011.

<sup>46</sup> RWP A, FC2 002, Interview with Per Anger.

legation geographically closer to the majority of Jews in Budapest, who lived in ‘yellow-star houses’ in the central districts of Pest (Figure 1).<sup>47</sup>

[Figure 3 about here]

In order to examine the hypothesis that topographic distance and proximity mattered, we used network analysis to calculate the shortest distance between each Jewish residence and the two Swedish legation buildings in the city (Figure 3). Here we worked with the assumption that Jews used the most direct routes—on foot—to get to their destinations in order to arrive as quickly as possible and avoid the queues that built up,<sup>48</sup> but it may be that they chose instead to use side streets to avoid non-Jews and officials, or to use a combination of walking and taking the single tram car assigned for Jewish use.<sup>49</sup> Given these caveats, the map in Figure 3 showing travel time on foot to the Swedish legation buildings needs to be read as a suggestive model of ‘invisible walls’ within this highly dispersed ghetto (at 30- and 60-minute relative walking distance) rather than representing reality. (In the map, we assumed an average walking speed of 1.3 meters per second.) These limitations notwithstanding, the map suggests that the nature and extent of accessibility was not uniform but varied according to where in the city Jews lived. Those ghetto houses beyond a 60-minute walking time—beyond the ‘invisible walls’—stand out as black pushpin symbols. Jews living in these houses potentially faced greater difficulties in negotiating for paperwork that might secure their safety. In the autumn of 1944 the critical issue was not simply about physically getting to the legation buildings and back home again within the

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<sup>47</sup> Cole, *Holocaust City*.

<sup>48</sup> Szép, *The Smell of Humans*, 40; RWPA, FC2 002, Interview with Per Anger.

<sup>49</sup> Szép, *The Smell of Humans*, 39.

time period when Jews could leave their homes, but also about getting there quickly enough to stand a good chance of being seen by officials. What is striking from the map is how the community based in Óbuda in Buda's third district that the survivor cited by Levine was a part of, was one of the peripheral parts of the city physically distant from the locations of both the Swedish legation buildings, and most markedly the increasingly important Pest premises in the city's eighth district. There may be something to Levine's suggestion that distance in material and topographic terms is part of the story of accessing rescue in the fall of 1944.

However, we want to nuance this model of the importance of physical proximity and topographic distance in a number of ways. As already noted, the map is a model of reality and not reality itself. In this sense, turning to oral histories and memoirs point to the ways in which the invisible walls that we map out within this dispersed ghetto could be—and were—breached by Jews and non-Jews, raising the importance of pre-existing social-networks in Jewish experiences. Also significantly, the network analysis that we undertook above treats Jews as a homogenous group, rather than examining the significance of differences such as gender, class, or degrees of assimilation in accessing rescue. Here we suggest that another geography was in operation in Budapest in 1944: not a geography of physical proximity and topographic distance, but a complex social geography of power.

### **Breaching invisible walls to access paperwork**

Oral history and memoir accounts clearly indicate that there were a variety of ways that Budapest Jews managed to get hold of Swedish papers in the fall of 1944, including obtaining



them either in person or through their parents.<sup>50</sup> In some cases it is clear that Jews risked being caught, and left their apartment outside of the curfew hours to visit the Swedish legation.<sup>51</sup> However, others recounted that they managed to access this paperwork through a social network of relatives (including relatives living in Sweden),<sup>52</sup> friends or acquaintances,<sup>53</sup> neighbors,<sup>54</sup> or friends of friends. For instance, Pearl Herling spoke of getting hold of a Swedish pass through a woman they used to buy furs from who had a friend in the Swedish consulate.<sup>55</sup> Once one person had got hold of Swedish papers, there appears to have been a domino effect, recalled by Magda Kalman who ‘was the first who got this Swedish papers from Wallenberg in my building. And after the other people find it out, and everybody rush to Mr. Barat [a non-Jew living in the building] and asked him to get it, and they got’ protective paperwork—for a fee ‘that wasn’t that small’.<sup>56</sup> As this latter case shows, paperwork could be—and was—gained by non-Jews who had greater freedom of movement throughout the city.

Non-Jews—like Mr. Barat referred to above—were permitted to stay living in their apartments in ghetto apartment buildings marked with a yellow star as the result of a last minute compromise,<sup>57</sup> and it is clear that relatively large numbers of non-Jews chose to do just that.

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<sup>50</sup> RWPA, FC2 004, Interview with Edit Ernster; FC2 107, Interview with Miriam Greenfeld; FC2 315, Interview with Valeria Nádas; FC2 319, Interview with Jánosné Solmosi; FC2 324, Interview with Eugen Türkl; FC2 332, Interview with Johnny Moser; FC2 339, Interview with Zsuzsa Gordon; FC2 560, Interview with JK; Szép, *Smell of Humans*, 39-41.

<sup>51</sup> Authors’ interview with Judit Brody (26 November 2009); Judit Brody, Unpublished memoir.

<sup>52</sup> RWPA, FC2 305, Interview with Peter Nádas; FC2 307, Interview with Miklósné Kellner; FC2 314, Interview with György Frigyesi; FC2 343, Interview with István Bélai; FC2 531, Interview with George Sebök; FC2 534, Interview with Anna Zafir; FC2 539, Interview with Margit Jarovitz; FC2 544, Interview with Ivan Gabor; FC2 558, Interview with Tamas Ungvari.

<sup>53</sup> RWPA, FC2 106, Interview with Francis Körösy; FC2 132, Interview with Veronic Molnár; FC2 313, Interview with Gyula Földes; FC2 320, Interview with Istvánné Gresz; FC2 542, Interview with Magda Kalman.

<sup>54</sup> RWPA, RC2 345, Interview with Stefánia Schwartz.

<sup>55</sup> RWPA, FC2 532, Interview with Pearl Herling.

<sup>56</sup> RWPA, FC2 542, Interview with Magda Kalman.

<sup>57</sup> T. Cole, Contesting and compromising ghettoization, Hungary 1944,” in J.K. Roth, J. Petropoulos and L. Rapaport (Eds.), *Lessons and Legacies IX: Memory, History and Responsibility: Reassessments of the Holocaust, Implications for the Future*, Evanston, 2010, 152-166.

Lévai's post-war claim that twelve thousand non-Jews lived in ghetto houses is hard to substantiate, but it may well not be far of the mark.<sup>58</sup> What we can say with more confidence is that in the area of the city which later became the site of the closed Pest ghetto in the winter of 1944, 144 of the 162 ghetto houses were lived in by non-Jews as well as Jews.<sup>59</sup> If we can extrapolate from these figures, it would seem that the majority of the 1,948 ghetto houses identified on 22 June were in reality 'mixed' houses where Jews and non-Jews lived alongside each other. In Budapest, the ghetto wall was in many cases in practice the apartment wall, meaning that the so-called 'Aryan side' could be as close as the neighboring apartment. The continuing presence of non-Jews in ghetto houses not only reframes our understanding of ghettoization as segregation, but also points to the heightened importance of Jewish and non-Jewish social networks in the summer and autumn of 1944.<sup>60</sup>

In this context, it mattered enormously whether your apartment building was included—or excluded—from the ghetto. Staying put meant more than simply hanging on to your furniture and food stored in your larder, important as both were.<sup>61</sup> Staying put also meant being able to maintain a local network of contacts both within and in the close vicinity of the apartment building.<sup>62</sup> This included not only non-Jewish neighbors who also stayed put, but also local shopkeepers. As Mrs. János Solmosi recalled, 'there was a shop at the corner of Szemere utca

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<sup>58</sup> J. Lévai, *Fekete Könyv a Magyar Zsidóság Szenvedéseiről*, Budapest, 1946, 156; Braham, *Politics of Genocide*, 735.

<sup>59</sup> New Hungarian Central Archives [hereafter ÚMKL] XXXIII-5-c-1, XI.23.

<sup>60</sup> Giordano and Cole, On place and space: calculating social and spatial networks in the Budapest ghetto; on the importance of Jewish/non-Jewish social networks in Warsaw, see G.S. Paulsson, *Secret City*, New Haven, 2002, 26-27 and 237.

<sup>61</sup> E. Gabor, *The Blood Tattoo*, Dallas, 1987, 46; Gottlieb, *Becoming My Mother's Daughter*, 102; T. Cole, *Traces of the Holocaust. Journeying In and Out of the Ghettos*, London, 2011, 29-31.

<sup>62</sup> Authors' interview with Judit Brody (26 November 2009). On the importance of pre-existing social relations with the apartment building caretaker see I.P. Adam, *Budapest Building Managers and the Holocaust in Hungary*, Houdmills, 2016, and M. Rigó, Ordinary women and men: superintendents and Jews in the Budapest yellow-star house in 1944-1945, *Urban History* 40-1 (2013) 71-91.

[street]. I was on good terms with the shop assistant who delivered us food, like he had done before ...'<sup>63</sup> Remaining in your apartment, as Mrs. Solmosi did, meant not just staying in a physical and material place but also in a social place.<sup>64</sup>

## **Mapping geographies of privilege**

In this next section of the article, we dig deeper into the geography of rescue discussed above. We do so with a list of the names and personal details of 6,686 Jews under Swedish protection in 1944. Created in 1944, the list runs to 447 pages of a hand-bound volume and gives such personal details as name, maiden name, and date of birth for most of the 6,686 listed. For 85.79% of the individuals, the list also includes the previous address of residence in Budapest or elsewhere in Hungary.<sup>65</sup> While most of the previous addresses are in the city, there are also 122 men serving in wartime labor battalions, as well as 41 individuals with addresses from outside of Budapest—either the suburbs of the city, or town and cities further afield (Table 1). Of the 5,573 with previous addresses in Budapest, we have identified districts for 5,431 individuals, allowing for comparison with pre-war census data published at the district level (Tables 1 and 2). Our concern here is to examine how representative Jews on this Swedish protected list were of twentieth century Jewish residence patterns. Even with the caveats that the list does not contain all the Jews rescued by Wallenberg, let alone all the Jews rescued by the neutral powers in 1944, its size allows us to test the claim that crops up in anecdotal references by survivors and as a

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<sup>63</sup> RWPA, F2C 319, Interview with Jánosné Solmosi. See also interview with Judit Brody.

<sup>64</sup> Braham, *Politics of Genocide*, 735.

<sup>65</sup> 'Name list of those persons who had Schutzpasses and were under the protection of the Swedish Embassy', 1944, 447 pages. RWPA F3A:18. See copy available at USHMM Archives RG-50.244, Reel 3.

single line in the work of historians that Jews in the International ghetto were an unrepresentative elite.

[Table 1 about here]

[Table 2 about here]

Prior to the implementation of ghettoization, Jewish residence patterns in Budapest were uneven, with the majority of the Jewish population living in the four central districts (V, VI, VII and VIII) in Pest (Table 2). These four densely populated inner-city districts were home to over four out of every ten inhabitants in the city as a whole in 1941 (41.65%), including three-quarters of the city's Jewish population (74.97%).<sup>66</sup> Given this context, it is perhaps not surprising that these four central districts in Pest dominate on the Swedish list (83.28%) (Table 2). But this is where the similarities between the demographic statistics and the sample end. What is more striking is how broadly unrepresentative the list is (see the '% Differential' column in Table 2). This was not the case in a minority of districts. The second and eleventh districts in Buda and the sixth district in Pest had roughly equal proportions of Jews in the 1941 census data and on the Swedish list. But in the majority of districts there was a very different story. Most striking was the over-representation of Jews from the first district in Buda and the fourth and fifth districts in Pest and the under-representation of Jews from the remaining districts. Home to 15% of the city's Jewish population in 1941, the fifth district accounted for 42.39% (a 282.61% differential)

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<sup>66</sup> L. Illyefalvy (Ed), *Budapest Székesfőváros Statisztikai Évkönyve 30*, Budapest, 1942, 28.

of all of those named on the Swedish list with addresses in Budapest that are legible and known. The corollary of overrepresentation was, of course, under-representation, and here the eighth district was in effect the mirror image of the story of the fifth district. Home to 13.57% of the city's Jews in 1941, the eighth district accounts for only 3.83% (a 28.22% differential) of all addresses on the Swedish list for which the district is known (Table 2). In short, what emerges from the list is a tale of two districts—the fifth and eighth districts—with very different stories.

[Figure 4 about here]

The map in Figure 4 is one way of visualizing the differences between the Jewish population distribution for the city as a whole and the population distribution on the Swedish list. It draws on quantitative spatial analytical tools, showing the mean center—the point where the numerical weight of a population balances—and the standard distance—showing the degree of concentration of the population—for Budapest's 1941 total population, 1941 Jewish population, and for those on the Swedish list. Figure 4 shows that the mean centers of the Jewish and total population almost coincides and are located in the seventh district. Whereas Table 2 shows differences in population numbers at the district level, Figure 4 implies that these differences cancel out at the city scale and that the Jewish and general population distribution are spatially similar. However, the standard distance measure indicates that the Jewish population was more concentrated—indicated by a smaller circle—than the general population. Even more spatial concentration is present when looking at those on the Swedish list, as the red circle shows. Furthermore, the mean center of the sample is located at some distance from the other two and in the direction of the fifth district. In all three cases, as shown by the directional distribution, the

population is slightly oriented in a northeast-to-southwest direction. Overall, when one looks at Figure 4, the fundamentally different spatial distribution of the sample as noted in Table 2 is confirmed, while differences in the Jewish and general population distribution appear attenuated.

As this discussion of over- and under-representation by district suggests, the hypothesis of physical proximity to the Legation offices is not borne out by the data from the Swedish name list. A further confirmation is provided by the map in Figure 3. Most strikingly, the eighth district accounts for very few names on the list despite being where Wallenberg's new office was located and despite being almost entirely within a 30-minute walking distance of the office (Figure 3). Likewise, the eleventh district was only slightly overrepresented despite the main legation building being located there; in this case, however, the district was home to very few ghetto houses. In contrast, the northernmost parts of the fifth district are actually outside the sixty-minute walking buffer, and several streets in it—including what was to become the entire International ghetto—are over thirty minutes away from the Swedish legation offices. Overall, a comparison of Figure 3 and Table 2 reveal little correlation between physical proximity to the offices and under- or over-representation on the list, which suggests that another geography was more significant.

Working with district boundaries, as we do above, is admittedly working with a rather blunt instrument.<sup>67</sup> It is not simply that districts were not wholly homogenous, something we explore a little more below, but individual apartment buildings within districts were intentionally not socially homogenous, given that buildings housed residents from different social classes in

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<sup>67</sup> On the implications of this for a construction through demographic statistics of a primarily 'Hungarian and Catholic city' see M. Rigó, *Survival Strategies, Ghettoization and the Persecution of Jews in Budapest, 1944*, unpublished Master's thesis, Central European University, 2009, 16-17.

very different apartments on different floors.<sup>68</sup> However, broadly speaking, districts did differ. Taking the example of living conditions, of relevance given our examination of the social status of those Jews being given protective paperwork, it is clear that Budapest's fifth and eighth districts were very different places in the interwar years. Working with the proportion of apartments with and without private bathrooms—one crucial marker of social conditions in the interwar period—a very different picture appears when you compare the two districts. In 1941, while three quarters of apartments in the fifth district had private bathrooms (75.36%), in the eighth district less than four in ten apartments had private bathrooms (38.57%).<sup>69</sup> Likewise, Table 3<sup>70</sup> shows that the average number of rooms per residential building was equal to 2.09 in the fifth district (the fourth highest number in the city) but only 1.65 in the eighth district (the ninth highest). It is interesting to note, as a way of perhaps confirming socioeconomic differences, that the other two districts massively over-represented in the sample—the fourth and first districts—rank respectively as first and second in average number of rooms per residential building in Budapest, with 2.34 and 2.18 rooms respectively (See Table 2 and Table 3).<sup>71</sup>

[Table 3 about here]

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<sup>68</sup> P. Hanák, *The Garden and the Workshop*, Princeton, 1998, 20-21.

<sup>69</sup> Illyefalvy, *Budapest Székesfőváros Statisztikai Évkönyve 30*, 7. For the city as a whole the proportion with private bathrooms was 40.88%.

<sup>70</sup> How the average of rooms per flat was calculated: 1) First we eliminated 'Off kitchen flat' and 'More than 8' (adding 'More than 8' and giving it a value of 9 changes only slightly the results); 2) the weighted mean is derived by multiplying the number of apartments by the room size for all rooms and dividing by the total number of flats.

Formally:

$$O_i = \frac{\sum_{i,j} f_i r_j}{\sum_i f_i}$$

where:  $f$  is flat,  $i$  is the number of districts,  $r$  is room,  $j$  is the number of rooms, and  $O$  is the average number of rooms per flat.

<sup>71</sup> Illyefalvy, *Budapest Székesfőváros Statisztikai Évkönyve 30*, 8.

But it was not just that broadly different social groups lived in different districts within the city—a pattern not restricted to Budapest but characteristic of modern urban life—but also broadly different Jewish communities lived in different parts of the city. As we have suggested, using district boundaries—a key administrative unit within Budapest—is rather blunt. There were important differences in Jewish demographic patterns within the eighth district where, ‘Népszínház utca and Nagy Fuváros utca were inhabited by upper middle-class people, while poorer Jews lived in and around Teleki tér’.<sup>72</sup> Similar gradations of wealth can be seen in the fifth district where the ‘relatively well-to-do’ lived around Pannónia utca and Pozsonyi út in the interwar housing area known as Új-Lipótváros, which was, remembered as ‘a place where mostly well off Jews lived, look the houses were modern’.<sup>73</sup> Interestingly, these two streets were also the location of many International ghetto residences. However, broadly speaking, rather different Jewish communities lived in the seventh and eighth districts of Pest compared with the fourth, fifth or sixth districts. Lipótváros and Új-Lipótváros in the fifth districts were known as the home to relatively wealthy, assimilated Jews,<sup>74</sup> compared with poorer, religious Jews in the seventh and eighth districts. The intersections of class and religious identity were significant. It is striking reading through the Swedish list how many names are Magyarized or Germanized names, as well as how many men there are with the title ‘Dr’: in fact, they make up 14.51% of men on the Swedish list. Taken together with the residential data, it is clear that this list is dominated by assimilated middle-class Jews, arguably those with the strongest set of established

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<sup>72</sup> *Jewish Budapest*, 341.

<sup>73</sup> *Jewish Budapest*, 336; RWPA, F2C, 118, Interview with Naomi Gur.

<sup>74</sup> RWPA, F2C 525, Interview with Irene Abrahms; Brody, Unpublished memoir.



social networks with non-Jews that could be drawn upon, as well as the greatest potential claims to a connection with Sweden.

Alongside the over-representation of addresses from the city's fifth district in the list, the list contains an unusually large percentage of Jewish men (48.9% of the total) compared to other ghetto lists in Hungary. This broad parity is surprising given the wartime context in Hungary, where Jewish men from their late teens to early forties (and from 1944 onwards, up to their late forties) were mobilized for military service in labor battalions, and so women make up anywhere between 80%-90% of those age-cohorts in ghettos in western Hungary.<sup>75</sup> It is hard to do a breakdown by gender and age for the Swedish list, given the relatively large number of cases in which we do not have an individual's date of birth. However, taking the roughly two-thirds of individuals for whom we do have dates of birth, it is clear that the age and gender profile differs markedly from the ghettos lists from western Hungary. The most striking difference is the presence of the relatively large number of men aged 30-42 and especially 43-49, where there is almost parity between men and women (Figure 5). The unusually high number of adult men on the Swedish list can also be seen when comparing this list with another post-war list that we have digitized and are currently working with. In the summer of 1945, the Hungarian Section of the World Jewish Congress, the Jewish Agency for Palestine, and the American Joint Distribution Committee established a 'Statistical and Search Department' to register Jewish survivors. After a door-to-door survey, they published a list of survivors living in Budapest early in 1946.<sup>76</sup> This

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<sup>75</sup> T. Cole, A gendered Holocaust? The experiences of 'Jewish' men and women in Hungary, 1944, in: R. Braham and B. Chamberlin (Eds), *The Holocaust in Hungary: Sixty Years Later*, New York, 2006, 43-61; Cole, *Traces of the Holocaust*, 13-27

<sup>76</sup> Hungarian Section of the World Jewish Congress, American Joint Distribution Committee and Jewish Agency for Palestine Statistical and Search Department, *Counted Remnant. Register of the Jewish Survivors in Budapest*, Budapest, 1946.

list contains over seventy thousand names, along with post-war addresses, place and date of birth and other personal information. The data allow us to construct a profile of the age and gender of survivors living in Budapest in the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust, which corroborates the anomalies reflected on above. Survivors in Budapest were overwhelmingly female (61.2%), with particularly marked majorities of female survivors in the age groups 30-39 (64.47%), 40-49 (65.18%) and 50-59 (62.45%) (Figure 6). Comparing figures 5 and 6 reveals how unusual the gender makeup of the Swedish list was where in a number of age categories, men outnumbered women.

[Figure 5 about here]

[Figure 6 about here]

The surprising presence of men missing from ghetto lists elsewhere in Hungary and the list of survivors in Budapest on this Swedish list, links with our earlier findings about these being a socioeconomic elite. What is striking reading through this list of names is that it is not a list primarily made up of individuals, but rather a list of smaller and larger family groups headed up by men in their forties, fifties and sixties (who were in the main just too old to be called up for labour service) who had attained a degree of economic and social status. Here one family's story is fairly typical. Judit Brody's family—whose names all appear on the Swedish list—were fairly typical of the profile of those Jews who dominate this unrepresentative list. Judit was eleven years old in 1944. Her parents—György and Irma—were in their late and early forties respectively. The family were securely middle class, living in a large apartment within a building

in the city's fifth district. Originally seeking a place in hiding in the fall of 1944, Judit's family ended up housed within the International ghetto having got hold of Swedish protective papers.

'Sometime during the summer,' Judit recalled, after hearing rumours,

'that the Swedes were distributing protective papers... my parents went to the Swedish Embassy to ask for protection. The trip to the embassy in the Buda hills was in itself a dangerous undertaking, because they went outside permitted hours and they had to be on the streets without a star. They just hoped nobody would recognize them or if they were recognized nobody would call the police or the gendarmes. The staff at the Swedish Embassy considered our case serious enough to issue protective passports to the whole family.'<sup>77</sup>

Within the International ghetto, families like the Brody's largely found people very similar to themselves. As another eleven-year-old in 1944 fondly recalled his experience of living in one of the Swiss protected apartment buildings, 'I kind of enjoyed my stay in that big apartment building. There were lots of kids. Pretty much of the same background as myself... And that was a new experience to me. I was kind of isolated in that working class district...among people I couldn't associate with and really didn't have much in common'.<sup>78</sup> Indeed, the relative homogeneity of those Jews placed into the International ghetto that emerges in the Swedish list made exceptions all the more surprising. As Judit Brody recalled, in the second Swedish building where she and her family were placed, they discovered that, 'in the maid's room lived a peculiar trio: a woman in her thirties with her two brothers. This was the first time in my life that I saw religious Jews praying in the morning with their prayer shawls and with phylacteries fixed on

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<sup>77</sup> Brody, Unpublished memoir.

<sup>78</sup> RWPA, F2C 518, Interview with Paul Milch.

their foreheads and wound around their arms.’ However, this ‘peculiar trio’ were effectively rendered invisible in her retelling of living in the Swedish protected building. They disappeared in the memoir and were largely absent in the oral interview. They were very much out of place in this ghetto largely occupied by an assimilated elite.

For Brody, there were broadly two different groups of Jews living in Budapest—‘middle class non-religious Jews’ and ‘mostly religious Jews’—who were placed into two different ghettos sited, in essence, where these two groups already lived. However, as she herself noted in the general, and also recalled in the particular, creating the International ghetto did mean relocation for some non-protected Jews who lived in these buildings. After ‘Wallenberg managed to have new buildings opened for his protegés in order to ease the congestion’ the Brody family moved. ‘When we arrived at our newly acquired flat,’ Judit remembered, ‘the original inhabitants, a mother and her teenage daughter were still getting their belongings together. They had to move to the ghetto... We certainly did not care much about these poor people whose home we had to occupy, we had our own problems’.<sup>79</sup> As this story shows, there were Jewish families living in Új-Lipótváros who did not receive protective paperwork from the neutral authorities and therefore were forced to leave their homes.<sup>80</sup>

This was something that Wallenberg was well aware of. When he was planning, in August 1944, to place around 100 persons in each building on Pozsonyi út, he acknowledged that each yellow star property would need to ‘be emptied of its current inhabitants and instead, house there an equal number of Jews who are under the Legation’s protection. It would be greatly desirable to be able to pay moving costs and limited damages to those Jews who have to in this way

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<sup>79</sup> Brody, Unpublished memoir.

<sup>80</sup> RWPA F2C 319, Interview with Mrs János Solmosi; RWPA F2C 324, Interview with Eugen Türkl; RWPA F2C 531, Interview with George Sebök.

suddenly leave their homes'.<sup>81</sup> As he foresaw, placing the International ghetto in the city's fifth district meant that those Jews who were not protected by the neutral powers were forced to move out of their former yellow-star homes, and relocate to another world—the crowded Pest ghetto in the city's seventh district—that 'everybody who had any means avoided.'<sup>82</sup>

Given the socioeconomic geography of the Swedish list, the siting of the so-called International ghetto in Új-Lipótváros area of the city's V district, made a certain demographic sense. Judit Brody recollected that 'that it was in a newer part of town, home for many middle class non-religious Jews,' and therefore that, 'there was some reason in the madness' when it came to where this ghetto was located.<sup>83</sup> The single street that dominated the Swedish list—Pozsonyi út—was also the single largest International ghetto street. In a sense, then, the International ghetto came to the protected Jews (although there were of course Jews who—like Brody's family—came to the ghetto). Here, the International ghetto fitted within a longer and broader history of the pragmatics of placing the ghetto where Jews already were in Budapest and elsewhere in Hungary.<sup>84</sup> Bringing the ghetto to the Jews—rather than the Jews to the ghetto—was motivated by a concern to avoid relocating non-Jews, in a broader context of implementing anti-Jewish measures with the aim of benefiting the non-Jewish population.<sup>85</sup> But if there was an economic geography to persecution during 1944, it also seems that there was an economic

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<sup>81</sup> Memorandum concerning the Hungarian Jews, 6 August report, cited in Levine, *Raoul Wallenberg*, 283

<sup>82</sup> RWPA F2C 534, Interview with Anna Zafir.

<sup>83</sup> Brody, Unpublished memoir.

<sup>84</sup> Cole, *Holocaust City*; Cole, Contesting and Compromising Ghettoization; Cole, *Traces of the Holocaust*, 41-70; Cole and Giordano, Bringing the Ghetto to the Jew.

<sup>85</sup> G.K. and Z. Vági, *Self-Financing Genocide. The Gold Train, the Becher Case and the Wealth of Hungarian Jews*, Budapest, 2004.

geography to rescue.<sup>86</sup> In this sense—at least in the case of the International ghetto in Budapest—it would seem that it was not simply a case of ‘bringing the ghetto to the Jews,’ but rather of bringing *which* ghetto to *which* Jews.

## Conclusions

In identifying a social and economic geography to rescue we do not seek to level blame. As Paul Levine reflected, responsibility for social fractures among Budapest Jews in 1944,

does not lie upon Wallenberg or the other Swedes for having to ‘choose’ to help some but not others; nor upon Jews ‘pushing’ their way upstairs at the Swedish Legation, desperate to obtain help for themselves and their families. It lies, naturally, upon the perpetrators. It was they who chose to do what they did—the vast majority of Jews in Budapest (and elsewhere during the Holocaust) had no choices. The responsibility for the breakdown in social solidarity amongst some Jews in Budapest rests with those who, in spite of the accelerating ‘difficulties’ they were encountering in achieving their malignant goal of eliminating Budapest’s Jewry, never stopped trying.<sup>87</sup>

Rather, our objective is to seek to uncover, from the surviving traces, the complexity of events in the past. Using the surviving list of names of those receiving Swedish protection in the summer and autumn of 1944, our research suggests that the resident of the third district quoted towards the beginning of this article, and fellow residents of her district, were doubly disadvantaged

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<sup>86</sup> On the economics of persecution in Hungary, see especially Kádár and Vági, *Self-Financing Genocide*; Cole, *Traces of the Holocaust*. More generally, see M. Dean, *Robbing the Jews. The Confiscation of Jewish Property in the Holocaust, 1933-1945*, Cambridge, 2008.

<sup>87</sup> Levine, *Raoul Wallenberg*, 284.

when it came to accessing the International ghetto, first by a geography of distance and secondly by the more significant geography of socioeconomic power.

But in seeking to situate Wallenberg's rescue within a broader set of geographies, we do more than simply interrogate the claim made by contemporaries and historians that those rescued were a privileged elite. Rather, this article also seeks to suggest broader implications of the so-called 'spatial' and 'computational' turns for Holocaust studies. The spatial analytical modeling and mapping that we employ here provides a context to re-read memoirs and oral history accounts, and in turn the reading of those memoirs and oral history accounts demands a nuancing of the model. Mapping suggests the existence of invisible walls in the city—potentially as real as the material walls of the Pest ghetto—with Jews limited in access to people and services within the spatiotemporal confines of the hours when they were permitted to leave their apartment buildings. In this context, and also given the concession to permit non-Jews to remain living in what in effect were 'mixed' houses, existing social networks between Jews and non-Jews *within* ghetto houses were of heightened importance. Here the physical geography of the city is overlaid with another and more significant social geography. As we suggest, there is a need not simply to consider space, but also the lived experience of place in understanding geographies of rescue. And to do this demands a mixed methods approach that examines the interrelationship of topographies and topologies in examining the multiple geographies of the Holocaust, including geographies of rescue.

