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On the cover:

Insignia used on the cover of Simon Wolf's 1895 book, *American Jew as Patriot, Soldier, and Citizen*. Levytype Company, owned by two Jewish brothers, often created insignia for books they designed. This insignia combines an eternal light as representative of the Jewish people with two American flags to convey the central theme of Wolf's book.

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The hitherto unexamined career of Rabbi Emanuel Schreiber is worthy of consideration for several reasons. Although he grew up Orthodox and had studied with the champion of Modern Orthodoxy, Esriel Hildesheimer, as a student later in Berlin he came under the lasting influence of the leading German Reformer, Abraham Geiger. Schreiber became a lifelong Geiger disciple, who carried his mentor's message to all the many congregations he served first in Germany and then in the United States. After his migration to America, Schreiber became a significant channel of transmission between German and American Reform Judaism. His career is likewise of importance as an example of the uncompromising religious radicalism that characterized some of the Reform rabbis of his generation. This article describes Schreiber's turbulent career in Europe and America and his association with leading American Reformers. It analyzes his insistence upon the religious legitimacy of modern biblical criticism and seeks to comprehend his frustration with those members of his various congregations who refused to accept what Schreiber believed were the imperatives of modernity.

“We Won’t Work with the Jews”: The 1891 Millville Strike

Jeffrey A. Marx

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In September of 1891, newspapers across the US carried reports of a walk-out by boy laborers in a Millville, New Jersey glass factory, who

declared that they would not work with newly hired Jewish immigrants. Their strike—a unique event in labor history and in the history of antisemitism in America—was followed, according to reports, by an attack on the Jews of Millville, ending with hundreds of them being driven from the town. This article examines the origins of the strike, the sensational accounts that followed, and the historiographical lessons to be learned.

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TO OUR READERS . . .

More than a century ago, Mark Twain observed, “You [Jews] will always be by ways and habit and predilections substantially strangers—foreigners—wherever you are, and that will probably keep the race prejudice against you alive.”¹ Although written in a different era, Twain’s words still resonate today, disturbingly so. In her powerful new book, *Antisemitism, An American Tradition*, Pamela S. Nadell charts the evolution of antisemitism in America from its very beginnings to the present day, showing that there was never really a time when antisemitism was absent from American life. “The Great Hatred,” as the writer Maurice Samuel called it, has merely evolved and is now deftly moving into the twenty-first century, seeping into every new cultural and technological platform with alarming speed and reach. As David Zvi Kalman warns: “As a small and unevenly distributed minority of the American population, media plays an oversize role in the public’s attitude towards the Jewish people. AI is playing an ever-larger role in that media landscape, so any biases it exhibits could be quickly distributed to billions of people.”²

This issue of the journal revisits the late nineteenth century, a time when the United States became, in the words of the historian Leonard Dinnerstein, “a full-fledged antisemitic society.”³ In many ways, it mirrored the virulent ideologies spreading across Europe found in the writings of Karl Eugen Duehring, Edouard-Adolphe Drumont, and Houston Stewart Chamberlain. In this climate, Jewish leaders like Reform rabbi Emanuel Schreiber (1852–1932) took up the pen to defend their faith and people. As Michael A. Meyer illustrates, Schreiber’s radical theology, which was shaped by his teacher Abraham Geiger, called for internal reform as a response to external hatred:

1 Mark Twain, “Concerning the Jews,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* (September 1899): 535 as quoted in Pamela S. Nadell, *Antisemitism, An American Tradition* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2025), 86.

2 David Zvi Kalman, “The Antisemitic Spree by Elon Musk’s Grok xAI Makes It Clear: AI Poses a Real Threat to Jews,” JTA.org, 10 July 2025.

3 As quoted in Nadell, *Antisemitism*, 47.

Schreiber believed that if Jews were to act properly even their most stubborn enemies, against their intention, would have to relate to such enlightened Jews with respect and esteem. From his reformist position, he held that principal Jewish responsibility for hatred of the Jews lay with the two extremes within the community: the Orthodox on account of their narrow-minded traditionalism and the secularists because of their materialism. Both offered easy targets for the antisemites.... (20).

Schreiber saw a silver lining: antisemitism could promote Jewish self-reflection and improvement. Upon his move to America in 1891, he hoped that, as in Germany, American antisemitism might lead to a renaissance of Jewish scholarship and ethical commitment, a point that he made in his lecture delivered at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. Schreiber, in fact, found a large and receptive Christian audience in several of the eight cities where he found employment: Los Angeles, Little Rock, Spokane, Youngstown, and Chicago. However, despite his erudition and seeming popularity with certain crowds, Schreiber's pugnacious personality and rigid theology ultimately hindered his career in America. Although he never became a major institutional leader in the Reform movement, Meyer compellingly demonstrates his significance as a conduit for transmitting a particular current of German Reform Judaism to the American context.

Rabbi Jeffrey Marx's article brings us back to the topic of antisemitism with a focus on the 1891 Millville, New Jersey strike, when tender boys who worked in the Whitall, Tatum & Co. glassblowing factory refused to work alongside newly hired Jewish boys, who likely came from nearby Jewish agricultural colonies. When the demands of the tender boys were rejected, they held a street parade in the town with banners and drums, shouting "No, no, no more Jews." A second night of protest ensued, during which workers yelled: "We don't care whether we work or not, we won't work with the Jews." Sensationalized reports claiming widespread violence and the expulsion of Jews from the town were published in the press. Despite its brief duration and limited impact, the strike is a notable episode in the history of American antisemitism that foreshadowed future anti-immigrant legislation and movements. For Marx, the Millville strike is yet another example of a "deeper, persistent antisemitism that came to the surface."

In reflecting on these historical episodes, we are reminded of Louis Edward Levy's assertion found in his editor's preface to Simon Wolf's 1895 apologetic work *The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier, and Citizen*:

The truth of history should, indeed, be no less sacred than that of religion. If this is true, and few or none will be found to dispute the proposition, then the records of historic truth may be regarded as part of the gospel of humanity. Such they are, in fact: as the truths of history become disentangled from the maze of sophistry and falsehood in which the passions and follies of mankind envelop them, they teach us first of all the lesson of charity and good-will to men.⁴

In short, as we work to separate fact from fiction, truth from falsehood, we uncover lessons that continue to demand our attention today. By bringing these histories to light, generations of scholars like Dinnerstein, Nadell, Meyer, and Marx have done a service to us all by equipping us with the historical tools to fight the injustices in our own time. Regrettably, antisemitism is not a relic of the past but a persistent and pernicious threat that adapts to each new age—one that demands moral clarity and sustained scholarly inquiry. As Twain is reputed to have said, "history doesn't repeat itself, but it does rhyme."

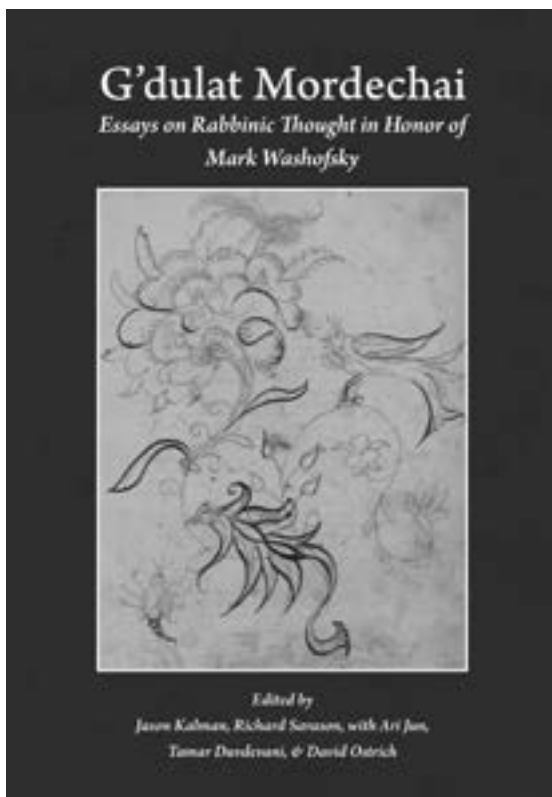
Dana Herman
Cincinnati, Ohio

4 Louis Edward Levy, "Editor's Preface" to Simon Wolf, *The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier, and Citizen* (Philadelphia: Levytype, 1895), viii.



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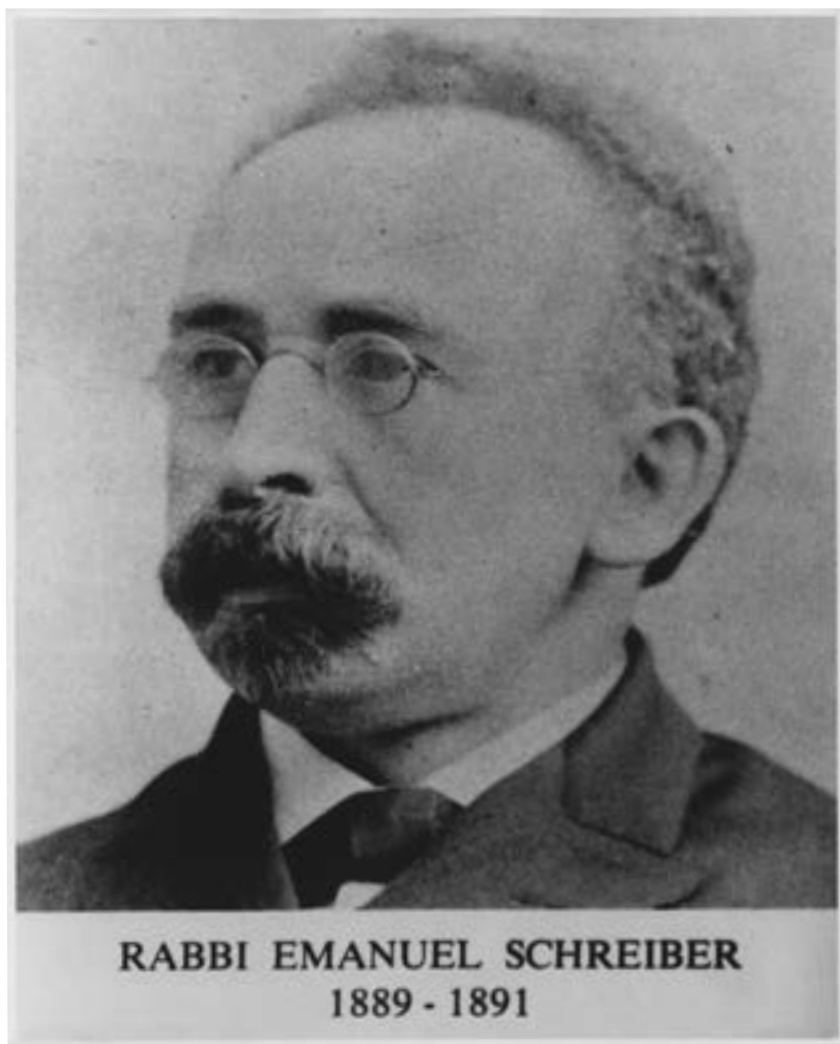


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(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

Rabbi Emanuel Schreiber (1852–1932): The Frustrated Career of an Obsessed Reformer in Germany and America

MICHAEL A. MEYER

Part One: Germany

By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, modern Jewish religious trends were well established in Central Europe. To varying degrees, each represented an adaptation of Judaism to the contemporary context. German Jews had created a conservative stream whose rabbis were ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary in Breslau, founded in 1854, while both more liberal and expressly reform-minded Jews were drawing their leadership from the Higher Institution for Academic Jewish Studies (the Hochschule) in Berlin, founded in 1872. The proponents of a Germanized orthodoxy had their religious focus in the Rabbinical Seminary (Rabbinerseminar) founded in Berlin in 1873. In the United States, too, Jewish religious life was organizing on a nationwide basis with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) coming into existence in 1873 and its Reform seminary, Hebrew Union College, in 1875. Conservative and Orthodox national institutions followed somewhat later. The factions in each country had newspapers that advocated for their interests while seeking to diminish the reputation of their competitors. Within German Liberal and Reform Judaism a new generation of rabbinical leadership was coming into view, not as original as its predecessor during the 1840s but no less caught up in a rivalry of interpretation with the opposing streams.

Rabbi Emanuel Schreiber was a member of the younger generation of rabbis in Central Europe whose career, like that of others before him, would lead him from Germany to America and from strict Orthodoxy

to radical Reform. He was not a leading figure within the rabbinate but a significant representative of the ongoing conflict over the true nature of Judaism and its relationship to the modern environment. His divisive religious views and pugnacious personality repeatedly set obstacles in his path, frustrating his ascent. Yet he was a prolific and forthright exponent of his interpretation of Judaism who gained the respect of some colleagues and congregants even as he evoked the anger of others. Thus, his biography reflects the ongoing religious struggles within modern Judaism. It is, moreover, a tale that has yet to be told.¹

Emanuel Schreiber was born on 13 December 1852, into an Orthodox family in Leipnik (now Lipnik nad Bécvou), in northeast Moravia, the present-day Czech Republic. Although a small Jewish community, Leipnik boasted a *yeshiva* that drew students from all over Europe. As a youth, Schreiber was able to study there with his learned father, Hermann Schreiber, grandfather Josef Löwy Schreiber, and thereafter with the scholarly Rabbi Moses Bloch, who would later teach Talmud and codes at the rabbinical seminary in Budapest. For a time, he also undertook secular studies at a gymnasium in the nearby town of Kremsier. When he was fifteen or sixteen, Schreiber was ready to pursue advanced Jewish studies with Rabbi Esriel Hildesheimer, who headed a significant *yeshiva* (titled “Rabbinats-Schule”) in Eisenstadt, Hungary. When Hildesheimer moved to Berlin in 1869 as the rabbi of the Orthodox Adass Jisroel community, his student followed him shortly thereafter and initially continued to study with his teacher, although apparently not after Hildesheimer became the founding head of the Orthodox Rabbinical Seminary. In Berlin, Hildesheimer was soon unable to hold on to his student. Before long, the young Schreiber became attracted to the teachings of Rabbi Abraham Geiger, whose lectures he first attended at the

1 Although not totally accurate, the best compact source for basic factual information on Schreiber is *Biographisches Handbuch der Rabbiner* 2, no. 2, ed. Michael Brocke and Julius Carlebach (K.G Saur, 2009): 554–555. No extensive study has been devoted to his life and writings. The only scholarly article on him deals principally with only one period of his life: William M. Kramer and Reva Clar, “Emanuel Schreiber: Los Angeles’ First Reform Rabbi, 1885–1889,” *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly* 9 (1976–1977): 354–370; 10 (1977): 38–55.

independent Veitel Heine Ephraimische Lehranstalt (where he may also have studied with the great Jewish scholar Moritz Steinschneider), and then at the newly established Hochschule.² Simultaneously, as was customary in Germany, he worked toward a doctoral degree, which he received from Heidelberg University in July 1873.³

Geiger soon replaced Hildesheimer as Schreiber's mentor, his evolutionary conception of Judaism overriding Hildesheimer's moderated orthodoxy. The now elderly Geiger's thought and personality made an unforgettable impression on his students. Of his new teacher Schreiber wrote:

Whoever had the good fortune to hear Geiger lecture, who in the true sense of the word sat as a student at the feet of the master, whether he intended to or not, was necessarily enraptured and excited for Judaism by his enthusiasm, honest conviction, warmth, powerful originality, brilliant eloquence, and sparkling unexpected flashes of ideas.... Rarely can a professor take credit for his lectures having stimulated [his students] as did Geiger's. That is something everyone must admit who even for a single hour heard him speak—whether or not he shared his views on Judaism. To his students he was not only a teacher, but a friend, a protector who, wherever he could and in the most touching way, stood by them in word and deed.⁴

But Geiger was not the sole disruptive influence in Schreiber's hitherto traditional Jewish life. Among his fellow students at the Hochschule,

2 Schreiber would later claim that he first encountered the name "Abraham Geiger" as a boy of ten or eleven in the study house of his hometown. A false rumor had arisen that Geiger had died, whereupon the gathered scholars joyously recited the words from the *Shulchan Arukh*: "Ba'avod reshaim rinah, when evil men perish there is joy." E. Schreiber, "The Shulchan Aruch," *Jewish Reformer*, 19 March 1886, p. 10. Thanks to Professor Jason Kalman for locating these words for me in *Kizur Shulchan Arukh*, "Yoreh Deah," 345.

3 Information on his studies in Heidelberg where the report, signed by multiple faculty members indicating that they were "satisfied" with his oral examination in traditional Jewish sources, is contained in the archives of the Heidelberg University, H-IV-102/77.

4 Dr. Emanuel Schreiber, *Abraham Geiger als Reformator des Judenthums* (Skrzeczek, 1879), 144. To my knowledge, this close relationship between Geiger and his students at the Hochschule has not previously been noted.

he mentions Immanuel Löw who, like his father, Leopold Löw, would become a leader of the non-Orthodox Neologist trend in Hungary, and two Americans: Emil G. Hirsch, who from his pulpit in Chicago would become the leader of the Reform movement's radical wing in America, and Felix Adler, son of Rabbi Samuel Adler of New York's Temple Emanu-El, destined to be the founder of the non-Jewish Ethical Culture movement.⁵ Like Schreiber, Hirsch and Adler became devotees of Geiger. Years later, Schreiber recalled that time:

At the celebration of Geiger's last birthday, May 10th, 1874, we students of the Hochschule selected Hirsch as our spokesman to make the speech presenting him our gift consisting of a very old, rare edition of a Hebrew Bible. For a year Hirsch and myself occupied a room on Zimmerstrasse. Every morning, from four to six o'clock, we studied Talmud and commentaries. Hirsch and Felix Adler were the only students of the Hochschule who openly disregarded the Jewish dietary laws and did not cover their heads during the Talmudic lectures of Dr. Israel Loewy.⁶

Schreiber remained in contact with Hirsch after the latter's return to America and became closely associated with him during the half decade that he would spend in Chicago.

In 1873, during his Hochschule years, Schreiber delivered a student sermon for Rosh Hashanah at a small synagogue on the Potsdamer Strasse in Berlin. Upon the request of his listeners, he was persuaded to self-publish his homily, promising to direct whatever proceeds its sale

5 Schreiber does not mention a third American student, Samuel Sale, who would serve for many years as the rabbi of Congregation Shaare Emeth in St. Louis. Later, in the United States, like other Reform rabbis, Schreiber would become a severe critic of Adler and the Ethical Culture movement. See Emanuel Schreiber, *Reform Judaism and its Pioneers: A Contribution to its History* (Spokane Printing Company, 1892), 339 n.

6 Dr. Emanuel Schreiber, "Reminiscences of Emil G. Hirsch," *Reform Advocate*, 26 May 1923, p. 568. Schreiber here reports that the observant Loewy, although himself a critical analyst of the Talmud, refused to greet Geiger when he encountered him at the Hochschule. Hirsch shared Schreiber's veneration of Geiger, whom he regarded as, next to his own father, his most valued teacher. See Bernice A. Heilbrunn, "Emil G. Hirsch and Chicago Jewish Progressives" (PhD diss., University of Houston, 2012), 47.

might generate to impoverished Jewish students. He dedicated it to his recently departed father who, he noted, had been unjustly persecuted, was regarded by some as an enemy, and had been declared a heretic. (Schreiber could not yet know that he, too, would be deemed an enemy of Judaism.) Like his later writings, this sermon bulged with citations from Bible and Talmud, which were not simply the attempt of a student to display his erudition but also characteristic of Schreiber's later writing.

For a hopeful young man, this earliest published sermon is surprisingly pessimistic. Schreiber here chose to describe the human being as "a wanderer, who in darkest night walks aimlessly alone upon an uncharted path where thorns can easily wound him."⁷ Yet the preacher's sentiments ultimately emerge from the darkness to declare that a dawning approaches and at last the true knowledge of God will be abroad. Israel will recognize its high mission to become a light unto the nations and to erect the "world temple" where all shall worship as one. The sermon's title, "Emanuel," perhaps purposefully, refers both to God being with the Jews and to his own name.

When the sermon reached the progressive *Jüdische Volkszeitung* in Leipzig, its correspondent rejoiced that, at a time when "the majority of younger theologians [i.e., rabbis], in their chase after positions, were joining the enemies of progress," one could find an exception in Schreiber's sermon. The reviewer praised his rich talent and his earnest striving toward the light. He believed that the sermon displayed warmth, pious candor, and rich imagery combined with dignified language. The notes indicated competent knowledge of Jewish sources.⁸

The published sermon may also have played a role in Schreiber's gaining his first position. He was chosen as a teacher of history, modern languages, and Latin at the Samson Jewish school in Wolfenbüttel, the same institution where years earlier the Jewish scholars Leopold

7 Emanuel Schreiber, עמנואל (Gott mit uns!). *Die Zukunft des Judenthums, sein Beruf in der Geschichte der Menschheit* (Selbstverlag des Verfassers, 1873), 15.

8 "Literarisches," *Jüdische Volkszeitung. Wochenschrift für Freunde des Fortschritts in Gemeinde und Schule, Synagoge und Leben*, 24 March 1874, p. 94. The review is unsigned but likely by the editor, J. Klingenstein, in Ingelheim.

Zunz and Isaac Marcus Jost had been pupils.⁹ Without doubt, Schreiber would have preferred a rabbinical position; not long after his arrival in Wolfenbüttel, he applied to become the rabbi in Stargard, a city in Pomerania, only to learn that the position had already been filled.¹⁰ A second application, shortly thereafter, for a more desirable teaching position at a shortly to be established and privately maintained Jewish school in Samter, a town in the province of Posen, was more successful, and he was offered a one-year contract.¹¹ He ultimately did not take the offer, since a position as rabbi and preacher for the Jewish community of Elbing in West Prussia became available. In becoming a candidate for it, Schreiber could claim qualification based on rabbinical certification at the Hochschule by no less than four prominent rabbis: Abraham Geiger of Berlin, Lazarus Adler of Cassel, Elias Grünebaum of Landau, and Leopold Stein of Frankfurt am Main.¹² For most members of the Elbing community the choice of this twenty-three-year-old disciple of the famous Abraham Geiger was lastingly welcome. His sermons appealed both to their reason and their feelings. His sonorous voice and understanding of the individual religious life aroused a new interest in Judaism within this not insignificant community.¹³ The religious services, which earlier had been sparsely attended even on the High Holidays, now pleased both men and women within “the intelligent portion of the community.” Even hitherto indifferent members

9 “Teacher of Congregation Emanuel: Dr. E. Schreiber,” *Reform Advocate*, 4 May 1901, p. 85.

10 Application dated 2 March 1875, CJA, 1A Sta2, Nr. 47, #7807, BI.24, Archiv der Stiftung Neue Synagoge Berlin-Centrum Judaicum.

11 Schreiber had traveled there for an interview, and the board had gone to the trouble of working out a salary arrangement with him, as well as a financial structure for the school. CJA, 1ASA3, Nr. 2, #6786, BI. 155, Archiv der Stiftung Neue Synagoge.

12 “Biographical Sketches of Rabbis and Cantors Officiating in the United States,” *American Jewish Year Book* 5 (1903–1904): 96.

13 An extant sermon celebrating the 89th birthday of Kaiser Wilhelm I in 1876 used biblical and talmudic passages to honor the sovereign under whose rule German Jews were no longer outcast strangers; they felt not merely tolerated but politically and legally equal. *Die irdische Majestät gleicht der himmlischen (Talmud Berachot Folio 58). Festpredigt, gehalten in der Synagoge zu Elbing am Geburtstage Sr. Majestät des Kaisers* (H. Gaartz, 1876).

enjoyed regular Sabbath participation. Without objection from the lay leadership, Schreiber was able to introduce reforms that included girls' confirmation, a German prayer before entry of the Sabbath, reading of the Haftarah in the vernacular, and limiting the central prayer, the Shemoneh Esrei, to a single recitation. A women's group organized itself under his aegis, and the religious school, led by Rabbi Schreiber, quickly grew to about sixty boys and girls.¹⁴ Their new rabbi appeared to have made his first pulpit an appreciated success. Yet not all members of the community were pleased with the extent of his reforms, in particular his decision that neither he nor the boys in his religion class would cover their heads in class.

For German Jews, the decade from 1870 to 1880 was marked by the need to deal with the widespread resentment provoked by the complete political emancipation they had been granted when the Second Reich was proclaimed in 1871. At the beginning of that decade, August Rohling had drawn on the classical anti-Jewish work of Johann Andreas Eisenmenger when publishing his infamous *The Talmud Jew*. Toward its end, Heinrich von Treitschke, politician and professor at the prestigious University of Berlin, entered the fray with his critique of contemporary secular Jews as well as observant ones. These and other anti-Jewish writings produced a variety of Jewish and non-Jewish reactions. While some Jews succumbed to the pressure and converted to Christianity, others reacted by reasserting their Jewishness.¹⁵ Leading figures in German Judaism, along with some Christians, published refutations. Given Schreiber's ambition to make himself more broadly known, it is not surprising that he should want to be among the public defenders.

One of the Jews' non-Jewish defenders was a local judge in Löbau,

14 Anonymous report from Elbing in April, *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, 9 May 1876, p. 302; Siegbert Neufeld, *Geschichte der Jüdischen Gemeinde Elbing*, 2nd ed. (CH-Verlag, 1992), 45–47.

15 Michael A. Meyer, "Great Debate on Antisemitism: Jewish Reaction to New Hostility in Germany, 1879–1881," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 11 (1966): 137–170; Ismar Schorsch, *Jewish Reactions to German Anti-Semitism, 1870–1914* (Columbia University and Jewish Publication Society, 1972); Sanford Ragins, *Jewish Responses to Anti-Semitism in Germany, 1870–1914: A Study in the History of Ideas* (Hebrew Union College Press, 1980).

not far from Elbing, who argued that enmity to Jews is incompatible with genuine intellectuality. Dr. Joseph Kolkmann was well acquainted with both Jewish history and contemporary Jewry. His knowledge and experience had brought him to the conclusion that Jews and Christians possessed common ideals. In a short work, he praised Jewish virtues and the Jews' striving to provide their children with a university education. His tolerant attitude persuaded him that gentile society should allow the German Jews to express those shared ideals through their own modes of worship. However, like proponents of the Jews in revolutionary France a century earlier, he believed that Jewish religious differences did not justify Jewish national ones. Fortunately, he was pleased to note, German Jews in reality no longer constituted a separate nation. At least the non-Orthodox among them had recognized that fact and therefore no longer placed value upon practices that kept them apart, such as observing dietary laws.¹⁶

Kolkmann's defense of a denationalized Judaism undermined the position of those German Jews who out of fear of the antisemitic wave were fleeing Judaism and joining the Christian majority. Among them was Dr. Martin Maas, a prominent Jewish banker in Breslau, who responded to Kolkmann with a justification of his apostasy that constituted a severe indictment of his own origins.¹⁷ He argues that, contrary to Kolkmann's opinion, the Jews had not given up their nationality. It was still there in their observance of kashrut and Jewish national festivals; moreover, their covenant with God set them apart. Even those Jews who had reformed their religion retained a separate *Stammeseigentümlichkeit*, an unexpunged ethnic difference. The only answer to prejudice against Jews, therefore, was not a reform of their religion but their total assimilation within the Christian population, best done by converting and preferably also marrying non-Jews. Maas himself had chosen that path. Decades

16 Dr. Joseph Kolkmann, *Die gesellschaftliche Stellung der Juden* (Skrzeczek, 1876).

17 Dr. M. Maass, *Die soziale Stellung der Juden in Deutschland und das Civil-Ehegesetz. Mit Bezug auf die Schrift des Herrn Dr. J. Kolkmann* (Skrzeczek, 1876). On Maas, see Til van Rahden, *Jews and Other Germans: Civil Society, Religious Diversity, and Urban Politics in Breslau, 1860–1925* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2000), 82, 328.

earlier, his views had called forth criticism from Geiger.¹⁸ Now Geiger's disciple felt called upon to do the same.

In a pamphlet piously dedicated to Geiger's memory and addressed to Maas, Schreiber took a position similar to Geiger's.¹⁹ As he saw it, Maas endeavored to justify his departure from Judaism via its degradation. Even a reformed Judaism, of the sort Kolkmann affirmed, could not, in Maas's view, eliminate the remnants of Jewish nationality that made it incompatible with the modern state. Although Schreiber himself was not opposed in the long run to the interfaith marriages that Maas extolled, the ignoble motives underlying them at present made them, at the very least, undesirable. Marrying a Christian should not be the necessary path to a Jew's gaining social equality. Nor should keeping the dietary laws be an obstacle. Although, as we shall shortly see, kashrut was not a Jewish essential for Schreiber, in a style typical of his polemics, he wrote: "Put your hand on your heart, Herr Dr., do you really believe that the Jew cannot be a good citizen, a good person, even if he keeps his dietary laws?"²⁰ To Maas's highly critical view of classical Judaism—not so different from that of the antisemitic literature—Schreiber counterposed a moral defense of the Talmud, although himself far from regarding it as an authority for the present. Judaism does not need to give way to a higher morality in Christianity, he argued, since Christian morality's foundation lies in Judaism. Hence Maas's conversion and newly adopted role as a missionary for Christianity is without justification.²¹

Schreiber's rabbinical duties in Elbing were sufficiently limited for

18 Abraham Geiger, *Ueber den Austritt aus dem Judenthume. Ein aufgefundenener Briefwechsel* (Kern, 1858); M. Maas, *Zwei Gespräche über den Austritt aus dem Judenthume* (O. Wigand, 1858); Abraham Geiger, *Ueber den Austritt aus dem Judenthume. Offenes Sendschreiben an Herrn M. Maas* (Kern, 1858).

19 Dr. Emanuel Schreiber, *Die sociale Stellung der Juden. Offenes Sendschreiben an Herrn Dr. Maass-Breslau* (L. Prange, 1877).

20 Schreiber, *Die sociale Stellung*, 16.

21 Schreiber's pamphlet came to the attention of Rabbi Ludwig Philippson, who echoed Schreiber's evaluation of Maas: "M. harbors inwardly a deep hatred of Judaism and Jews. But as a missionary he must not relegate them to outright abhorrence. He rather plays half defender and half attacker, the first sweet and gentle, the other bitter, if not poisonous." "Literarischer Wochenbericht," *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, 13 February 1877, p. 104.

him to publish two additional writings in 1877 aside from his response to Dr. Maas. The longer of the two, *The Principles of Judaism*—fully the size of a book (252 pages)—was likewise intended as a defense of the Jews against the current wave of antisemitism.²² But it was more than that: an extended argument for Judaism's superiority to Christianity. Like the reply to Dr. Maas, it, too, was essentially a piece of apologetic writing, and it, too, was dedicated to one of his teachers in Berlin, Moritz Lazarus, who had, like Geiger, played a major role in the Reform movement. Within the last decade, Lazarus, a philosopher and psychologist, had served as the president of the two reforming synods of Leipzig in 1869 and Augsburg in 1871, and as founding head of the Hochschule's governing board.²³ "A Jew, like Professor Lazarus," Schreiber wrote in his dedication, "constitutes the strongest refutation of every attack upon the Jews." Schreiber then proceeded to defend Judaism against its detractors: Rohling on the Ultramontane Catholic side, and the antisemitic *Kreutzzeitung* on the Protestant side; likewise secular non-Jews who, having lost out economically, claimed to have been swindled by Jews or envied Jews their economic advance. His ammunition for defense consists of assembled passages in the Talmud friendly to all humans that he believes constitute the true principles of the Jewish faith. Ever eager to show his erudition, he cites—by his own count—about a thousand ethical sayings from Talmud and midrash complemented by favorable statements made by non-Jews about Jews in modern times. He hoped that this documentary evidence of mutual respect would not only refute the antisemites but also provide material that fellow preachers could use when they set out to defend the Jewish faith in their sermons. Upon

22 Emanuel Schreiber, *Die Principien des Judenthums verglichen mit denen des Christenthums zur Abwehr der neuesten judenfeindlichen Angriffe* (Baumgartner, 1877). The previous year, Schreiber had serialized what would become the chapters of this volume in one of his briefly existing Jewish newspapers: *Israelitisches Gemeindeblatt. Specialorgan für das jüdische Gemeindeleben*. Only a single issue is preserved, that of 8 December 1876. It appeared in Königsberg. Interestingly, the surviving issue includes an advertisement for kosher meat.

23 Lazarus was also head of the Aid Association for Jewish Students, and Schreiber refers to him as his benefactor. During his Hochschule years Schreiber was likely a Lazarus beneficiary.

examining Schreiber's work, Rabbi Ludwig Philippson, editor of the influential *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, concluded that the young rabbi had displayed considerable talent as a writer in defense of Judaism even though he would need to acquire a more methodological approach to his subject as well as a more appealing literary taste.²⁴ Although the work did indeed suffer from a cumbersome style, that fault did not lead to its neglect. Soon after its publication, Schreiber could advertise that *The Principles of Judaism* "was warmly recommended" by such leading lights of the Reform movement as Adolf Jellinek in Vienna, Lazarus Adler in Cassel, Solomon Herxheimer in Bernburg, Grünebaum in Landau, "and many other authorities."²⁵

The third of Schreiber's 1877 publications was much shorter and much more personal and controversial. Titled *Progressive Rabbinism*, it was the cri de coeur of a young rabbi caught in the painful ongoing conflict between traditionalists and secularists while seeking to bridge the gap via religious reform:

There is no denying that at present one of the most difficult situations is that of the Jewish clergyman. He sees before him two wholly detrimental extreme positions: the one ossified, the other torn away from every tie to faith; the latter being those deafened by the thunder of the age. In the center are people who feel a wound and a longing in their hearts, for whom the wide fissure has pressed into their hearts, who are detached from the old structure and miss a new one.... What does one therefore ask from the character of the rabbi? That he possess the strength to wage

24 Ludwig Philippson, "Literarische Notizen aus Bonn," *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, 31 July 1877, p. 494. Years later, in the United States, Schreiber would devote a pamphlet to evaluating Philippson, who likewise lived in Bonn, both as a person and as a Reform Jew. His younger colleague in Bonn declared his senior "most decidedly overrated," not a scholar, and moreover a personal enemy. He did, however, conclude that he should be remembered as an activist in the cause of modern Judaism. Dr. E. Schreiber, Rabbi, Toledo, *Dr. Ludwig Philipson [sic]: A Biographical Sketch* (Bloch & Newman, n.d.).

25 See the inside of the back cover of Emanuel Schreiber, *Uebersicht der jüdischen Geschichte von der babylonischen Gefangenschaft bis zur Gegenwart* (M. Langwiesche, 1880). His short book was still read more than two decades later. See Josef Schrattenholz, "Ein Bischof als Talmudkritiker," *Dr. Bloch's Oesterreichische Wochenschrift*, 15 February 1901, p. 115.

the struggle within himself and outward, that he possess the honesty to recognize its necessity. If he is weak enough to satisfy himself with swaying back and forth, he may as well be lost among the multitude and simply await a Healing Hand. If he is dishonest enough to cover up the struggle so as to offend no one, he is [not fit for his task].²⁶

For Schreiber that task was the struggle for as radical a reform as his community would allow. Were he not to act on his principles, tempered by critical historical knowledge, he believed that he would lack integrity. To act, he wrote, "is what the rabbi, if he is honest, must do whether or not he thereby subjects himself to peril and conflict."²⁷ Schreiber's own willingness to act on his beliefs, regardless of the consequences, was about to bring himself into painful conflict.

It seems that while still a student at the Hochschule, Schreiber had again been called upon to lead a set of High Holiday services, this time at a synagogue in Stettin (Szczecin), northeast of Berlin. A few years later, after he had been given employment in Elbing, a report began to circulate that, during his visit to Stettin, one of the members of that community, while listening to him delivering his Rosh Hashanah sermon, recalled having seen him on his way there sitting in a train station restaurant devouring an unkosher bowl of bouillon. According to the report by an anonymous West Prussia correspondent of the conservative *Israelitische Wochen-Schrift*, edited by Rabbi Abraham Treuenfels, the Stettin community had been aghast at the news and cancelled his return trip for Yom Kippur. In the correspondent's view, this infraction was nothing less than a transplantation of American Reform Judaism onto German soil: "Though perhaps in America there are rabbis who drink *tref* bouillon, in Germany there is no room for such an infraction even within the most radical communities, except for the Reform Congregation in Berlin."²⁸ In response, Schreiber sought to justify his

26 Emanuel Schreiber *Der fortschreitende Rabbinismus! Zum 25 jährigen Landrabbiner-Jubiläum des Herrn Landrabbiner Dr. Lazarus Adler in Cassel, 20 Mai 1877* (L. Prange, 1877), 3, 4.

27 Schreiber *Der fortschreitende Rabbinismus!*, 8.

28 *Israelitische Wochen-Schrift*, 29 March 1877, p. 105.

action by claiming that he had felt weak at the time, and that Jewish law under such circumstances permitted unkosher food. But in truth, the most likely explanation was that, influenced by the American students at the Hochschule, he no longer regarded kashrut as a divine command at all.²⁹

The correspondent was not content merely to bring this violation of Jewish law to broader attention. He was eager to note that an attack had also been made upon Schreiber's intellectual honesty based on a Jewish New Year's message Schreiber had written the previous year for a weekly Jewish community newspaper that he published.³⁰ The *Israelitische Wochen-Schrift* article attacking Schreiber suggested that his message contained material intentionally plagiarized from a sermon that the conservative Rabbi Manuel Joël had published a decade earlier.³¹

29 Three years after this accusation was made, there appeared a small volume titled *Die jüdischen Speisegesetze* (Skrzeczek, 1980), with its author listed as "Theologus." It presented a critical view of the dietary laws. Since the ninety-eight-page volume suggested that, if dietary laws could not easily be abrogated, at least a traveler who could not find kosher food should be dispensed from observance (p. 90), it was believed that Schreiber was behind this pseudonym. See *Biographisches Handbuch der Rabbiner* 2, no. 2, 554–555. However, a contemporary article reveals "Theologus" to have been Rabbi Jakob Stern, who in 1879 had been disciplined for violating ritual law and thereupon left the rabbinate in 1880, became a politician, converted to Christianity, and eventually committed suicide. See a review of this volume by a Dr. Lewis in *Das jüdische Literaturblatt*, edited by the Conservative rabbi Moritz Rahmer, 21 July 1880, p. 120 and the entry on Jakob Stern in *Biographisches Handbuch der Rabbiner* 2, no. 2, 590–591. Stern had published under no less than seventeen pseudonyms.

30 *Israelitische Gemeinde- und Familien-Zeitung. Organ für jüdische Reformbewegung*, co-edited by Schreiber and Rabbi Adolf Guttmann in Hohenems, Tyrol. In an advertisement for the paper, the publisher claimed that this newspaper was "the only organ in all of Germany for the Reform Movement." The advertisement, occurring at the back of Schreiber's *Abraham Geiger als Reformator des Judenthums*, includes praise from the controversial Reform rabbi of Frankfurt, Leopold Stein, and the radically oriented prolific Jewish scholar, Rabbi Nehemiah Brüll. Relevant issues of the newspaper itself appear not to be extant.

31 Joël's text reads: "Ein Jahr nimmt von uns Abschied, das über die Erde ging mit dröhnendem Schalle, ein Jahr, ereignisreich und folgenreich wie nur wenige, ein Jahr, das seine Schrecken warf auf die Brust auch des Berherzttesten, ein Jahr, in welchem die Herzen bebten...." Schreiber's text, as reported, reads: "Wieder nimmt ein Jahr von uns Abschied, das über die Erde ging mit dröhnendem Schalle, ein Jahr bedeutungsvoll für die Politik, bedeutungsvoll für den Kampf zwischen Staat und Kirche, bedeutungsvoll für das Judenthum...."

That was a charge Schreiber denied while adding, "But even that would not have been a serious offense."³²

Schreiber's troubles did not end there. In its issue of 31 July 1878, a correspondent for the *Jüdische Presse*, edited by the Orthodox Rabbi Seligmann Meyer, announced with great regret that the important Rhineland Jewish community in Bonn had elected as its preacher and teacher of religion Dr. Emanuel Schreiber, a man who, according to traditional Jewish law and the opinion of all principled rabbis, was not qualified for the position.³³ Nonetheless, the community's assembled representatives had voted six to three in favor of his engagement. This selection aroused fear that it might lead moderate Orthodox Jews in the city to withdraw from the general community and form a separate organization, as had been done in some of the larger Jewish communities. A few weeks earlier, Rabbi Treuenfels of the *Israelitische Wochenschrift* had written privately to an acquaintance in Bonn of Schreiber's infractions, including a charge published in an Orthodox paper titled *Israelitische Bote*, edited in Bonn by Moritz Baum, that Schreiber's translation of passages from the Talmud proved he was an *am haarez*, an ignorant Jew, and as such not suited for a rabbinate.³⁴ Shockingly, despite the ignoramus charge, Schreiber had been chosen for the position. Never one to take an accusation lying down, Schreiber decided to sue Baum for libel in the local magistrate's court. During the trial, he admitted having drunk

It is persuasive that Schreiber had indeed seen Joël's "Am Schlusse des Jahres 5626 (1866)," contained in his *Fest-Predigten* (Schletter, 1867), 67, but he began with "Wieder" ("Again"), indicating that what had been true earlier was true once more. He then took some words from the Joël sermon, without acknowledgment, to stress the parallel but continued with his own language and content.

32 Schreiber rebuttal, dated Elbing, 2 April, in *Israelitische Wochen-Schrift*, 19 April 1877, p. 123.

33 On the Orthodox press in Germany during this period, see Mordechai Breuer, *Modernity within Tradition: The Social History of Orthodox Jewry in Imperial Germany*, trans. Elizabeth Petuchowski (Columbia University Press, 1992), 166–173.

34 *Jüdische Presse*, 31 July 1878, p. 345. Issues 26 and 27 for 1878 of the *Israelitische Bote*, in which the accusation appeared, have unfortunately not been preserved. Hence it was necessary to rely on its echo in the report in the *Jüdische Presse* signed (ironically) with the pseudonym "Auheb Scholaum."

the bouillon and presented what he regarded as evidence that it was not a violation of biblical law. As for the *am haarez* accusation, he regarded that as the greatest insult for a Jew, especially for a rabbi, since it was the equivalent of calling him a “depraved person.” He then tried to prove that contention by citing talmudic texts. To support his case, Schreiber gathered opinions favorable to his position from a number of Reform rabbis. The defendant, in turn, claimed that the epithet meant only “an unlearned individual.” On 12 December 1878, the judge delivered his verdict. Although it recognized that Baum had dealt in the interest of his religion and that his paper in which Schreiber was attacked had earlier been dubbed by Schreiber a scandal sheet, it sentenced the defendant to a monetary penalty of 150 Mark, whereupon the defendant promised to appeal.³⁵

Some months later, the suit, which seems also to have been directed against Rabbi Meyer, the editor of the *Jüdische Presse*, as having also been involved in the accusation against him, reached a final decision. The case had meanwhile risen to adjudication by the Prussian Supreme Court in Berlin, which presented its verdict on 12 May 1879. Schreiber also won the case at this level, but only on the basis that the expressions used to describe him were outright insulting. His opponents therefore rejoiced that the judgment did not dispute the facts they had presented.³⁶

The accusation against Schreiber in the *Jüdische Presse*, which was edited and published in Berlin and associated with the Orthodox Rabbinerseminar, received wide attention. A Rabbi Hirsch Plato of the Separatist Orthodox community in Cologne, who had testified as an expert witness in the case, brought the matter to the attention of his close friend, Schreiber’s one-time teacher, Esriel Hildesheimer.³⁷ If Schreiber were indeed an *am haarez*, how could Hildesheimer (as he believed) have earlier bestowed on him the honorific title of *haver*, indicating talmudic competence, which Schreiber had used to defend himself in court? Hildesheimer felt he had to make a statement. Attached to a letter

35 *Jüdische Presse*, 1 January 1879, p. 10.

36 “Report from Berlin, May 12,” *Der Israelit*, 21 May 1879, p. 532–533.

37 Mordechai Eliav, ed., *Rabbiner Esriel Hildesheimer Briefe* (Ruben Mass, 1965), 168 n. 42.

addressed to the defendant, Moritz Baum, Hildesheimer sent an official announcement regarding Schreiber:

Annulment

The achievement of the *chaver* title not only implies a certain competence in the religious law, but also requires a presumed commitment to live completely within the sense of its legal prescriptions (see Bekhoroth 30b).³⁸ At the time when the title was presented to him, he displayed an appropriate way of life in accordance with that stipulation. However, since this Dr. Schreiber has meanwhile, both in expression of opinion and in practical life, gone over to the complete opposite, I hereby take back from him the *chaver* title received years ago. It is invalid on account of his lacking the prerequisites.³⁹

The withdrawal of the title did not undermine Schreiber's position in the expanding Jewish community of Bonn. Its leadership, which he claimed had elected him over some forty other candidates, continued to lend him support. Moreover, as mentioned, he did have valid rabbinical degrees from a number of respected German rabbis. Personally, Schreiber was pleased with his election to a more significant Jewish community than Elbing and one amenable to liturgical change. Only one member of the board voted against the synagogue reforms that he soon suggested to them. These centered upon adoption of the moderately reformed Geiger prayer book and included the confirmation ceremony. At the dedication of a new and larger synagogue, which boasted an organ and a mixed choir, Schreiber was able to deliver a well-structured, broadly conceived sermon on "The House of Worship in Our Time."

38 The Talmud passage (Bekhorot 30b), which is cited in the name of Rabbi Meir, reads: "An *am haarez* who accepted the obligations of a *chaver* and who is suspected of violating one religious law is suspected of violating the whole Torah."

39 Hildesheimer to M. Baum in Bonn, 15 January 1879, in Eliav, ed., *Rabbiner Esriel Hildesheimer Briefe*, 129. See also David Ellenson, *Rabbi Esriel Hildesheimer and the Creation of Modern Jewish Orthodoxy* (University of Alabama Press, 1990), 76. Although Hildesheimer here takes responsibility for bestowing the title on his student, years later an anonymous writer in the *Reform Advocate*, 4 May 1901, p. 351 was of the opinion that Schreiber had received the title of Chabar [*sic*] at the age of thirteen from Rabbi Moses Bloch.

In distinguishing between medieval and modern times in that sermon, he noted the recently rising importance of the synagogue, which was increasingly compensating for the diminution of Jewish religious practice outside of it, in the home. Like other Jewish religious reformers, he spoke of a spiritual Zion replacing the one in Palestine, in his case having in mind the synagogue rather than the country in which he lived: “Wherever the word of God is heralded pure and honorably, there is Zion, there is Jerusalem.”⁴⁰ The sermon did not mention the winds of antisemitism blowing destructively outside the synagogue’s walls. In Schreiber’s eyes, German Jews were fortunate that their lives were far more secure than the bitter ones of their medieval ancestors.

Bonn was the site of a major university where years earlier Geiger and Samson Raphael Hirsch had studied together and developed an intense if short-lived friendship. Schreiber believed that in his day the Jewish community had reached a high level of general culture evidenced by the fact that the university included five faculty members who were Jews. In such a town and community, it may have been expected that their rabbi would devote much of his time to scholarly writing. Thus, in the years 1879–1881, Schreiber published not less than six historical essays. Not surprisingly given his overriding concern with contemporary Judaism, his writings did more than provide scholarly innovation; they used history to make ideological points. One of his compositions, in celebration of the new synagogue, was a brief history of Bonn’s Jewish community, focusing on its religious life.⁴¹ Two were biographies of admired German Jews: the fountainhead of Jewish cultural integration, Moses Mendelssohn, and the most significant religious reformer, Abraham Geiger. The fourth was a look at the sources of antisemitism, the fifth on the Talmud, and the sixth an overview of postbiblical Jewish history. The Mendelssohn biography, initially a celebratory address directed to Jews and then a longer lecture to a general audience, was occasioned by the Jewish philosopher’s 150th birthday in 1879. In speaking to his own

40 Emanuel Schreiber, *Das Gotteshaus in unserer Zeit. Festpredigt gehalten bei der Einweihung der neuen Synagoge zu Bonn am 31 Januar 1879* (Skrzeczek, 1879), 22.

41 Emanuel Schreiber, *Die Jüdische Gemeinde Bonn. Festschrift zur Einweihung ihrer neuen Synagoge am 31 Januar 1879* (Universitäts-Buchdruckerei, 1879).

community, Schreiber stressed Mendelssohn's friendship with Gotthold Ephraim Lessing as exemplary for the relation between Jew and non-Jew. Recalling that four years earlier Zunz had written to him that "A Lessing shuts the mouths of a million [antisemitic] hep-hep yellers," Schreiber thought that the same was true also for Mendelssohn: "His life is the best answer for all of the accusations against Jews," he wrote. Drawing upon the rabbinic story of the shepherd Moses and the lost lamb he recovered, Schreiber wrote that this latter-day Moses had likewise returned a stray lamb in that his translation of the Pentateuch brought the Torah "in its purity and without the rust spots of casuistic rabbinic interpretation" back to the Jewish community. Of Lessing Schreiber did not hesitate to write: *zekher zedik livrakbah* ("May the memory of the righteous be a blessing").⁴² For the broader audience, Schreiber focused on Mendelssohn's German convictions at a time when Jews did not yet enjoy civil equality anywhere in the German states and, once again, he held up the model of his relationship with Lessing.⁴³

In writing of Geiger, the disciple identified himself completely with his one-time teacher, seeing him not merely as an instructor but as "a friend to his students and their protector," seemingly also as a father figure to the young Schreiber.⁴⁴ Upon Geiger's death in 1874, he had hurried from Wolfenbüttel to attend his mentor's funeral. Using mainly Geiger's own writings, Schreiber's biography strings together events in Geiger's life with appropriate dates, along with summaries of his writings and his struggles with his opponents. Not surprisingly, he especially stresses Geiger's straightforward defense of religious reforms. Geiger's struggle, as Schreiber here illustrates excessively, was carried—similar to his own—against religious opposition. Although certainly not bringing Geiger to life, Schreiber's biography is comprehensive and includes interesting personal details deriving from the three years that he studied with

42 Emanuel Schreiber, *Moses Mendelssohn und seine Verdienste um das Judenthum. Festrede gehalten bei der Feier des 150 jähr. Geburtstage Mendelssohn's zu Bonn am 6. Sept. 1879* (Krüger, 1879).

43 Emanuel Schreiber, *Moses Mendelssohn's Verdienste um die deutsche Nation* (Verlags-Magazin, 1880).

44 Abraham Geiger als Reformator des Judenthums, 60, 144, 154.

Geiger in Berlin. Scarcely the work of a trained historian, Schreiber's work of more than 150 pages, for all of its shortcomings, deserves mention as the first comprehensive Geiger biography. There would not be another for thirty years.⁴⁵

With the wave of antisemitism continuing at the end of the decade, Schreiber again entered the fray. He praised the defenses published by his better-known contemporaries, the Jewish professors Moritz Lazarus, Harry Bresslau, and Hermann Cohen, and he added a response that differed from theirs in that it focused less upon the antisemites and more upon the Jews. If Mendelssohn was their model, he argued, contemporary Jews had not lived up to it; therefore they shared, at least to a limited degree, responsibility for the animosity directed against them. Schreiber wanted to be a truth-teller. To his mind, describing Judaism and Jews without fault represented a distortion of historical fact. Moreover, it was not the most effective way to combat the Jews' enemies. In a work lengthier than his other writings of that period, which was titled "Self-Criticism," Schreiber initially recounted Jewish virtues reflected in the inner world of the Jews, for example, their Jewish charitable institutions. But—regrettably, he thought—the Jews insufficiently lived up to their faith. Schreiber did not hold them directly responsible for the rise of antisemitism, but since some Jews were providing the antisemites with easy targets, the consequence had been to cast blame on all Jews. The claims of the antisemites could not be fully explained as hateful misperception since "not everything that our enemies raise against us is false. The annual days of *teshuvah*, of repentance, provide the best opportunity to remind us to change our ways."⁴⁶ Thus

45 Ludwig Geiger, ed., *Abraham Geiger. Leben und Lebenswerk* (Berlin, 1910) is a sympathetic but critical work by multiple authors for which his son Ludwig wrote an extensive biography that was followed by eight writers discussing Geiger's various contributions to Jewish scholarship

46 Emanuel Schreiber, *Die Selbstkritik der Juden* (C. Duncker, 1880), 135. It received sufficient attention for it to be reprinted a decade later in Leipzig. On page 135 Schreiber makes reference to an article he had written on the same theme in his above-mentioned newspaper, which he titled "Verstopfet die Quellen des Rischuss" ("Clog the Springs of Jew-Hatred!"). The following year he struck some of the same notes in Emanuel Schreiber, *Der religiöse Zustand im deutschen Israel und die Judenfrage* (Th. Quos, 1881).

a Jewish preacher who urged virtue and morality upon his flock was acting against antisemites not less than the polemicist who sought to refute their arguments. Schreiber believed that if Jews were to act properly even their most stubborn enemies, against their intention, would have to relate to such enlightened Jews with respect and esteem. From his reformist position, he held that principal Jewish responsibility for hatred of the Jews lay with the two extremes within the community: the Orthodox on account of their narrow-minded traditionalism and the secularists because of their materialism. Both offered easy targets for the antisemites. Then, employing an argument as old as the beginnings of Jewish emancipation, he continued: if only the poor Jews would enter productive occupations, that, too, would remove ammunition from the antisemites' armory. Notably, Schreiber's display of self-criticism reached American shores, where Rabbi Bernhard Felsenthal, a radical reformer and biblical critic in Chicago, reviewed it favorably in the first volume of a new German-language American Jewish paper.⁴⁷ While attributing German antisemitism—shocking in so cultured a people as the Germans—fundamentally to non-Jewish envy of Jewish economic success, Felsenthal agreed with Schreiber that some good could come out of it. That good, he believed, was that "our fellow Jews in the old fatherland, or at least a goodly portion of them, have learned to detect an admonishing voice, an earnest wakeup call to reflection, self-examination and reform. As the author says, 'For not *everything* that has been charged against us is unjust.'" The forthright admission of partial culpability that Schreiber urged was, according to Felsenthal, evidence of a solid moral sensitivity.

Even as Schreiber admitted the validity of some antisemitic arguments against Jews and Judaism but rejected comprehensive condemnation, so did he find merit in antisemitic disapproval of certain passages in the Talmud even as he strongly identified himself with others. In a short work evaluating the Talmud from the standpoint of modern Judaism, Schreiber dissociated himself from the minutiae of its halakhic portions.

47 Bernhard Felsenthal, "Vom Büchertisch," *Der Zeitgeist. Ein israelitisches Familienblatt. Organ für die Interessen des amerikanischen Judenthums* 1 (1880): 253. Although signed only with the initial "F," the review was almost certainly by Felsenthal.

The Talmud, he wrote in a published essay, had to be understood not as black or white but “equally as shadow and light.”⁴⁸ The critics of the Talmud—August Rohling, Wilhelm Marr, and their ilk—had called attention only to the shadows. They had neglected the great treasures lying not in the halakhah but the aggadah. It was in the moral insights of the aggadah that Schreiber found the basis for ongoing attachment to this classical document. By first discussing halakhah and then aggadah, he was able to move from the negative aspect to the positive, from what he rejected in the Talmud to what—at least if one omitted some of its fantasies—he affirmed. The ancient rabbis had regarded the aggadah as a stepchild, he thought; for him, it became the Talmud’s still-inspiring source of wisdom for the moral life. To illustrate his viewpoint, Schreiber collected no less than 210 appealing apothegms drawn from the pages of the Talmud. Although Schreiber’s work thus sought to find value in the Talmud, like so many of his earlier writings, this essay was bound to arouse severe criticism from the Orthodox. Especially irritating was the proposal to his fellow Jews with which he ended: “For enlightened Jews the Talmud possesses only cultural, historical, and scholarly value. However, in practical terms it lacks all authority. Its ethics meets with our approval on its own account, but we absolutely reject the inhumane passages it contains.”⁴⁹ For Schreiber, as was already the case a generation earlier for Rabbi Samuel Holdheim, the Talmud was a treasure trove of ethical gems but, in its totality, merited no authority over the modern Jew.⁵⁰

At this time Schreiber received an attractive offer that appealed to his self-regard as a historian. For many years, a textbook for Jewish school children and their families containing stories from the Bible had enjoyed widespread popularity within German Jewry. As a new fourth

48 Emanuel Schreiber, *Der Talmud vom Standpunkte des modernen Judenthums* (Wilhelm Issleib, 1881), Foreword.

49 Ibid., 52.

50 A review in a conservative Jewish newspaper, *Das jüdische Literaturblatt*, 5 October 1881, pp. 161–162, signed only with the letter “C,” accused Schreiber of having produced a shoddy work that drew on secondary sources rather than directly on the Talmud and suggested that its author was a *mumar lehakhis* (a renegade who seeks to anger).

printing was about to appear, the authors (or the publisher) decided to increase the volume's value by supplementing it with interspersed contextualizations for the biblical tales, as well as a broad, critical survey of postbiblical Jewish history.⁵¹ For this purpose they turned to Rabbi Schreiber, probably without knowing what they would be getting! In expanding the biblical text, Schreiber chose to mention that Jews do not believe in Original Sin, that other ancient peoples likewise had their flood stories, and that, in Persian lore, too, Sinai was regarded as a holy mountain. It mattered not that children could have little understanding of Original Sin and that Schreiber's additions would diminish the inspirational value of the biblical text. In composing his historiographical supplement—more a bloodless recounting of facts than a stimulating portrayal of personalities—Schreiber sought to live up to university-level objectivity and sophistication, although, in fact, his work was scarcely nonpartisan. Notably, Schreiber was concerned to stress that, with the destruction of the ancient state and temple, the Jews ceased to be a nation, and their history thenceforth was that of a religious community. Like Geiger and unlike the historian Heinrich Graetz, he asserted that it was dominantly the Jewish spirit (*Geist*) rather than the Jewish ethnicity that was the marker of Jewish identity.⁵² For all of his "critical approach," Schreiber not only accepted the story that Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai had been carried alive out of Jerusalem in a coffin but chose to declare the ancient rabbi to have been a savior and reformer of Judaism. Like Graetz, Schreiber was less favorable to the Hasidim than to their antagonist, the Gaon of Vilna, and, also like Graetz, he found the modern

51 Abraham Jakob Cohn and Abraham Dinkelspiel, eds., *Erzählungen der Heiligen Schrift für Israeliten. Zum Schul- und Privatgebrauch bearbeitet. Vierte, vermehrte, wissenschaftlich bearbeitete und mit einer kurzgefaßten Geschichte des Judenthums versehene Auflage von Dr. Emanuel Schreiber* (Langewiesch, 1880). Schreiber reprinted his section in a separate publication: Emanuel Schreiber, *Uebersicht der jüdischen Geschichte von der babylonischen Gefangenschaft bis zur Gegenwart* (Langewiesch, 1880).

52 Ironically, Geiger's views were closer to those of Graetz than were those of Geiger's disciple Schreiber, increasingly so in the course of time. See Michael A. Meyer, "From Combat to Convergence: The Relationship between Heinrich Graetz and Abraham Geiger," in *Reappraisals and New Studies of the Modern Jewish Experience: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Seltzer*, ed. Brian M. Smollett and Christian Wiese (Brill, 2015), 145–161.

period of Jewish history to have begun with Mendelssohn. Recognizing that a work for the young should conclude on an optimistic note and not wanting to end with a partisan statement, Schreiber led up to the conclusion that, although there remained much to be done for the welfare of Judaism, all Jews should admit that, given the advances of the last five decades, there was reason to look forward to a bright future. To Schreiber's dismay, his work was not greeted with the enthusiasm that he expected, even in non-Orthodox circles. The objection was principally pedagogical. Putting the Bible into historical context was not the way to persuade children to identify with their faith. Even a reviewer for the principal reformist paper, the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, wrote in condemnation: "It should be removed very quickly from the schools if it is not to cause incalculable damage to our religion and to our religious community."⁵³

Schreiber believed himself not only a historian but also a penetrating critic of the historical work of others who were far better known than himself. He decided to take on no less than Graetz, whose eleven-volume history of the Jews had recently been completed and was enjoying wide distribution. Within the antisemitism debate, Graetz's magnum opus had become a lively topic of discussion after Treitschke attacked it for the manner in which the Jewish historian engaged in disturbing Jewish self-glorification while slandering German Christendom. Given Treitschke's status as a German historian and their own rejection of Graetz's Jewish nationalism, prominent Jews were reluctant to come to the historian's defense, preferring to dissociate themselves from him. Schreiber agreed with this policy of dissociation but expanded his critique of Graetz beyond the apologetics of other Jewish respondents. His analysis of Graetz's history dealt with it more broadly: with the nature of the historiography in general and even the character of its author. Ironically, the dim view Schreiber held of Graetz put him in accord with Hildesheimer, his one-time teacher and then antagonist. Graetz's oeuvre and the Breslau seminary where he taught were unacceptable for

53 A lengthy unpaginated review by a Mr. (or Ms.) Becker from the very small town of Tirschtiel (today Trazciel in Poland) in *Beilage zu Nr. 6 der Allgemeinen Zeitung des Judentums*, 8 February 1881. The Orthodox Jewish press simply chose to ignore it.

an Orthodox Jew as they were for a radical reformer.

Hildesheimer was a sworn opponent of the middle-of-the-road Jewish seminary in Breslau where Graetz taught. He did respect the learning of its director, the late Rabbi Zacharias Frankel, and he appreciated that Frankel excluded biblical criticism from both the seminary's curriculum and the scholarly *Monatsschrift* that he edited.⁵⁴ But Hildesheimer had to condemn Frankel's most important work, *Darkhei ha-Mishnah*, because it attributed agency to the Tannaitic teachers instead of seeing them merely as vessels of biblical revelation. Moreover, Frankel bore responsibility for seminary students, who Hildesheimer believed were not fully observant of Jewish ritual laws, as well as for a faculty that included the arch-heretic Graetz. When students wanted to transfer from his seminary in Berlin to Frankel's in Breslau, Hildesheimer sought to discourage them, fearing that they would become closet hypocrites. He believed that Judaism was trodden upon at the Breslau institution, and the result was clear in its graduates: "How tiny is the difference in principle between these [Breslau] Reformers who do their work with silken gloves on their hands and the Reformer Geiger who attacks with a mallet or sledgehammer," he wrote to an acquaintance.⁵⁵ Among Hildesheimer's opponents, he believed Graetz was the most dangerous on account of his influence within German Judaism. As he saw it, Graetz drove his innocent students, one after the other, downward to a level that was "worse than that of *poshe yisrael* [sinners in Israel]." They became "hypocrites, Jesuits, heretics—like Graetz."⁵⁶ Although their teacher might make a show of observance in his personal life, Hildesheimer noted, he does not believe literally in revelation of the Oral Law or even the Written Law. No one more than himself, Hildesheimer claimed with pride and

54 However, once Graetz took over as editor, Hildesheimer regarded the *Monatsschrift* as heretical. See Graetz to A[lliance] I[sraélite] U[niverselle], 24 December 1847, in Reuven Michael, ed., *Heinrich Graetz. Tagebuch und Briefe* (J. C. B. Mohr, 1977), 344.

55 Hildesheimer to Rabbi Zeev Wolf Feilchenfeld in Düsseldorf, during the week of Parashat Hāyyei Sarah, 5621, in E. Hildesheimer, "Rabbi Esriel Hildesheimer on Zacharias Frankel and the Rabbinical Seminary in Breslau" [Hebrew], *Ha-Ma'ayan*, Tishrei 1953, p. 66. The editor presents the German letter in Hebrew translation.

56 Hildesheimer to Rabbi Zeev Wolf Feilchenfeld, 68.

resolution, stands so incessantly armed for battle against him, his school, and his following. In short, for the head of the Berlin Orthodox rabbinical seminary, Graetz was as deleterious to Judaism as was Schreiber—who, it turns out, fully agreed with his one-time teacher's negative view of the Breslau historian, both for similar reasons and for very different ones.

Even the language that Schreiber used in writing of the Breslau seminary and its graduates echoed that of Hildesheimer. He, too, thought that its “half-orthodox” rabbis were hypocrites and Jesuits. They had come up with the “super-smart opinion that the rabbi could think whatever he wanted but needed to cleverly hide it when in contact with ‘uneducated people.’”⁵⁷ Neither the far right nor the far left, it seems, could tolerate a centrist position and felt compelled to find it religiously and morally illegitimate. But Schreiber had an additional reason to be prejudiced against the Breslau seminary. Back in 1854, its lay founders had chosen Frankel to be its first director despite the fact that the preparatory work for it had been done by Geiger, his revered mentor, who fully expected to receive the position and was deeply disappointed when it was not tendered to him.

However, as for Hildesheimer so also for Schreiber, the chief culprit deserving the most severe criticism was the seminary's famous historian. Schreiber decided to write a lengthy essay on Heinrich Graetz's eleven-volume history of the Jews. He wanted to show that, contra Treitschke, Graetz's history was not, as Treitschke claimed, a “standard work” representative of the German Jews. The reason was simply that there was no legitimate faction in German Jewry that his volumes represented. Reading the Breslau orientation out of existence, Schreiber claimed that “German Jewry today consists of Orthodox and Reform Jews. Both orientations are too dreadfully mishandled for either to regard Graetz's history as their ‘standard work.’”⁵⁸ Schreiber's approach to the subject was clear in the very title that he gave to his analysis of Graetz's writing. He did not name it “Graetz's Historiography,” but *Grätz's Geschichtsbauerei*

57 Emanuel Schreiber, *Abraham Geiger als Reformator des Judenthums*, 11 n.

58 Emanuel Schreiber, *Grätz's Geschichtsbauerei* (W. Issleib, 1881), Vorwort, iii.

("Graetz's Faulty Attempt at Constructing History"). It was less a summary of his volumes than an attempt to show how Graetz's work revealed cynical hypocrisy, misjudgment, and severe bias. In volumes one and two, dealing with ancient history, the author had repeatedly avoided acknowledging divine intervention by using language that could be ambiguously interpreted in religious or secular terms. In instance after instance, as Schreiber points out with numerous examples, he had used ambiguous language that the reader could interpret as he chose. Where Graetz might have written "God revealed," he wrote instead "the people was firmly convinced" or, with regard to miracles, "as it is related."⁵⁹ In volume two, Graetz had heretically put forward: "Seemingly, God appeared on Mount Sinai."⁶⁰ While claiming to be a Jew of traditional belief and practice, his writing, carefully examined, was that of a closet biblical critic. He was flying under a false flag. It was because Graetz engaged in unacknowledged criticism that Hildesheimer had declared him a heretic; it was because he did not forthrightly admit it that Schreiber declared him dishonest.

If Schreiber and Hildesheimer were for their own reasons united in criticizing Graetz as a scholar of biblical history, they were almost totally at odds with regard to their view of Graetz's eleventh volume, the one dealing with the period from 1750 to 1848. They were *almost* totally at odds because Hildesheimer would no doubt have agreed with Schreiber that Graetz devoted inordinate attention to well-known Jewish figures such as the poet Heinrich Heine, the essayist Ludwig Börne, and the *salonnière* Rahel Varnhagen, who all three had converted to Christianity. Although they might have been good Germans, Schreiber thought that converts did not deserve such extended treatment. But if Hildesheimer was likely in agreement on excluding apostates from Jewish history, he could scarcely agree with Schreiber's vigorous defense of the Jewish reformers whom Graetz had attacked without mercy. In his final volume, Schreiber fumed, Graetz had slandered the Reform movement, especially Moses Mendelssohn's disciple David Friedländer, whom Schreiber

⁵⁹ Ibid., 95.

⁶⁰ Heinrich Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, Volume 2 (Oskar Leiner, 1875), 193. The German term Graetz used, translated here as "seemingly," is *scheinbar*.

viewed with sympathy even though he could not condone his well-known letter offering conversion. As Schreiber saw it, Graetz's hypocrisy lay not only in his playing at the role of faithful traditional Jew while subtly denying literal revelation at Sinai; he had heaped devastating unmerited criticism on those individuals who openly and forthrightly sought to bridge the gap between tradition and modernity via religious reform. In his view, the Graetz of volume one was a secular critic; the Graetz of volume eleven was an Orthodox Jew. As for the vast historical territory between the two volumes, Schreiber emulated an earlier critique of specifics by Geiger, who personally identified with certain historical characters, especially Renaissance Jews, while declining to see in others a positive message for present times.

Schreiber expected that his more polemical than impartial treatment of Graetz's writing would arouse loud calumny among his enemies, but not that it would fail to gain support even among his supporters. "We hear them already, those barking yappers, how they howl and rage, and we hear already those friends how they tell us—'in our own self-interest': Why pierce a hornets' nest, let others pull the chestnuts from the fire—and all such clever ways of speaking."⁶¹ Yet in some Reform circles Schreiber's wholesale rejection of Graetz's historiography did receive a positive response. Again, it was Felsenthal, the Chicago rabbi, who publicly shared a Schreiber position. According to Felsenthal, it was unfortunate that Graetz had written a history of the Jews, since the impetus to embark on this difficult task was thereby taken away for generations into the future.⁶² However, unlike some of Schreiber's earlier writings, this one seems to have been ignored in Germany, perhaps because by the time it appeared, its author may already have been preparing to abandon Europe for America.

In Bonn, Schreiber succeeded in splitting the community. When one of his supporters, Marcus Spanier, passed away, he saw an opportunity to deride those persons who had increasingly made his position as their rabbi untenable. He delivered a eulogy in which he praised the

61 *Grätz's Geschichtsbauerei*, iv.

62 *Ibid.*, 66. Schreiber had become aware of Felsenthal's view and cited it in his work.

departed as “a *man* when *men* in our time are rare, especially within our community.”⁶³ Ill-willed opponents thereupon spread the word that he had regarded the deceased as the *only* one in the community who deserved the honorable accolade of “man.” That was almost certainly not the case. But Schreiber may well have been correct that there were few like the departed Mr. Spanier in fully accepting his critical approach to Jewish tradition. He had stood with his rabbi in combatting “the enemies of progress” who, according to Schreiber, perhaps nowhere else displayed such zealous wickedness and fanatical malice as they did in his community.⁶⁴ Schreiber, the injudicious fighter for his cause, was clearly defeated. He no longer saw a future for his radical views or for himself as an uncompromising Reform rabbi in Germany. As he recollected many years later, by the 1880s, the trend toward the reform of Judaism, which had moved forward for two generations, had begun to move in reverse: “With the exception of a very few younger rabbis...a veritable wave of Orthodoxy and Conservatism had broken over Judaism in Germany.”⁶⁵ So Schreiber’s eyes turned to the West:

Look over at America! There no one needs to belong to a religious community. There religion is de facto a private matter. And yet what a magnificent, imposing Jewish communal life. Synagogues, communities, each with rabbis and ritual arrangements of their respective orientations, are legion in New York, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, Chicago, Baltimore, St. Louis, etc. And what synagogues, hospitals, orphanages! And all of that without compulsion! Only those of similar views in each congregation. As a result no such vehement fights, no such agitations, mutual suspicions, slanders, intrigues and machinations within one and the same community. What doesn’t belong together should exist apart.⁶⁶

63 Emanuel Schreiber, *Worte der Trauer, gehalten am Grabe des sel. Marcus Josef Spanier in Bonn am 2. September 1881* (G. Heimann, 1881), 3.

64 Ibid., 7.

65 Emanuel Schreiber, “Personal Memories,” *B’nai B’rith Messenger*, Los Angeles, 7 June, 1929, p. 81. Cited in Kramer and Clar, “Emanuel Schreiber: Los Angeles’ First Reform Rabbi,” 356.

66 *Der religiöse Zustand*, 17.

Shortly after writing these words, Schreiber was on his way to the United States where, to his chagrin, controversy regarding his views and actions did not cease.

Part Two: America

By November 1881, Schreiber had accepted a rabbinate in Mobile, Alabama, the oldest city in the state, albeit a declining town of about 30,000 residents that, at a time of continuing economic depression, was deeply in debt. Congregation Sha'arai Shomayim had joined the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) three years earlier and considered, but decided not to use, Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise's prayerbook, *Minhag America*. Since the temple had about one hundred members and was well sustained by a few wealthy individuals, its rabbinate seemed a desirable position. When the pulpit became vacant, Schreiber sent a written application that impressed the board of trustees with the candidate's academic qualifications, including his being a disciple of the renowned Abraham Geiger, whose reputation had apparently reached Mobile.

But Schreiber did not remain in Mobile very long. It was but the first stop in a peregrination that would take him repeatedly from one congregation and one city to another and then yet another. During his Mobile period, which lasted scarcely more than a year, he did not publish any writings and seems to have devoted himself to mastering the English language, in which he was unsurprisingly imperfect. He did have occasion to display his erudition when he presented an English version of the evaluative lecture on the Talmud that he had published in Germany to a local Philharmonic Society that had been established by members of the congregation.⁶⁷ However, like the synagogues Schreiber had served in Germany, Sha'arai Shomayim was divided among proponents and opponents of religious reform. A few months after his arrival, the result of consecutive heated congregational meetings was a vote against allowing men to worship without hats. Clearly the congregation was not ready

67 The lecture, delivered on 14 May 1882, was serialized in the *American Israelite* for 9 June 1882 and 7 July 1882. It was later published as Emanuel Schreiber, *The Talmud: A Series of Lectures* (Inter-Ocean Printing House, 1884).

to adopt Schreiber's desired pace of reform.⁶⁸

When, only a few months after his arrival in Mobile, the opportunity arose for a more challenging and lucrative position in the larger Jewish community of Denver, Colorado, Schreiber successfully applied. On his way north and west he stopped in St. Louis, where he preached to a large crowd at Temple Shaare Emeth and was reported to have "made a very favorable impression, both by a pleasant delivery and a scholarly and finished interpretation of the Divine Word."⁶⁹ An anonymous local fellow rabbi, writing in the *American Israelite*, found him to be "a professional brother who evinces the marks of faithfulness, of winning modesty, and of a cordiality so much lacking in many an American rabbi." He concluded: "Matters must go very wrong if a brilliant future is not in store for him." Alas, it soon became apparent that matters could go very wrong—again and again.

The Denver congregation's trustees were sufficiently impressed by Schreiber's European credentials to offer him a generous salary and a three-year contract. When he arrived in the growing Rocky Mountain city in 1883, its Temple Emanuel had just constructed a new and larger synagogue. In return for his compensation, he was expected to deliver sermons within it alternately in German and English. But once again his obsession with reform versus orthodoxy did him in. Although Temple Emanuel was not Orthodox, the range of belief and observance in its midst required a measure of respect for tradition and not the ingrained ridicule of Orthodoxy that Schreiber was constitutionally unable to overcome and for which the congregational board found it necessary to rebuke him. Temple Emanuel used Wise's *Minhag America*, a prayerbook more traditional than Geiger's, which was the one that Schreiber had used in Bonn.

While at Temple Emanuel, Schreiber delivered a Hanukkah sermon

68 On Schreiber in Mobile, see Robert J. Zietz, *The Gates of Heaven: Congregation Sha'arai Shomayim: The First 150 Years. Mobile, Alabama 1844–1994* (Congregation Sha'arai Shomayim, 1994), 71–76.

69 Ben Abi, "St. Louis," *American Israelite*, 13 April 1883, p. 338. According to a report in the *American Israelite*, 1 September 1882, p. 71, he had earlier lectured at Bene Israel (the current Rockdale Temple) in Cincinnati.

titled “Old and Modern Maccabees” and produced an accompanying holiday program that received extensive attention in the *American Israelite*. For the modern Jew, Schreiber thought, Hanukkah should not focus on the cruse of oil that miraculously lasted for eight days. That story could not capture the interest of the young. Jews should rather glorify the Maccabees as their historical heroes just as America glorified its founding fathers. “Judah Maccabee did for the Jews more than Washington for the Americans.... Hanukkah is for us the celebration of both political and religious liberty and independence.”⁷⁰ Like the Hellenizing assimilationists of ancient times, Jews in the modern world had begun selling their birthrights. It was then that Reform Judaism first emerged. Its leaders were the modern Maccabees fighting especially against proselytizing Christians. After Schreiber had finished his sermon, boys and girls of the religious school individually recited, in turn, brief biographies of the most prominent Reform leaders, such modern Maccabees as David Einhorn, Wise, and of course Geiger. Ironically, the theme of “modern Maccabees” would be taken up a generation later by the Zionists, whom Schreiber could not regard as authentic Maccabees, given their secularism and—in his eyes—inappropriate Jewish nationalism.

During the nearly three years that Schreiber served in Denver, from early 1883 to the fall of 1885, he began to appear more broadly on the American Jewish scene. Very shortly after his arrival, the congregation paid for him to attend the July 1883 Eighth Council of the UAHC, which was held that year in Cincinnati. There he was appointed to serve with the radical Rabbi Jacob Voorsanger of San Francisco and the very conservative Rabbi Frederick De Sola Mendes of New York to carry out a plan for circuit and district preaching under UAHC auspices.⁷¹ It is not clear whether he was present at the infamous non-kosher “Trefa

70 A report by “Ben Zebi” in *American Israelite*, 2 January 1885, p. 2. Cf. Diane Ashton, *Hanukkah in America: A History* (New York University Press, 2013), 71–72. Although he was far more interested in principle than practice, Schreiber did support observance of Jewish festivals and thought that Hanukkah could serve as an important source of religious inspiration. See *American Hebrew*, 17 August 1894, p. 473.

71 *Proceedings of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations* 2 (1880–1885): 1406.

Banquet” that was held in conjunction with that meeting and the attendant first ordination of Reform rabbis in America.

Schreiber’s time in Denver was not without its successes and pleasant events. His English pronunciation was now perfected, and he was able to deliver well-received lectures to Jews and non-Jews alike. His oration at a Denver Masonic festival “gave general satisfaction.”⁷² On one occasion, he travelled a few miles south to Pueblo, Colorado, where he delivered a lecture so impressive that it spurred the formation of a new congregation, which he then continued to serve part-time. “The doctor will come down from Denver every two or three weeks to look after his little flock, which he has formed in the midst of the wilderness.”⁷³ It was also in Pueblo that he found, and in July 1884 married, Sallie Fist. It was a happy marriage that lasted to the end of Emanuel’s life.

During his Colorado years Schreiber returned to an analysis of the Talmud, this time in a series of four published lectures in the English language.⁷⁴ Some of his contentions are familiar from his German writings, especially recognition of the Talmud’s historical value but not its historical authority. Not surprisingly, he draws upon Geiger’s writings but—innovating for his American audience—here compares his mentor with the liberal Unitarian theologian William Ellery Channing, who likewise had an evolutionary view of religion. Geiger, he suggests, was the “Channing of the Jews.” New also is his use of Wise as an authority on the subject, noting that, like himself, Wise regarded the Talmud as “*advisory* only.” Addressing a largely non-Jewish audience and readership, Schreiber sought to elevate the Talmud rather than to derogate it. He argued for its influence (or at least of the aggadah within it) not only on Christianity and Islam, but also on Homer, Dante, Boccaccio, Milton, and even Shakespeare. Some of his earlier ambivalence vis-à-vis the Talmud remained, but a measure of pride had largely cast aside the angrily critical and mildly apologetic tone that characterized his earlier writing on the subject. He concluded the first lecture by calling

72 Cited in Kramer and Clar, “Emanuel Schreiber: Los Angeles’ First Reform Rabbi,” 356.

73 “Pueblo, Col.,” *American Israelite*, 6 July 1883, p. 6.

74 The following citations are from Dr. E. Schreiber, *The Talmud: A Series of Lectures* (Inter-Ocean Printing House, 1884), 9, 13, 18, 25, 44.

the Talmud “a work of the most gifted men in ten centuries.... Like Rabbi Meir, concerning his heretic teacher, Elisha ben Abuyah, we, too, exclaim, ‘We accept the good kernel and throw away the shell.’”

However, despite such intellectual accomplishments, by the autumn of 1884, Schreiber’s tactless behavior had produced sufficient unhappiness with him at Temple Emanuel to result in the resignation of leading members of the congregation. A period of bitter controversy, mainly over income, ensued, during which Schreiber claimed that as a married man he could not manage with the lower salary newly offered to him and that the malcontents and grumblers against him were but a small minority. A vitriolic Schreiber letter to the board provoked a reprimand that accused him of driving away some of the congregation’s most active members on account of his obnoxious, off-putting behavior. If he were not satisfied with the compensation offered him, the board would welcome his departure.⁷⁵ As in his previous positions, Schreiber had split the congregation, making his life as its rabbi untenable. In these tense circumstances, he hung on to his position for only a few months longer before leaving. Yet not all of the members were urging him to leave. After he had decided upon departure, one congregant confessed regarding their exiting rabbi that “his congregation will sorely miss his enlightening words and genial countenance,” and that “he takes with him their best wishes for his future success and prosperity.”⁷⁶ Thus confronted by mixed feelings, Schreiber felt it necessary to hit the road once more, spurred as well by his sickly wife’s suffering from the thin mountain air. Again, he moved westward, this time all the way to Los Angeles.

In the fall of 1884 Schreiber arrived in California and gained a claim to fame. At Congregation B’nai B’rith (later known as Wilshire Boulevard Temple) he became the first Reform rabbi in the City of Angels. The congregation, the only one in the city at that time, had been liturgically Orthodox. But since a significant number of members were leaning toward ritual reform, Schreiber’s Orthodox predecessor, Rabbi Abraham Wolf Edelman, had decided to resign rather than compromise

75 Marjorie Hornbein, *Temple Emanuel of Denver: A Centennial History* (A. B. Hirschfeld, 1974), 36–39.

76 *American Israelite*, 11 September 1885, p. 4.

his convictions. In keeping with the pattern at his previous pulpits, the first impression Schreiber made was gratifying. When he delivered a sermon comparing General Ulysses S. Grant and Moses Montefiore, who had died in the same week, the five hundred to six hundred persons present received it with enthusiasm.⁷⁷ In line with his thinking in Germany, Schreiber respected Montefiore as a consistently Orthodox Jew and therefore more honorable than Conservatives, who claimed to be traditional Jews when in fact they were not. Following Schreiber's election to the pulpit, Rabbi Wise described him as enjoying "an enviable reputation both as a rabbi and savant."⁷⁸ In his new pulpit Schreiber moved cautiously with regard to the liturgy. Rather than use the radical prayer book authored by Rabbi Einhorn or even the more moderate one by Wise, he agreed to employ the only slightly reformed Jastrow prayerbook, which he praised for its emphasis on the Jewish mission in the Diaspora, a shortened service, and some passages that could be read in English. Despite his disdain for Jewish dietary laws, and unlike some of his congregants, Schreiber did fast on Yom Kippur.⁷⁹ Yet, after four years, on the holiday of Shavuot at a confirmation ceremony, he chose to officiate with uncovered head, and shortly thereafter the congregation voted to allow men to worship with bare heads as well.⁸⁰

Now at a great distance from the center of American Jewish life, Schreiber was unable to attend the November 1885 rabbinical convention in Pittsburgh, although he did send his regrets.⁸¹ Had he been there, he would surely have voted in favor of that year's radical Pittsburgh Platform. Unable to do so, he embodied its principles in a lengthy article titled "Unsere Aussichten" ("Our Prospects") that appeared in the

77 Kramer and Clar, "Emanuel Schreiber," 358. The similarity of death dates is noted in Jonathan D. Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews* (Schocken, 2012), 136–137.

78 Cited in Kramer and Clar, "Emanuel Schreiber," 359.

79 *Los Angeles Times*, 16 September 1888, p. 6.

80 Emanuel Schreiber, "Personal Memories," *B'nai Brith Messenger*, 7 June 1929; Marco R. Newmark, "Wilshire Boulevard Temple: Congregation B'Nai B'Rith 1862–1947," *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (1956): 169–170; *B'nai Brith Messenger*, 9 September 1966.

81 Walter Jacob, ed., *The Changing World of Reform Judaism: The Pittsburgh Platform in Retrospect* (Rodef Shalom Congregation, 1985), 91.

Jüdisches Reformblatt, the German supplement to the *Jewish Reformer*. That paper was co-edited by Kaufmann Kohler, the principal author of the platform.⁸² Schreiber concluded that Jewish prospects in America, unlike in Germany, where Reform had stumbled, were remarkably good. In his words: “The Judaism of Palestinian nationality and the statutes connected with it have died away. However, the Judaism whose indestructible spiritual health is founded upon the Prophets, which embraces the whole of humanity and has prophetic ideas as its guiding lights—it lives and is attaining ever more invigorating life.”⁸³

However, in keeping with his lifelong offensive stance, Schreiber felt compelled to insist that this favorable prospect for Reform in America would not come about without a struggle. It would almost certainly require engaging in “a lively, joyous, courageous battle.”⁸⁴ Wherever he went and whatever the outcome, Schreiber in America, as in Europe, persistently engaged in that battle. From the Talmud he now turned to the *Shulḥan Arukh*, the bible of Orthodoxy that lacked the saving grace of aggadah. In multiple installments, the Los Angeles rabbi wrote of that code’s “frightening influence for three hundred years.” In his view, the *Shulḥan Arukh* was the antipode of the true Judaism: its spirit “is fanatic, most intolerant, and in striking opposition to the doctrines of Judaism as proclaimed by our great prophets, the heralds of justice, truth and broad humanity.”⁸⁵ When in the third installment Schreiber deals with the *Shulḥan Arukh*’s assignment of an inferior status to women, it is again Reform Judaism that occupies the morally superior position. But in that regard Schreiber is honest enough to admit its current shortcomings: “It is Reform Judaism, which has done much—and will doubtless continue to do so, for only a feeble beginning is made so far—toward raising woman to her true station, to her dignity and nobility.”⁸⁶

82 Dr. E. Schreiber, Rabbiner in Los Angeles, Cal., “Unsere Aussichten,” *Jüdisches Reformblatt*, 8 January 1886, 12–13.

83 *Ibid.*, 13.

84 *Ibid.*

85 Dr. E. Schreiber, Rabbi, Los Angeles, “The Shulchan Aruch,” *Jewish Reformer*, 19 March 1886, pp. 9–10; 26 March 1886, p. 13. The citation is from the latter installment.

86 Emanuel Schreiber, “The Shulchan Aruch and Rabbinical Law on the Position of

It is not clear why Schreiber decided to leave the promising Jewish community of Los Angeles for Congregation B'nai Israel in Little Rock, Arkansas. According to one report, in southern California he was looked upon as a savant by Christians both in Los Angeles and in neighboring counties; he had been elected "Professor of Greek, German, and Latin" in the local Presbyterian college.⁸⁷ Moreover, his successful investment of thousands of dollars in a land boom in the "citrus belt" (which he would later regret) had made him independent of his congregants' desires. Although there is no explicit evidence, it must be that, once again, he had created rising antagonism that made his position there untenable.

We know little of Schreiber's two years in the Arkansas capital (1889–1891), but it seems that they were uncharacteristically free of public conflict. When he decided to depart, declining an offer of re-election, the congregation expressed gratitude for his services, profound regret that he was leaving, and sympathy with his desire for "a larger sphere of usefulness." A publicly circulated resolution spoke of his "extraordinary scholarship, powerful eloquence, and irreproachable character." He had done the congregation proud by chairing the local Board of Examiners working on behalf of the municipal public schools and giving lectures to literary and scientific societies in the city.⁸⁸ In 1890, he represented the congregation at the first annual convention of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) where, not surprisingly, he became a member of the committee producing a majority report in favor of including the

Women," *Jewish Reformer*, 9 April 1886, pp. 9–10. A final article in the series, "Origin of the Superstitious Custom of Praying with Covered Head," *Jewish Reformer*, 22 April 1886, p. 10, sets historical variation in practice of the custom against the strict insistence upon it in the *Shulḥan Arukh*. While in Los Angeles, Schreiber also published a strictly historical, nonpolemical article on ancient gnosticism, which, although not footnoted, indicated a capacity for scholarly objectivity: Emanuel Schreiber, "Origin of Theosophy," *Platonist, an Exponent of Philosophic Truth* 3, no. 9 (1887): 495–502. The journal was edited by Thomas M. Johnson, a prominent "Missouri Platonist."

87 A report by Isidore Choynski, who titled himself "Maftir," in *American Israelite*, 9 December 1887, p. 9.

88 "Resolutions: Little Rock, Ark., Aug. 20, 1891," *American Israelite*, 27 August 1891, p. 7; Ira E. Sanders and Elijah E. Palneck, eds., *The Centennial History of Congregation B'nai Israel* (The Congregation, 1966), 42.

Pittsburgh Platform in the *CCAR Year Book*. When the first volume of the *Year Book* appeared, it contained Schreiber's lecture on how to teach biblical history in Reform religious schools.⁸⁹ As he had done in Europe, he here again argued for separating fact from legend and focusing on the moral values in the text.⁹⁰

Schreiber consistently prided himself on his classical European education, which gave him a certain status among his rabbinical colleagues. His background assured him a measure of authority when citing at length the works of the German Reform rabbis, for example regarding their views—similar to his own—against the necessity of circumcision for converts.⁹¹ Shortly after Wise's death, he noted that European-trained rabbis were notably absent at the meeting of the CCAR in 1901, perhaps an expression of lack of respect for Wise's successor, the American-born and -trained Joseph Silverman.⁹²

Although there is no extant evidence, it may be that the position of Blacks in Arkansas society was a factor in Schreiber's departure from Little Rock. In any case, he would not again choose a southern pulpit. This time he moved to the city of Spokane, Washington (then known as Spokane Falls), which was to be his fifth pulpit in the United States. Emanu-El, consisting of seventy-nine members, met in a Unitarian church but was in the process of building its own structure. Schreiber noted that it was both the youngest Reform congregation in America and the only one in the states of Washington and Idaho. Once again he drew large numbers of Jews and (mostly) Christians to his lectures, held on Friday evenings.⁹³ That the local B'nai B'rith lodge was named in memory of Geiger was likely due to Schreiber's influence.⁹⁴ He also

89 Emanuel Schreiber, "How to Teach Biblical History in Our Sabbath-Schools," *Central Conference of American Rabbis Year Book* 1 (1891): 59–61.

90 See n. 51 for his work on the subject in Europe.

91 "Response of Dr. Emanuel Schreiber," *Central Conference of American Rabbis Year Book* 2 (1892): 101–113.

92 E. Schreiber, "Dr. Emanuel Schreiber Explains," *American Israelite*, 22 August 1901, p. 5.

93 *American Israelite*, 15 October 1891, p. 6.

94 Moses N. Janton, *History of the Jews in Spokane, Washington from the Earliest Days until the Present Time* (Star Printing House, 1926), 11.

lectured up and down the West Coast. A San Francisco correspondent for the *American Israelite* provided the Cincinnati newspaper with an offhand rather droll and satirical account of the rabbi at that time:

My dear little man, Dr. Schreiber, the greatest of them all, on this coast at least, has come down from Spokane...to deliver his lecture on "Judaism and its Essential Purity," which he did...in a very becoming manner at the Temple Emanuel to a very select and appreciative audience. Dr. Schreiber is the same old Shlemeel [*sic*] of ye olden times, but he is at least twenty pounds heavier and forty pounds better in practical appearance.

He goes to Los Angeles to lecture...and look after his real estate, which if he had sold while he was there during the boom, he would not be a schlemeel.⁹⁵

It was during his Spokane years that Schreiber published his best-known work, a history of Reform Judaism, the first to appear in the English language. He had earlier proposed to the newly formed Jewish Publication Society (JPS) that it be the publisher. However, when conservative Rabbi Marcus Jastrow reported adversely on the manuscript, JPS rejected it, and Schreiber was forced to seek a local non-Jewish publisher.⁹⁶ The book had an impressive list of sponsors that, in addition to sympathetically inclined rabbis, included two nationally prominent lay leaders, Jacob Schiff of New York and Julius Rosenthal of Chicago. That JPS should have rejected the book, quite apart from its stylistic inadequacies, was likely due to its persistent attack upon Graetz for demeaning the German leadership of the Reform movement, just at the time when JPS was in the process of publishing an English version of Graetz's history.

Schreiber's approach to the history of the Reform movement is

95 Maftir [Choynski], "Grave Reflections," *American Israelite*, 26 May 1892, p. 5.

96 Minutes of the Publications Committee of the Jewish Publication Society for 2 June 1889 and 3 August 1890, as noted in Jonathan D. Sarna, *JPS: The Americanization of Jewish Culture, 1888–1988* (Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 44, 307 n. 54. The book appeared as Emanuel Schreiber, *Reformed Judaism and Its Pioneers: A Contribution to Its History* (Spokane Printing Company, 1892).

biographical. Each chapter deals centrally with a different leading reformer, beginning with Mendelssohn—who Schreiber admits was not really a religious reformer—and culminating, not surprisingly, with Geiger.⁹⁷ Of interest and some value in the volume is Schreiber's division of Reform Judaism's history in Europe into three distinct periods: a humanistic period, an aesthetic and homiletic period, and a historical-critical period. The first includes the Haskalah, the Jewish enlightenment, the second the preachers and educators who propagated liturgical change and edifying vernacular sermons, and the third focuses on Zunz and culminates with Geiger. Following Geiger's death in 1874, according to Schreiber, the German Reform movement severely declined, its energy transferred to Reform Judaism in the United States (with which Schreiber, however, did not deal).⁹⁸ Of course, he wishes that the volume not only represent the past but also influence the present. For example, although in many respects a "Classical" Reform Jew (although that designation was not yet invented), Schreiber argues against the dominant practice of paid choirs entertaining a passive congregation, thereby creating "the chilliness so characteristic of our worship," and in favor of active congregational musical participation.⁹⁹ The volume displays considerable knowledge of European developments, but its value is vitiated by the evaluative style and especially by the intemperate polemics that pervade it.

This most significant among Schreiber's writings in the English language received a mixed reception. The most enthusiastic response came from the German-born and London educated American Rabbi Barnett Abraham Elzas, who unreservedly recommended the volume "to

97 Schreiber's history is placed within the developing historiography on the Reform movement in Michael A. Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement* (Oxford University Press, 1988), 475–477 ("Bibliographic Essay"). David Philipson, who in 1907 published the second such work in the English language, titled *The Reform Movement in Judaism*, did not bother to mention Schreiber's preceding history. The chapter on Geiger would appear in a separate printing shortly thereafter as Emanuel Schreiber, *Abraham Geiger, the Greatest Reform Rabbi of the Nineteenth Century* (Spokane Print Co., 1892).

98 In a footnote to his *Reformed Judaism and its Pioneers* (p. 369 n.) Schreiber indicated his intention to write a sequel on "Reform Judaism in America," but that did not come about.

99 *Reformed Judaism and its Pioneers*, p. 125.

every young man and woman who wishes to get a good insight into the forces which have led up to our present-day Judaism.”¹⁰⁰ Writing in the *American Israelite*, Wise criticized the work for being “all outwardness without inwardness; all accidental abolition and demolition, without construction and innovation.”¹⁰¹ Yet his review concludes on a positive note:

Dr. Schreiber’s book is the negative side of the pioneer history of Reform. Yet we consider it a welcome addition to our literature and can recommend it as the one side of that history, with the expectation that he will also give us the counterpart at his earliest convenience, as there exists nothing of the kind in the English language. We congratulate Dr. Schreiber on this publication.

Wise’s critique is exaggerated; Schreiber did include the positive side, but it was overwhelmed by its opposite. Similarly mixed was a review by Gotthard Deutsch in Wise’s German-language paper, *Die Deborah*. His criticism must have stung Schreiber in a delicate spot for, in criticizing errors of transcription in biblical verses, the reviewer claimed that “we German rabbis must guard ourselves against such things, lest we have nothing left with which to impress the evil Yankee, whose tongue stumbles in citing a biblical verse.”¹⁰²

Although he seems to have achieved at least initial success in Spokane, Schreiber’s tenure in the Pacific Northwest was even briefer than his stay in Little Rock. Once again, his uncompromising advocacy for Reform split a congregation that was not uniform in religious orientation. A

100 “Random Jottings,” *Jewish Progress*, 2 March 1894. The article is signed only with the initials B. A. E., but these letters surely refer to Rabbi Elzas, who claims not to know Schreiber personally and therefore have no personal bias with regard to him.

101 The unsigned review is in the *American Israelite*, 28 April 1892, p. 4.

102 Dr. G. Deutsch, “Neueste Literatur,” *Die Deborah*, 30 November 1893, p. 6. Deutsch, himself a historian, objected to Schreiber’s polemical tone and his calling Graetz “a so-called historian,” but he, too, regarded the work a valuable contribution to Jewish literature. A later reference to the volume by a similarly radical reformer thought the volume deserved a large circulation but had to admit that it was marred by the author’s lack of “the judicial temperament of the historian.” Jacob Voorsanger, “Characteristics of American Judaism,” *Pacific Jewish Annual* 2 (1898): 31 n.

group of traditionalists made moral accusation against their rabbi.¹⁰³ Although Schreiber was fully vindicated by the leadership of the congregation, he again moved on. For the next five years, from 1892 to 1897, Schreiber was the Reform rabbi in Toledo, Ohio, before traveling across the state to Youngstown. According to a history of Toledo Jewry, Schreiber's tenure in Toledo increased awareness of the differences between Reform and Orthodox Jews. "It was almost as if the rabbi was engaged in a campaign to point out those differences."¹⁰⁴ And yet, although his principal obligation was to lead Sabbath services at the Reform Tenth Street Temple, at least for a time he also led daily worship at the Orthodox Sarei Zedek congregation. During these years he was also invited to deliver, and afterwards to publish, a lecture on the Bible at the much larger and more prestigious Rodef Shalom Temple in Pittsburgh. As he had in the past and in highly subjective inspirational fashion, his lecture was an endeavor "to prove that the spirit [of the Bible] lives although the letter is dead, and that the Bible, far from losing, can only gain by a scientific, reasonable and reverential treatment."¹⁰⁵ Schreiber also used the occasion to endorse the Pittsburgh's Platform's critical plank on the Bible, and to deplore the fact that the presiding rabbi at the 1885 Pittsburgh conference—without mentioning Wise by name—continued to reject higher biblical criticism.¹⁰⁶ Although the congregations he served were small, Schreiber managed to maintain a wider reputation on account of the historical knowledge he had gained in Europe.

This wider reputation qualified Schreiber to be one of the "well-known

103 "Dr. Emanuel Schreiber Vindicated," *American Israelite*, 22 September 1892, p. 4. The content of the accusation is not specified in the source.

104 Elaine S. Anderson, "The Jews of Toledo, 1845–1895" (PhD diss., University of Toledo, 1974), 268.

105 Emanuel Schreiber, *The Bible in the Light of Modern Jewish Theology* ([Pittsburgh], 1897), 28.

106 *Ibid.*, 30. A few years later, in 1902, Schreiber criticized Wise by name, comparing his belief in the literal revelation of the Bible unfavorably to the supposed Orthodoxy of Solomon Schechter, who had expressed his approval of modern biblical criticism. See Emanuel Schreiber, "Is Schechter Orthodox?" in *Modern Orthodox Judaism: A Documentary History*, ed. Zev Eleff (Jewish Publication Society, 2016), 124–127.

scholars” invited to make presentations when the World’s Parliament of Religions was held in connection with the World’s Fair in Chicago in September 1893. At that event, attention was given to Judaism both within the Parliament itself and in a special Denominational Congress. As the Jewish participation was propagated and supported by the CCAR and the UAHC, almost all the lecturers in the sessions on Judaism came from the Reform branch and included its principal leadership—among others, Wise, Kohler, and Emil G. Hirsch. Five topics within the Denominational Congress were assigned to a section on history. The subject of the Jewish share in general culture was given to Gotthard Deutsch, recently appointed professor of Jewish history at the Hebrew Union College; the contribution of Jews to the sciences in the Middle Ages was assigned to Samuel Sale, who had studied at the Hochschule; the traditionalist H. Pereira Mendes provided an Orthodox view of Jewish history; and the position of women in Jewish history was the subject presented by the Berlin-born scholarly Rabbi Max Landsberg. “Historians of Judaism” was the subject given to Schreiber, who traveled from Toledo to Chicago to deliver his lecture.¹⁰⁷

Schreiber’s presentation was appropriately erudite. He began by noting that, although much had been written about the history of the Jews, far less attention had been given to the history of Judaism. Within the short framework of the lecture and in line with his own definition of Jewish identity as religious, Schreiber sought to fill that lack with an abundance of information. As had Geiger, Schreiber here presented the Jewish past as a journey of the Jewish spirit. He was not interested in Jewish history as suffering from persecution; rather, he focused on the spiritual contributions made by Jewish historical writers from medieval times to the present. To his credit, he did not merely enumerate Jewish historical writings but independently evaluated them by style and content. He showed special admiration for Samuel Usque, whose imaginative Portuguese “Consolation for Israel’s Tribulations” he found both important and original. On the other hand, he was

107 Rabbi E. Schreiber, “Historians of Judaism,” in *Judaism at the World’s Parliament of Religions* (Robert Clarke & Co. for the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1894), 204–229.

critical of such Christian writers on Jewish history as Jacques Basnage and Ernest Renan. Surprisingly, given Schreiber's religious universalism, he expressed his belief that "only a Jew can fully appreciate his own history."¹⁰⁸ No less surprising is his contention that in Germany anti-semitism produced a reaction of Jewish scholarly achievement and his hope that American antisemitism would do the same. As he neared the culmination of his lecture, Schreiber did not neglect Jewish historians in the United States, calling special attention to the historiography of the organizer of American Reform:

Our venerable Dr. I. M. Wise is to my knowledge the first Rabbi who has undertaken the dangerous task to write as early as 1854, his well-known "History of the Israelitish Nation," from its very beginnings. Not one of the [other] Jewish historians possessed the courage to write a history of Israel from a radical point of view.¹⁰⁹

As printed in the Congress volume, Schreiber's lecture mentions Graetz numerous times but without the requisite analysis of this best-known of modern Jewish historians. Yet, when Schreiber independently published his lecture shortly thereafter, his critical analysis of Graetz did appear in the text. It seems that the anonymous members of the editorial committee had censored it out. If so, they had thereby chosen not to be responsible for Schreiber's contention that Treitschke had "made out a good case against Graetz," that Graetz's work had given strength to antisemitism, that his history was "decidedly overestimated," and that he had propagated a "dangerous doctrine of Jewish nationality."¹¹⁰

At the Jewish Congress, a nasty dispute arose at which Schreiber, although perhaps not an active participant, was certainly a partisan. It seems that Kohler had expressed a controversial opinion, very much in the spirit of Schreiber. Kohler remarked that the standard of Jewish scholarship among American-born rabbis was rather low, certainly not up to the European standard. In response, the American-born Rabbi

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 216.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 227–228.

¹¹⁰ Emanuel Schreiber, "Historians of Judaism in the Nineteenth Century," *Occident*, 1894, pp. 16–18.

David Philipson, according to Schreiber, supposedly taunted the foreign-born rabbis in America with the “boyish yell”: “I thank God that I was not born in Europe.” Reporting on the incident in Chicago’s *Occident* shortly thereafter, Schreiber then justified Kohler’s position in this altercation with the rhetorical question: “Who are the *prominent* teachers at the Hebrew Union College, we mean the men who have a thorough knowledge of Jewish literature? The *foreigners*.” As for those in the Reform rabbinate who deprecated their foreign-born colleagues, Schreiber launched a stinging rebuke at them. They were Jewish “Knownothingarians,” an equivalent of the American anti-immigrant Know-Nothing political party.¹¹¹

As Schreiber went from town to town and congregation to congregation, he continued his literary efforts. As editor of the Religion Department for the *Occident*, he weekly wrote multiple short pieces on a variety of topics. These included American and world politics, polemics directed at articles in more conservative Jewish papers, and his defense of Reform ideas and institutions. He was often acerbic, pulled no punches, and was rarely boring. His hero in some of these articles is Emil G. Hirsch, whose uncompromising stands on religious issues Schreiber greatly admired. In one article he called Hirsch a “Gadol be-Yisrael” (a great Jewish man), praised his fight for “justice and righteousness,” and delivered his highest tribute: “Upon him has fallen the mantle of Abraham Geiger.”¹¹² Their relationship, formed in student days, must have become even closer after Schreiber moved from Youngstown to Chicago, where Hirsch installed him as the rabbi of Temple Emanuel, and where he remained for an unusually long time, from 1899 to 1907. After the turn of the century, Schreiber also became a contributor to seven out of the twelve volumes of the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, although it seems he did not write any of the major articles.¹¹³

111 See the report by Schreiber in the *Occident*, 20 October 1893 (he was the religion editor at the time), and the anonymous “An Unseemly Quarrel,” *American Israelite*, 9 November 1893, p. 6.

112 *Reform Advocate*, 21 May 1921.

113 One would have expected that Schreiber had been asked to write on Reform, historiography, or Geiger. Although he published an article on “The Jews in Medicine” in a medical

For Schreiber, the advent of the Zionist movement at the end of the nineteenth century ran directly counter to his cherished belief that Jewish identity should be limited to the Jewish religion. He therefore vigorously condemned the Zionist notion that there was such a thing as Jewish art.¹¹⁴ As for the Hebrew language, he believed it was beyond revival in Reform liturgy and had its place as a modern language, if anywhere, only among young people in Palestine.¹¹⁵ Zionism represented a dangerous assault upon his belief in the mission of the Jews in the Diaspora, a central element of his religious ideology. It fostered the notion that Jews were not fully American patriots. For Schreiber, optimism lay at the essence of Judaism, while Zionism represented a pessimism that he thought to be the ineradicable result of antisemitism. Our mission, he wrote, “is to dwell among all the nations of the earth... to spread the truth of Ethical Monotheism.” Yet, writing shortly after Theodor Herzl’s death, Schreiber could not suppress a certain amount of respect for the founder of the Zionist movement: “‘This was the noblest of them all’ may well be applied to Dr. Theodore Herzl.” Schreiber even admitted that Herzl’s movement was visionary, even as it was “extremely dangerous to Occidental Judaism.”¹¹⁶

Along with his anti-Zionism, Schreiber subscribed to the notion that religion should remain separate from any form of violent action.

journal, the *Medical Standard*, and had delivered a lecture at the inauguration of the College of Medicine at the University of Southern California in 1885, he was also not asked to write on that subject for the *Jewish Encyclopedia*. He reprinted his article as a pamphlet: Emanuel Schreiber, *The Jews in Medicine* (Engelhard, 1902) and reprinted it with the same publisher in 1923.

114 “Jewish Art,” *Reform Advocate*, 11 January 1908, p. 661.

115 Emanuel Schreiber in the *B’nai B’rith Messenger*, 6 April 1928, p. 24.

116 Emanuel Schreiber, “Dr. Theodore Herzl,” *Reform Advocate*, 16 July 1904. It was reprinted in the same paper thirty years later, 17 August 1934. Later Schreiber also wrote a piece on Israel Zangwill, who espoused territorialism in place of Zionism, but he, too, “more or less denied the mission of Judaism as a religion.” See also Emanuel Schreiber, “Why I Am an Anti-Zionist,” *B’nai B’rith Messenger* 27 May 1921. Yet, despite his opposition to Zionism, toward the end of his life Schreiber was willing to speak for the United Appeal in Los Angeles urging support “for reconstruction and relief for Europe and Palestine.” *B’nai B’rith Messenger*, 12 March 1926.

During World War I he connected this conviction to opposition against America's joining the conflict. When, in 1915, Rabbi Max Raisin, a confirmed Zionist, proposed at a meeting of the Eastern Council of Reform Rabbis that Boy Scout troops should be encouraged within Jewish religious schools, Schreiber responded: "I am amazed that anyone should think of disgracing the synagogue by bringing into it the weapons of blood. We are of a religion which believes that the time will come when the swords shall be beaten into plowshares." He then added that he had watched meetings of Boy Scout groups and heard some of the members even saying that they would like to be over in the European war. In his judgment, the Boy Scouts were clearly "a militaristic movement."¹¹⁷

Toward the end of Schreiber's life, Reform Judaism began its slow path toward a broader view of Jewish identity and less display of antagonism toward its more traditional or national forms. Schreiber was not sympathetic to this inchoate trend. To him it represented a retreat, and he tried to minimize its influence. In his writings he now set the "father of Reform Judaism," Abraham Geiger, next to "the father of Radical Reform Judaism," Samuel Holdheim, and it seems that he identified as strongly, if not more so, with the latter. Like Holdheim, and unlike Geiger, he preferred a religious service almost entirely in the vernacular and like him also, and again unlike Geiger, he believed in the value of rabbis officiating at interfaith marriages.¹¹⁸ Schreiber still held that Reform Judaism's strength lies in its advocacy of the truth revealed by science over laws and beliefs from the past. "Love ye truth and peace, truth first, then peace, but not peace at the cost of truth," he wrote, using his interpretation of Zechariah 8:19 as a prooftext.¹¹⁹ His faith in truth convinced him that, in the end, Reform Judaism will triumph.¹²⁰

In 1926, at age seventy-four and living again in Los Angeles, Schreiber retired from the pulpit rabbinate. A few years later the CCAR

117 *American Hebrew*, 12 November 1915; *American Israelite*, 18 November 1915, p. 5.

118 Emanuel Schreiber, "Retrospect and Prospect," *Jewish Voice*, 28 May 1909.

119 Ibid.

120 "Is There A Conservative Wave Within the United States," *Reform Advocate*, 27 May 1916, 597–599.

voted unanimously to name him an “honorary member.”¹²¹ Schreiber believed that he certainly deserved that title since, without extant evidence, he now claimed “as a historical fact” that while a rabbi in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1889, he “was the first to urge Dr. I. M. Wise to call a conference of rabbis.”¹²²

During his last years, Schreiber carried on a correspondence with Hyman Enelow, the senior rabbi of affluent Temple Emanu-El in New York. Like Schreiber, Enelow was a scholar and, also like him, an opponent of Zionism. And he thought highly of Schreiber’s history of the Reform movement. In one of his letters to Enelow, Schreiber suggested that his colleague introduce a resolution at the CCAR calling upon every member, at least once a year, to preach a sermon on Reform Judaism and that the Hebrew Union College should have a course on the subject. Having lost much of his fortune when his investment in land within the citrus belt collapsed, Schreiber plaintively turned to Enelow for monthly payments for himself and his wife. He had no children for support since their only child, Helen, had died at an early age. Schreiber saw himself as a sufferer—if not a martyr—for the cause of Reform Judaism.¹²³ Fortunately, at least for a while, Enelow regularly sent him a monthly stipend. In 1918, a portion of his valuable library was destroyed by a fire, including a nearly completed history of the Jews in the United States.¹²⁴ Shortly thereafter he was forced to offer the rest of his library, much of which he had collected while a student in Berlin, for sale.¹²⁵ He hoped that when he died, Enelow would come to Los Angeles to deliver the eulogy. But it was instead Rabbi Edgar Magnin, his successor at Wilshire Boulevard Temple, who wrote a eulogy for Schreiber that was delivered

121 *Central Conference of American Rabbis Year Book* 41 (1931): 172.

122 Schreiber to Hyman Enelow, 11 May 1926 and again 8 January 1927, MSS 11, 20/15, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio (hereafter AJA).

123 Schreiber to Enelow, 4 August 1927. In his letter of 26 September 1929, it is not difficult to detect signs of paranoia. Possibly, Schreiber was troubled by feelings of undeserved persecution throughout his career.

124 *Hebrew Standard*, 11 January 1918.

125 “Rare Books,” *B’nai B’rith Messenger*, 3 February 1922; Schreiber to Enelow, 3 July 1926.

before the CCAR.¹²⁶ In 1932, at age seventy-nine, Schreiber died peacefully at Cedars of Lebanon Hospital in Los Angeles.

Over the course of his career, Emanuel Schreiber published two dozen books and pamphlets plus countless articles in the German and American Jewish press. He served no fewer than seventeen congregations in Germany and the United States. In some cases, he had left one pasture for a greener one, but most often, it seems, he did not depart of his own accord. That was partially due to his aggressive personality and his unchecked egotism, but it was also on account of his uncompromising promulgation of what he believed to be the true Judaism, as it had been most eloquently espoused by Geiger.¹²⁷ He was not in the first rank of Reform rabbis, but he did play a role in transmitting the European heritage of Reform Judaism to its American offspring. He was an enthusiast for the old in Reform Judaism, not the new. He called himself “a rabbi of the old school”; a colleague called him “the last of the Mohicans.”¹²⁸ Whether in Germany or in America, he remained much the same. Sometimes out of desperation, he tried to hold the fort against the new trends, including Zionism and the greater attention given to more tangible expressions of Jewish religious identity. But his firm commitment to truth, regardless of personal consequences, makes him—for all of his shortcomings—stand out positively among the Reform rabbis of his time.

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126 Edgar Magnin, “Emanuel Schreiber,” *Central Conference of American Rabbis Year Book* 42 (1932): 185–186. Magnin called his colleague “fiery and enthusiastic.”

127 Rabbi Voorsanger of San Francisco wrote of his colleague: “Dr. Schreiber wields a vigorous pen from which the personal pronoun flows rather too often.” And further: “Dr. Schreiber has yet to learn that the goodwill of man is as indispensable to success as learning and ambition.” *Jewish Progress*, 27 October 1893.

128 Schreiber to Enelow, 13 October 1929.

“We Won’t Work with the Jews”: The 1891 Millville Strike

JEFFREY A. MARX

By day and by night,
the fires burn on in Millville
and bid the sand let in the light

—Carl Sandburg, “Millville”*

In September 1891, newspapers across the United States carried reports of an attack by a mob on the Jewish inhabitants of Millville, New Jersey. Likening it to the persecution of Jews in Russia, the papers described how the refusal of boy laborers in a glass factory to work with newly hired Jewish immigrants led to their subsequent strike, and then to an attack on the Jews of Millville, ending with hundreds of them being driven from the town.

The Millville strike was a unique event in the history of Jews and antisemitism in America, just as the later blood libel in Massena, Massachusetts in 1928 would prove to be an exceptional occurrence. First, the site of the strike was unusual. While many Eastern European Jewish immigrants were involved in clothing manufacture and cigar making, few were involved with glass blowing, which, like steel making, coal mining, and railroad working, demanded not just long working hours like the sweatshops but hard and dangerous physical labor as well. Moreover, while thousands of labor strikes would take place throughout America in the closing decades of the nineteenth century—over 1,500 in 1886 alone, involving 610,000 workers—*not one*, except for Millville, would involve a strike of industrial workers devoted

specifically to protest having Jews in their workplace.¹ Finally, although there had been national newspaper coverage of antisemitic incidents in America, such as the Seligmann (1877) and Corbin (1879) affairs, only the Millville strike involved highly exaggerated and sensationalized accounts of the event. Such exaggerated accounts of antisemitic incidents did not occur in the years that followed, either.

Although it was a unique event, the 1891 Millville strike nonetheless provides the opportunity for a detailed examination on a small scale of the complex national dynamics that would unfold in the decades to follow, as newly arrived Jewish immigrants searched for a livelihood, as industrialists needed cheap labor, and as nativist American workers feared that they would be displaced. While the reaction that occurred in Millville as a result of this convergence was largely a response to “competition for places,” as American historian Oscar Handlin suggested, it was more than merely the expression of “hostile sentiments.”² At work was a deeper, persistent antisemitism that now came to the surface.

Whitall Tatum

Millville, in Cumberland County, New Jersey is located forty miles south of Philadelphia. It was, in 1891, an industrial town with a population of approximately ten thousand.³ Since the area was rich in silica-

1 *Epigraph from Charles A. Sandburg, *In Reckless Ecstasy* (Galesburg, IL: Asgard Press, 1904), 25. My thanks to Britt Tevis at Syracuse University, who first called this episode to my attention; John Burlage, Chapter Historian of the West Jersey Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, for his detailed information on New Jersey train lines and stations in the 1890s; Mannat Khurana for her creation of the agricultural colonies train map; Sandra Keirse, Millville, New Jersey library and Adam Rosenthal, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Los Angeles library, for their research assistance; and Nancy Green for her helpful suggestions on an earlier draft of this article.

Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876–1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), 89. See also, *The Encyclopedia of Strikes in American History*, ed. Aaron Brenner et al. (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2009).

2 Oscar Handlin, “American Views of the Jew at the Opening of the Twentieth Century,” *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 40 (1951): 323–324.

3 “Millville,” *Boyd’s Cumberland County, N.J. Directory 1889–90* (Washington, DC: W.

based sand, several glass factories were in operation there, including Whitall, Tatum & Co., started in 1857 when John M. Whitall, the owner of an existing glass factory in Millville, was joined in business by his brother-in-law, Edward Tatum. The company manufactured flint and green glass jars, bottles, and vials, specializing in prescription bottles and apothecary jars for pharmacies across the country. It had two major plants in Millville: Schetterville in the south and Glasstown in the north, about a mile apart. The two plants operated a total of twelve furnaces and employed over 1,500 workers, making Whitall, Tatum one of the largest glass companies in America.⁴

As with other glass companies of this time, Whitall, Tatum employed boys from ages twelve to nineteen, known collectively as “tending-boys.” There were “cracker-off” boys who broke the cooling glass from the end of the blowpipe, “holding-mold” boys who opened or shut the molds, “sticker-up” boys who took the vessel from the mold and held up its mouth to the furnace opening so it could be reheated for further shaping, and “carry-in” boys who took the finished product away to the annealing oven. Although it was illegal, Whitall, Tatum, like other glass companies, also employed boys under the age of twelve, sometimes as young as eight or nine, since their small size was critical to the operations of the factory—this was especially true in the case of the holding-mold boys, who were needed to sit at the feet of the blowers—and because their labor was cheaper than hiring men (see Figure 1).⁵

Andrew Boyd and George S. Boudinot, 1890), 167; “Millville,” *Boyd’s Cumberland County, N.J. Directory 1891–’92* (Philadelphia: C. E. Howe Co., 1892), 215.

4 “At South Millville,” *News of Cumberland County* (Bridgeton, NJ), 11 September 1891, 4; “For Equal Taxation,” *Bridgeton Pioneer* (NJ), 2 July 1891, 4; Virgil S. Johnson, *Millville Glass: The Early Days* (Millville, NJ: Delaware Bay Trading Co., Inc., 1971), 22, 40, 42; “Millville Industry,” *Millville, N.J. Centennial Souvenir 1866–1966* (Millville, NJ: Millville Centennial Corporation, 1966); Adeline Pepper, *The Glass Gaffers of New Jersey and Their Creations From 1739 to the Present* (New York: Scribner, 1971), 225–230; Hannah W. Smith, *John M. Whitall: The Story of His Life* (Philadelphia: pub. by author, 1879), 197–199; “The Strike at Millville,” *Bridgeton Pioneer*, 24 September 1891, 1.

5 This was not unique to the glass industry. In 1890, 1.5 million children between ten and fourteen were working in American factories, mines, and fields. Hugh D. Hindman, *Child Labor: An American History* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2002), 31, 130–135; Johnson,



Figure 1. Section from Lewis Wickes Hine, *Noon Hour, Millville Bottle Works*, Millville, NJ, 1909, Lot 7478, National Child Labor Committee Collection, Library of Congress.

As an incentive for families to send their children to work in the factory, men seeking employment were often given preferential treatment if they had young children who could be hired as well. Given that glass blowers at Whitall, Tatum made good wages—five to twenty dollars a day—and that tending boys who worked in the factory could become glass-working apprentices at age sixteen for a five-year term while earning half wages, parents were willing to have their children work in the factory from an early age.⁶ The extra family income that the boys could bring in, ranging from \$2.76–\$5 a week, was also welcome.⁷

The Jewish Boys

In July 1891, as was usual, a committee of the green bottle blowers met with John Mickel, the superintendent of the firm, to negotiate their salaries for the forthcoming season that was set to commence on 1 September. It was expected that “undoubtedly all differences will be amicably adjusted.”⁸ Negotiations with the flint-glass grinders took longer but were resolved by 4 September.⁹ Both the Whitall and Tatum families

Millville Glass, 115–116; Owen R. Lovejoy, “Child Labor in the Glass Industry,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 27 (March 1906): 43, 46–47; Sandburg, *In Reckless Ecstasy*, 25; “Youthful Czars,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 21 September 1891, 2.

6 Hindman, *Child Labor*, 136; Johnson, *Millville Glass*, 56, 64–65; Sandburg, *In Reckless Ecstasy*, 25; “Youthful Czars.”

7 S. S. Huber, “Our New York Letter,” *Lebanon Courier and Semi-Weekly Report* (Lebanon, PA), 21 October 1891, 2; Sandburg, *In Reckless Ecstasy*, 25; “Youthful Czars.”

8 “The Local Committee,” *News of Cumberland County*, 29 July 1891, 4.

9 “Whitall, Tatum & Co.,” *Murfreesboro Index* (TN), 4 September 1891, 1.

were devout Quakers, who “did not believe in war, nor in litigation,” and it is likely that their values were continued by the company when it came to negotiations with workers.¹⁰ Indeed, in August of that year, a short editorial in a local paper remarked: “How pleasantly Whitall, Tatum & Co. settle with their blowers, while some other manufacturers are in a wrangle almost continually. Whitall, Tatum & Co. go right along, pay the prices demanded and make lots of money.”¹¹

The factory started up three of the furnaces on 2 September, and the company anticipated a busy season.¹² One issue facing them, however, was a scarcity of boys. The company had difficulty in hiring enough boys during their last season, and so they advertised in June and July for additional boys to work in the glassworks (see Figure 2).¹³ At the beginning of September, fourteen Jewish boys were hired by the company. Several papers stated that they came from Philadelphia.¹⁴ Although the West Jersey Railroad Company had a station in Millville that connected it with Philadelphia, this does not seem likely (see Figure 3). The morning train from Philadelphia would not have arrived in Millville until 8:30 a.m., far too late for the boys to have begun work.¹⁵

10 Bill Lockhart et al., “Whitall Tatum—Part I—Whitall, Tatum & Co.” (August 2020), 88, Historic Glass Bottle Identification & Information Website, Society for Historical Archaeology, <https://sha.org/bottle/pdffiles/WhitallTatum1.pdf>; Smith, *John M. Whitall*, 192.

11 “How Pleasantly,” *News of Cumberland County*, 14 August 1891, 4.

12 “Whitall, Tatum & Co.,” *Baltimore Sun*, 2 September 1891, 1; “Whitall, Tatum & Co.,” *News of Cumberland County*, 3 September 1891, 4.

13 “Factories Closed,” *News of Cumberland County*, 18 September 1891, 1; “New Glass Patents at Millville,” *Streator Free Press* (Streator, IL), 24 July 1891, 2. The 1890s were the beginning of a steady decline of boy workers in the glass industry that resulted in manufacturers hiring Black Americans and immigrants at low wages to fill their places. Hindman, *Child Labor*, 138–141. See also, John Spargo, *The Bitter Cry of the Children* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1906), 161.

14 “Factories Closed,” 1; “Strike at Millville,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 19 September 1891, 2.

15 It is unlikely the company would have accommodated late arrivals since the limited train service to and from Philadelphia would have resulted in only an eight-hour workday instead of the usual ten to twelve hours. “Pennsylvania Railroad System: West Jersey Railroad,” in *Travelers’ Official Railway Guide for the United States and Canada: Railway Time Schedules, Connections, and Distances*, ed. W. F. Allen (Washington, DC: National Railway Publications Company, September 1892), 329; “Transportation,” *Millville, N.J. Centennial Souvenir*.

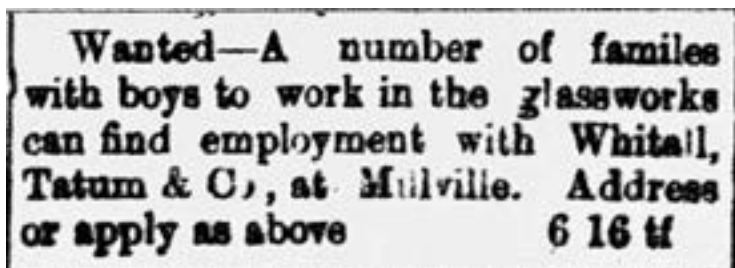


Figure 2. Whitall, Tatum & Co. want ad, News of Cumberland County, 24 June 1891.

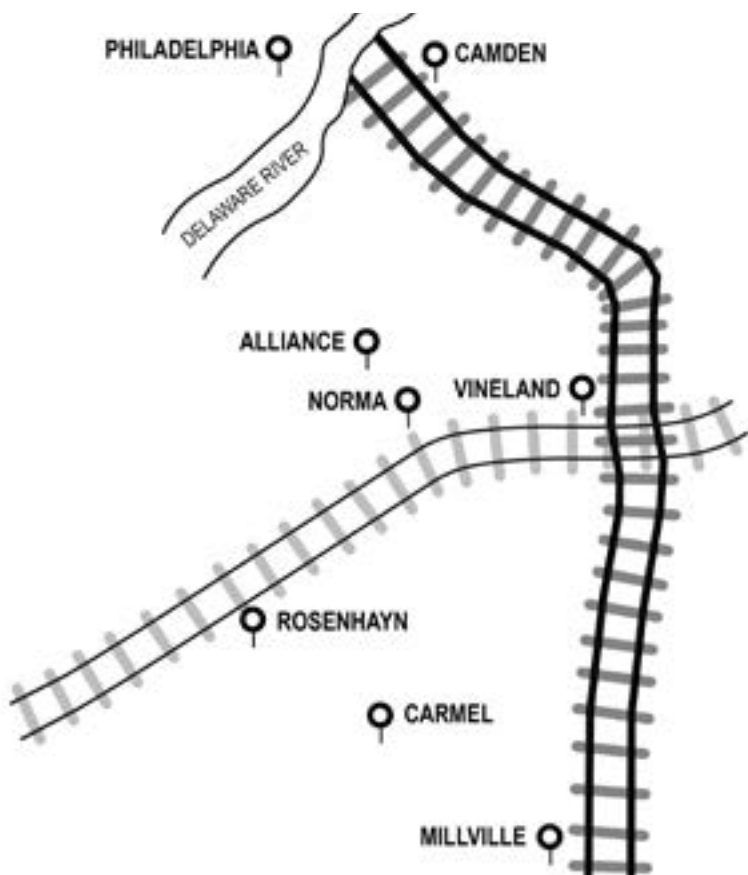


Figure 3. New Jersey Jewish Colonies Near Vineland and Millville. Garton Road colony, not shown on the map, was along the tracks just to the west of Rosenhayn.

A number of papers assumed that the boys came from Millville, although there was no organized Jewish community in Millville when the 1891 strike took place.¹⁶ In fact, there were almost no Jews living in Millville at all. A Jewish clothing store owner, Abraham Weinberg, lived there in 1880, but he left Millville before the 1891 strike and moved to Philadelphia.¹⁷ In 1891, among its ten thousand inhabitants, Millville had only three identifiable Jewish families.¹⁸ The first was Jacob Haas, originally from Germany, who had served briefly in the Civil War. He was living in Millville by 1880, where he worked in a glass factory, as did his two teenage sons.¹⁹ The second Jewish resident in 1891–1892 was Nathan Braunstein, a clothier, who lived there with his wife and family.²⁰ The third Jewish resident, Harry Sheffer, arrived in Millville in late 1890 or early 1891 and worked as a peddler for Braunstein.²¹ Haas's sons were adults, Sheffer had only girls, and one of Braunstein's two sons was just seven—that meant that the fourteen boys did not come from Millville.²²

16 A synagogue is absent from the listing of churches in the 1891–1892 city directory. “Churches,” *Boyd’s Cumberland County, N.J. Directory 1891–’92* (Philadelphia: C. E. Howe Co., 1892), 297. For the absence of Jewish life in Millville before this time, see J. H. Nixon, “Sketch of Millville of the Long Ago,” *Millville Republican*, 2 January 1864, and “Religion in Millville,” *Millville, N.J. Centennial Souvenir*.

17 “Abraham Weinberg” and “Fannie Weinberg,” 1880 US Census, Millville, New Jersey, Ancestry.com; “Fannie Wineberg,” 1900 US Census, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Ancestry.com. He is not found in the 1889–1890 Millville City Directory.

18 “Millville,” *Boyd’s Cumberland County, N.J. Directory 1889–1890*, 167–234; “Millville,” *Boyd’s Cumberland County, N.J. Directory 1891–’92*, 215–295.

19 “George Haas,” “Jacob Haas,” and “Levi Haas,” 1880 US Census, Millville, New Jersey; “Jacob Haas” and “Levi Haas,” *Boyd’s Cumberland County, N.J. Directory, 1889–90* (Washington, DC: W. Andrew Boyd and George S. Boudinot, 1890), 191.

20 “Nathan Braunstein,” *Boyd’s Cumberland County, N.J. Directory 1891–’92* (Philadelphia: C. E. Howe Co., 1892), 407; “Nathan Braunstein,” 1900 US Census, Millville, New Jersey.

21 “Harry Schaefer,” *Boyd’s Cumberland County, N.J. Directory 1891–’92* (Philadelphia: C. E. Howe Co., 1892), 276; “Harry Sheffer Died at His Home,” *Millville Daily*, 2 May 1927, 1.

22 “Nathan Braunstein,” 1900 US Census, Millville, New Jersey; “George Haas,” “Jacob Haas,” and “Levi Haas,” 1880 US Census, Millville, New Jersey; “Harry Sheffer,” 1900 US Census, Millville, New Jersey.

Other papers proposed that the fourteen boys came from the nearby Jewish colonies of “Russian Hebrews.”²³ These would have been the Jewish agricultural settlements funded by the already settled German Jews of America for the newly arrived Eastern European Jewish immigrants, beginning in 1882. Fearing (rightly) that the influx of these “unwashed hordes” into America and their concomitant concentration in urban centers such as New York would lead to antisemitism among long established Americans, they formed groups, such as the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society, to help settle these new immigrants on farmland outside the cities. By 1889, the Alliance colony in New Jersey had 529 settlers, Carmel had 286, Garton Road 145, Norma around 100, and Rosenhayn 294.²⁴

Yet it would have taken over three hours by foot to cover the distance between Alliance, Norma, Garton Road, or Rosenhayn and the Whitall, Tatum plants in Millville.²⁵ Although all four of these colonies were walking distance to the Vineland station, the earliest train from Vineland was the one coming from Philadelphia, and it arrived too late for work in Millville. Rosenhayn and Norma did have train stations on the Southern Division Line of the Central Railroad Company that would have allowed the boys to transfer at the Vineland station, but the earliest train was still the one from Philadelphia that arrived late (see Figure 3).²⁶ Carmel, however, was only four miles away from Millville,

23 “Boys on Strike,” *Jersey City News*, 19 September 1891, 1; “Youthful Czars.”

24 Population figures are for 1889. Joseph Brandes, *Immigrants to Freedom: Jewish Communities in Rural New Jersey since 1882* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1971), 51, 55, 60–62, 67; Ellen Eisenberg, *Jewish Agricultural Colonies in New Jersey, 1882–1920* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 69, 106, 124, 139; Jacob G. Lipman, “Eastern States: The South Jersey Colonies,” in *The Russian Jew in the United States: Studies of Social Conditions in New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago, with a Description of Rural Settlements*, ed. Charles S. Bernheimer [1905] (New York: A.M. Kelley, 1971), 377, 382–383. For an overview of the colonies, see also Deborah E. Popper, “‘Great Opportunities for the Many of Small Means’: New Jersey’s Agricultural Colonies,” *Geographical Review* 96, no. 1 (1931): 24–49.

25 Alliance was 11 miles away; Norma, 10 miles; and Rosenhayn, 7 miles.

26 “Pennsylvania Railroad System,” 329; “South Jersey Rails 1891,” West Jersey and South Jersey Heritage, <https://westjersey.org/rr/wjt1891.htm>; “Reading Railroad System: Central

a little over one hour by foot. Although initially established as a farming community, some of its colonists worked either part time or full time as industrial laborers to supplement their income. It is thus possible that boys from Carmel were the ones briefly employed at Whitall, Tatum.²⁷

Two weeks later, on 15 September, a small group of boy workers complained to the company that the Jews who had been hired would soon be joined by others who would “run them out of their situations.”²⁸ It is more than likely that some men in one or both plants encouraged them to present this complaint. The *Evening Journal* from nearby Vineland stated at the outset of the strike that it was caused by “the blowers and yard men, many of whom are members of the Order of American Mechanics.”²⁹ As Jewish immigration to the United States increased—between 1881 and 1889 it was averaging 22,700 a year, while in 1890 it increased to 40,700—New Jersey papers carried articles expressing concern about the influx of Russia’s Jews into the United States.³⁰ In December of 1890, for example, a headline from the *Evening Journal* stated: “Driven from Russia—England Overrun with Hebrew Immigrants—Workmen Greatly Alarmed—Efforts Will Likely be Made to Unload on the United States.”³¹ In August of 1891, the *Evening Journal* reported that labor organizations in Baltimore “have started

Railroad of New Jersey,” *Travelers’ Official Railway Guide for the United States and Canada: Railway Time Schedules, Connections, and Distances*, ed. W. F. Allen (Washington, DC: National Railway Publications Company, September 1892), 277.

27 “A Russian from Carmel,” *Evening Journal* (Vineland, NJ), 5 June 1891, 1; Eisenberg, *Jewish Agricultural Colonies*, 138–139. Four miles would have been a comfortable walking distance. *Evening Journal*, 5 August 1882, 5.

28 “The Strike in Millville,” *News of Cumberland County* (Bridgeton, NJ), 19 September 1891, 4.

29 “The Millville Strike,” *Evening Journal*, 18 September 1891, 1. Founded in 1844, the Order of United American Mechanics was a nativist society opposed to the hiring of foreign labor. Albert C. Stevens, *The Cyclopaedia of Fraternities* (New York: E. B. Treat and Co., 1907), 290–292.

30 Eisenberg, *Jewish Agricultural Colonies*, 77–78. In addition to New Jersey, newspapers and journals across the United States also printed concerns about Russian Jewish immigration. Louise A. Mayo, *The Ambivalent Image: Nineteenth-Century America’s Perception of the Jew* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1988), 154–160.

31 “Driven From Russia,” *Evening Journal*, 16 December 1890, 1.

an agitation” against accepting any additional Russian Hebrew immigrants.³² Just a few days before the strike, the *Evening Journal's* front page article “Only to Our Shores” reported that no more Russian Jews would be sent to British territories; instead, they would be sent to the United States where “all expected to get rich.”³³

Up to this time, the residents of Cumberland County had been welcoming, overall, to the Jewish colonists upon their initial settlement and in the years that followed.³⁴ The *Evening Journal*, for example, in December 1890, lauded the prosperity of Rosenhayn, Carmel, and Alliance and the plans for future settlement of “thrifty” immigrants in new colonies. But it is likely that once there was fear that the Jewish immigrants would leave their colonies and compete with laborers in the local towns, there was trouble.³⁵ Seeing this first contingent of Russian Jewish boys employed in the factory, the adult men would have understood and feared what most of the boys did not: that the arrival of these Jewish boys was the harbinger of their own employment woes to come. Accordingly, they goaded the boys who worked with them into action. The American poet, Carl Sandburg, who visited Millville, said of the boys (who were middle school and high school dropouts): “Their education has consisted mainly of the thoughts, emotions and experiences that resulted from contact with [adult] ‘blowers’ and ‘gaffers.’”³⁶ Indeed, on the first day of the strike, three adult glassworkers (who were subsequently discharged) did not allow their boys who had entered the plant to work that day.³⁷ Although the strike in Millville was a strike solely by the tender boys, it is more than likely that there were adult influences behind the scenes.³⁸

32 “A Despatch from Baltimore,” *Evening Journal*, 25 August 1891, 4.

33 “Only to Our Shores,” *Evening Journal*, 14 September 1891, 1.

34 For the few examples of hostility toward the colonists during these years, see Brandes, *Immigrants to Freedom*, 179.

35 “The Prosperity of the Foreign Colonies,” *Evening Journal*, 24 December 1890, 3.

36 Sandburg, *In Reckless Ecstasy*, 26.

37 “Strike in Millville.”

38 See also “One of the Greatest Misfortunes,” *American Israelite* (Cincinnati, OH), 15 October 1891, 1; “The Writer,” *Courier-Post* (Camden, NJ), 21 September 1891, 2.

The Strike

At 7 a.m. on Friday morning, 18 September, as Whittall, Tatum's Schetterville plant opened for work, a group of tending boys gathered at the entrance, each said to be holding "a club, barrel stave or broomstick," which they used to threaten the other boys, discouraging them from entering the plant and compelling them to join their ranks. Most did so. (One boy, Ambrose Parr, refused to go out on strike and was labeled a "scab," resulting in his tragic decision to hang himself a week later.)³⁹ Several hundred of the tender boys then marched into downtown Millville, where they were met by the other boys coming from the Glasstown plant, evidence that this was a planned walkout. The crowd of boys then marched to the Wheaton & Co. glass works to call on the tending boys there to join them in their protest, but they left after they were informed that no Jews were employed there. This is not surprising, since Wheaton & Co. was a small operation, employing only two dozen boys.⁴⁰

There are conflicting reports about what happened next. At the end of the day, the *News of Cumberland County* reported that the crowd that morning marched to the train station and set upon six Jews who had just arrived from Philadelphia, severely beating four of them. The *Evening Journal*, also at the end of the day, reported that the crowd chased Jews to the train station and into the train cars. It also mentioned that the crowd approached a group of Italians working on the Presbyterian church and advised them to leave. But the only violence it reported was that an Irish fruit and grocery driver had his wagon overturned, and that a piece of watermelon from his goods struck a policeman.⁴¹ The next day, the *Courier-Post* in Camden stated that the crowd marched to the station to meet the morning train from Cape May, based on a rumor that additional Jews were arriving from Halbertstown "to take their places." The crowd chased three Jews from the train car who then took refuge in the station while the railroad men drove off the tender

39 "Suicide of a Boy," *Tribune* (Scranton, PA), 28 September 1891, 1.

40 "Millville Imitates Russia," *Courier-Post*, 19 September 1891, 1; Pepper, *Glass Gaffers*, 247.

41 "Factories Closed"; "Millville Strike."

boys. Next, the paper stated, the crowd encountered “a party of Jews” who had driven into town. Their horses’ heads were turned around, and they were given three minutes to leave town. Finally, several of the “Jew tending boys” were “roughly handled” by the strikers.⁴² Again, this account made no mention of a serious violent encounter. All three accounts agree that some sort of confrontation took place between the crowd and some Jews at the rail depot. Whether they were the Jewish boys who had been working in the plants or new Jewish workers who were now arriving is not clear. What is clear is that the tender boys opposed the hiring of Jews by Whitall, Tatum.

In the early afternoon, the tending boys gathered and, guided by Dr. William Newell, a distinguished resident of Millville who offered his assistance in mediating, drafted a resolution to be presented to the company. Newell, who understood the labor requisites of the company, guided the boys to soften the resolution’s early language. Rather than demand that “all Jews be removed from the works,” the resolution now “respectfully asked” that employment preference be given to American boys. Newell was clearly more interested in Whitall, Tatum’s employment needs—thus his desire not to have the tending boys antagonize the company—than the Jews, since the resolution went on to request that, “given the peculiar character of the Jewish nationality,” other nationalities be given employment preference before them. The resolution also asked for ten cents a day raise, and that the men who had been fired for preventing some of the boys from working that morning be reinstated.⁴³ When the resolution was brought by a committee from the tending boys to the superintendent of Whitall, Tatum, he rejected their demand for a pay increase and stated that the Jews would be discharged only if more

42 “Millville Imitates Russia.” Halbertstown (Alborton) was a short-lived Jewish agricultural-industrial colony, established just a few months before, about eight miles south of Millville, near the Manumuskin train station. It consisted of approximately seventy-five inhabitants. William Stainsby, *The Jewish Colonies of South Jersey: Historical Sketch of Their Establishment and Growth* (Camden, NJ: S. Chew & Sons, 1901), 28.

43 “Millville Imitates Russia”; “Millville Strike,” 5; “The Strike at an End,” *News of Cumberland County*, 23 September 1891, 4; “Strike in Millville.”

boys could be found to fill their places.⁴⁴

For Whitall, Tatum, this was, first and foremost, a human resources issue. Boys were needed to help keep the factory running; who they were was immaterial. Until such time as the Jewish workers could be replaced, they would stay. In addition, although Whitall, Tatum had a reputation for paying their workers well, the company policy was to settle on their wages at the start of the season. It may have seemed an unwise precedent for them to allow salaries to be renegotiated. Therefore, the boy tenders' demands were rejected. That night, the boys held a street parade in Millville with banners and drums, shouting out: "No, no, no more Jews."⁴⁵

On Saturday, Whitall, Tatum closed their gates, locking out all three thousand of its workers. This was probably less a tactic to pressure the strikers than a practical decision, since the blowers could not do their tasks without the boys' help, and without the blowers, other workers, such as pressers, grinders, and mold makers were also unable to perform their tasks.⁴⁶ The company gave the strikers a deadline to return to work, stating that if they did not do so, half of the furnaces would need to be shut down.⁴⁷ Whitall, Tatum needed to proceed cautiously here, since it was dependent on its workers, especially its highly skilled glass blowers. Thus, when the company issued their demand that the strikers return to work, it was with the warning not that they would be replaced by others but that the company would be forced to cut down production, resulting in loss of work for its laborers.

On Saturday night, the boys held a second parade, setting off firecrackers, waving colored lights, and shouting out: "We don't care whether we work or not, we won't work with the Jews." (It is interesting that

44 "Millville Strike."

45 "Strike in Millville"; "The Striking Glass-House Boys," *News of Cumberland County*, 19 September 1891, 4.

46 Sandburg stated that the boys who were employed outnumbered the adult workers. "Millville Strike," 3; "Glass Works Closed Down," *Savannah Morning News* (Savannah, GA), 20 September 1891, 1; "Hundreds Are Idle," *Patriot-News* (Harrisburg, PA), 19 September 1891, 1; Sandburg, *In Reckless Ecstasy*, 25; "Strike at Millville," *Bridgeton Pioneer*.

47 "The Strike at Millville," *Evening Journal*, 22 September 1891, 3.

they did not also call out for the salary increase they had demanded.) While both the Friday and Saturday parades did nothing to influence the decision made by Whitall, Tatum, they no doubt strengthened the resolve of the tender boy strikers. Indeed, the second chant on Saturday night was "We'll stand the storm, it won't be very long."⁴⁸ By Monday, however, as it became clear that the heads of Whitall, Tatum were not going to change their minds, a number of parties did care that the boys went back to work and were privately pressuring them to do so. If Whitall, Tatum needed the workers, so, too, did the workers need Whitall, Tatum. About one-third of the town depended on the company for their income. First were the adult factory employees who were missing work, especially since the average working season was only ten months out of the year. Second were the boys' families, "sisters and mothers dependent upon their earnings for their support." Third were Millville's merchants who relied on the workers' purchases.⁴⁹

The boys' chant thus came to pass: the storm, indeed, was not very long. On Tuesday, no doubt because of the private pressure they were receiving, about two hundred of the striking boys returned to work (along with an unspecified number of adult workers) at the Schetterville plant. The fact that their furnaces needed, on average, about twenty-seven hours to fire up suggests that Whitall, Tatum was confident on Monday that at least some of the strikers would be returning to work the next day and so restarted the furnaces then.⁵⁰ By Thursday, the strike was entirely over; all the boys were back at work together with the full

48 "The Lock Out," *Evening Journal*, 21 September 1891, 3. New Jersey glass factories were known to import boys from orphan asylums and reformatories, place them in laborers' families, and compensate the families for their room and board. These boys were "wholly without control" when they were not working and were often in the streets in gangs. Spargo, *Bitter Cry*, 162.

49 "Lock Out"; Lovejoy, "Child Labor," 43; "Strike at an End," 4 (quote); "Strike at Millville," *Evening Journal*; "Strike at Millville," *Bridgeton Pioneer*. For the dependency of town inhabitants on glass factories in their midst, see Spargo, *Bitter Cry*, 155.

50 Since the "batch" (sand, soda ash, and limestone mix) needed to be heated to 3,090 degrees Fahrenheit to create glass, it took some time to reach that temperature using coal. "Extremely High Heat Needed to Turn Sand into Glass," *Daily Herald* (Chicago, IL), 6 November 2012; Johnson, *Millville Glass*, 47.

force of adult workers.⁵¹ Whether the fourteen Jewish boys returned to work at the plants or any Jewish boys worked there in the future is unknown but does not seem likely.

The Millville strike also influenced a brief protest by the tending boys at the Cumberland Glass Mfg. Co. in Bridgeton, about nine miles away, which employed three hundred workers. On Monday morning, while the Millville strike was still underway, the boys gathered to rail against the employment of Russian Jews and “American colored boys.” The foreman immediately discharged six Jewish boys who had been hired (probably from either the Rosenhayn or Norma colonies that were fifteen minutes away by train), and the strikers went back to work. The company then issued a statement that they had already planned to dismiss the “Jew boys” since their work was unreliable.⁵²

Sensational Reports

In the days that followed, news of the Millville strike was printed in papers throughout the United States and reached as far as London.⁵³ The events of the first day (which were not entirely accurate to begin with) were blown out of proportion the further from Millville they were reported. Many of the papers, in presenting these exaggerated and sensational accounts, likened the treatment of the Jews in Millville to the harsh treatment that Jews had been receiving in Russia. They bore headlines such as: “As Bad as Russia,” “Bad as Darkest Russia,” “Much Like Russia,” and “Youthful Czars.”⁵⁴

51 “About Two Hundred of the Striking Tending Boys,” *Evening Journal*, 23 September 1891, 3; “The Boys Lacked Backbone,” *Buffalo Enquirer*, 25 September 1891, 2; “Strike at an End”; “The Strike of the Boys,” *News of Cumberland County*, 23 September 1891, 4; “The Strike of the Glass Factory Boys,” *Courier-News* (Bridgewater, NJ), 25 September 1891, 1. Hindman, *Child Labor*, 132 notes that, among boy laborers in the glass industry, “brief, spontaneous job actions and ‘spring fever’ strikes were not uncommon, from which the boys gained very little.”

52 “The Boys Say No,” *News of Cumberland County*, 21 September 1891, 1; Pepper, *Glass Gaffers*, 217; “Reading Railroad System”; “Strike at Home,” *Bridgeton Pioneer*, 24 September 1891, 1.

53 “Three Thousand Hands,” *American Settler* (London), 26 September 1891, 4.

54 “As Bad as Russia,” *South Omaha Daily Stockman*, 23 September 1891, 3; “Bad as

In one version, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that the boys marched into downtown Millville, gathering up clubs. There they set upon “a quiet and inoffensive Hebrew citizen” and beat him severely. They then “hooked a stick in his long, flowing beard, and twisted it until the hair was yanked from his face.”⁵⁵ The *Kansas City Star* added to the account that, although the Hebrew citizen “shrieked for mercy...scores of people stood calmly by and made no attempt to rescue the old man.”⁵⁶

Other accounts increased the number of Jews that were attacked. The *Republican and Herald* in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, stated that two Hebrew peddlers with their packs got off the train sometime on Friday morning and were hammered with tin cans and brickbats, dragged back to the train, and warned never to set foot in Millville again. Furthermore, “Whenever a Hebrew was encountered he was beaten nearly into insensibility and ordered to clear out at once.”⁵⁷ The *Evening Journal* in Vineland reported that a number of Hebrews were assaulted in the streets on Saturday night, forcing a number of them to leave town, and that the mob left notices at houses where “Hebrews were in hiding, to leave at once under penalty of a severe flogging.”⁵⁸ The *Daily Advocate* of Ironwood, Michigan, stated that all the Hebrews in Millville, about one hundred, were driven from the town by the boys. Many were severely beaten.⁵⁹

The reports reached their crescendo with a Missouri paper reporting that out of a thousand or more Hebrews living in Millville, not a half a dozen now remained, and that most of them, not having the means to pay for transportation, left the town on foot.⁶⁰ The *Kansas City Star* provided even more pathetic details:

Darkest Russia,” *Kansas City Star*, 21 September 1891, 5; “Much Like Russia,” *Republican and Herald* (Pottsville, PA), 21 September 1891, 3; “Youthful Czars.”

55 “Youthful Czars.”

56 “Bad as Darkest Russia.”

57 “Much Like Russia.”

58 “Strike at Millville,” *Evening Journal*.

59 “Drove Hebrews Out,” *Daily Advocate* (Ironwood, MI), 22 September 1891, 2; “Glass Works Closed Down.”

60 “Still Being Persecuted,” *Hamilton News-Graphic* (Hamilton, MO), 2 October 1891, 2.

It was a sorrowful sight to see the procession of terror-stricken men and women, with their few possessions tied up in bundles, stealthily creeping through the back streets to the depot and roadways, not daring to show themselves on the principal highways for fear of encountering the wrath of their persecutors.⁶¹

A week after the incident, the New Jersey governor, Leon Abbett, a strong supporter of labor rights, instructed the prosecuting attorney of Cumberland County to investigate the matter. Abbett had been directly involved in calming down Newark's volatile Clark Thread Mills strike a few months earlier, and it is likely that he acted now less out of concern for the Jews than on hearing reports of mob violence.⁶² The mayor of Millville, however, seeking to refute the melodramatic stories, wrote to inform him that "he had no knowledge of any Hebrew being assaulted or violently handled by the strikers," and that "the sensational reports published about Hebrew outrages in Millville are false."⁶³

The mayor's insistence that there had been no violence is supported by the fact, presented above, that the two local papers carried no reports of violence when the walkout first occurred, and the fact that none of the three Jewish families living at this time in Millville departed the town as a result of the strike. Haas continued living in Millville until his death in 1893, and his son, George, was still there in 1895.⁶⁴ Braunstein and his family continued to live in Millville through 1900.⁶⁵ Sheffer remained there until his death in 1927, when he was lauded as "one of Millville's leading and most highly respected and esteemed merchants."⁶⁶

61 "Bad as Darkest Russia." The events at the Cumberland Glassworks were also sensationalized. It was reported that the tending boys gathered at the factory gate, placed iron bars across it, and, armed with stones and clubs, informed "Jews and colored boys" that they would be stoned to death if they attempted to enter." "Strike at Home."

62 "Governor Abbett Inquiring into Alleged Violence Towards the Hebrews," *News of Cumberland County*, 26 September 1891, 5; Richard A. Hogarty, *Leon Abbett's New Jersey: The Emergence of the Modern Governor* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2001), 292 n. 95.

63 "Governor Abbett."

64 "George Haas," 1895 New Jersey State Census, Ancestry.com; "Jacob Haas," New Jersey, U.S., Death and Burials Index, 1798–1971, Ancestry.com.

65 "Nathan Braunstein," 1900 US Census, Millville, New Jersey.

66 "Harry Sheffer," 1900 US Census, Millville, New Jersey; "Harry Sheffer Died at His Home."

Millville in Perspective

The Millville strike needs to be seen in context as a pushback by (adult) nativist skilled and semiskilled industrial workers against the entry of recently arrived immigrants into their workplace. As noted above, some of these workers may have belonged to the anti-immigration Order of United American Mechanics. Not only Jews but Italians and Black Americans (who had migrated from the South) were included in the efforts of the Whitall, Tatum strikers to remove them from the town. The Millville strike was a forerunner of the conflicts to come. In the years that immediately followed, these new workers would be increasingly seen by nativists, especially through the lens of racial theory, as inimical to White Protestant American society. Anti-immigration sentiment, which the Millville strike displayed, would result in the passage of the 1891 Immigration Act, which allowed for the rejection of immigrants who were likely to become a public charge. The creation of the Immigration Restriction League in 1894 followed, and in 1896, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge proposed a bill for a literacy test to limit immigration to America.⁶⁷

The strike in Millville, however, demonstrated more than a generalized hostility toward immigrant workers; rather, its animus was directed specifically toward Jews. After all, even the modified and softened strikers' resolution that was presented to Whitall, Tatum clearly proclaimed, in essence, "any workers but Jews," and the chants that filled the air during the nighttime parades were directed specifically against them. Moreover, this strike was not for better wages, reduced working hours, or workplace safety; rather, it took place specifically in opposition to the hiring of Jews. If the historian Bertram Korn observed that the Jewish community, thirty years earlier, was not sure how much anti-Jewish prejudice "lay latent under the smooth appearance of equality," the Millville strike suggests that it was hovering right beneath the surface, ready to erupt when economic uncertainties entered the lives of American nativist workers.⁶⁸

67 John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism 1869–1925* (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 69, 71, 99–101.

68 Bertram Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (New York: Atheneum, 1970), 13.

Yet the antisemitic outbreak that occurred in Millville was short-lived, and its consequences mild overall, since Whitall, Tatum refused to fire its Jewish workers, the nearby Jewish agricultural colonies continued their agricultural and light-industrial pursuits, and, more significantly, the Jews living in Millville remained as residents. In addition, although a number of newspapers across the United States had presented the growing number of Jewish immigrants as an economic threat, they now also wrote sympathetically about the Jews of Millville as a group in need of compassion for the conditions that drove them from Russia.

The story of the events in Millville thus adds to the history of antisemitism in America and underscores that this history is a complex one, involving both animus toward and support of Jews. The Millville strike also serves as a reminder that the sensationalizing of antisemitic incidents may sometimes grossly overstate what actually occurred. Just as “there was no joy in Mudville” after mighty Casey’s strike-out in 1888, so, too, “there were no Jews in Millville”—not thousands, hundreds, nor even tens—who were driven away during the 1891 strike.⁶⁹

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69 “There is no joy in Mudville,” from Ernest Lawrence Thayer, “Casey at the Bat: A Ballad of the Republic, Sung in the Year 1888” (1888), in Phineas Thayer, *Casey at the Bat* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg, 1912).

Book Reviews

Ann Brener, *Books Like Sapphires: From the Library of Congress Judaica Collection* (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2024), 272pp.

Ann Brener has produced a beautiful book that presents the treasures from the Library of Congress's Judaica holdings in their best light. The focus is on manuscripts and early printings of Hebraica and Judaica, but the volume offers forays into modern works, especially those produced in prestate Israel. The book is at its best in describing the early texts, their publishers, printers, typesetters, and the efforts that went into producing them. The photographs are exceptional. They capture identifiable and intricate details of the original artifacts. The book provides a valuable service in making known to the public the kinds of holdings available for study in the collection. It also provides a useful introduction to the history of Jewish book production and printing; how, where and by whom it was accomplished; and, to some degree, the impact this had on Jewish culture and learning.

The book is organized in seven parts: "The Hebrew Bible" includes editions of medieval and early modern commentaries as well as illuminated, illustrated, and decorative scrolls of Esther and Ruth. "The Literature of the Sages" includes the requisite rabbinical literature like editions of the Babylonian Talmud, but also medical works, philosophical-theological works, medieval halakhic works, and sermons and a foray into the use of unicorn imagery to illustrate Jewish books. "The Hebrew Prayer Books" includes examples of haggadot and festival prayer books, nighttime prayers, and the like. "Hebrew Language and Literature" includes works by medieval poets, dictionaries and grammars, and works of bibliography, a prestate Hebrew periodical, and modern Hebrew poetry. "Children's Books" includes early twentieth century examples of Bialik's works and a Russian Hebrew periodical for children, as well as other Hebrew works from prestate Israel. "Life in the Jewish Community" includes plays, wedding poems, prayers for the restoration of the health of Maria Theresa (who ruled the Habsburg

dominions from 1740 to 1780), a victory ode for the Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II (1741–1790), and prayers for the dedication of synagogues. Finally, “Out of the Ashes” provides a summary of the history of the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction organization, its role in securing and redistributing Jewish cultural property at the end of World War II, and how the Library of Congress became home to some of these books.

As a detailed catalogue and study of each of these texts, *Books Like Sapphires* is a superb book. The book flap promises that, in addition to describing the Library’s treasures, “This book also tells the story of the patrons and collectors, first among them Jacob Schiff, as well as archivists and curators, who made the storied Judaica archive at the Library of Congress the precious resource that it is today.” Concerning these matters the reader may be disappointed. The books are well described as individual titles, but their significance as part of a storied collection is never duly explored. The reader is left with only the most superficial understanding of the role of Hebraica and Judaica in the Library of Congress from the perspectives of the librarians who built it, the donors who contributed to it, or to American Jews. In his foreword to the volume, philanthropist Martin J. Gross, who funded the volume, writes: “The act of collecting is the physical manifestation of an inner motivation on behalf of the collector” (ix). If this is true, it is a shame that the volume does little to explore what it means for the United States to collect Judaica. What are the nation’s motivations?

The book begins with a brief history of the collection. After the British burned the nation’s capital and the first Library of Congress on 24 April 1814, Congress purchased 6,487 volumes from Thomas Jefferson in 1815. Jefferson then owned the most extensive personal library in the country. Brener asserts that “there certainly were no Hebrew books in the collection that Thomas Jefferson sold to the nation” (2), but scholars have identified seven volumes of Hebraica and Judaica, including a volume of Mishnah and Spinoza’s Hebrew grammar, among them.¹ Brener jumps a century to begin her history in 1912 with the

1 Abraham J. Karp, *From The Ends of the Earth: Judaic Treasures of the Library of Congress* (Washington, D. C., 1991), 1–9; Brad Sabin Hill, “A Century of Hebraica at the Library of Congress,” *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 106:1 (2016): 101–129.

donation of nearly ten thousand books acquired from the bookdealer Ephraim Deinard by the philanthropist Jacob Schiff; this acquisition established a formal Judaica and Hebraica section for the Library of Congress. With the false assumption about Jefferson's library and the shift to 1912, Brener overlooks the holdings of the collection on the eve of its great expansion.

Certainly, the collections of both Hebrew Union College (HUC) and the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) were much larger and had also received gifts from Schiff, but it is noteworthy that, in 1906, Max Schloessinger, the librarian of HUC in Cincinnati, reached out to Herbert Putnam (then Librarian of Congress) to acquire the catalogue cards for Hebraica and Judaica. The Library had begun printing and making available such cards in 1901.² These early communications may have been part of Putnam's desire to build a Judaica collection. According to Putnam's office, the Library of Congress had located a staff person with requisite knowledge who was willing to seek out these cards in the catalogues of other collections since a Judaica and Hebraica section did not yet exist. Putnam's office did not expect they would find many cards since the holdings were relatively small.³ They *were* small, yes, but large enough that purchasing the cards would be more advantageous than producing the cards anew in Cincinnati. What treasures were in the collection before Schiff and Deinard entered the scene?

The 1912 acquisition was the first of three purchases from Deinard. The first two were supported by Schiff, and the last was purchased with a congressional allocation. Brener is quick to point out that the librarian reports and correspondence are inadequate for reconstructing the contents of the collections as they were received. Based on what is preserved, Putnam was interested in expanding the international holdings of the library. He "envisioned a library in which American scholars would have everything they needed here, in America, without having to rely on the great collections of Europe..." (3). Schiff agreed to acquire the

2 Peter Devereaux, *The Card Catalog: Books, Cards and Literary Treasures* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2017), 112.

3 Putnam to Schloessinger, 20 January 1906, MS-5, Library Correspondence, E1/4, Correspondence 1906–1907, AJA, Cincinnati, Ohio.

collection providing the Library would hire a Hebraic scholar to work with the materials. All this, though, leaves Schiff's motivations entirely unexplored. Schiff had supported public libraries, including acquiring a collection for the New York Public Library (NYPL) nearly a decade earlier, as well as other Jewish libraries. Judaica scholarship could already be done in the United States. Scholar Cyrus Adler, who had been the librarian of the Smithsonian, was consulted on the sale. He suggested that Schiff's philanthropic involvement was necessary because it was not clear that Congress would allocate funds for such a purchase.⁴ Why, then, did Schiff imagine that it was important for Judaica to be well represented in "the People's House," and why was it better that this collection was there rather than at HUC or JTS? What might it have meant for American Jewry to have its literary heritage preserved in the nation's capital rather than at another American Jewish institution or the NYPL?

Although Brener laments that not much is known about the acquisition of these early volumes and spends several pages discussing whether there were three or four acquisitions from Deinard, this is really the last the reader hears of how any of the books "found a home" (xi) at the Library of Congress. The word choice here is telling; it suggests that the books were active participants, which disguises the roles played by the donors, librarians, and administrators who actively sought a home for Jewish books. It is a challenge to criticize an author for the book they did not write, but the story of the donors and librarians would better explain why it is significant that these books are present in the holdings of the United States government, on shelves in the nation's capital. Brener does a good job of telling us about these types of patrons when the books were produced but stops too short when it comes to those who acquired them for the Library of Congress.

Instead, we are told things like, "In 2014, the Hebraic Section of the Library of Congress had the good fortune to acquire a lovely little manuscript, an illuminated prayer-book of miniature size..." (166). The images in the book are stunning and the discussion of its contents and artistry

4 Cyrus Adler, *Jacob Schiff: His Life and Letters*, vol. 2 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1929), 35.

thorough, but how did it come to the United States and make its way to the capital? Was it purchased by the Library? Did a Jewish patron think this was a good home for a family heirloom? The reader is left to wonder.

The failure to discuss seriously the route of the books to the library leads to some clunky history as well. In her discussion of a medieval medical text, Brener writes that it was “one of the treasures that reached the Hebraic Section of the Library of Congress during the earliest years of its existence” (79). Just a few pages later, in a genuinely poetic paragraph, she relates, “It is hard to stand in front of this book and not wonder: how on earth did it survive the centuries to reach the Library of Congress? The expulsions, the pogroms, the wars, the Holocaust?” (83). These are important questions, but the book survived the Holocaust precisely because it had been in the Library of Congress from its earliest days, before World War I. In truth, some of these questions might have been answered if more attention had been paid to the building of the collection.

When it comes to modern history, Brener is to be lauded for devoting so much space to a printing of the Babylonian Talmud supported by the American military for displaced persons trapped in the American zone after the Holocaust and the work of Jewish Cultural Reconstruction Inc. in helping to relocate heirless Jewish cultural property, including a half-million books, after World War II. Both of these sections offered her the opportunity to speak about the specifically American relationship to the production and preservation of the Jewish literary legacy, but the opportunity is missed. Little of American Jewish cultural production is included in the volume; given that the history of Hebrew printing in the United States reaches back to 1735, the absence of any real discussion of treasures by American Jews in the Library’s holdings is a glaring omission. While the book does a truly superb job of describing and discussing particular books and the Jews who made them possible, it largely ignores the value of this collection for present-day American Jewry. At the end of an essay about an Esther scroll in a silver filigree case from the Bezalel school, Brener states that the artefact “remains important for us today and intensely, magnificently, alive” (58). Perhaps, but how so? The reader is never told what it means for the Library of Congress to hold the piece or how it is important, nor how a ritual item preserved in a library is alive when it is not being used for the religious practice

for which it was created. The lack of discussion makes these feel like throwaway lines rather than serious questions and statements, and they undermine what is otherwise a valuable book about books.

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Adriana M. Brodsky and Laura Arnold Leibman, eds., *Jews Across the Americas: A Sourcebook, 1492–Present* (New York: New York University Press, 2023), 538pp.

Adriana M. Brodsky and Laura Arnold Leibman have assembled an extraordinary volume that does so much more than explore primary source documents from 1492 to the present. It redefines numerous fields of historical research, creates new ways of organizing and understanding Jewish history, synthesizes a diverse set of transnational sources, and forces scholars to reimagine the very questions we ask in historical inquiry. A primary source document reader that offers a bold new historical synthesis, *Jews Across the Americas* sets the highest bar and merits thoughtful reading and reflection by historians with specialties well beyond its focused time and place.

The documents, mostly unknown and as yet unconsidered in the literature, challenge conventional understandings of American Jewish history (however geographically defined) by encouraging historians to let go of generations-long assumptions and embrace an important, convincing, and new approach to “American” Jewish history, defined by hemispheric borders rather than national boundaries. Beyond its documentary sections, the book’s narrative descriptions help readers better understand the innovative approach, as the authors reframe historical fields and draw out historiographic implications.

Brodsky and Leibman offer a compelling thesis—namely, that scholars limit ourselves when we limit our understanding to British Colonial America and later the United States. Only by breaking down those national boundaries and including the Caribbean, Central America and South America as part of the American Jewish historical experience can we gain keener insights, not only into transnational stories but also the assumptions internalized by studies based on the United States.

Jews Across the Americas acknowledges a range of origin stories and investigates the connections between various American Jewish stories. Taking aim at a limiting historiography embraced by most of us who teach American Jewish history, their volume “reveals how Jews created thriving communities in the Americas long before the fall of Recife, and [how] Jews continued to flourish across the Americas, settling in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Canada, as well as what would become the United States” (2). By rejecting the often-internalized belief that “America” and the “United States” are synonymous, the editors and their many contributors paint a very different historical picture, one that reveals both similarities and differences from a United States-based analysis. This reframe, they argue, allows us to identify seven important “strands” that remain hidden in a United States-centered view: a moving center, antisemitism, Jewish diversity, the rise of a transregional Jewish community and identity, the Americanization of Jewish practice, shifting stories of Jewish gender and sexuality, and the problems of national belonging (2).

By and large, this volume takes aim at the exceptionalist thesis, once a mainstay in our framing and understanding of the Jewish experience in British colonial north America and later the United States. With a new hemispheric recast, Brodsky and Leibman can more effectively test the many underlying assumptions about the distinctiveness, or lack thereof, of Jewish life in the United States (and beyond). For example, they claim that antisemitism has always defined the Americas, making its appearance in the United States more typical than most scholars and their readers would like to believe.

Among its many contributions, *Jews Across the Americas* lets us know that not all Jews emigrated from Europe. Not all Jews racialized as White. Incorporating recent demographic research on Jewish diversity,

they show how traditional research erased a level of Jewish communal diversity that existed for centuries yet was hidden by a White North American Jewish view held by both scholars and contemporary communal leadership. By opening the aperture, Brodsky and Leibman can see, and show us, the limitations of American Jewish exceptionalism and the historiography that followed. *Jews of Color*, for example, lived Jewish lives across the Americas and across the centuries, even if their experiences have not been treated as central in the literature. Brodsky and Leibman expand the historiography of gender as well, documenting and analyzing Jews who did not identify along the male-female binary. Primary sources reveal ritual baths and tell stories of “where and how Jewish sexuality is regulated” (6).

In terms of the book’s organization, the editors have created a narrative arc that explores the history of the Americas over time and place, while at the same time it grounds historical documents with important, significant, and innovative analysis. *Jews Across the Americas* contains five sections, with a new periodization that better animates this hemispheric approach. Each historical period contains more than a dozen primary sources, each introduced by a contributor with expertise in that document and its meaning. They offer words that give the reader important background and significance for the document to come. The source material, all translated into English and edited for brevity, make for reading that undergraduates and lay people alike can appreciate. Kudos to New York University Press for taking on the added expense of including several photographic and other schematic sources, which deepen the book’s impact and provide a multidimensional view of the history.

It is rare for a single book to upset so many long-held assumptions—even more for a collection of primary source documents. Brodsky and Leibman have crafted a volume that will force all of us in the field to rethink so much of what we do. We need borders and boundaries to define our work just as we know that whatever limits we choose will, by definition, restrict our understandings. With *Jews Across the Americas*, scholars are gifted with the opportunity to go back to our most basic assumptions—by going back to the sources—and rewrite our books and our classes in a much more sophisticated, thoughtful, and compelling way.

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Rachel Cockerell, *Melting Point: Family, Memory, and the Search for a Promised Land* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2025), 401 pp.

Between 1907 and 1914, the Galveston Movement, orchestrated by New York financier Jacob Schiff, redirected nearly ten thousand Russian Jewish immigrants to the Texas Gulf Coast and dispersed them to communities throughout the West and Midwest. In *Melting Point*, English writer Rachel Cockerell describes her discovery of the movement, which carries a unique charge: Cockerell's great-grandfather David Jochelmann was one of its leaders. Directing the Kyiv branch of the transnational effort, Jochelmann was responsible for recruiting potential emigrants and selecting candidates for the Galveston-bound ships. Cockerell's search for her ancestor and his reasons for moving his family to London after World War I uncovered his involvement in a plan she had never heard of to send Russian Jews to a place she had never heard of.

Due to the dearth of documentation by or about him, Jochelmann remains "the almost silent figure at the heart of *Melting Point*" (5), but it is shaped around him. The first part (roughly half the book) details the background of the immigration movement he helped direct; the second focuses on the interwar experiences of Jochelmann's son Emmanuel, who relocated to New York and became a successful if forgotten playwright in the avant-garde theater; and the third chronicles Jochelmann's move to London and the subsequent generations of his family there.

It is unfortunate that Cockerell was not able to find more detail on Jochelmann's Galveston Movement activities, which would have been a welcome addition to the record, but in viewing the movement from a European rather than American perspective, *Melting Point* makes an important contribution. As Cockerell demonstrates, a project that Schiff and his American managers understood to be purely pragmatic—as

pogroms worsened, Russian Jews could find immediate safety only in America—was for their European partners embedded in ideology. Cockerell turns up connections between her family history, the Galveston Movement, and the tumultuous politics of early Zionism, including leaders like Theodor Herzl, Vladimir Jabotinsky, and Israel Zangwill.

In Jochelmann's near-absence, Zangwill, his Galveston Movement colleague and an English playwright, is *Melting Point's* central figure; Cockerell's title puns on Zangwill's best-known play. "I had certainly never heard of Israel Zangwill," Cockerell writes, "[once] the most famous Jewish figure in the English-speaking world, but I soon began to understand his significance—both to the early twentieth century and to my family" (4). It was Zangwill who enlisted Cockerell's great-grandfather into Schiff's project and who enticed him years later to move to the United Kingdom, where his descendants, including Cockerell, still live.

Cockerell is at her best depicting Zangwill's tireless (and, in hindsight, absurd) attempt to secure a site for a Jewish homeland *anywhere except* Palestine. As founder of the Jewish Territorial Organization (ITO), Zangwill responded to Herzl's call for a sovereign state in the Jews' ancestral home by supporting the concept but rejecting the location. "The principal difficulty," an ITO supporter explained, "is that Palestine is already the homeland of another people" (324). At various times Zangwill tried to secure land for a Jewish state in East Africa, Cyrenaica (eastern Libya), Mesopotamia, Australia, Canada, Mexico, and Paraguay; every proposal collapsed, usually quickly.

Zangwill's frustration with the ITO's repeated failures led him to partner with the Galveston Movement, even though its goals contradicted his; Schiff was an avowed anti-Zionist and opponent of every plan for Jewish statehood. "The promised land of the Jew," Schiff wrote, "is America," and rather than seeking a land of their own, immigrant Jews should "become part of the bone and sinew of our great country" (115, 109). Schiff's goal was to make America accessible to as many Jewish immigrants as possible and to disperse them broadly, preventing the massing populations that could create ghettos—or homelands. Zangwill agreed to support the plan Schiff proposed as "something immediately practicable" (115), but his ambivalence ran deep. "America

is the euthanasia of the Jew and Judaism,” he said. “If I had my way, not a single Russian Jew should enter America” (126). Zangwill is the best-drawn figure in *Melting Point*, a true *schlemiel* who comes across as equal parts zeal and haplessness, genius and futility, and he deserves the detailed attention he receives.

The most conspicuous feature of *Melting Point* is its peculiar narrative method. With the exception of Cockerell’s brief preface and afterword (totaling eleven pages), the entirety of the book is comprised of direct quotes taken from published primary documents, selected and arranged into a narrative, with each source cited briefly in the margin. This approach, Cockerell explains, allows her sources to “reinforce each other, bristle against each other, converse with each other, and come together to build a story” (1). Not only is there no narrator, but there are no explanatory notes, archival or secondary sources; no thesis, argument, interpretation, contextualization—only quotes. “I began to notice my irritation at my own interjections,” Cockerell says, “and found myself reaching to delete them” (1).

But without a narrator, major figures—Chaim Weizmann, Cyrus Sulzberger, Max Nordau—are mentioned or quoted but never identified. No one restrains racist and colonialist speakers who disparage Kenyans as “savages” and “barbarians” who “are well disposed to white men” and “admit [British] superiority” (70–71). No one intercedes to clarify confusing quotations, as when Winston Churchill lavishes praise on “Mr. Chamberlain,” which seems odd until it is revealed that Churchill was speaking not of his rival, Neville Chamberlain, but of his father, cabinet minister Joseph Chamberlain (51). Without a narrator, every source seems equally important, as when the assessment of the potential for a Jewish state by Weizmann, the future Israeli president, is placed right beside another from the *Jersey City News* (15).

The problem is that historical sources do not speak for themselves, and they never mean only what they say. They require context, explanation, and often correction, or they are likely to be misunderstood. Even *Melting Point*’s publisher seems to have come away with a crucial misconception of the Galveston Movement, billing the book as “the story of a long-lost plan to create a Jewish state in Texas.” It is not. There was never any such plan, and no one in the book credibly says

there was; the Galveston Movement was actually a plan to *prevent* a Jewish state. Perhaps the confusion arises from the mistaken newspaper coverage Cockerell quotes without saying it was mistaken: “A colony will be established near Galveston”; “Zangwill’s ITO is colonizing the Southwestern United States” (124, 133). Fortunately, Cockerell gives Zangwill an opportunity to rebut: “There is not the faintest idea of establishing a colony in Texas,” he insists (124). But how is a reader to know which account is correct? These contradictory statements do not reflect different opinions—Zangwill’s claim is verifiably true, and the newspaper reports are verifiably false—but they are presented side by side without explanation as equally plausible. Recent media coverage of *Melting Point*, including a *New Yorker* piece titled “When Jews Sought the Promised Land in Texas,” suggests that without authorial guidance, readers are already drawing the wrong conclusions.

Melting Point is entertaining to read and informative about personalities, recovers important and overlooked subjects, and some readers may appreciate Cockerell’s stated goal of reproducing the quality of memory, “elastic, shifting, filled with small details” (1). But it is an anthology of unmediated opinion, and most historians will be frustrated by Cockerell’s decision not to assess the veracity of her sources, draw conclusions, or correct known errors. Maybe a book like *Melting Point* is perfect for our post-truth age, when everyone has a take, every take is equally valid, and opinions are more compelling than facts.

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Rachel Gordan, *Postwar Stories: How Books Made Judaism American* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024), xi + 298 pp.

Rachel Gordan has transformed her Harvard dissertation into an engrossing, fluent, and copiously documented volume on the acculturation of American Jews in the years following World War II. The book's central thesis is that the 1940s and 1950s saw a change in the image of American Jews from an ethnic and even a racial group to a religion, and since religion was highly prized in America, this makeover helped bring about the post-World War II "golden age" of America's Jews. In 1951, Louis Finkelstein, the head of the Jewish Theological Seminary, appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine. Four years later saw the appearance of Will Herberg's *Protestant-Catholic-Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology*, the most widely read book on American religion of the 1950s. Its title suggested that Jews, despite comprising less than three percent of the population, had achieved parity with Protestants and Catholics, and that Judaism had become an integral part of the American religious mosaic.

A key factor in this transformation, Gordan argues, was the flood of "middlebrow" books on American Judaism, Jews, and antisemitism published by major firms after the war. They included Joshua Loth Liebman's *Peace of Mind* (1946); Milton Steinberg's *Basic Judaism* (1947); Abraham Joshua Heschel's *The Earth is the Lord's* (1949), *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man* (1951), and *God in Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism* (1955); Ludwig Lewisohn's *The American Jew, Character and Destiny* (1950); Maurice Samuel's *Gentleman and the Jew* (1950); Philip Bernstein's *What the Jews Believe* (1950); Louis Finkelstein's *The Beliefs and Practices of Judaism* (1952) and *Thirteen Americans: Their Spiritual Biographies* (1953); Morris Kertzer's *What Is a Jew?* (1953); Oscar Handlin's *Adventure in Freedom: 300 Years of Jewish Life in America* (1954); Robert Gordis's *Judaism for the Modern Man* (1955); Abba Hillel Silver's *Where Judaism Differed: An Inquiry into the Distinctiveness of Judaism* (1956); Herman Wouk's *This Is my God* (1959); and Samuel Dresner's *Three Paths of God and Man* (1960), as well as several anti-antisemitic novels: Arthur Miller's *Focus* (1945), Jo Sinclair's *Wasteland* (1946), Saul Bellow's *The Victim* (1947), and Laura Z. Hobson's *Gentleman's Agreement* (1947). Also important to Gordan's

story are three magazine articles. Two appeared in *Life* magazine: Philip Bernstein's "What the Jews Believe" (11 September 1950) and Jozefa Stuart's "Judaism" (13 June 1955). The other was Arthur A. Cohen's "Why I Choose to be a Jew" in the April 1959 issue of *Harper's*. *Postwar Stories* would have been even more compelling had it also scrutinized such postwar middlebrow blockbuster novels as Wouk's *The Caine Mutiny* (1952) and *Marjorie Morningstar* (1955) and Leon Uris's *Exodus* (1958).

Determining the impact of books and magazine articles is a difficult, if not impossible task. Did they shape public opinion or simply reflect the zeitgeist of the time? But the fact that editors employed by major publishers thought that there was now an American market for such volumes was telling. The post-1945 era, Gordan stresses, was a propitious period for this middlebrow literature since it appeared concurrently with a religious revival. At this time "Under God" and "In God We Trust" were placed on stamps, money, and the Pledge of Allegiance; politicians fondly uttered religious pieties; "Judeo-Christian nation" was frequently used to describe the United States; religious bigotry was abhorred; and religion was conscripted as an ally in the Cold War conflict with the atheistic Soviet Union. The American form of government, Dwight Eisenhower said in 1952, makes no sense "unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith, and I don't care what it is" (11). Presumably it could be Judaism as well as Christianity.

The major feature of Gordan's writers was their confidence in the compatibility of American Judaism and America's four and a half million Jews with the social, economic, intellectual, and religious mores of the other one hundred and thirty-five million Americans. Thus Elliot Cohen, the founding editor of *Commentary*, optimistically called upon Jews and gentiles alike "not only to permit but to prize the variety and values of the kind of American who never appears in advertisements—the Pole, the Italian, the Irishmen, the Seventh Avenue dress manufacturer and the bearded orthodox rabbi, the grimy, sweaty workman and the men of other eye-slants and skin colors" (100).

Gordan's major concern, as noted in the subtitle of her book, is less with America's Jews than with American Judaism, and at times she conflates the two. This is understandable since her dissertation was for the Committee on the Study of Religion at Harvard, and she is a

professor of religion at the University of Florida. "Writers increasingly centered religion in their postwar presentation of Judaism," she writes. "Explaining Jews and Judaism through the language of religion, rather than as a race, nationality, or as a problem—understandings that had all been common, previously—allowed authors to present Jews in acceptable ways for Cold War readers" (6). This is undoubtedly correct, but one wonders whether it misses the big picture.

Gordan's Judaic authors, several of whom were ordained rabbis, were among the minority of American Jews who took Judaism seriously. What was central to them was not necessarily what other Jews considered important. Most American Jews then and now were not religious in any conventional sense, if by "religious" one means belonging to a synagogue, attending religious services on a regular basis, and taking seriously some of Judaism's basic commandments and beliefs. American Judaism, as has been frequently noted, was unique in that most of its adherents rejected its most basic tenets. Judaism was also unique in that it comprised a religion and an ethnic group simultaneously, and the religious element was one aspect of Jewish identity that for the past several centuries has been quite variegated.

The Judaism preached by these writers was syncretic and *sui generis*. They stressed the similarities between Judaism and Christianity, particularly their support for America's civil culture. Thus, Steinberg remarked that "Lincoln and Jefferson are my heroes together with Rabbi Akiba and Moses Maimonides. The four get along in my imagination most companionably.... I sing Negro spirituals, American ballads, and Hasidic or Palestinian folksongs with equal vigor and tonelessness." Both Judaism and America, he said, were democratic and "emphasize the worth of the individual and his right to freedom. In both there is passionate devotion to the ideal of social justice. And the vision of the more abundant life is a secularized parallel of the ancient Jewish dream of the Kingdom of God on earth." For Steinberg and other Jews, Judaism and Americanness were symbiotic, and whether this was true or not was irrelevant (126–127).

And then there was the apologetic nature of Steinberg's *Basic Judaism* and other books of this genre. In his 1948 review of *Basic Judaism*, Irving Kristol complained that it simplified and debased Judaism by accommodating it to "the outlook of an American 'Main Street' in its New Deal variant." The result was a "perversion of the Jewish religion

into a doctrine of social (and sociable) principles, the transformation of Messianism into a shallow, if sincere, humanitarianism, plus a thoroughgoing insensitivity to present day spiritual problems" (126).

America's Jews in the immediate postwar years were torn. Despite evidence that American antisemitism was rapidly declining from its peak during the 1930s and early war years, they feared its resurgence and worried that "it could happen here." In the wake of the Holocaust, no one needed to be told what "it" meant. Yet Jews were hopeful that the contributions that 550,000 Jewish servicemen and -women had made to the war effort, combined with the identification of racial and religious hatred with Germany and Japan, America's mortal enemies, would usher in a new era of religious and ethnic harmony and facilitate the entry of Jews into the American mainstream.

No postwar event encouraged this optimism more than did the selection of Bess Myerson, who had grown up a Bronx cooperative housing project populated by Yiddish speakers, as Miss America in September 1945, four months after Germany was defeated and one month after the Japanese surrender. Six million of Europe's Jews had been murdered by the Nazis, while in the United States a Jew had become the model of American femininity. The contrast between the condition of Jews in Europe and the United States could not have been starker.

The most interesting of Gordan's middlebrow books, and the one she spends the most space on, is *Gentleman's Agreement*. To the surprise of its author and publisher, Simon & Schuster, it sold over a million and a half copies, and Hobson's agent expected that it would be gobbled up by one of Hollywood's major film studios. With one exception, these studios were controlled by Jews, and they declined to bid for the rights to the novel. *Crossfire*, the only other Hollywood film to date to examine domestic antisemitism, had appeared earlier in 1947. The studio moguls thought that one such film was enough and doubted whether another would be financially successful. They also feared that it might set off an antisemitic backlash. Darryl F. Zanuck, however, the gentile head of 20th Century Fox, was willing to take a chance. The film starred Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire, and John Garfield and was released in November 1947 to widespread critical and popular acclaim. Much to the surprise of most Hollywood executives, it made a hefty profit and won

three Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Director (Elia Kazan). None of this could have been predicted, and it strongly suggests that Gordan is correct in believing that this reflected a sea change in public attitudes toward Jews and Judaism.

The public's response to Liebman's *Peace of Mind* indicated this same thing. The book sold over a million copies within three years to readers eager to learn how the insights of religion might improve their psychology, and it spent more than three years on the *New York Times* list of nonfiction best-sellers. *Peace of Mind*, wrote the historian Andrew R. Heinze, "marked the arrival of Judaism in a marketplace of Christian goods." Liebman, the rabbi at Boston's prestigious Temple Israel, was the first in a now long line of Jews providing popular advice to the American public after the war. They included Sylvia Porter and Suze Orman in finance; Dear Abby, Ann Landers, and Judith Martin in behavior; Ralph Ginzburg, David R. Reuben, and Ruth Westheimer in sex; William Safire in the proper use of the English language; Harold Kushner, author of *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* (1981), in dealing with personal crises; and Elie Wiesel, the greatest of all American Jewish wisdom figures, in thinking about politics.

The postwar Jewish presence in American literature was also notable. So prominent were Philip Roth, Bernard Malamud, Saul Bellow, Isaac Bashevis Singer, and other Jewish novelists, poets, and critics on the American literary scene by the 1960s that Truman Capote and Gore Vidal complained that gentile writers were being systematically excluded from the reading public by a cabal of New York Jews. In fact, there was no Jewish cabal, and Jews were excluding no one; they were simply responding to the new opportunities offered by America after the war. In the process, they, along with Jewish advice columnists, Hollywood films, novelists, and Judaic writers, smoothed the way for Jews and Judaism becoming part of the American religious, cultural, and social mainstream.

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Robin Judd, *Between Two Worlds: Jewish War Brides after the Holocaust* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2023), 239 pp.

Robin Judd tells a very important and compelling story in this book, one that is little known outside of the community of Holocaust survivors and their descendants. Through meticulous research, numerous interviews, and personal knowledge (as the granddaughter of a survivor who was a Jewish war bride), Judd brings to life their stories while providing us with important contextual information.

The war brides on whom this book is based are women who had survived the Holocaust in various ways and then met and began romantic relationships with Allied Jewish servicemen who were serving in Europe or North Africa. The war bride experience was not uncommon, as thousands of European women married or became engaged to marry Allied soldiers, primarily British, Canadian, and American. As Allied armies drove back the Nazis and began to occupy European countries that had been under their domain, hundreds of thousands of refugees who had escaped the death camps began to emerge from hiding. Those who were in need of food, medical care, and other means of support often looked to the liberating armies, although those armies did not always see them as their responsibility.

Jewish soldiers were especially inclined to try to help Jews who had survived or escaped the Nazi killing machine. They collected money and, when they could, purchased or diverted supplies to refugees. Their military superiors, however, often viewed these survivors more broadly as refugees or civilians, without regard to their status as Jewish survivors of a genocide and were often suspicious of them or their motives. The armies of occupation had strict rules regarding fraternization and social interaction with locals, and superior officers often frowned upon these relationships.

Judd also provides us with an explication of the term “survivor,” which is an important element in understanding how many war brides saw themselves. She provides the historical context of the different terms used by Jewish refugees to describe themselves, which is important for understanding their self-perception. The oft-used term “DP,”

or displaced person, was put into use by the Allies in 1944 to describe any person, Jewish or non-Jewish, who had been displaced by the war, many of whom lived in DP camps.

Problems of adjustment to a new life in the United States or Canada are well documented by the author. The language barrier between survivors and liberators provides additional context for the ability of these couples to develop meaningful relationships, particularly with their new families. In at least one case, the soldier was himself one of many German Jewish refugees who immigrated to the United States and subsequently returned to Europe as American soldiers. He and his future wife shared the same native tongue and cultural background. Many war brides struggled to adjust to their new surroundings after immigration, did not speak or understand English well, had different levels of religious observance, and lacked familiarity with American social norms. Speaking Yiddish was helpful in some cases but not in others. Some war brides from Balkan countries or North Africa were Sephardic Jews and found the Ashkenazic customs of their husbands' families unlike what they were accustomed to. Many also suffered from long-term physical and psychological damage from being interned in concentration or work camps, or from being in hiding for prolonged periods. This often made pregnancies difficult and caused other physical maladies to linger.

This book also details cases where marriage or engagement did not automatically grant immigration rights to a war bride, particularly if there was concern over political ideology. This became even more prevalent during the postwar fear over communism and foreign agents entering the United States. Although the United States passed legislation in 1945 meant to facilitate the immigration of war brides by circumventing established immigration quotas, many still faced barriers and long waits. The author posits the question of "whether spousal reunification was a 'privilege' or a 'right'" when it was challenged by immigration authorities; she cites one case in which years of lobbying and legal action were required to gain admission for a war bride and another that ended in failure, forcing the couple to eventually settle in Britain (123).

Some may prefer that this book unfold like many history books do, by providing the broader context of facts and statistics, then focusing on the specifics of individual stories. That is not how Professor Judd chose

to present this book. The stories of the war brides *are* the book, and they are woven throughout. If there is a downside to this, it is that we are drawn to these stories, compelling as they are, without context such as a systematic history of Jewish participation in the Allied armies, how and why Allied GIs sought to marry European women while deployed there, and how the structure of the military bureaucracy helped or impeded this phenomenon. The author does put the number at several hundred Jewish women and a few dozen men out of over two hundred thousand war brides. Some of this information appears in the story narratives, as this book is very well researched and documented, and it may well be that more detailed statistical data is nonexistent or would require unsupported speculation. The role of Jewish chaplains, who were ordained rabbis, is mentioned in some cases and could possibly have provided more insight with further research. We know that many of these chaplains officiated at hundreds of weddings for Jewish GIs stateside, where military regulations had far less control over the matter, and that in theaters of deployment, where there were stricter rules, they were still able to officiate at marriages between Jewish military personnel and even some intermarriages.

None of this, however, detracts from the moving stories that make up the heart of this book and the picture it provides of the interaction between Jewish soldiers and Jewish refugees, of which we had little prior knowledge. Judd tells a very personal but also historically important story of survivors and soldiers that contributes to our understanding of the Holocaust and the Jewish experience during and after World War II.

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Elizabeth Petuchowski, *Where From and Where To: One of the Last Self-Told German Jewish Life Stories* (Bloomington, IN: Archway, 2022), 594pp.

Late in her life, Elizabeth Petuchowski, professor of German literature and wife of the late scholar and rabbi Jakob Petuchowski, has composed her autobiography under the title *Where From and Where To: One of the Last Self-Told German-Jewish Life Stories*. Her work underscores the cultural uprootedness of the German-Jewish refugee experience by giving her work a title that leans on Axel Corti's 1986 Austrian film trilogy "Wohin und Zurück" ("Where to and Back"), which masterfully captured the flight, emigration, and return of sixteen-year-old Ferdinand from Vienna, who made it to the United States. He was the only one in his family to survive, but he could not escape the effects of the refugee experience throughout his life. Elizabeth Petuchowski's book, a rich 575 pages, with footnotes and a long list of literature, is interesting and a worthwhile study for many reasons.

In the first place, it is a record of Elizabeth's life, which began in Bochum, Germany, in 1924, where she was born as Elisabeth Mayer. It explains her early years growing up in a bourgeois German-Jewish family and details the growing antisemitism and persecution Jews experienced in Nazi Germany. She tells how the family managed to flee to England and how this affected her life and education, as well as how the family spent World War II in London, Kettering, and Coventry. She also provides information on her education in German literature at the University of Aberystwyth and at University College London, where she met her future husband, Jakob Petuchowski, at the time a German-Jewish psychology student who had come to England on a Kindertransport years earlier. They met at the Christmas party of the UCL German Department, where Elizabeth studied, and continued to meet around West London Synagogue, a hub for liberal German Jewish refugees in England. When they married in 1946, Leo Baeck, Bruno Italiener, and Harold Reinhart officiated.

The German refugee leadership, which clustered around West London Synagogue, inspired young Jakob's interest in liberal Judaism and the rabbinate. While he came from a family with a long line of

rabbis, they had all represented Orthodox, not liberal, Judaism, but he was the only one to survive. The leaders of the refugee community “adopted” Petuchowski and supported him in his effort to learn more about modern Judaism and *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. With his interest growing, they also helped him and his young wife to start a new life in the United States, in Cincinnati. At a place that had become a hub for a number of German-Jewish scholars and students since the 1930s and the site of a major effort to rescue German rabbis, students, and scholars, Jakob and Elizabeth found more than a new home, they found a *Heimat*, professionally and personally. Here at Hebrew Union College (HUC), Jakob studied for the rabbinate and became a leading faculty member and scholar in the American Reform movement, while Elizabeth taught at the German department of the University of Cincinnati and engaged in Jewish life. Her book addresses the college community as well as the tight-knit network of surviving German rabbis who assembled around the annual visits of Baeck, their European perspectives on American life, the couple’s postwar trips on behalf of the College, and their professional interests. This included Jakob’s years in Jerusalem as the founding director of HUC’s new campus there in the 1960s and the couple’s emotionally difficult first returns to Germany, which were associated with professional engagement for interfaith activities there.

Second, Petuchowski’s book is a unique source of insight into her own changing identity as woman, wife, scholar, and partner of her husband, as well as the changing gender roles that defined her life and career over time and place. While she dedicates a large part of the biography to the life of the Petuchowski couple and the family, it takes until the 1960s until she steps out of the shadow of her husband’s career and develops her own as professor of German literature at the University of Cincinnati, publishes her own work, and turns into a leader in a number of Jewish organizations. She also continues to play an important role in her husband’s career as a partner, friend, advisor, and confidant, a role that should be valued rather than belittled, since this couple shared more than others and were also connected to each other by their shared history and biography. Elizabeth was thus knowledgeable and an expert on things regarding history, memory, and Germany, all topics that engaged the Petuchowskis as a couple and a family. This is reflected in

Elizabeth's own publications and activities, such as her exchange with Gertrude Luckner, a German and a Christian who had actively rescued Jews during the Nazi era, whom she and her husband met in Germany in the 1960s when exploring possible partners for a Christian-Jewish dialogue in Germany. The resources of her work can be tracked in her publications, the press, and journals, as well as in the collection of the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati and might provide an interesting and unique picture of the life of a female German-Jewish refugee that is worth studying.

Third, while she talks a lot about Jakob, her account provides a different perspective on her husband as a private person and the Petuchowskis as a team. He never published an autobiography in English; interestingly, he wrote only a short booklet on his background and life in German, perhaps inspired by his German colleagues and friends at the time.¹ Elizabeth's work is thus an important addendum to his biography as well, given that he passed away unexpectedly and far too early in 1991.

Last but not least, her work is a source that highlights that the wives and daughters of the German refugee rabbis documented in the digital humanities database German Refugee Rabbis in the United States after 1933 (mira.geschichte.lmu.de), where researching the lives and careers of men also means including publications of their close family members, including their wives and daughters, who are an important part of their story.

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1 Jakob Petuchowski, *Mein Jüdissein: Wege und Erfahrungen eines deutschen Rabbiners*, (Freiburg: Herder, 1992).

Marlene Trestman, *Most Fortunate Unfortunates: The Jewish Orphans' Home of New Orleans* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2023), 352pp.

Marlene Trestman's thoughtful and deeply researched *Most Fortunate Unfortunates: The Jewish Orphans' Home of New Orleans* tells the story of the Home for Jewish Widows and Orphans in New Orleans ("the Home"), the "first purpose-built Jewish orphanage" in the United States. Widely praised as "the institution that is not an institution," "a home-like Home," and "a real home for its youthful inhabitants," the Home provided care for 1623 children and 24 adult women over the course of its ninety-year history. While keeping the focus squarely on the Home itself, Trestman usefully sets it in the context of Southern Jewish history, evolving American Jewish identities, developments in Jewish communal service, and broader trends in public health and caring for children in need.

The Home opened in 1856, in response to devastating outbreaks of yellow fever in New Orleans. With existing Jewish benevolent organizations insufficient to meet the needs of the many devastated families, leading members of the city's Jewish community joined together to establish an institution to house needy widows, orphans, and half-orphans. (Within a few decades, the Home discharged its last widow and henceforth focused exclusively on children.) In addition to purely philanthropic impulses, founders were motivated by a desire to ensure Jewish continuity and to demonstrate the commitment of Jews to caring for their own. The Home cared for the children until they could be returned to a parent or relative (the most common result), were old enough to be self-sufficient, or had found a suitable employer or apprenticeship (for boys) or a respectable husband (for girls).

Trestman traces the Home's history through the challenging years of the Civil War, increasing immigration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a regional partnership with B'nai B'rith, changes in best practices for dependent children in the first decades of the twentieth century, and the turbulence of World War II. Over the years, the Home expanded, remodeled, and rebuilt regularly; it incorporated indoor and outdoor recreation areas, swimming baths, a workshop, classrooms, an infirmary, study rooms, a library, a synagogue, summer camping, and

more. In 1904, it opened the Isidore Newman Manual Training school, becoming the only American orphanage to open a coed, secular school where Home children attended alongside paying children from the well-off families of New Orleans. For decades before the advent of government social programs, it offered the region's needy Jewish children care and the potential for upward mobility.

Throughout, Trestman pays careful attention to race, gender, and class. She does not shy away from the irony of the fact that among the Home's founders were men who enslaved Black persons, including children, or that several of the Home's leaders during the Civil War were Confederate sympathizers who saw the South as the place that had provided Jews with extensive prospects. The Home's leaders were also not immune to the gender ideologies of the time. While women played important roles in running the institution, bending contemporary gender norms, men always remained firmly in control (unlike in some comparable institutions); while female residents were provided with educational and professional training opportunities, their futures were envisioned very differently from those of their male counterparts. And for decades, the Home's board struggled with whether exposing resident children to their wealthier counterparts would harm them by raising unrealistic expectations or help them by providing them with role models and connections.

Beginning in the early twentieth century, experts in the nascent field of social work began increasingly to emphasize the importance of home life for dependent children. Where possible, professionals argued, aid should be given to families—for example, through mothers' pensions—to enable children to stay in their homes. Where that proved impossible, foster care or adoption was now seen as preferable to institutional care.

For the first few decades, the Home's leaders resisted these trends, choosing instead to focus on making the Home more "homelike." Rather than attempting to keep children with their families or place them for foster care or adoption (indeed, only just over a dozen cases of adoption occurred in the Home's ninety-year history), administrators transformed dormitories into smaller bedrooms, abandoned institutional long dining tables for more intimate arrangements, and provided children with more opportunities for individualization, through clothing,

personalized birthdays, and spending money. Indeed, New Orleans as a whole remained skeptical of foster care. Only in the mid-1920s did the board begin more regularly to explore ways to keep children with their mothers rather than admitting them to the Home.

The financial pressures of the Depression finally pushed the Home toward refusing admission for children for whom acceptable family care could be secured. With increasing government aid for families during the New Deal, declining birth rates, declining death rates for parents, and growing acceptance of foster care, the need for institutional care diminished, and the Home's population fell. In 1944, the board made its first real move toward offering foster care. When superintendent Harry Ginsburg died in 1946, the Home closed its residential facility and transformed itself into a regional, nonresidential children's service, known today as the Jewish Children's Regional Service.

While Trestman takes an analytical eye to the Home's history, her affection for the organization is palpable and personal. As a young child, with a struggling mother and a father in a state mental hospital, she went to camp and ballet classes in the former orphanage building; when her mother died when Trestman was eleven years old, the Jewish Children's Regional Service oversaw her foster care. If she had been a few decades older, she likely would have lived in the Home.

Trestman did a prodigious amount of research for *Most Fortunate Unfortunates*. With residents' case files mostly lost, she plumbed admissions records, annual reports, minutes, and newsletters, in addition to many archival and manuscript collections. She utilized nearly 140 oral histories—many of which she conducted herself—of Home alumni and their families, descendants, former staff, and former leaders. This research occasionally results in perhaps an overabundance of detail, but it also lends richness and depth, especially to the stories of individual alumni.

As a wonderful corollary to her engaging book, Trestman has created an extensive online supplement, available at marlenetrestman.com, that will be of interest to any reader, but especially to scholars or teachers of Southern Jewish history or child welfare. The supplement includes an extensive photo gallery with historical images of the Home's various buildings; a growing list of alumni profiles that include biographical sketches, photographs, and primary source documents; overviews of fifty-three

other American Jewish orphanages; sketches of the Home's founders, including the number of people they enslaved; and information about superintendents, staff, and the children admitted. It is a model for how authors can enhance their publications and make primary source material easily accessible to students and colleagues.

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Andrew Meier, *Morgenthau: Power, Privilege, and the Rise of an American Dynasty* (New York: Random House, 2023), xxi +1,046 pp.

Daniel Schulman, *The Money Kings: The Epic Story of the Jewish Immigrants Who Transformed Wall Street and Shaped Modern America* (New York: Knopf, 2023), xviii +570pp.

Steven Ujifusa, *Last Ships from Hamburg: The Business, Rivalry, and the Race to Save Russia's Jews on the Eve of World War I* (New York: Harper Collins, 2023), 356pp.

Until recently, academic scholars paid selective attention to members of the American Jewish business establishment that emerged during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Much is known about the involvement of a few prominent Jewish entrepreneurs, bankers, and lawyers in the spheres of philanthropy and politics, albeit primarily on the national level and in New York. The religious sphere is also well

researched, notably the rise of the Reform movement and the origins of Conservative Judaism. And in recent years, the service of Jewish men in the Union and Confederate armies during the Civil War has received growing attention. Surprisingly little, however, has been written about the outsized impact of Jewish immigrant entrepreneurs in sectors other than finance, such as retail, the garment business, mining, and meat processing during the second half of the nineteenth century. The history of Jewish life in cities and regions outside of New York between 1820 and 1900 (and beyond) has not been sufficiently researched.¹

The three books discussed in this essay deal with illustrious members of the Jewish business establishment with a strong New York focus: a detailed history of the Morgenthau family, a history of major Jewish banking houses (and families) in New York, and an account of how leading Jewish business figures in the United States and Germany, as well as J. P. Morgan, supposedly coordinated support for Jewish migrants and refugees from the Russian Empire in the years before World War I. The three authors address primarily general readers. They do not examine why and how members of a small religious minority who had lived for generations on the margins of European societies rose from humble origins into the urban middle class *in a single generation*. Only Daniel Schulman ponders the question of why a few Jewish entrepreneurs played an outsize role in the transformation of American finance.

The high social mobility and embourgeoisement of most Jews who moved between the 1820s and 1880s within the German states and adjacent territories like Alsace and Bohemia to nearby cities, to Britain, and to North America remains little understood. Scholars and other authors have long focused on a few well-known Jewish business founders in New York who figure in these three books but not much on their counterparts in smaller and mid-sized cities. As newcomers who hailed from the protocapitalist margins of feudal economies, Jews who left

1 Naomi Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation: The German Jews in the United States 1830–1914* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1984); Michael A. Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Adam Mendelsohn, *Jewish Soldiers in the Civil War: The Union Army* (New York: NYU Press, 2022).

small Central European rural communities for nearby cities such as Berlin or Frankfurt; for London and Manchester in Britain; and for New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Chicago, and other cities across the United States could build on generations of experience with entrepreneurship, often as itinerant peddlers. In the United States, many migrants who arrived before the Civil War spent years in rural parts of the South and Midwest as peddlers and small store owners before relocating to larger cities.

The role of tight-knit family networks after 1800 requires more research. Most Jewish-owned businesses that were established after 1800 were family firms. Famous examples are the retail and banking businesses of the Seligman, Lehman, Straus, and Lazard brothers. All four firms had roots in the rural South. A closer look at these and other business founders indicates that Jewish immigrants frequently partnered with close relatives. Marriages were often tied to business partnerships. And businesses established before the Civil War often depended on credit that was provided within family networks because traditional Christian and socioeconomic stereotypes about Jews were widespread. Research for Chicago indicates that these stereotypes faded in the 1870s as Jewish business owners became respected and trustworthy insiders. More than a few migrants struck out on their own or formed partnerships with Jewish strangers and even with Christians. A good example is Nelson Morris, the son of a Jewish cattle dealer from the Black Forest. After working in different occupations, even as a miner, he built a giant packing business in the Chicago stockyards that flourished in the wake of the Civil War. He briefly partnered with Isaac Waixel, a Jewish cattle dealer from Hesse-Darmstadt, but did not bring relatives into his business, except his children. His son Edward married the daughter of Gustavus Swift, a major competitor and a Christian. The marriage appears to have been tied to a cooperation between the two packing house owners. Albert Lasker, who transformed modern advertising by focusing on branding started out as an office boy at Chicago ad agency Lord & Thomas in 1898. In 1903 he became a partner, and in 1912 he bought

the firm. Two of his three wives were not Jewish.²

A long-overlooked factor behind the high social mobility of Jews in Central Europe and of immigrant Jews from Central Europe in England and the United States during the middle decades of the nineteenth century was education. After the Napoleonic Wars, even smaller Jewish communities in rural southern Germany but also in the Prussian province of Posen and in Bohemia set up state-of-the-art elementary schools for boys and often girls. The school curriculum focused on secular subjects and was inspired by the Enlightenment. Jewish *Gemeinden* organized these schools to convince reluctant civil servants that the case for full emancipation in the respective state had merit. Apart from rabbis who had to earn a diploma from a secular university in most German states after 1815 to qualify for ordination, a not insignificant number of Jews who immigrated before the Civil War from Central Europe had attended state-of-the-art high schools and even universities; banker Joseph Seligman is one example. Autobiographical sources hint at a deep appreciation of *Bildung*, an Enlightenment ideal that expresses a continuous commitment to (self-)education and the arts. During the Gilded Age, Jewish business owners devoted their philanthropy to museums, philharmonic orchestras, and education-related causes ranging from public libraries and craft schools to modern research universities.³

A closer look at publications about pre-1880 Jewish immigrants and their American-born descendants reveals a wide gap between a handful of academic studies and dozens of books written for general audiences. Publications in the latter group range from well-researched studies to page turners with few or no references and sometimes questionable

2 "Death Comes to Nelson Morris," *Chicago Tribune* (28 August 1907); "Ed. Morris Dead, Left \$40,000,000," *New York Times* (4 November 1913); "Sudden Death of Isaac Waixel," *Chicago Tribune* (3 October 1892); Jeffrey Cruikshank and Arthur W. Schultz, *The Man Who Sold America: The Amazing (But True!) Story of Albert D. Lasker and the Creation of the Advertising Century* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2010).

3 Simone Lässig, *Jüdische Wege ins Bürgertum. Kulturelles Kapital und sozialer Aufstieg im 19. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), esp. 26–34; Tobias Brinkmann, *Sundays at Sinai: A Jewish Congregation in Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

claims and significant gaps. The three books to be discussed here fall into this latter group and illustrate the advantages but also pitfalls of the general interest genre.

Why were only a few scholars interested in Jewish migrants from Central Europe who arrived before 1880, even though there was a strong demand for books about wealthy “Uptown Jews” among nonacademic readers? In the late 1960s, when American Jewish history became a subject for courses at a growing number of colleges and universities, studying wealthy Jewish capitalists was not particularly appealing. In the wake of the ethnic revival, the obvious and understudied subject was the large Jewish migration from Eastern Europe that had completely transformed American Jewry after 1880. In the 1960s, studies about working class immigrants, the descendants of former slaves, and women sidelined traditional works about powerful male political leaders and business titans. Moreover, post-1880 Jewish immigrants had a major impact on twentieth-century American culture and were the subject of many studies about popular entertainment and literature. In academic studies about Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, the “Germans” featured either not at all or as the “other” Jews, who lived in nice residences uptown, far removed from the downtown tenements where recently arrived immigrants clustered in often challenging conditions. Researching Jewish business history was an uncomfortable topic for another reason. The remarkable success of Jewish entrepreneurs appeared to confirm antisemitic stereotypes about Jewish influence and power. In was no secret, however, that wealthy Jewish business owners and their families were exposed to antisemitic discrimination and experienced growing social isolation after the late 1870s, just when the number of immigrants arriving from Eastern Europe began to increase.⁴

Among the dozens of books about New York’s Jewish business establishment that have been published since the late 1960s, Stephen Birmingham’s 1967 *Our Crowd: The Great Jewish Families of New York* still stands out. The book was in print until the 1990s. Birmingham was

4 Moses Rischin, *The Promised City: New York’s Jews 1870–1914* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962); Jerry Z. Muller, *Capitalism and the Jews* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).

not specifically interested in Jewish history. He wrote over thirty books about wealthy Americans, covering topics such as *Real Lace: America's Irish Rich*, *California Rich*, and *Certain People: America's Black Elite*, to name but a few. *Our Crowd* is a well-written and well-researched narrative about the interconnected private and public lives of the most prominent Jewish families in New York. The book contains hundreds of quotations but no references, apart from a list of a few titles in the front matter to satisfy copyright holders. It is not possible to ascertain what is fact and what is speculation. Birmingham aspired not to cover the whole canvas but to tell a good story. He ignored many important figures and major themes, such as religion.⁵

Among the authors of popular histories about Jewish business figures and dynasties were and are accomplished scholars who conduct in-depth archival research and produce excellently written studies. This applies to the family histories of the Warburgs by Ron Chernow and the Rothschilds by Niall Ferguson. In contrast, a 2005 history of the Guggenheim family by an award-winning academic historian contains substantial omissions and does not engage with the existing scholarship.⁶

Fortunately, with his study of the Morgenthau family, Andrew Meier makes an important contribution not just to modern Jewish history but also to American and New York history. Apart from a family history written by Henry Morgenthau III, this is the first collective biography of the main figures of the family. Meier is a respected journalist who covered the final years of the Soviet Union and contemporary Russia. He did extensive research and interviewed several members of the family. The book contains a detailed list of archival collections and an exhaustive bibliography. All quotations are referenced.⁷

5 Stephen Birmingham, *Our Crowd: The Great Jewish Families of New York* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967).

6 Ron Chernow, *The Warburgs: The Twentieth-Century Odyssey of a Remarkable Jewish Family* (New York: Random House, 1993); Niall Ferguson, *The World's Banker: The History of the House of Rothschild* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998); Irwin Unger, *The Guggenheims: A Family History* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005).

7 Henry Morgenthau III, *Mostly Morgenthau: A Family History* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1991).

The Morgenthau family story illustrates that the rags to riches story from peddling in the Central European countryside to wealth and political influence in New York was not straightforward. The Leo Baeck Institute in New York owns a memoir that Lazarus Morgenthau wrote in 1842. The twenty-five-year-old and his siblings grew up in extreme poverty in the region between Würzburg and Frankfurt. Lazarus wrote the memoir just as he made the transition from working as an itinerant peddler selling self-made cravats. In 1843, he married and moved to Mannheim, an expanding industrial and commercial city on the Rhine. He reinvested the income from a retail business into an expanding cigar factory employing hundreds of workers. The cigars were exported to the United States, where Lazarus's brother Mengo oversaw the distribution. When Congress imposed import tariffs in the wake of the Civil War, Lazarus had to dissolve the business. In 1866 he moved with his wife and eight children to Brooklyn. The forty-nine-year-old brought substantial capital along, and he arrived at an opportune moment, just when other Jewish business founders like the Straus brothers relocated to New York. Yet Lazarus lacked familiarity with American business culture. His ventures failed, depleting his capital. He became estranged from his older children. It fell to his ninth child Henry (Heinrich), born in 1856 in Mannheim, to provide income for his younger siblings and parents. Henry worked different jobs after attending school. After graduating from City College and Columbia Law School, he opened a law office. He cultivated important relationships and was a keen observer of the expanding city. In the 1890s, he became a successful real estate investor.

One of the stories Meier shares with his readers relates to Adolph Ochs, an important figure in Henry's orbit. In 1896, Ochs bought the struggling *New York Times* and turned it into a successful national paper. When he was looking for larger editorial offices uptown, Morgenthau advised him not to locate on 23rd Street and recommended a potentially lucrative location instead, at the intersection of 42nd Street and Broadway, where a subway station would be built. When the Times Tower was completed in 1904, Ochs convinced the city to name the intersection "Times Square," which soon became the bustling hub of the city's upscale entertainment district. Morgenthau developed large tracts of Manhattan's Upper West Side and the Bronx for residential housing.

In 1912, he helped to fund the presidential campaign of New Jersey governor Woodrow Wilson, a Democrat. Wilson's confidante Edward (aka Colonel) House undermined his appointment to a cabinet office. Meier emphasizes that House's letters do not reveal "overt antisemitism" (116), but there is little doubt that members of Wilson's inner circle shared stereotypical views of Jews. Morgenthau reluctantly accepted the ambassadorship to the Ottoman Empire, following in the footsteps of other American Jews in this position. Meier competently summarizes Morgenthau's desperate efforts to draw attention to the Armenian genocide and his support for the Yishuv during the early phase of the war.

Like other authors of general-interest histories, Meier devotes little attention to religion. Admittedly, none of the male Morgenthau protagonists who feature in this book were observant. Yet readers learn in passing that, in the 1870s, Henry Morgenthau attended sermons by David Einhorn. He was involved with Felix Adler's Ethical Culture Society and an early backer of Stephen S. Wise's Free Synagogue. It seems not a far-fetched assumption that Reform Judaism and Adler's ethical philosophy informed his view of the world. Meier does not discuss Henry's response to Jim Crow laws in the South and to lynchings. It remains unclear whether he had any interactions with members of New York's African American community, either as developer or as philanthropist.

The senior Henry Morgenthau, sixty-five years old in 1920, recedes into the background on page 184 of Meier's history, even though the book extends to 1,046 pages. Meier devotes slightly more attention to the younger Henry Morgenthau (ca. 300 pages). The elder Henry's favored son was socially awkward and not academically gifted. The father granted his wish to manage a farm in Fishkill in the Hudson Valley. Henry Jr. put his father's social capital to good use. He befriended Franklin D. Roosevelt, another Fishkill farm owner, and became his trusted sidekick. Henry Jr., as it turned out, was a competent manager and committed worker. When FDR was elected governor of New York, he tasked Henry to oversee agricultural projects. During the second year of his presidency, in 1934, FDR appointed Henry Jr. as Secretary of the Treasury. For over a decade, until the early months of the Truman administration, he steered the huge administration capably, tackling major challenges. Morgenthau's genuine concern for Jewish refugees

receives sufficient attention. Meier identifies him accurately as a major driving force behind the creation of the War Refugee Board. Henry Jr. acted as a broker between the administration and Rabbis Wise and Peter Bergson (Hillel Kook) to intervene on behalf of Jews in Europe. The failure of these desperate efforts and of the “Morgenthau Plan,” which sought to divide and deindustrialize postwar Germany, illustrate the limits of Morgenthau’s influence.

The main protagonist of this book is Robert Morgenthau, Henry Jr.’s son. Meier was able to interview him before his death in 2019. During World War II, Robert served in the Navy with distinction. After the war, he worked as a corporate lawyer and was appointed by President John F. Kennedy as U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York. Meier sheds much light on the political horse trading involved in various appointments. After two failed runs for the New York governorship, Morgenthau was elected as Manhattan District Attorney in 1975. He ran unopposed for reelection between 1985 and 2005, serving until 2009 when he was ninety years old. In contrast to his father and grandfather, Robert did not become an important player on the national stage, but he looms large in New York’s recent history. Morgenthau’s record is mixed. The wrongful conviction of five black teenagers in the 1989 Central Park jogger case occurred under his watch. He deserves credit for reopening the case. It is not surprising that Meier, as a journalist, was drawn to Robert. Illustrious mobsters, police scandals, notorious killers, flamboyant real estate moguls, and different mayors populate the cast. This part of the book is just as well written as the earlier chapters, but some sections come rather close to an authorized biography. Meier mentions other members of the family only in passing, such as the historian Barbara Tuchman, a granddaughter of Henry Sr. and cousin of Robert.

The book unintentionally highlights a striking gap. The decisive figure in the rise of the family dynasty is Henry Morgenthau Sr. He generated the family’s wealth and valuable social capital in a period of increasing antisemitism. The creation, preservation, and allocation of social capital was largely overseen by Henry Sr., who passed away only in 1946 at the age of ninety. The Morgenthaus became quintessential insiders in a city of outsiders, in part by cultivating ties with members of the city’s moneyed elite like the Roosevelts. The accumulation of wealth

was closely tied to the push for status and recognition. Robert's success occurred not coincidentally when the terms of inclusion changed after World War II. In the 1960s, Jewish, Italian and Irish roots became valuable political capital that could generate returns even on the national level, as the rise of the Kennedy family illustrates. JFK's success as elected official depended in no small part on military service, wealth, and excellent family connections. This also applies to Robert Morgenthau, who was two years younger than JFK.

Unlike the collective biography of Henry Sr., Henry Jr., and Robert Morgenthau, *The Money Kings* by Daniel Schulman does not cover new ground. The well-written synthesis follows the rise of Jewish investment bankers and their gentile counterparts, notably J. P. Morgan, from the 1860s to the Great Depression. Like Meier, Schulman is a journalist and author of a book about the Koch brothers, who, after World War II, founded an industrial conglomerate and remain influential philanthropists and political donors. Schulman conducted archival research for this book, carefully references his sources, and acknowledges the work of scholars, not least business historian Susie Pak, author of the important 2013 study *Gentleman Bankers* about the rise of the investment banks Kuhn, Loeb & Co. and J. P. Morgan & Co. Following in the footsteps of Birmingham and other authors, Schulman begins his narrative with Joseph Seligman and his brothers, who are joined by the Lehman brothers, Marcus Goldman, and the Warburg family. Not surprisingly, Jacob Schiff, whose career spanned the arc of this book, looms large. As many authors before him, Schulman shares with readers that Schiff walked every day from the home he acquired in 1885 on the Upper East Side to the offices of Kuhn, Loeb & Co. on 14th Street. And like other authors, Schulman discusses the epic battles Schiff, Morgan, and other business titans fought to gain control of major railroad lines. Schulman cannot ignore these developments, but to readers familiar with the lives of wealthy and famous New York Jews much of the discussion is redundant.⁸

8 Susie Pak, *Gentleman Bankers: The World of J. P. Morgan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).

Religion does not concern Schulman. Rabbi Wise is mentioned once (!), as a speaker at Schiff's funeral in 1920. Schiff was an observant Jew who belonged to the lay leadership of Temple Emanu-El. He opposed Adler's Ethical Culture Society but acknowledged Adler as a brilliant thinker. Seligman, another protagonist of *The Money Kings*, was an early backer of Adler, as Schulman mentions in passing without discussing the implications of these religious (re)alignments, which clearly mattered for several of his protagonists. Another drawback is the New York focus. To give just one example, Schulman does not even mention the Lazard brothers, who moved from Loraine to New Orleans in the 1840s. A dry goods store became the foundation for a bank that was formally established in San Francisco and eventually comprised three branches (known as "Houses") in Paris, London, and the United States. Lazard Frères & Co. was an important source of capital for different ventures in the American South and West. Following a merger of the three houses in 2000, the bank is based in New York today.⁹

Schulman describes the philanthropy of Schiff and other bankers competently but does not ponder why and how the strategies and philosophy guiding Jewish philanthropists differed from their Christian counterparts. Morgan could be described as a traditional philanthropist. He devoted much of his fortune to his art collection. He also supported New York museums, in particular the Museum of Natural History. He gave generously to the Episcopal Church and also supported social housing but apparently was not concerned about social inequality and the atrocious poverty in many parts of the city. In contrast, Schiff and other Jewish business leaders reinvented traditional philanthropy. Schiff deserves much credit for being one of the main founders of the American Jewish Committee in 1906. A major cause for the attempt to bring together Jews of different backgrounds was the growing crisis in the Russian Empire and the situation of Russia's large Jewish population. Schiff gave to many causes outside of the Jewish community, because he understood the implications of growing economic inequality. Jewish

9 William D. Cohan, *The Last Tycoons: The Secret History of Lazard Frères & Co.* (New York: Knopf, 2008). See also Michael R. Cohen, *Cotton Capitalists: American Jewish Entrepreneurship in the Reconstruction Era* (New York: NYU Press, 2017).

leaders like Schiff and Macy's co-owner Isidor Straus, and of course progressive reformers like Adler, took steps to tackle the challenging living conditions in the city's working-class neighborhoods and, on a more general level, the social question. A good example of the overlapping spheres of business and philanthropy is the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. Schiff's well-known decision to raise funds for Japan among his Wall Street peers is much better analyzed by Pak than by Schulman. Pak shows that Schiff grasped that Japan, as a rising power, offered lucrative business opportunities for Kuhn, Loeb & Co. He carefully cultivated a lasting business relationship. After Schiff's death, the bank was not able to retain the Japanese business.

Schiff is also a major protagonist in Steven Ujifusa's *The Last Ships from Hamburg*. Ujifusa is an independent historian who has written two books on maritime history. In this volume, he discusses the large Jewish migration from the Russian Empire to the United States between 1880 and 1914. His overarching thesis is that Albert Ballin, the chief executive of the Hamburg America Line (HAPAG), and to a lesser extent Schiff and Morgan, "saved" hundreds of thousands of Russian Jews who moved to the United States and a few other destinations on HAPAG and other ocean liners. As Ujifusa puts it, Ballin was the "unlikely mastermind of the second Exodus of the Jewish people" (9). This is a bold statement indeed.

A closer look at the reference section reveals several red flags. Ujifusa draws information from dozens of websites. Some are reliable but others are not. For instance, Ujifusa references the "Jewish Virtual Library" repeatedly, even though it is a compilation of sometimes outdated Wikipedia articles and other unedited content. He also draws on "encyclopedia.com," a metasearch engine that offers a lot of undigested information, except about its actual owners. Unlike Meier and Schulman, who carefully researched little-known illustrations from different archives and family collections, Ujifusa simply reproduces several photographs from Wikipedia, even though he claims he had access to family records of Ballin's descendants. In the acknowledgements, Ujifusa reveals that he does not read German but relied on translators. For a book that focuses heavily on a German business figure and requires research in different locations, lacking knowledge of German is a serious drawback,

because the author depended on others to navigate archival collections and German-language publications.

The unsubstantiated exaggerations and claims in this book reflect a limited grasp of the recent academic literature on Jewish and European history. Ujifusa references quite a few academic studies, but, rather than engaging with the interpretations of different authors, he frequently cherry-picks quotations and specific information. Also concerning is that he relies heavily on a handful of studies, in particular one of my own journal articles about Ballin and a study about a typhus outbreak in New York in 1892 by Howard Markel. Instead of referencing articles straight from the *New York Times*, he simply references Markel's citations from the *Times*.¹⁰ More concerning are the factual mistakes in this book. For instance, Ujifusa claims that the German scientist and Nobel Prize laureate Robert Koch was born Jewish (78). Koch was not of Jewish descent. Ujifusa shares with his readers that Jews lived in the Russian Empire since the seventh century, even though the Russian Empire did not even exist at that time (24). Ujifusa also states that Jews had to undergo medical exams at the German border with Romania (155), even though Germany and Romania did not share a border. More such mistakes could be listed.

Ujifusa subscribes to an outdated view of the Russian pogroms. He claims that Jews leaving Russia exclusively fled pogroms and brutal state repression, and that Tsar Alexander III personally instigated the pogroms in 1881–1882. Ujifusa ignores research by John Klier and others who have shown that the Russian state tried to prevent the pogroms in 1881–1882, albeit with limited success. Klier draws attention to the wide gap between the actual events on the ground and the perception by the western public. Klier reminds readers to read contemporary newspaper articles critically, because these were often biased.¹¹

10 Tobias Brinkmann, "Why Paul Nathan Attacked Albert Ballin: The Transatlantic Mass Migration and the Privatization of Prussia's Eastern Border Inspection, 1886–1914," *Central European History* 43 (2010): 47–83; Howard Markel, *Quarantine! East European Jewish Immigrants and the New York City Epidemics of 1892* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

11 John D. Klier, *Russians, Jews, and the Pogroms of 1881–1882* (Cambridge: Cambridge

Ujifusa states that Russia and Prussia partitioned Poland in the late eighteenth century (24), without mentioning Austria. Indeed, the Austro-Hungarian Empire receives hardly any attention in this book, even though Jewish migration from the Austrian province of Galicia (which is not even mentioned) was substantial. Galicia was notorious for widespread poverty. Anti-Jewish violence in Galicia was rare, and all Jews in the province were fully emancipated in 1867. Hundreds of thousands of Jews, Poles, Ukrainians, and others left Galicia for the United States, Canada, and Brazil after 1890. Jews from Galicia clearly did not flee pogroms or oppression but were looking for better economic opportunities for themselves and their children, and often found them. Jews from Galicia, however, do not feature in this book. Like other migrants from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, many travelled with the North German Lloyd steamship line via Bremen and Bremerhaven. Ujifusa treats the Lloyd as a minor steamship line misjudging its importance. Two other lines that carried many Jewish migrants from Eastern Europe, the Rotterdam-based Holland America Line and the Antwerp-based Red Star Line, are mentioned only in passing. Readers interested in the actual history of the transatlantic steamship business should turn to better researched studies by specialists.¹²

Did Ballin really save Jews who managed to leave the Russian Empire before 1914? Such a claim could perhaps be made for Schiff but not for Ballin and Morgan, who were major stakeholders in the “business of migration,” as historian Drew Keeling puts it. As a young ticket agent, Ballin grasped the importance of Eastern Europe’s huge passenger market for the transatlantic steamship business. By 1880, expanding railroad networks were connecting millions of economically struggling Eastern Europeans in hitherto remote rural regions to globalizing markets. After joining HAPAG as head of the passenger division in 1886, Ballin organized a price-fixing cartel of continental steamship lines to sideline the

University Press, 2011).

12 Drew Keeling, *The Business of Migration between Europe and the United States, 1900–1914* (Zurich: Chronos, 2012); Torsten Feys, *The Battle for the Migrants: Introduction of Steamshipping on the North Atlantic and Its Impact on the European Exodus* (St John’s, NL: International Maritime Economic Association, 2013).

main British lines. He successfully assuaged concerns by Prussian and American state officials who considered migration as a potential threat by taking on all costs associated with migrants who did not meet the admission criteria imposed by the United States Congress. The conquest of the lucrative Russian passenger market partly explains why HAPAG became a huge and dominant global steamship line before 1914. Ballin's overarching concern was safeguarding the success of the steamship line that he managed. He cooperated closely with Morgan, who brought several steamship lines under his control soon after the turn of the century. Tellingly, Ballin refrained from any public statement that was critical of the treatment of Jews in the Russian Empire. Soon after 1900, HAPAG sold several older steamers to the Russian Admiralty. In the early phase of the Russo-Japanese War in 1904–1905, the Russian Admiralty paid the Hamburg America Line generously for using its coal stations to move a small fleet of warships to East Asia to defeat the Japanese navy. Ujifusa discusses this episode without realizing that Schiff must have been aghast when he learned about Ballin's business deals with Russia. Since Schiff's papers are only partially preserved (an interesting subject in its own right), his personal views about Ballin are not known.

In Ujifusa's telling, a few ingenious male business titans moved millions around the globe. Yet steamship executives like Ballin and railroad investors like Schiff were mobility entrepreneurs who took considerable risks and created and shaped the conditions for mass mobility on an unprecedented scale. Ujifusa overlooks another crucial point—namely, that Jews in Eastern Europe were not pawns on a chessboard who were moved by powerful players but exercised agency, at least until post-1914 immigration restrictions stranded many in permanent transit exposing them to violent persecution, forced expulsion, and ultimately genocide. Before 1914, few were fleeing actual violence. Rather, fear from persecution, lack of rights, growing political instability, and particularly limited economic prospects and better opportunities elsewhere influenced the decisions of Jewish men and women to leave the Russian Empire. Most Jewish (and non-Jewish) migrants belonged to close-knit networks that played an increasingly important role in the migration process because migrants had access to concrete information about jobs and support in America. A closer look at the number of migrants who were registered

in Ellis Island shows that, rather than “the” pogroms, the uneven business cycles of the American economy drove large swings in the number of Jewish and other European migrants who arrived between 1890 and 1914. Without a doubt, Ballin, along with Jewish aid associations, other steamship lines, and other helpers facilitated the migration of hundreds of thousands of Jewish and other Eastern Europeans. But unlike Jewish aid associations represented by Schiff and other Jewish community leaders, the steamship lines were privately owned businesses focused on increasing market shares and profits. HAPAG and the North German Lloyd fixed the prices for transatlantic passage at high levels but also offered high safety standards and reliable service. Both businesses were publicly listed and had to act in the interest of their shareholders.

The references indicate that Ujifusa relied heavily on an English translation of a hagiographic 1922 biography of Ballin’s associate Bernhard Huldermann instead of the excellent 1967 biography by Lamar Cecil, which is only referenced a few times. The actual HAPAG chief executive was no superhero business titan who led the Jewish masses out of cursed Russia. Ballin systematically fought organized labor, hiring foreign crews to undercut wages. That (and the business Ballin conducted with Russia) explains why the Socialist press in Germany was fiercely critical of Ballin. Curiously, Ujifusa quotes from Chaim Weizmann’s 1949 memoir but ignores an acerbic passage about Ballin. According to Weizmann, Ballin was “more German than the Germans, obsequious, superpatriotic, eagerly anticipating the wishes and plans of the masters of Germany.”¹³ Ujifusa also does not discuss that Ballin’s humble origins isolated him within the upper echelons of Hamburg’s bourgeois establishment, in marked contrast to the Warburgs. And perhaps most importantly, as Weizmann stressed in his memoir, Ballin strongly backed Germany’s reckless naval expansion and jingoist imperialism. Only very belatedly, in 1914, did it dawn on him that antagonizing Britain had been a disastrous mistake. The war doomed HAPAG, the company he cherished above everything else.¹⁴

13 Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weizmann* (New York: Harper, 1949), 183–184.

14 Cecil Lamar, *Albert Ballin: Business and Politics in Imperial Germany 1888–1918* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967).

The three books by Meier, Schulman, and Ujifusa are well written and were positively reviewed by the press. In the *New York Times Book Review*, David Nasaw, a respected historian, praises Ujifusa's book as a "thoroughly researched and beautifully written history," uncritically repeating some of Ujifusa's unsubstantiated claims.¹⁵ For academic and student readers, these books have relatively little to offer. Meier promises a history of an American dynasty but focuses primarily on New York prosecutor Robert Morgenthau, devoting some attention to his father Henry Jr. and relatively little to his grandfather Henry Sr., the central figure in the family's success story. He largely ignores other members of the Morgenthau family. Schulman has written a solid synthesis about major Jewish figures and firms in New York's finance industry but largely follows in the footsteps of previous authors. Both Meier and Schulman did extensive research and acknowledge the findings of academic scholars. The mistakes and misleading assertions in Ujifusa's book demonstrate why the peer-review process and fact-checking are critical. It is puzzling why a reputable press published a flawed manuscript and why reviewers like Nasaw take a good story at face value, ignoring obvious red flags, especially in the reference section. Another point that is puzzling is the superficial treatment of women in these three books.

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15 David Nasaw, "The Deadly Business of Restricting Immigration," *New York Times Book Review* (12 February 2024).

SELECT ACQUISITIONS 2024

Bamberger, Bernard

Includes sermons, drafts of manuscripts, offprints, and some correspondence, 1935–1977.

Received from Judi Cogen, Cincinnati, OH

Besser family

Includes material relating to various members of the Besser family—including correspondence, scrapbooks, journals, writings, plays, and other personal material, 1917–2021.

Received from Amy Doherty, Franklin, ME

Brenner, Reeve

Papers of Rabbi Reeve Brenner including some correspondence and writings, and records pertaining to Brenner's legal suit regarding NIH and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) office, 1970–2007.

Received from Reeve Brenner, Washington, DC

Brickner, Balfour and Doris

Contains writings, photographs, correspondence, and other items of Balfour and Doris Brickner, 1966–2005.

Received from Daniel Singer, New York, NY

Eliot, Charles

Three letters from Charles Eliot, former president of Harvard University, to Henry Hurwitz regarding an article written by Eliot about Jacob H. Schiff and publication of an address given at the Woodrow Wilson Club of Harvard University, 1920–1922.

Received from Ron Daniel, New York, NY

Emma Lazarus Federation of Jewish Women's Clubs

Collection of papers of the Emma Lazarus Federation of Jewish Women's Clubs including letters, newspaper clippings, International Women's Day speeches, and historical essays written by members, 1970–1981.

Received from Barbara Berney, Los Angeles, CA

Fox, Karen

Papers of Rabbi Karen L. Fox, 1967–2023.

Received from Karen L. Fox, Beverly Hills, CA

Harari, Raymond

Includes eulogies for Rabbi Harari as well as videos taken of his memorial services, funeral, and burial, 2024 November.

Received from Victor Dweck, New York, NY

Institute for Jewish Spirituality

Oral histories of people involved with the IJS, along with caption files for them, 2023.

Received from Josh Feigelson

Jacobson, David

Papers of Rabbi David Jacobson, 1915–2008.

Received from Dottie Miller, San Antonio, TX

Joseph, Samuel K.

Includes correspondence and teaching material along with VHS tapes, all related to Joseph's career at HUC, 1979–2015.

Received from Samuel Joseph, Cincinnati, OH

Kalsman Institute

Archives of the Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health; and the Institute of Judaism, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity, 2000–2024.

Received from Joel Kushner, Los Angeles, CA

Kanter, Morton M.

Papers of Rabbi Morton M. Kanter (1927–1996), congregational rabbi in Cincinnati, Dayton, Bay Shore, N.Y., Detroit, and Winchester, Va. including sermons, correspondence, HUC student papers, 1936–1985.

Received from David Kanter, Palm Beach, FL

Korzenik, Diana

Research material gathered by Diana Korzenik pertaining to her book, "Lithuania to Brooklyn: The Rabbi Daniel and Minnie Shapiro Family (2019)," including correspondence, biographical information, genealogical records, photographs, and research notes, 1922–2021.

Received from Diana Korzenik, Lexington, MA

Korros, Fred and Harry

Collection of material belonging to Fred and Harry Korros relating to leadership and financial records of Yavneh Day School, Golf Manor Synagogue, Camp, Livingston, JCRC, and the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati, 1966–2009.

Received from Harry Korros, Cincinnati, OH

Kravitz, Leonard

Includes lectures, notes, drafts, and research of HUC professor Leonard Kravitz, 1990–2016.

Received from Tamar Rubinstein, Evanston, IL

Kuhn, Setty Swarts

Consists mostly of photographs and portraits of Setty Swarts Kuhn, her ancestors, and descendants. Also includes some correspondence and a photocopy of a 1952 biography, 1804–1994.

Received from Sarah Kuhn, Lincolnville, ME

Kuhn, Theresa Lederer

Theresa Lederer Kuhn diary, 1900.

Received from Patty Mason of Northbrook, IL

Lazar, Lynn Magid

Papers of Lynn Magid Lazar, former president of Women of Reform Judaism, including Board and Executive Committee records, correspondence, biennial assembly material, district files, photographs, nearprint, and ephemera, 1963, 1991–2023.

Received from Lynn Magid Lazar, Cincinnati, OH

Malino, Jerome

Includes family photos and scrapbooks, correspondence, some rabbinical items, and newspaper clippings, 1906–2002.

Received from the Malino Family

Mandel Foundation

Includes the papers of Daniel Pekarsky and Barry Holz and their work on education issues with the Mandel Foundation, 1990–2013.

Received from the Mandel Foundation, Cleveland, OH

Marx, Jeffrey A.

Includes family trees and written histories about the family of Jeff Marx, 2023–2024.

Received from Jeffrey A. Marx

Melrose B'nai Israel Emanu-El (Elkins Park, PA)

Records including minutes, constitution, by-laws, incorporation records, bulletins, service programs, memorial book records, and Men's Club files, 1972–2024.

Received from Susan Levey, Elkins Park, PA

Noveck, Simon

Papers of Rabbi Simon Noveck, 1930s–2005.

Received from Beth Noveck, Boston, MA

Oppenheim family

Genealogy records and research papers of David Oppenheim's family, 1820–2024.

Received from David Oppenheim, Heriot Bay, BC, Canada

Ornstein, Anna and Paul

Collection of Ornstein family papers, 1983.

Received from Martha Ransohoff Adler, Washington, DC

Priesand, Sally

Collection of Rabbi Sally Priesand material from Monmouth Reform Temple including photographs, artwork, framed art and certificates, 1959–2023.

Received from Sally Priesand, Ocean Township, NJ

Randolph, Daniel

Includes correspondence, receipts, and advertisements related to Jewish Cincinnati businesses that were related to liquor and cigar creation and distribution. Also includes Randolph's research on the subjects, 1876–2019, undated.

Received from Daniel Randolph, Cincinnati, OH

Reiss, Johanna

Papers of Johanna Reiss; translations of books by Johanna Reiss, 1972–2022.

Received from Julie and Kathy Reiss, Brooklyn, NY

Sherwin, Byron L.

Papers of Rabbi Byron L. Sherwin, 1923–2012.

Received from Judith Sherwin, Chicago, IL

Silber, Stanley

Korean War mementos, including currency and photo, belonging to Stanley Silber. Also includes Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Passover menus and Haggadah from the Eighth United States Army, 1953–1954.

Received from Susan J. Silber, Miami, FL

Sonderling, Jacob

Jacob Sonderling letters to Mordecai Kaplan, 1995, 2021.

Received from Evelyn Fair, Philadelphia, PA

Temple Adath Joseph (St. Joseph, MO)

Records of Temple Adath Joseph of St. Joseph, Missouri, 1856–2024.

Received from Debra Duncan, St. Joseph, MO

Temple Beth El (Hammonton, NJ)

Archives of Temple Beth El (Hammonton, N.J.) including photographs, newspaper clippings, notes, ephemera, together with digital files, 1937–2022.

Received from Claudia Tung, Hammonton, NJ

Temple Chai (Long Grove, IL)

Records of Temple Chai of Long Grove, Ill., including administrative records, Sisterhood and Religious School records, photo albums, bulletins, and papers of Rabbi Stephen Hart, 1983–2023.

Received from Alison Siegel Lewin, Long Grove, IL

Temple Emanuel (Baltimore, MD)

Records of Temple Emanuel (Baltimore, Md.) including minutes, correspondence, photographs, and records of merger with Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, 1965–2007. Scans of papers and records of Temple Emanuel (Baltimore, Md.) including anniversary event programs and booklets, photographs, clippings, and records of mergers with Baltimore Hebrew, 1975–2006.

Received from Alan Katz, Baltimore, MD

Trepp, Leo

Contains correspondence between Leo Trepp and Mordecai Kaplan. Also includes a photocopy of the manuscript “On Jewish Theology,” 1943–1977.

Received from Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Wyncote, PA

Tugend, Tom

Papers of journalist Tom Tugend including correspondence, writing, photographs, and recorded interviews, 1966–2023.

Received from Alina Tugend, Mamaroneck, NY

Turitz, Leo

Papers of Rabbi Leo Turitz including sermons, clippings, correspondence, and additional material, 1938–2020.

Received from Susan Turitz Cooper, Richardson, TX

United Order of True Sisters (Baltimore, MD)

United Order of True Sisters (UOTS) material belonging to former Baltimore UOTS (#35) presidents, Roxy Schreiber Lipsitz and Beatrice Wise Lipsitz, including pins and a 16mm film, 1950s–1970s.

Received from Ilene Lipsitz, Baltimore, MD

Weiner, Herbert

Accrual to papers of Rabbi Herbert Weiner, including correspondence, writings, subject files and notes for writings, 1947–1997.

Received from Thomas Guthertz, Charlottesville, VA

Weiner, Karl and Eva

Papers of Eva Weiner and Rabbi Karl Weiner, founding rabbi of Temple Judeah Mizpah, 1899–1996.

Received from Jamie Weiner and Carolyn Friend

Wise and Ochs family

Collection of Effie Wise Ochs and Adolph S. Ochs family papers including correspondence, photographs, books and academic robe, 1880–1920.

Received from Susan Dryfoos, New York, NY

Women of Reform Judaism

Collection of Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ) material including administrative files, photos, publications, posters and promotional material, and material culture items (e.g. buttons, conference material, embossing stamp), 1913–2019.

Received from Lizzie Rosenblum, New York, NY

Women of Reform Judaism (Central District)

Records of Women of Reform Judaism's Central District, 2010–2021.

Received from Liz McOsker, Cincinnati, OH

Women of Reform Judaism (Heartland District)

Records of Women of Reform Judaism's Heartland District (formerly Central, and Midwest District) including Board and Executive Committee minutes, president's records, correspondence, convention files, and photographs, 1986, 2014–2023.

Received from Janet Buckstein, Diane Kaplan, and Marci Delson, Cincinnati, OH

The Yidische Gauchos

Digital files of Spanish and English language versions of the film *The Yidische Gauchos* (Mark Freeman, 1989)., 1989, 2024.

Received from Mark Freeman, San Diego, CA

Zoberman, Israel

Congratulatory material relating to Rabbi Zoberman's fifty years in the rabbinate, 2024.

Received from Israel Zoberman, Virginia Beach, VA

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The Marcus Center welcomes the following twenty scholars as 2024–2025 Fellows to the Barrows Loebelson Family Reading Room located on the historic Cincinnati campus of the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion.

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The Rabbi Ferdinand Isserman Memorial Fellowship

*Emmanuel Chapman: A Jewish Perspective on a Catholic
Philosopher*

Mr. Nathan Lucky

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The Bertha V. Corets Memorial Fellowship

*Resistance with Words: The Jewish Telegraphic Agency during the
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The Herbert R. Bloch Jr. Memorial Fellowship

*Forging African Unity: Trans-Saharan Pan-Africanism, The Black
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The Rabbi Theodore S. Levy Tribute Fellowship

*Transnational Intimacies of Early Jewish Life and Love in
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University of Sussex

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*The Specter of Dual Loyalty: George H. Bush and the
Israel/Jewish Lobby*

Mr. Aharon Varady

Independent Scholar

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Chaplains, 1869–1904*

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Technical University Berlin

The Loewenstein-Wiener Fellowship

*Between Cincinnati and Freiburg: The Transnational
Encounter Between Gertrud Luckner and Elizabeth
Petuchowski in the 1980s*

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THE LAST GENERATION OF THE GERMAN RABBINATE

by Cornelia Wilhelm

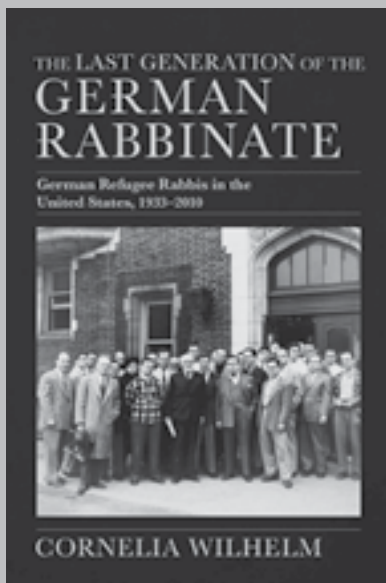
After the Nazi seizure of power on January 30, 1933, over 250 German rabbis, rabbinical scholars, and students for the rabbinate fled to the United States. The Last Generation of the German Rabbinate follows their lives and careers over decades in America.

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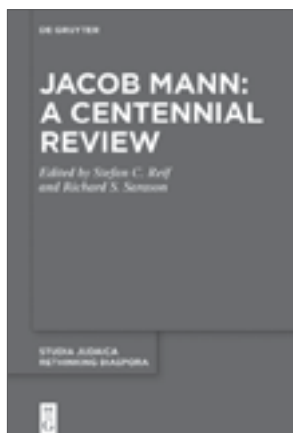


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Jacob Mann (1888–1940) was a major figure in Genizah studies in the early twentieth century. This volume, based on papers delivered at a conference at St. John's College, Cambridge, assesses his scholarly contributions in the light of more recent developments in the areas of medieval Jewish history, particularly Geonica; Jewish liturgy and homiletics; calendar studies; Jewish messianism; and Karaitica. It includes papers by Yosef Ofer, Moshe Lavee, Gila Wachman, Ruth Langer, Stefan Reif, Adiel Breuer, Sacha Stern, Jennifer Grayson, Menahem Ben-Sasson, Miriam Frankel, Yoram Erder, as well as an updated biography of Mann and bibliography of his scholarly writings by Richard Sarason. Together, they portray Mann as a scholar who was captivated by the riches of the Cairo Genizah and devoted his academic career to their exploration and publication.

Stefan C. Reif, St. John's College, University of Cambridge, U.K., and

Richard S. Sarason, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, USA.



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