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“Upon the Threshold”: Anglo-American Jewish Women Writers’ Counterhistories of
Liberal Citizenship and Jewish Nationalism in England and the United States, 1880-1923

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

English

by

Amanda Kaye Sharick

June 2017

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Susan Zieger, Chairperson

Dr. Joseph Childers

Dr. Michael Alexander

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The Dissertation of Amanda Kaye Sharick is approved:

Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

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To the women across time and place
whose work has made this project possible

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

“Upon the Threshold”: Anglo-American Jewish Women Writers’ Counterhistories of Liberal Citizenship and Jewish Nationalism in England and the United States, 1880-1923

by

Amanda Kaye Sharick

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in English
University of California, Riverside, June 2017
Dr. Susan Zieger, Chairperson

This project illuminates Anglo-American Jewish women writers’ (AAJWW) critical appropriation of counter-history—which David Biale argues is a Jewish hermeneutic for transvaluing historical records to expose the ethical structures of the present—in their writings to critique and expand definitions of citizenship and emerging Jewish nationalisms in England and the United States between 1880 and 1923. In chapter one, “Contingent Sympathies: Politics and Poetics of Pseudepigrapha,” I examine Amy Levy and Emma Lazarus’s use of counter-history and pseudepigraphic dramatic personation to challenge the gender and racial biases of authorship and citizenship with their poetry. In chapter two, “Exposing the ‘Secret History’: Translation and Biblical Midrash,” I utilize translation theories put forward by AAJWW to expose how each relied on a counter-history hermeneutic to expand the role of women within and beyond their Jewish communities. In chapter three, “Novel Counter-histories: Contesting the ‘Jewish Type’ in the works of Amy Levy and Israel Zangwill,” I examine Levy and

Zangwill's novels as counter-histories to Joseph Jacobs and Francis Galton's composite photographs of the "Jewish type" and expose how imperialist narratives mobilize the gender and racial bias of liberal subjectivity. In chapter four, "Counter-Photography: History as Identity in Early Alternative Zionist Discourses," I trace the legacy of Jacobs's "Jewish type" in early political Zionist "fauxtographic" histories—which aimed to rewrite the discourse of modern Jewish identity—and then contrast these histories with AAJWW's historical works to expose what was being left out of this discourse of identity, namely Jewish women and indigent Jewish refugees. In chapter five, "*From Plotzk to Boston: Mary Antin's Human Document: Immigration, Genre, and Citizenship*," I situate Russian-Jewish author Mary Antin's memoir within the transatlantic contexts of British and American fin-de-siècle immigration policies and the burgeoning literary sub-genre of invasion fiction to claim her work as a counter-history of the "invasion of America" by Jewish immigrants. In the coda, "On the Edge of Empire: Hannah Barnett Trager & Citizenship in Pre-Mandatory Palestine," I foreground Trager's 1923 memoir, *Pioneers in Palestine*, as a counter-history of pre-mandate Palestine that challenges the gender, class and racial biases of political Zionism's vision of Jewish nationalism.

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Introduction: ‘Upon the Threshold’: Counter-histories of Citizenship and Nationalism

Lit by a fury and a thought, I spake:
‘By all great powers around us! can it be
That we poor women are empirical?
That gods who fashioned us did strive to make
Beings too fine, too subtly delicate,
With sense that thrilled response to ev’ry touch
Of nature’s, and their task is not complete?
That they have sent their half-completed work
To bleed and quiver here upon the earth?
To bleed and quiver, and to weep and weep,
To beat its soul against the marble walls
Of men’s cold hearts, and then at last to sin!’ [176-187]
[...]
But Sokrates, all slow and solemnly,
Raised, calm, his face to mine, and sudden spake:
‘I thank thee for the wisdom which thy lips
Have thus let fall among us: prythee tell
From what high source, from what philosophies
Didst cull the sapient notion of thy words?’ [204-209]

– Amy Levy, “Xantippe: A Fragment” (1881)

“[W]hy is it...that American women go forward and we Jewish women stick in one place? Look at the old days when the daughters of Zelophehad stood up for themselves and claimed their inheritance. Look at Deborah...Judith, look at the many women of Biblical times who had as much wisdom and courage as the men... ‘And now,’ broke in another girl ‘is the time for us colony women to take a stand for our fair share in communal matters. Here we are, helping to build up a new commonwealth in a country where we are all really free to do as we like. Are we going to build on a basis of equality or not? Have not we women taken our part in the founding of this colony as fully as the men have? Did not our mothers suffer and struggle as well as our fathers?’... ‘They are quite right,’ said one young man after the other, more astonished at this eloquence on a girl’s part than they quite liked to confess...”

–Hannah Barnett Trager, *Pioneers in Palestine: Stories of one of the First Settlers in Petach Tikvah* (1923)

In these two scenes, I offer a map of my dissertation’s argument and circulating themes. United by their content, the scenes convey two different exchanges between

women and men about the nature of the *polis* and, more importantly, who among them can be included. Although representative of different genres—dramatic monologue and memoir—the two texts revise influential historical documents that have, in one or more ways, neglected to capture the presence and contribution of women to those historic moments. This omission, of course, is no accident of history, but rather, as the authors show, the consequence of the political structures of their contemporary historical moments.

To start, Anglo-Jewish writer Amy Levy's text writes in the historical gaps of Plato's *Phaedo*, the emblem of her English society's obsession with Hellenism, by poetically imagining a counter-historical narrative. Halfway through the poem and directly before this above extract from "Xantippe: A Fragment" (1881), Levy offers the reader an evocative image of Xantippe standing in a doorway watching and listening to her husband Socrates and his pupils discuss the philosophical capabilities of women. In this threshold, Xantippe realizes her marginalized position within a culture that does not recognize the subjectivity of women nor their ability to produce cultural knowledge. Xantippe's literal exclusion from the circle of intellectuals recalls her unfavorable role in Plato's *Phaedo*, where, as the antithesis of reason, she forbids Socrates from speaking to Plato and is, thus, dragged away.

Xantippe's exclusion from the city-state, on both social and institutional levels, is dramatized by the elision of her narrative from official historical records. Yet, Levy's narrator and version of Xantippe is not the only one left "ling'ring upon the threshold" of an intellectual community (Levy 361). In 1881, though she did not complete her degree,

Levy was the first Jewish woman to attend Newnham Women's College at Cambridge University. While there, she learned firsthand what it meant to be marginalized within the academe because of her gender, religion, and her racial "type" ("Introduction: Reuben" xvii). For at this moment, Levy's colleagues were popularizing the work of Sir Francis Galton, also of Cambridge and the founder of Eugenics, who would go on to create a map of "all the races of men" including a specific "Jewish type" with his composite photographic method just two years later (Galton 99). Levy uses poetry to offset the privileged histories of Western philosophy and quasi-scientific theories of race by challenging that women are biologically inferior and the "half-completed work" of the gods in her imagined historical account (Levy 362). In doing so, Levy renders apparent the continuities between the cultural values of these two historical moments in order to critique the ethical and political structures of her own moment.

The second epigraph comes from Anglo-Jewish writer Hannah Trager's 1923 memoir, *Pioneers in Palestine*, just one year after the establishment of the British Mandate. Trager recounts her family's colonial efforts in Palestine during the 1880s and then in 1911 to offer a historical prequel to the Balfour Declaration (1917), a document that was a forerunner to the 1922 British Mandate. The Balfour Declaration marked a turning point in the British annexation of Palestine and established an official "declaration of sympathy" between political Zionists' and the British Government (Balfour np). Trager frames her narrative as a "token of gratitude" to this historic document on her dedication page (Trager np). Yet, her story, a fusion of literature and history, challenges the outcomes of the colonial legislation by recounting the events of

her Petach Tikvah colony. Trager identifies the major obstacles of building a colony and highlights future challenges for the new generation of colonists, not least of which she imagines as defining the role of women in these efforts.

The scene described in the second epigraph comes from the chapter, “Votes for Women,” wherein the young women of Trager’s colony are appealing to their male peers to recognize and lobby on behalf of their right to participate in “communal matters” (Trager 69). The chapter begins with a picture of a utopian reading room of men and women sitting and discussing a newspaper article about women’s suffrage in the United States. After hearing the American feminist argument for women’s liberties, the young women of the colony, Trager included, consider how they, too, were relegated to separate domestic spheres when it came to issues of communal governance. To that point, settlement life required them to work within the home as well as out in the fields alongside the men. Yet, it is important to note that the colony women are not using the American article to argue for their own equality; but rather, they argue that their labor on behalf of the commonwealth gives them an even greater case for total enfranchisement.

To support this claim, the colony women recount their historical precedents of Jewish biblical women who led the Jewish nation. Their reframing of the biblical narratives of the past to expand their role within their Jewish colony is an example of what I identify as women’s counter-historiographical rhetoric, a means of persuasion rooted but not limited to the history of Judaism. As I will show, the rhetoric as well as an interpretive framework of counter-history sheds light on the various forms of Jewish feminism that emerge in contradistinction to Christian-centric feminism in the late

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This scene hints at these distinct forms of feminism and illustrates how important it was for Anglo-American Jewish women writers (AAJWW) to persuade their coreligionists that political enfranchisement was not discontinuous with their Judaism or their identities as Jewish women.

My examination of these two scenes reveals my method of close and wide reading as a way of analyzing both form and content with special attention to how biographical and cultural contexts influenced the text's final formulation and circulation. As such, the texts I selected for this dissertation share features of a particular genre of Jewish hermeneutics: counter-history. According to Jewish historian David Biale, counter-history, as a methodology, was borne out of Kabbalah-infused historiography that traces both dominant and subordinate traditions of interpreting the Jewish past, rejecting the completeness of any one interpretation (Biale 11-12). Most notably, twentieth-century philosopher and historian Gershom Scholem used the method of counter-history to "systematic[ally] attack" the historiographical methods of the nineteenth century German Jewish movement *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (Gershom 2). As implied in the name, counter-history is a way of reading the past to discover the "subterranean" elements of mainstream or dominant historical narratives in order to say something about the ethical and social structures of the reader's contemporary moment (Gershom 7). Biale is credited with identifying and expanding the relevance of this diasporic hermeneutic: adding that counter-history is not revisionist because it does not seek or depend on a collection of new facts. Rather, it is a way of reading the past that "transvalues" the existing historical record (11). Notably, this method informed both Scholem and his colleague Walter

Benjamin, who draws on Jewish counter-history to, now famously, redefine the task of the historian to “brush history against the grain” (“Theses” 257).

Building on Biale’s work, Jewish Studies scholar Susannah Heschel argues that Jewish Studies, as a discipline, emerges in the nineteenth century as a counter-history of the Christian West (Biale 5; Heschel 101). As suggested by my excerpts from Levy and Trager, I use counter-history to explain common generic features in AAJWW’s texts and foreground their critiques of official historical records of both the Christian West and its Jewish counterpart: for example, the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century *Wissenschaft des Judentums*’ canonization of Jewish History and omission of “irrational” Jewish mysticism, a part of Jewish history that would become important to AAJWW like Lady Katie Magnus and Henrietta Szold. More importantly, AAJWW would voice their critique of this historiography at a moment when history rather than religion was becoming the “master discourse of Jewish identity” (Gotzmann 498). For this reason, I argue that reading AAJWWs’ texts through the lens of counter-history re-contextualizes the historical and cultural critiques found in their writings as part of a forgotten dialogue with their male contemporaries, Zionists and *Wissenschaft des Judentums* scholars alike.

Furthermore, the broad scope of this dissertation, geographically and temporally, relies heavily upon the concept of counter-history to illuminate the similarities between a range of literary, historical, and autobiographical texts by Anglo-American Jewish writers. By tracing these textual resonances, I explore how these writers were, by varying degrees, also connected through social and historical institutions, British and American presses, as well as personal correspondence during the late nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries. I do not claim that there are explicit connections between each work I examine but that, when viewed through the lens of counter-history, a matrix of connections not previously considered is exposed. Thus, I am not only using the hermeneutic of counter-history to interpret the writings of AAJWW, but I have also structured my dissertation as a counter-history to existing scholarly debates about the relevance and influence of AAJWWs and their works for a range of audiences, including but not limited to scholars of Victorian Studies, Cultural Studies, Transatlantic Studies, Jewish Studies and Immigration Studies.

For example, fifty years before Walter Benjamin famously wrote that “every document of civilization is a document of barbarism,” Anglo-Jewish writer and historian Lady Katie Magnus claimed that Jewish history is buried under the “din and dust of...crusaders” and each century’s layers of “paint and varnish” to convey the conqueror’s version of the past (*Theses* 256; *Portraits* 10). While Magnus does not articulate the metaphor of “brushing history against the grain,” she does encourage the practice of reading official Western histories by the “side lights,” where possible, to see traces of the things obscured (*Portraits* 13). As Anglo-Jewish poet Nina Davis Salaman would eventually argue in her article “The Hebrew Poets as Historians” (1919), recovering the details of abbreviated accounts in Jewish biblical or rabbinic histories requires a “sidelight” reading of Hebrew literature and liturgy, where the task of the poet and artist is to provide a record of the spirit of that historical moment, which sometimes offers a “truer impression” than the precision of historical dates (Salaman 273, 269). It is this counter-historical practice that I argue is modeled in the two opening epigraphs.

Furthermore, each of the writers discussed in this dissertation offers up their own theories about using their texts to not only brush history against the grain but to do so with their contemporary cultural treasures. In particular, the hermeneutic of counter-history informs how their texts engage with the dominant print forms of their time and are cross-hatched with cultural significance for a non-Jewish audience that typically imagines AAJWW as other.

One of the sustained arguments of this dissertation addresses the darker sides of liberalism. Namely, its ability to support the imperialist project through narratives of individual and national progress, the expansion of civilization, as well as narratives of the inverse: what Anne McClintock calls a “poetics of degeneration” that gave social power to the pseudo-scientific classification systems of the hierarchies of humankind and was used to reinforce boundaries between English and non-English Others and between women and men (McClintock 46). Buttressed by the domestic ideology of separate gendered spheres, British and American cultural and political social structures of the late nineteenth century were replete with examples of this darker, oppressive side of liberal progress (46). As illustrated in the opening epigraphs, the narrators question their disenfranchisement by debunking narratives of innate inequality buoyed by quasi-biological tenets of teleological human development, wherein women are “half-completed works,” lacking the intellectual capacities of men, the moral courage, and the individual will to attain the political power necessary to demonstrate self-governance

(Levy 362). Of course, Jewish women writers are not the only ones concerned or affected by these conventions of liberal subjectivity.¹

Yet, the writers I consider are important because they reveal the cross-hatched nature of their marginalization and exclusion from political representation, as an effect of the mutually imbricated discourses of gender, race, class and religion. As Benjamin notes, another way these exclusions were compounded in narrative form was through the strategic management of history (“Theses” 256). Building on Benjamin’s historical materialist approach, McClintock identifies how imperialist and colonialist tactics of management influenced the cultural apparatus of England’s civilizing forces, especially through its prime mode of representing individual subjectivity through literature:

If Enlightenment philosophy attempted to rewrite history in terms of the individual subject, the nineteenth century posed a number of serious challenges to history as the heroics of individual progress. Laissez-faire policies alone could not be trusted to deal with the problems of poverty or to allay fears of working class insurgence...[Instead,] [t]he usefulness of the quasi-biological metaphors of “type,” “species,” “genus” and “race” was that they gave full expression to anxieties about class and gender insurgence without betraying the social and political nature of these distinctions. As Condorcet put it, such metaphors made “nature herself an accomplice in the crime of political inequality.” (McClintock 48)

The texts I analyze here similarly interrogate the techniques that naturalize gender and racial exclusions from political positions of power. Separated by over forty years, the two

¹ Michel Foucault argues in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* that the liberal subject appears as an effect or function of institutional and political discourses, tactics and techniques, that “creat[e] out of bodies...individuality” (Foucault 167). In nineteenth century England, the practices applied to criminals were extended to the “dangerous classes” through the development of forensic devices that “enable the body to function as text and as politics” (Thomas 3). With regard to my dissertation, the composite photographic method functions in this capacity when race scientists like Joseph Jacobs and Sir Francis Galton read the physiognomy of the Jewish immigrants to interpret the “Jewish Type,” which I elaborate on in Chapter 3.

opening epigraphs serve as thematic bookends about Jewish women writers' multi-generational, transatlantic networks and efforts to use the discourse of liberal subjectivity and autonomy to reframe their position with a liberal-state apparatus as integral to the maintenance of its foundational values.

My approach draws on the model of Michael Galchinsky's seminal text *The Origin of the Modern Jewish Woman Writer: Romance and Reform in Victorian England* (1996), which maps out the emergence of "the Jewish woman into modern literary and cultural history" in dialogue with political emancipation debates of the 1830s as evident in their Romance novels (Galchinsky 19). More specifically, Galchinsky shows that it was through the manipulation of the generic conventions and assumptions of the Romance genre and "reform" poetics that Anglo-Jewish women writers (AJWW) like Grace Aguilar, Charlotte Montefiore, and Marion and Celia Moss, all middle-class Sephardic Jews, entered the public arena of print culture. These AJWW used popular tropes of female domesticity to reach outside the Jewish community and lobby for increased tolerance and respect for Jewish culture. Even more interestingly, while using some of the same language as philosemitic conversionist literature, these AJWW maintained their Jewish identity and used their popular fiction and poetry to bolster the position of Jewish women within the Jewish community and reinforce a sympathetic relationship between Christians and Jews (30-31).

Aguilar, Montefiore, and the Moss sisters were but a few of the many AJWW who, during the early-to-mid nineteenth century, used their work for the political benefit of the Jewish community and the advancement of Jewish women. One of the main

concerns Aguilar sought to redress was the lack of religious education for Jewish women, especially in the Hebrew Scriptures. Adopting similar emancipationist rhetoric, Aguilar and others argued for Jewish women's inclusion into Jewish religious life as capable learners and teachers. As Galchinsky shows, these women were interested in the education of women, not to shirk their traditional roles in the home, but for the opportunity to actively participate in the interpretation and propagation of Jewish religious traditions and culture. These first AJWW's foray into the theological-political spheres of English and Jewish culture set the precedent for other women, Jewish and non-Jewish alike, to lay claim to spiritual and cultural authority during the latter half of the Victorian period (193). The works of writers like Aguilar ushered in possibilities with their poetics of reform and the adoption of popular cultural forms, like the Romance novel, to reach diverse audiences remained a dominant strategy for later Anglo-Jewish women writers to articulate their political and cultural interests at the fin-de-siècle.

Cynthia Scheinberg's *Women's Poetry and Religion in Victorian England: Jewish Identity and Christian Culture* (2002) extends Galchinsky's work with her juxtaposition of both Christian and Jewish poets who also participate in these earlier AJWW's poetics of reform. Scheinberg argues that Jewish and Christian women poets were invested in Jewish discourse and used images from Judaism and the Hebrew scriptures in their poetry to articulate their "complex arguments about the relationships between Jewish and female artistic identity" (*Women's Poetry* np). Through the comparison of English and Jewish Victorian poets Elizabeth Barrett-Browning, Grace Aguilar, Christina Rossetti and Amy Levy, Scheinberg explores how both Jewish and Christian women used poetry as a site

for creative and original theological interpretation within their respective traditions (4). Scheinberg's work is particularly useful for me to consider later AAJWWs like Nina Davis Salaman and Ray Frank, who were conscious of and committed to working within the discourse of Judaism to expand women's roles within their Jewish communities rather than publically intervening or advocating for women's suffrage.

To read these women writers in such a way attests to the necessary reconsideration of women's religious poetry as something more than a passive reproduction of dominant patriarchal forms. Rather, these writers used poetry to facilitate a dialogue in which they participated, however unevenly, in a semitic discourse to negotiate their place within their respective religious traditions and traditional artistic identities. Scheinberg acknowledges that this type of work for poets of the Victorian period remains deeply invested with "theories of sexual identity [as well as] certain Christian theological principles," which at times seems to problematize the creative possibilities of such an uneven dialogue between these writers and the dominant culture of their non-Jewish peers (22). For example, Nadia Valman critiques Aguilar and Levy's appropriation of Christian conversionist tropes and Evangelical narratives as ineffective at furthering the emancipatory possibilities of AJWW during the Victorian period (Valman 9-10). Sarah Gracombe, on the other hand, shows how Jewish writers, male and female, were effective in their attention to and reappropriation of the conversionist narratives and argues that their texts facilitated the rise in the genre of "Jewish return," or reverse conversion narratives by Jewish and Christian writers ("Picturing" 67-8).

Building on this intersectional model that considers the multiple registers of AAJWW literary works, my dissertation argues for a more sustained investigation into the literary and non-literary forms of AAJWWs as way to better understand their impact within and beyond their imagined communities.

Nadia Valman's critically acclaimed work, *The Jewess in Nineteenth-Century British Literary Culture*, traces the figure of the Jewess within "what Bryan Cheyette terms the 'semitic discourse'—an ambivalent form of representation in which the meaning of 'the Jew' is not fixed" during the long-nineteenth century in England (Valman 4). Valman's genealogy of the figure of the Jewess reveals how gender was at the center of the Jewish Question in Victorian Christian and secular cultures. In her chapter, "The Jewess question," she reads what were considered paradoxical constructions of "the Jew" through the lens of Victorian Evangelical literature. This genre of literature reveals how gendering 'the Jew' was a theological strategy crucial to understanding the tensions within English and Christian identity—as in Matthew Arnold's poem Rachel III: "In her, like us, there clashed, contending powers, / Germany, France, Christ, Moses, Athens, Rome./ The strife, the mixture in her soul, are ours" (ix). Valman demonstrates that literary representations of the Jewess in English liberal culture were used to reconcile the contradictions at the heart of liberalism, specifically "the Jew's" and women's exceptional and yet necessary position within the English nation.

Liberal gender paradigms, as described by Nancy Armstrong, Catherine Gallagher, and Anne McClintock, are inseparable from the perpendicular discourses of

imperialism and sexuality²; and in the case of the Jewess, the discourse of Orientalism flourishes most profusely in English Evangelical literature (Valman 9). Evangelical literature constructed a malleable and seductive Jewess in need of saving from an anachronistic and oppressive Judaism; the conversion of the Jewess also figured as a colonial strategy to reify England's own "chosen" status among all the nations within Christian and secular liberal discourses (Valman 214; Bar-Josef 1,3). And yet, the figure of the Jewess is perpetually marked 'inassimilable' through the imperial rhetoric of race and through her equally dispossessed position as a woman within a Christian patriarchy. Especially during the late nineteenth century, the Jewess had to remain outside the fold of the English nation because her "racia[l] unplaceability" called attention to the "the unstable construction of the whiteness and purity of Britishness" necessary for perpetuating British imperial and racial superiority (Valman 214). The figure of the Jewess, again, remained at the crux of these discourses as a necessarily ambivalent construction.

Valman's review of Anglo-Jewish women writers' intervention in this debate over the figure of the Jewess reveals that they, too, were informed by the "semitic discourse" and representations proliferated by literary works (214, 9). Valman does credit the writers for the ways they challenged the gender paradigms of Judaism and English literary culture, but she does not idealize their accomplishments as somehow changing the

² Armstrong, Nancy. *Desire & Domestic Fiction: a political history of the novel*. Oxford University Press, 1987; Gallagher, Catherine. "Nobody's Story: Gender, Property, and the Rise of the Novel." *Eighteenth-Century Literary History: A MLQ Reader*. Duke University Press, 1999.; McClintock, Anne. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. Routledge, 1995.

discourse about Jews and Jewishness. In fact, Valman very pointedly begins her study with the claim that these writers participated in the construction of an English “semitic discourse,” yet were never able to fundamentally change it (9). Valman concludes that while AJWWs used their works to stage political interventions on behalf of the Jewish community, their efforts were stifled by the need to adopt the dominant culture’s terms in order to make Judaism legible and acceptable. According to Valman, this effectively reduces Jewishness to a poor-man’s Englishness and, thus, works against the original political aims of social and religious tolerance. Even when it comes to the feminist politics of Anglo-Jewish women during the 1880s and 90s, Valman sees this work as deeply steeped in European liberal culture and imperial racial discourses of biological determinism. Such polarizing contexts highlight the discursive web that enmeshes the figure of the Jewess and Valman’s call for scholarship that addresses the paradoxical suffering and redemptive figure to be aware of the dynamic historical, religious and cultural affiliations that prevent an uncomplicated reading of Anglo-Jewish women’s texts.

While I agree with many of Valman’s points, my approach to the complexities of Jewish figures in literature resists a zero-sum-game perspective on the life work of Anglo-Jewish women writers and their Jewish American colleagues. Valman’s binary, I think, stems from reading Anglo-Jewish women writers as belonging primarily within the existing Jewish/Christian dialogues played out in Victorian literature. For this reason, the lens of counter-history allows for dominant and subterranean readings of these AAJWW texts that illuminate new and influential connections and patterns of rhetorical gestures.

Counter-history as a Jewish hermeneutic was deeply embedded in Jewish historiography and can be leveraged in many ways to contradictory ends; it also emerged as a practice of retaining a dynamic, polyphonic Jewishness capable of holding varied forms of Jewishness together. Counter-history reveals how emphasizing some voices over others was the task of each Jewish community, which, according to Ray Frank, is how traditions endured (Litman 8-9). My project is less interested in showing that each writer wanted to achieve or was even pursuing the same outcomes with their work. I am more interested in showing that their methodology and collaboration reveal a transatlantic dialogue among Jewish women about their roles within and beyond the Jewish community.

In each chapter, I demonstrate how AAJWW texts work on various registers to speak to both Jewish and non-Jewish audiences simultaneously. Counter-history as a hermeneutic informs their engagement with popular debates within their community and their selection of certain genres as the best way to enter those debates. In particular, the counter-histories included in this dissertation share a propensity towards the mechanisms and nature of citizenship, as well as inquiries into the modes of representing Jews and Jewishness within and without the liberal nation-state through narratives of degeneration or criminality.

In chapter one, “Contingent Sympathies: Politics and Poetics of Pseudepigrapha,” I examine the counter-historical poetry of Anglo-Jewish writer Amy Levy and her contemporary Jewish American counterpart Emma Lazarus: in particular, Levy’s “Xantippe: A Fragment” and Lazarus’ completion of *Wissenschaft* literary critic and poet Heinrich Heine’s autobiographical trilogy “Donna Clara”; “Don Pedrillo”; “Fra Pedro”

(*Songs* 56-66) . I situate the chapter within the transatlantic context of Christian/Jewish historiographical debates about pseudepigrapha, a nineteenth-century classification system for Christian biblical scholars to identify falsely attributed texts of the ancient world, which were often written by later students or disciples. The genre exemplifies the way Christian scholarship attempted to draw a circle around authentic documents in order to discredit texts that did not fit their existing accounts of the past (Reed 411). Pseudepigraphic literature also played a role in Jewish historiographical debates, especially Heinrich Graetz's seminal multi-volume *History of the Jews*, and the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* movement's exclusion of the "irrational" parts of Jewish history (Biale 23).

I argue that Levy's "Xantippe" speaks to this anxiety while simultaneously using and critiquing the genre of dramatic monologue, a nineteenth-century poetics that focuses on unearthing the authentic character of the speaker of the poem, with particular emphasis on how they tell their story and what they leave out. As a result, Levy offers a critique on multiple levels that each tie back to the anxiety around Christian and other androcentric ways of knowing and apprehending the world through specific episteme but also through policing who can be a knowledge and cultural producer. Whether consciously or not, Levy pulls together these anxieties over authenticity to show, as in the opening epigraph, how the criteria and measure of authenticity is often biased against women, like Xantippe, and Jewish women authors, like Amy Levy. As Cynthia Scheinberg has argued, Levy's use of the dramatic monologue illustrates that the criteria to judge its successful rendering of the true character of the speaker relies heavily upon

the assumed gender of the reader (Scheinberg 7-8). Levy's poems and later translations of poems work to intervene in the dominant cultural debates about women and Jewishness by exposing and deconstructing these biases.

Emma Lazarus, on the other hand, takes up pseudepigraphy to finish the uncompleted poetic trilogy by Heinrich Heine and to write a counter-history of Heine's life and role as an authentic rather than heretical Jewish poet. Lazarus's translation of "Donna Clara" is informed by a letter Heine leaves behind about the unfinished trilogy that explains that the work, although set during the Spanish Inquisition, is based on his experiences. Heine's exclusion from the coteries of German intellectuals during his lifetime was compounded by the government banning his work in 1830 for its radical views (*Poems* xvii). For Lazarus, her "imitations" of Heine's poetry took some creative license to finish his autobiographical series of poems and offered, in the process, an exploration of notions of belonging and national identity.

At the time of her translations in 1881, Lazarus was shocked into a new recognition of the plight of Jewish suffering in Russia and began her philanthropic work with indigent Jewish immigrants in New York. Her translations thus telescope three historical portraits of diaspora: the Inquisition, Heine's ban from Germany, and the Russian Jewish refugees arriving in New York. In doing so, Lazarus builds a sympathetic case on behalf of Jews while also critiquing the logics that perpetuate their collective suffering: namely, the blood and soil rationales of citizenship that were developing in both England and the United States and increasing tensions between Jewish and non-Jewish communities.

Building on this argument, chapter two, “Exposing the ‘Secret History’: Translation and Biblical Midrash,” examines how AAJWW’s translations of literary and biblical texts influenced debates about the roles of women in society. Where translators like Amy Levy and her colleague Eleanor Marx argue for more fluid and secular definitions of gender and sexuality, including the abolition of institutions like marriage, later Anglo-Jewish Hebraic scholar and poet Nina Davis Salaman and Jewish American writer Ray Frank understood their religious interventions as transvaluing the existing record to expand and not upend what they viewed as the important domestic roles of women within Judaism. Both Salaman and Frank went on to fulfill traditional gender expectations: they married and had children; however, they both would become scholars and influential thinkers in their own rights. Coincidentally, they were the first women to preach in synagogues in England and the United States, respectively. What I hope to convey in this first set of chapters is that these AAJWW were diverse and had, at times, widely different perspectives on Judaism, Jewishness, and on British and American culture. Through a special attention to genre, I also aim to expose unconsidered connections between this network of women who intervened in cultural debates within and beyond the Jewish community.

In this way, the remaining chapters, three through five, consider how AAJWW’s critical interventions in public debates navigated the genres that were the unofficial platforms for such debates. This is true for Amy Levy’s shift from poetry to translation to the novel and short story modes: each genre offers different critical tools for varying rhetorical effects. Levy’s multi-generic approach to the problem of women and Jews’

marginalization corresponds to different facets of the debate rooted in the twin logics of liberal progress and eugenic racial typologies premised on the promise of future advancement or the threat of degeneration.

Chapter three, “Novel Counter-histories: Contesting the “Jewish Type” in the works of Amy Levy and Israel Zangwill,” for example, considers how new photographic techniques changed the discourse on Jewish citizenship and demonstrates how three Jewish writers used the generic constraints of one mode of representation to create a critique of another. I situate Levy amongst her Cambridge colleague Joseph Jacobs, a Jewish folklorist, historian, and sociologist who worked closely with Sir Francis Galton to create composite photographs of the “Jewish type,” a photographic experiment to average out and reveal the defining features of “the Jew” (Jacobs 268). As the chapter highlights, this debate was not isolated from larger ones about the Anglicization and assimilation of Jews into the dominant liberal culture, which was still deeply entrenched in Christianity. In fact, after 1881, a shift in the semitic discourse required Anglo-Jewish writers to appeal to the generic expectations of their non-Jewish audience, as well as consider how their representation of Jewishness informs representations of “the Jew” by non-Jews.

I examine the various registers of this dialogue across mediums and explore Levy’s engagement with both her female and male interlocutors. Through an attention to genre, I map how Levy and then Israel Zangwill used the diachronic art form of the novel to counter the diachronic conflation of Jewishness in Joseph Jacobs’s composite photographs of the “Jewish Type” (268-269). While Jacobs appealed to the eugenics

logic of types in order to change the history about Jews, he ultimately, in Levy and Zangwill's estimation, conceded too much ideological ground to make the Jewish body legible within the frame of imperial racial hierarchies in much the same way as his contemporaries that came of age during the emancipation era felt compelled to conform. Furthermore, as Daniel Novak has argued, Jacobs made the body of the "Jewish type" a disembodied representation that would serve as a screen for British cultural anxieties about Jewishness (*Realism* 110-112). In response to Jacobs's work, Levy and Zangwill critique these forms through a novelized version of mirror photography that insisted that Jewish identity could not be reduced to basic features or stock figures.

In chapter four, "Counter-Photography: History as Identity in Early Alternative Zionist Discourses," my argument about the prevalence and relevance of Jewish "types" as evidence of a cultures' civility or national futurity, measured, of course, by its approximation to Western culture, is situated through a battle over Jewish history and communal authority in the major Jewish transatlantic presses. Extending the argument of chapter three, I consider how photography not only influenced the reception of literary works as true-to-life but also shaped a new critical approach to Jewish historiography, establishing a theory of historical portraiture to accurately capture the past through, as we saw in chapter one, the inclusion of authentic documents. Again, my analysis of counter-history is a useful hermeneutic for thinking about the through-threads and themes that continued to shape Anglo-American discourses about Jewishness and Jewish collective identity as increasingly represented in nationalist terms.

From the outset, I demonstrate how, following the first Zionist Congress in 1897, photography proved to be instrumental in writing a new history, or “fauxtographic histories,” of the secular political Zionist movement and projecting an image of a future Jewish nation, twenty-two years before the British established Palestine as the Jewish homeland. Chapter four argues for a new reading of the AAJWW involvement in countering and perpetuating these narratives about Jewish nationalism in print. It is impossible to fully represent the vast number of publications produced on the topic of Jewish nationalisms, Zionist or otherwise, during the fin-de-siècle; however, I focus on the early years of the rebranded Jewish Publication Society of America in the 1890s as a way to mark a shift in the transatlantic dialogue over the relevance of history and the new opportunities for women as editors-in-chief of such influential organizations. Henrietta Szold, Lady Katie Magnus, Rosa Sonneschien, Emma Wolf, and others form the major contours of the chapter’s argument about the influence counter-historical texts had in their moment and beyond.

Chapter four also focuses on the impact of Anglo-Jewish writer Lady Katie Magnus and Jewish American editor Henrietta Szold on Heinrich Graetz’s *History of the Jews*, one of the seminal *Wissenschaft* historical narratives first translated into English by the Jewish Publication Society of America in 1892. I show how AAJWW’s coordinated efforts provided a model for other Jewish writers, women and men, to think about the functions of Jewish history as in service to both nationalist and diasporic aims within British and American political contexts. While *Wissenschaft des Judentums* would also illustrate these two functions of Jewish literature and culture, the purpose of *Wissenschaft*

was primarily to show how Jewish culture and history were on par with Western culture and civilization. As noted above, this included excising certain “irrational” aspects of Judaism from the historical record, such as the history of Kabbalah (Biale 7). In response, some Anglo-American Jewish writers used their texts to make a case for Jewish culture and civilization without removing aspects of Judaism or historical records of “irrational” sects of Jewish mysticism that, in their view, were equally important to Jewish culture. By the 1890s, we see a proliferation of Jewish historiographies that juxtapose the *Wissenschaft* movement and biographies of key figures like Heinrich Heine, Heinrich Graetz, Leopold Zunz, with the very heretics they left out or negatively portrayed in their works. I show how these counter-histories provided a useful model of history and historiography that in some ways anticipated the moves of twentieth-century historians like Gershom Scholem and Walter Benjamin.

The final chapter of the dissertation discusses, at some length, how Mary Antin, a sixteen-year-old Jewish immigrant writer, crafts a memoir of her travels from Polotzk, Russia to Boston, Massachusetts in 1894. The text was first written in Yiddish as a sixty-page letter to a relative back in Russia, but it was translated into English for an American Jewish audience in 1899 (Yudkoff 7). It is this latter claim about intended audience that I pitch my chapter against. Using the lens of counter-history, I examine how Antin crafts her narrative to function, like other AAJWW, on multiple registers for a transatlantic Anglo-American audience. First, I establish the historical and literary contexts informing the semitic discourse during the mid-1890s to show how shifts in the immigration policies in England and the United States correlated with a shift in political and literary

representations of Jewish immigrants as degenerate, disease-ridden, even criminal invaders. These stereotypes were, in part, an effect of the popularization of invasion fiction texts like *The Great War of England 1897 (1894)* and genre-blending texts like *Trilby (1894)* and *Dracula (1897)*. After establishing the challenges posed by these texts, specifically the anti-alien tropes promulgated by each, I show how Antin structures her narrative to invert popular tropes and deconstruct the validity of the stereotypes about Jewish immigrants.

In the second section of chapter five, I build upon the work of Yiddish scholar Sunny Yudkoff to argue that it is not only for her American Jewish audience that Antin “fashions” herself a “booklover” in her text (22). Rather, Antin styles herself and her journey along the traditional rubric of the bildungsroman genre, in order to fashion her image in the text, the Mary Antin character in her work, as the heroine who becomes a self-possessed individual. I go on to argue that this is the real aim of her text, which sets her narrative apart from other immigrant narratives: America is not the condition for the realization of her subjectivity. Antin, instead, creates and authenticates her “self” through the journey to America and her text stands as the result and evidence of her individual identity. At the end of the chapter, I explore why it was so critical for Antin’s text to be a “human document” rather than an artifact of the Other. Thus, Antin’s *From Plotzk to Boston* functions as a counter-narrative to the invasion fictions of her moment and the imperialist criteria of male authorship that she must navigate to legitimize her story as an authentic record, and relevant counter-history, of the Jewish immigrant’s “invasion” of America (Antin 8).

In the coda, I turn to the work of Hannah Barnett Trager's memoir to explore how Anglo-American Jewish networks informed both the narrative and Trager's ambivalent relationship to Mandatory Palestine. In this text, as in Israel Zangwill's foreword, Trager navigates the competing threads of political and cultural Zionisms as well as the anti-Zionist arguments offered by Zangwill, the British Jews League, and Jewish Territorial Organization. The two historically-infused allegories that Trager offers in her memoir identify the major questions and concerns about the challenges of liberal paradigms of citizenship within a nationalist movement based on labor, land, and blood so ardently opposed by Jews remaining in England and the United States.

Finally, my dissertation illustrates the stakes of AAJWW's poetics and politics during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that provided alternate forms of Anglo-Jewish collective identity while also engaging, extending, and challenging their contemporary Zionist movements in England and America. The myriad ways that Anglo-American Jewish women sought alternative modes of collective identification has caused some scholars to balk at their relevance to Jewish national discourse, describing their critical stance as necessarily ambivalent and contradictory. Consequently, AAJWW, along with other Anglo-Jewish male writers, have either fallen through the cracks of official Zionist narratives or have been categorized as "impressive intellectual failure[s]" (Dubnov 128). While these women may be "difficult to pin down", Benjamin's "Theses on the Philosophy of History" and "Convolute N" of the *Arcades Project* offer an alternative perspective of failure. In fact, for Benjamin, all the past appears as one ever-extending catastrophe; "as wreckage [piled] upon wreckage," the viewer only becomes

aware of the “missed opportunity” of unrealized potentialities in the “now of recognizability”—when the past is brought into critical relationship with the present (“Theses” 257; Arcades N10, 2). This Kabbalistic-infused reimagining of history dismisses the language of “Progress” altogether and makes room to see the tessellation of new constellations of AAJWW and their labor. By “brushing history against the grain,” I hope to facilitate a reconsideration of AAJWW as another critical part of understanding Jewish national discourse and political Zionism.

In Ana Parejo Vadillo’s 2005 work, *Women Poets and Urban Aestheticism: Passengers of Modernity*, she reminds the reader of Theodor W. Adorno’s astute observation: “If... a poem could be defined ‘as a philosophical sundial telling the time of history’, then the poetry of Amy Levy... tell[s] the time of late-nineteenth-century British culture” (Vadillo 2). Similarly, Benjamin sees poetry as a model of history which is not homogenous empty time, but rather presents the past charged with the time of now—“a tiger’s leap”—revealing the present moment of “danger” (“Theses” 261). I claim that AAJWW are similarly reinterpreting the past to highlight the dangers of their contemporary cultural moment. Their poetics and politics make legible the ways Jewish women are more than the excluded excess of Jewish nationalism. In her recent work on the gender politics of early political Zionism, Mikhail Dekel argues that “Woman” was indeed, like in the case of other nationalisms, necessarily excluded from the emerging nationalist discourse as the inassimilable force “at the edge of the [imagined] nation” against which early political Zionist leaders could define themselves and their movement (Dekel 32). My project investigates the ways this representation of the Zionist past

reproduces the violent exclusion of the lives and work of the Anglo-American Jewish women who so actively contributed to the discourse of Jewish nationalism during the “Zionist moment.”

The paradoxical treatment of AAJWW’s work as both critical to understanding late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century English and American cultures and yet unimportant to discussions of early political Zionism in England and America seems to be a consequence of the canonization of Zionist history from the retrospective post-1948 gaze, a perspective which marks parts of Zionist history as “successful” in relation to its continuity with post-World War II political Zionism. In this sense, other expressions of Jewish collective identity, whether exclusively non-state based, cultural or religious, are perceived as failures—as anglicized or liberal European bastardizations of an authentic Jewish national identity, unconcerned with the sustainability of a Jewish national culture. My dissertation contests the ways Anglo-Jewish women and their literary and political work have been overlooked and reduced to passive supporters of early Zionist history. I am invested in recovering the important roles Anglo-Jewish women shared with their male Zionist peers in shaping discussions around Jewish collective identity within their respective communities. I am equally invested in the ways these women challenged the political structures of classic liberalism and actively participated in forging new forms of collective identity and practices.

Chapter 1 Contingent Sympathies: Politics and Poetics of Pseudepigrapha

Incited by the 1881 anti-Jewish Russian pogroms, Jewish physician Leon Pinsker anonymously published his pamphlet *Auto-Emancipation!* in German under the *nom de plume* of “Einen Russischen Juden,” “A Russian Jew,” in 1882. Pinsker’s pamphlet would go on to spark debates across Jewish communities in Europe, England and the United States about whether Jewish nationalism and a national homeland was needed to achieve political emancipation. In it he argued that “as men, [Jews], too, would fain live and be a nation like the others...” with rights, autonomy and dignity (Pinsker 12). The pamphlet anticipated political Zionist founder Theodore Herzl’s treatise *The Jewish State* by five years and would later be reclaimed by historians as a seminal proto-Zionist text.

Just over half a year before Pinsker’s pamphlet, AAJWWs Emma Lazarus in the United States and Amy Levy in England expressed their views on the violent underside of chauvinistic nationalism in their poems “Xantippe: a fragment” (1881) and “Don Pedrillo” & “Don Pedro,” “imitations” of Heine (1881). While each of these poems have their own political context, I read them as participating in the discourse of the Jewish Question, a transatlantic debate over whether Jews could be a part of the nation, particularly in the wake of the 1878 essay by British liberal historian Goldwin Smith who infamously questioned “can the Jews be patriots?” like other men because of their religion (Smith 875). Where Pinsker anonymously calls for Jews to be men like others with a nation composed of common blood and soil, Lazarus and Levy respond with poems that impersonate historical figures to critique the validity of such exclusive models

of belonging. To be clear, pseudonymous writing and fictional renderings of historical figures were common literary practices during the long nineteenth century. What I do here is to consider how the lens and history of pseudepigrapha in the nineteenth century can help us better understand the critical stakes of the politics and poetics of Levy and Lazarus's writings.

Throughout this chapter, we will find that these texts challenge the conventions of traditional authorship, writing under another's name or dramatic persona to "say [something] which they deem worthy of the attention of contemporaries put forth under the egis of a great name, not to deceive, but to conciliate favor" (Deane 1). During the eighteenth and nineteenth century, this practice of pseudepigrapha was understood by Christian scholars to be commonly associated with Christian and Jewish communities in the first century of the common era. As a genre, however, pseudepigrapha is invented by eighteenth and nineteenth-century bibliographers and historians to designate "falsely attributed" writings. According to Annette Yoshiko Reed's 2009 article, "The Modern Invention of 'Old Testament Pseudepigrapha'," the term pseudepigrapha was first used by eighteenth-century German classical scholar and bibliographer Johann Albert Fabricius in his 1713 *Codex Pseudepigrapha VT*, which described a specific set of manuscripts in his collection of antiquities as false writings (Reed 414). Fabricius's term, Reed shows, was purposed in "the side-by-side comparison of all the evidence [in order to] expose [false writings] to the contempt of everyone" (Reed footnote 74). In other words, Fabricius authenticated the historical documents that supported the existing record and discredited those that departed or challenged it. Reed argues that Fabricius's interest

in the falsity of manuscripts was in response to his socio-historical moment. Due to changing print technologies of the eighteenth century, Fabricius became anxious over the potential rise in modern forgeries and so developed a way to identify forgeries by using characteristics from a subset of predominantly Jewish ancient manuscripts against authentic Christian texts (426).

Additionally, Fabricius's codex emerges during "the first definitive boundary making of the Christian Bible," which corresponds with the Reformation movement in Western Europe in the wake of the Enlightenment (426). Pseudepigrapha shared many characteristics with other ancient manuscripts, but its most definitive trait was that the text was written under the assumed name of some famous or well-known person, which, based on empirical evidence could not have been possible. However, Fabricius's invented genre did not come into popular use or common knowledge until "British, French and other colonial expansions enabled archaeological excavations, as well as facilitating further contacts with churches and monasteries in Africa, Eastern Europe and the Middle East," when it became critical for these empires to control what narratives counted as part of the Christian West (414). Pseudepigrapha, then, can be understood as another technique of British imperial culture to categorize and assimilate the history and cultural treasures of Others into their own hierarchies of knowledge.

By the mid-nineteenth century, according to Reed, popular and scholarly interest in these texts increased in England and Western Europe, specifically because they "gave historical Jesus's Jewishness further importance" (Reed 431). Jewish representations of the often Anglicized Christian Savior created new connections between Jews and

Christians, as well as ushered in new anxieties and doubt about the religious Other in their midst. The Jewishness of “the historical Jesus,” while important to other religious movements in England, was a main tenet of some apologetic German Jewish research models of *Wissenschaft des Judentum* (430). Within the contexts of Catholic and Jewish political emancipation debates in England, the genres of apocrypha and pseudepigrapha trickled into public discourse. As national and imperial boundaries expanded and absorbed other peoples, histories, and cultural artifacts, Reed shows, pseudepigrapha carried forth the marks of polemics long past, revealing the contours of imperial epistemologies rather than the cultural politics of antiquity.

By 1891, however, English Protestant minister William John Deane took issue with Fabricius’s criteria. Deane suggested that pseudepigraphic texts “‘should not be read in light of literary forgeries [nor as] fraudulent attempts at imposture; but the authors, having something to say which they deemed worthy of the attention of contemporaries, put it forth under the aegis of a great name’ (Deane 1-2)” (quoted in Reed 404). Deane suggests that using the term pseudepigraphic applies anachronistic concepts of authorship and forgery to ancient works (404). Drawing from this question of authorship, I follow Reed’s lead to focus on how the genre was leveraged in the nineteenth century to manage cultural anxieties about women’s changing roles and the future of the British Empire, as well as shifting demographics due to imperial expansion and Jewish immigration. While the specialized term pseudepigrapha circulated amongst historians and classicists, the practice of writing under the name of a figure of the past was not new in Victorian or even English literature. However, Jewish women writers appropriated historical figures,

writing under their names, as a means to expose their secondary citizenship status and social experience, which was different from other forms of psuedepigrapha of the time. As marginalized subjects, as Jews and as women, their relationship to “History” is from the vantage point of what Amy Levy would describe as the “yoke of oppression”—despite their assimilation in British middle-class culture (“Jewish Humour” 9).

In her 1886 essay “Jewish Humour,” critiquing *Wissenschaft* literary critic Heinrich Heine, Levy marks how the movement to make Jewish texts accessible to non-Jewish audiences, providing indexes and glossaries, for English or German readers to assess the full value of the culture was, in her mind, also a way of reducing Jewish history to serve an unsympathetic readership (8-9). She notes that, by attempting to authenticate the status of Jewish culture and history, Heine was effectively “cracking the communal joke,” or making their cultural treasures palatable for non-Jewish, European audiences (8). Similarly, in 1891 Deane’s work on the Old Testament psuedepigrapha functioned more accurately as part of a Christian discourse that sought to ascertain the Jewish scriptures historically—a strategy some read as Christian supersessionism, what Eitan Bar-Josef defines as the British Protestant assumption of Jews’ “chosen status” (Bar-Yosef & Valman 16). Furthermore, when considering the practice of psuedepigrapha, and its associations with Jewish historiography by Christian and Jewish historians of the nineteenth century, we see that the term was used as way to manage what counted as legitimate Jewish history in order to intervene in political debates about modern Jewish identity.

As Pinsker's text models, the pseudonym "a Russian Jew" allows him to universalize the particularities of Jewish persecution in Russia to issue "[a]n admonition to his Brethren" across the globe, generalizing the condition of Jewish suffering throughout history as a consequence of their failure to "be a nation like the others" (Pinsker 12). In contrast, I show how Amy Levy and Emma Lazarus's poetics of pseudepigrapha function as literary counter-histories that "transvalue" the particularities of key historical moments from the vantage point of overlooked or imagined historical figures to make critiques about the social structures of their contemporary moment (*Gershom* 7).

For example, halfway through her poem "Xantippe: A Fragment," published in 1881, Amy Levy offers the reader a subtle yet evocative image of Xantippe standing in a doorway watching and listening to her husband Socrates discuss the philosophical capabilities of women with his pupils. In this threshold, Xantippe realizes her marginalized position within a culture that does not recognize female subjectivity or women as valid producers of cultural knowledge. Xantippe's literal exclusion from the circle of intellectuals recalls her unfavorable role in Plato's *Phaedo*, where, as the antithesis of reason, she is violently excluded from the nation, on both social and institutional levels, through the omission of her narrative from official historical records. Xantippe's threshold vantage point highlights the complex and intricate ways nationalisms depend on the construction and maintenance of liminal subjectivities, gendered and otherwise, which is especially pronounced in the history of liberal nationalism (McClintock 353). Using counter-history to expose the gender and religious

biases of Victorian culture, including the genre of dramatic monologue, Levy finds the limits of liberal nationalism and highlights how the discourse of humanity fails those left in the threshold of the nation.

Similarly, in “Don Pedrillo,” Lazarus finishes Heine’s autobiographical trilogy, set in Medieval Spain, to show that antisemitism is a byproduct of blood and soil rationales: Don Pedrillo “swears immortal hatred” because the Rabbi in the poem crosses the “threshold” of his home, “pollut[ing] the soil of Spaniards” (Lazarus 215). As I will show in the first section of this chapter, Lazarus balances the maliciousness of the young man with the ironic reality known only to the reader that Don Pedrillo is half-Jewish. Lazarus’s reframing of the discourse of antisemitism, I argue, is one example of what Jewish historian David Biale describes as “counter-history,” a type of Jewish historiography that unearths the ethical structures of a particular society not by rewriting history but rather by reading the historical record against the grain (Biale 135). Although Lazarus’s poem emerges from a specific political context, her use of counter-history broadens the scope of her critique of exclusive forms of national belonging to include an indictment of systemic forms of violence throughout history (“The Jewish Problem” 602).

Pseudepigrapha, as a nineteenth-century genre and phenomenon, is less useful to my argument as an actual classification system for thinking about the veracity of texts. Instead, I am interested in appropriating the term to discuss the writings by AAJWW, like Amy Levy and Emma Lazarus, that were purposed for contesting dominant narratives about the past through historically-inspired poetry. Anglo-Jewish writers Lady Katie

Magnus and Nina Davis Salaman, the former a colleague of Levy's, lamented that Jewish history was lost—"covered up from sight in the din and dust raised by recurring crowds of 'chivalrous' crusaders"—and that Jewish writers and historians must, therefore, recover the past through the "side-lights" of history (*Outlines* 199; Magnus 11; Salaman 273). At a moment when Christian historians used the label of pseudepigrapha to demarcate Jewish texts which did not fit within or challenged their religious tradition, I embrace this derogatory term to describe Levy and Lazarus's counter-historical works, since their representation of historical facts and filling of historical gaps were fashioned for challenging rather than upholding the status quo.

Furthermore, this chapter considers how Levy and Lazarus came to explore these similar themes and sources between 1879-1883 through their shared interest in Heinrich Heine's work, especially his works on Jewish history from antiquity to medieval Spain. Heine's work rose to new prominence among the post-emancipation generation of English and American Jewry, and it was particularly useful for AAJWWs because he modeled a relationship to historiography as a way to carve out his political identity. Lazarus and Levy, while separated by oceans and social circles, are brought, I argue, into a critical conversation about Heine's literary corpus through the conflict and politics surrounding mass Jewish immigration. And as Russia reinforced its national boundaries in explicitly violent ways, Lazarus and Levy's poems consider the exclusive forms of national belonging, citizenship, and social prejudice, each of which shaped their respective American and British societies. Their poems express this critical posture by asking questions about the history of imperial-state violence against Jewish communities

from the vantage point of those living in the pale of citizenship. Skeptical of the progressive roll of civilization, Lazarus and Levy express ambivalence toward the supremacy of classical texts and question the privileged position of Hellenist civilization and Christianity within British and American culture.

As a member of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* movement, Heine's conception of historiography departed from Graetz in that he, too, was more interested in looking at the "story hidden by historiography" (Goetschel np). This is akin to what Biale argues is the hermeneutic of the counter-historian embedded in traditional Jewish historiography. Biale claims the counter-historian "rejects the completeness of [any] interpretation [of historical events];" he affirms the existence of a "mainstream" or "establishment" history but believes that the vital force lies in a secret [because omitted or overlooked] tradition" (Biale 7). Biale's concept of counter-history is informed by Benjamin's theory of "brushing history against the grain" and Gershom Scholem's method of recovering evidence of Kabbalist history despite the omissions of nineteenth-century Jewish historians. Benjamin argues for the critical consideration of "cultural treasures" or "documents of civilization" as bearing within them the violent histories of conquest that entail the subordination and subjugation of other peoples, histories, and cultures ("Theses" 256). Influenced by Scholem's view of the Kabbalist's relationship to history, Benjamin argues that the ability to see the underside of any history is the result of a "flash" of recognition, a moment where present social conditions telescope a previously unconsidered fragment of the past (255).

Levy and Lazarus (and other AAJWWs) cultivate a similar relationship to history and compose counter-histories to expose and challenge the ethical structures of their contemporary moments. Biale's concept of counter-history is useful for understanding AAJWW's adaptation of various genres of writing. Levy and Lazarus's use the hermeneutic of counter-history to craft poetic interventions in their historical moment for Jewish and non-Jewish audiences. By manipulating generic features, Levy and Lazarus's poems critique the cultural anxieties around authenticity and alternate epistemologies as evidenced in the Victorian genre of dramatic monologue and Christian scholarship on pseudepigrapha.

By using the term pseudepigrapha in this way, I perform a counter-historical reading of nineteenth-century historiographic nomenclature: once meant to leverage cultural documents to the benefit of the imperial power, I will use pseudepigrapha as shorthand for the texts that expose the imperial armature of historiography. As I refine my use of pseudepigrapha, I will consider also how accessible this style of counter-history is to non-marginalized groups. To this end, in the last section of this chapter, I trace the pseudepigraphic use of a historic Jewish queen's name, "Zenobia," from late-antiquity, by a range of nineteenth century writers, Jewish and non-Jewish. The historical figure of Zenobia was a Jewish-Syrian Queen of Palmyra who led a revolt against the Roman Empire and became a commonly referenced historical figure in British and American literary and aesthetic discourses. In an effort to further distinguish the term, my preliminary answer for why all invocations of Zenobia cannot be read as counter-histories or pseudepigrapha has to do with the positionality of the writer and the threshold

perspective that may only be accessible to marginalized communities. Rather than essentialize minority communities, I mean to say that pseudepigrapha denotes a specific relationship to sites of institutional power. For the purposes of this chapter, I use my working definition of pseudepigrapha to describe how shared global contexts and comparable positions within British and American liberal cultures facilitated Amy Levy and Emma Lazarus's counter-histories during the same five-year period, as both writers actively translated Heinrich Heine, Jehuda Halevi, and wrote poems that highlight the limitations of history.

Amy Levy's "Xantippe": Forging Historical Fragments with Dramatic Monologue

First published in 1880 in the *Dublin University Magazine*, "Xantippe: A Fragment" brought the scorned wife of Socrates, relegated to the margins of history, into the London imperial center and into the imaginations of Victorian readers. Levy (1861-1889), an Anglo-Jewish woman writer of late-nineteenth-century England, grew up in a middle-class Jewish home in London's West End. Unlike most Jewish women, Levy received a private education as the first Jewish woman to attend Cambridge's Newnham College for women. In 1883, after just two years, Levy published her first book of poems, *Xantippe and Other Verse*, and at the age of twenty, decided to end her studies at Cambridge without taking a degree. This part of Levy's biography is useful for thinking about her positionality as a poet and her use of dramatic monologue.

Due to the high quality of Levy's dramatic monologue poetics, *Xantippe and Other Verses* was met with critical acclaim with some reviewers even comparing her to

Browning (Scheinberg 170). Scheinberg “reclaims” literary critic Robert Langbaum's “emphasis on how dramatic monologues [as a genre] engage readerly sympathy and judgment” and argues “that rather than splitting the reader's capacities for sympathy and judgment, dramatic monologues by both men and women work to reveal the contingency between powers of poetic sympathy and moral judgment” (*Sympathy & Judgement* 8). She goes on to remind us that these two powers are indicative of and integral to the pronouncement of aesthetic judgments of women’s poetry as not as sophisticated as their male peers (7-8). More interestingly, the dramatic monologue was not a form often used by Victorian women, but “Amy Levy provides a great example of [how] a Jewish woman challenged the most basic formula for English poetic identity - Christian and male” (8). These gender dynamics put Levy in a unique position to test the limits of the genre. While compared to Browning, she did not have the same cultural privilege or literary prestige and, therefore, risked more with her representation of Xantippe and biting critique of Hellenism hurled from the thresholds of English literary culture.

Within the context of fin-de-siècle Victorian culture, Levy’s “Xantippe: A Fragment” offers an important critique of Victorian Hellenistic discourses of “beauty” and “truth,” a reality accessible only through the homosocial intellectual pursuits of men, exposing them as exclusionary and harmful in their implementation on an imperial-national scale (Olverson 112). Levy’s work also speaks to the paradox of Victorian liberal nationalism that premises its social and cultural cohesion on the exclusion of women, Jews, and colonized peoples within the empire. In doing so, Levy highlights the inequitable conditions that make such pseudepigrapha possible—namely the always

present gaps in the historical record of a “civilized” society as evidence of gender and racial violence. In this way, her poem models a critical posture toward British obsession with Hellenism as an aesthetic of “civilization” that has historically depended on the exclusion of women from the canon of history.

Scheinberg argues that “Xantippe: A Fragment” was one of Levy’s many critical responses to Victorian literary theorist, Matthew Arnold, who idealized Hellenism as an aesthetic of civilization (Scheinberg 207). In more recent criticism, T.D. Olverson’s 2010 essay foregrounds Levy’s classical training and use of the “garb of ancient Greece” to shore up her own “philosophical and political concerns” (Olverson 111). Olverson’s article demonstrates Levy’s knowledge of Greek culture as well as how this knowledge was reproduced in Victorian celebration of Hellenism. Olverson argues that Levy was not the first person to write about Socrates’ wife; in fact, Scottish poet James Thomson, a writer who played an important role for Levy’s theories on poetry, first wrote an essay in 1866 entitled “A word for Xantippe.” In Thomson’s essay, after reviewing her historical reputation, he invites “respectable Victorian matrons” to “follow Socrates home ‘to judge whether Xantippe had or had not the right to scold and rage and even pour out vessels of wrath’” (quoted in Olverson 111). According to Olverson, Levy takes on this challenge with verse almost thirteen years later (111). Building on Olverson’s research, I offer a more complex reading of Levy’s “political concerns” as those of women’s rights but also as an important critique of history as a contested site where knowledge and power are concretized and leveraged to the benefit of those in positions of authority.

In the opening scenes of the poem, Xantippe is on her deathbed as an older widow, attended to by young maidens to whom she narrates her “dreams of a troubled sleep,” which are memories of her former “stormy days” as the wife of the acclaimed Athenian philosopher Socrates (Levy 357). Xantippe explains that she was not an ordinary girl content with “maiden labour” but rather a “soul which yearned for knowledge, for a tongue that should proclaim the stately mysteries of this fair world” (358). Xantippe recounts the day she first met Socrates in the city center and, while initially repulsed, she was drawn to the knowledge and opportunity he represented to her. Soon after, Socrates selects her for a wife and she believes he will teach her how to access the higher realms of learning, the language of philosophy. She is sorely disappointed to learn that Socrates has no such plans—and “the high philosopher, / Pregnant with noble theories and great thoughts, / Deigned not to stoop to touch so slight a thing/ As the fine fabric of a woman’s brain” (366). The main conflict occurs when Xantippe is called upon to provide Socrates and his students, Plato and Alcibiades, with “fresh wine-skins”; upon returning to the group, Xantippe remains in the arbor entry way, “[I]ng’ring upon the threshold,” listening to the men discuss a female philosopher Aspasia, which Pericles “hath brought from realms afar” (361): a woman who

hath a mind...of a strength beyond her race;
 and makes employ of it, beyond the way
 Of women nobly gifted : woman’s frail—
 Her body rarely stands the test of soul;
 She grows intoxicate with knowledge ; throws
 The laws of custom, order, ‘neath her feet,
 Feasting at life’s great banquet with wide throat (ll 165-175, 362)

Socrates's critique of Aspasia, while drawn from Levy's extensive knowledge of Greek language, literature and philosophy, is lifted from nineteenth-century debates about women's education. Levy, I argue, uses the popular form of dramatic monologue to craft this pseudepigraphic text to say something "deemed worthy of the attention of [her] contemporaries, [but] put it forth under the aegis of a great name' (Deane 1). Rather than a great name, Levy leverages Xantippe's infamous historical trace in Plato's *Phaedo* to show that history is one of the foundational sites of patriarchal power that puts women and "those brought from afar" under erasure (Levy 362).

By using conventions of dramatic monologue, specifically the ability to create some kind of split in a reader's process of identifying with the speaker, Levy is able to draw out the tensions between the positionality of the speaker of the poem, Xantippe, the intended audience of fair maidens, and the reader. These tensions arise because dramatic monologue, as Scheinberg notes, is meant to play on the auditor's sense of moral or ethical values which are complicated by feelings of sympathy toward the morally questionable actions of the speaker (Scheinberg 176). In this instance, Levy has positioned the speaker as critical of the widely-accepted forms of culture and civilization, and her female auditors as dutiful but skeptical attendants. Thus, when Levy presents the story of the speaker's suffering as a consequence of social marginalization due to gender, the conventional relationship between speaker and reader, which is reliant upon moderate poetic identification, breaks down and fails to build the defining sympathetic bonds of the genre.

Levy's use of the dramatic monologue brushes against the grain of literary conventions and the classics of Western philosophy to elucidate the pervasive and damaging effects of exclusionary models of citizenship. Levy is not the first person to achieve this critique with poetry; however, Levy's quarrel is meant to contradict the western historical record—to read by the “sidelights” of history and challenge the ethics of Plato's use of Xantippe as a “vehicle” for his own views (Magnus 11; Deane 2). In this way, the Xantippe text functions as a type of pseudepigrapha: it does not rely on the veracity of its representation, for its sole purpose is to expose the incomplete and biased nature of the existing historical record as evidence of the bias at work in her own cultural moment. Writing under the aegis of Xantippe's name, Levy's dramatic monologue performs the political posture of counter-history as it critiques contemporary responses to women's changing social roles, from “maiden labour” to cultural producers of knowledge, through a new representation of historical events from classical antiquity.

After hearing Socrates's judgment of the “strange-woman” philosopher, Xantippe emerges from the threshold to challenge his assumptions. Xantippe seethes:

‘By all great powers around us! Can it be
That we poor women are empirical?
That gods who fashioned us did strive to make
Beings too fine, too subtly delicate...
That they have sent their half-completed work
To bleed and quiver here upon the earth?
To bleed and quiver, and to weep and weep,
To beat its soul against the marble walls
Of men's cold hearts, and then at last to sin! (Il 177-187, 362)

As the group of male philosophers are stunned by her speech, their shock quickly fades into sardonic countenances with smiles that “half did smile and half did criticize” her

transgression of the threshold of homosocial space and the gender roles of Athenian culture (362-3). For a moment, Xantippe thinks she has taught the philosophers a lesson, but she quickly feels the full weight of cultural authority reassert itself by denying her the status through which any such lessons can be taught. Socrates's response to Xantippe makes this subtle but violent process visible to Levy's readers:

'I thank thee for the wisdom which thy lips
Have thus let fall among us: prythee tell
From what high source, from what philosophies
Didst thou cull the sapient notion of thy words?' (ll 206-209, 363)

Socrates's pronouncement reestablishes the status quo by objectifying Xantippe as mere vessel rather than producer of knowledge. Socrates interprets Xantippe's seemingly wise words as a male-dependent reproduction, which is consistent with the cultural narratives surrounding women's biological status as first and foremost vessels of human reproduction. By dramatizing the narrow limits of Xantippe's existence, Levy uses the genre of dramatic monologue to fill in the historical details of Xantippe's life to make her sympathetic to her intended audience of fair maidens, auditors presumed to be female. As a result, Levy's "Xantippe" imagines another perspective of Plato's brief mention of Xantippe as a quarrelsome woman, one that speculates whether such a summary label was simply a way of criticizing women who attempt to be equal with men. With a "sudden flame, a merciful fury sent/ To save [her]," Xantippe explains to her maiden audience the turning point of her life: "with both angry hands I flung/ The skin upon the marble, where it lay spouting red rills and fountains on the white;.../White garment stained to redness" (363). Red wine stains on her white garment, like menstrual blood, a symbol of her gender difference and her "sin" of disobedience. Following this scene,

Levy then describes the purgatorial fate of Xantippe through a reversal of Tennyson's well-known poem "The Lady of Shalott"(1832)³. Rather than a mythic "curse" demanding she weave or perish (Tennyson 1115), Xantippe chooses to weave all day and night to speed her death, "until, [she] spun away/ The soul from out [her] body, the high thoughts/ From out [her] spirit" (Levy 364). At the end of the poem, Xantippe's "dream" and the grim consequences of her life bring her maiden audience to tears. In her final farewell, Xantippe gestures toward the new torture of a death deferred—the dawn of a new day.

Like other dramatic monologues, "Xantippe" builds a sympathy between the speaker and auditor or reader through a recognition of the speaker's humanity; however, this is no small feat considering that both the author and fictional character occupy marginalized subject positions. While Levy was not the first poetess to write dramatic monologues, she was one of the early Jewish writers to manipulate the biases of the genre to critique her Christian male audience. Similarly, the boundaries between historical material and pseudepigrapha are revealed as products of these institutional biases, too. Thus, "Xantippe," as a pseudepigraphic history or pseudo-dramatic monologue, sheds light not on the past but on the gender issues of the nineteenth century. By using the dramatic monologue form, Levy recasts these scenes from Greek antiquity (469-399 BC), a presumed foundational moment of Western philosophy, from the threshold vantage

³ "The Lady of Shalott" is a poem that imagined the conditions of women during the golden age of Arthurian romance. The Lady of Shalott is cursed by an unknown power to weave all day and night what she sees appear in her mirror of the outside world with the threat that if she should leave the loom she will perish. (Tennyson 1115-1116).

point of a female narrator, which, rather than revise the history of Socrates, creates another, albeit fictional, narrative to explain Plato's depiction of Xantippe. Levy's Xantippe, instead, uses the dramatic form to candidly present the violent effects of her marginalization for her nineteenth-century audience and offers commentary on her life as an author and poet. For example, Xantippe shows the audience that her exclusion is embedded in the very centers of culture and knowledge production. Therefore, her self-loathing is redirected toward the group of men, their "city," and conquests, which in this case, is the orientalizing of Aspasia brought from afar to entertain and give pleasure to Pericles.

Levy's characterization of her poem as "A fragment" alludes to the missing piece of classical history that has been forgotten or misrepresented. As such, I interpret Levy's poem as drawing on the anxieties of nineteenth-century historiographers' concern with such fragments like pseudepigrapha, which threatened to challenge the authority of traditional or mainstream historical accounts. By interpreting the poem as pseudepigrapha, I explore how Levy's powerful critique of gendered historiography and its relationship to national identities comes into clearer view. Rather than recovering an artifact from the past, Levy reframes the historical gaps in Xantippe's history to expose the ethical structures of her contemporary moment, particularly the system of male privilege that structures access to centers of power, such as universities or owning property.

In 1881, on the eve of the second Married Women's Property act that protected married women's unlimited right to retain and obtain property from their husbands,

Levy's poem calls attention to the way women's access to education can be read as a denial of their right to their intellectual property. Xantippe's experience highlights how women who publically engage "the best that has been thought or said" are, in much the same way as Aspasia and Xantippe, denied the property of their own thoughts by the male coterie of intellectuals. From her first meeting of Socrates, Xantippe imagines and desires the "gem" of knowledge he possesses for herself, so that "led by his words, and counselled by his care, [Xantippe] should lift the shrouding veil from things which be" (Levy 359). The sting of Xantippe's treatment and dismissal resonated with Victorian women who were denied access to education and disenfranchised for the rest of the nineteenth century. Thus, Levy's poem had long-term relevance as an important pseudeipgraphic counter-history that telescoped two historical moments to index the complex ways forms of political and social belonging depend on the construction and maintenance of gender difference (McClintock 353). This gender difference is especially pronounced in the case of British liberal nationalism because of its complicity with imperialist narratives of civilization and progress. Even as liberal nationalism makes the promise of universal inclusion and tolerance, Levy's poem demonstrates how universals, as extensions of male privilege, perform a type of violence by imposing dangerously exclusionary logics.

The questions Levy raised in "Xantippe," about history and power, especially for racialized others, were further developed in her 1882 translation work on Heinrich Heine and Jehuda Halevi, which she wrote while traveling in Germany and Switzerland. Part of a collaborative project with well-known Anglo-Jewish writer Lady Katie Magnus, Levy

began reading and translating Heine's works for Magnus' 1882 essay "Heinrich Heine: A Plea," which would also appear in Katie Magnus's 1888 *Jewish Portraits* (discussed in chapter four). As a translator, Levy "intimately reads" Heine's experience and is drawn toward his modernist style (Spivak 186). Heine's history of failed assimilation into German culture and his life in exile in France would eventually percolate into her essay "James Thomson: A Minor Poet" and an 1886 essay on "Jewish Humour" that appeared in the *Jewish Chronicle* (Scheinberg 205).

Levy's essay, "James Thomson: A Minor Poet," extended her critique of history to the process of literary canonization. As Scheinberg notes, Levy's essay was an attack on Arnoldian conceptions of "great" poetic identities as connected to some vision of a universal (and ultimately Christian) utterance of "poetic truth and poetic beauty" (206). Arnold's 1880 essay on "The Study of Poetry" discredits local poetry for its particularity: the subjective view is not "beautiful" (206). In her essay response, Levy blatantly dismisses the idea of the poet/philosopher as capable of universal utterances in favor of a minor poet, which she characterizes as:

no prophet, standing above and outside things, to whom all sides of a truth (more or less foreshortened, certainly) are visible; but a passionately subjective being, with intense eyes fixed on one side of the solid polygon of truth, and realizing that one side with a fervour and intensity to which the philosopher with his birdseye [sic] view rarely attains. (Levy 501)

Scheinberg reads Levy's "minor poet" as destabilizing the very "crux of British literary tradition— [and the idea] that the true lyric poet has some sort of prophetic access to universal feeling and truth" (Scheinberg 208). Building on this view, I read Levy's deconstruction of the universal poet/philosopher as her way of unsettling the

unquestioned superiority of English and Christian-centric logics that permeate the public and private spheres.

Furthermore, in her 1886 essay “Jewish Humor”, Levy provides a useful lens to consider parallels between minor poets, women, and Jews. Scheinberg examines how Levy views all three figures as exposing the relationship between dominant and marginalized cultures or languages during key cultural moments. In the essay on translating “Jewish humour” for a non-Jewish audience, Levy honestly asks: whom does it benefit? Levy’s experience translating Heine and medieval Hebrew poet Jehuda Halevi in 1882 for Katie Magnus’s *Jewish Portraits* was an example of a type of representation of Jewish intellectuals for the purposes of showcasing “cultural treasures” or social progress. Levy pushes back on this impulse and Heine’s too easily accessible translations of Jewish culture and stories that were borne out of the suffering of Jewish diaspora, despite the fact that British literary critics like Matthew Arnold praise Heine for this exact characteristic (Scheinberg 211). Heine’s tumultuous relationship with German culture, including conversion to and then away from Christianity, was not lost in translation for Levy. In his attempt to make the particular universal, which often meant making something German or Christian, Heine reduced Jewish culture for an audience that had categorically excluded Jews as Others. This may be why Levy champions minor poetry to her Jewish audience, in hopes that the community will not completely sacrifice their particularity, and that they might still speak in particular ways to their Jewish communities (184). Levy writes:

In general circles the mention of Jewish Humour is immediately followed by that of Heine; nor is this a non-sequitur. For Heine, in truth, has given perfect

expression to the very spirit of Jewish Humour, has cracked the communal joke, as it were, in the language of culture, for all to enjoy and understand. . . . The world laughs, and weeps and wonders; bows down and worships the brilliant exotic. We ourselves, perhaps, while admiring, as we cannot fail to admire, indulge in a little wistful, unreasonable regret, for the old cast clouts, the discarded garments of the dazzling creature; for the old allusions and gestures, the dear vulgar, mongrel words; the delicious confidential quips and cranks which nobody but ourselves can understand. (Levy 521-2)

While the minor poet must navigate the gravitational pull of the canon, remaining ever beyond its scope, the poet's desire to be recognized for the work and bring about some sort of political change remains a continual cause of tension. Perhaps, Levy got it right with her first book of verse. Writing in another's name, in some ways, fulfills Levy's anxiety over the translation of the poet into the speaker or the too-accessible translation, which I discuss more fully in chapter two.

In this way, Xantippe, as a female speaker in a genre structured around a male speaker, shares a unique kinship to the subject of this "Jewish Humor" essay, Jewish translator Heinrich Heine. Pseudepigraphic practices can be a way of marking the audience, and reorienting the power dynamic through the inclusion of the untranslatable to limit the access of specific outside readers. Although the genre of dramatic monologue was successful at rousing sympathy, it also relies on conjuring the universal out of the particular, which for Levy is like "crack[ing] the communal joke" and covering over important, albeit marginalized, histories. Pseudepigrapha as a method of counter-history is coded by its historical reference to another place and time but is never claiming universal truth for itself; rather pseudepigrapha reveals a truth "worth saying" about the present if read by the right reader (Deane 2; "Jewish Humour" 9).

Emma Lazarus's translation and imitations of Heine: reading intimately and (re)writing wrongs

In 1881, the same year as Levy's counter-history to Plato's *Phaedo*, Emma Lazarus's "translation and imitations" of Heinrich Heine's poem "Donna Clara" were published in America. Lazarus (1849-1887), a Jewish writer of upper-class New York literary elite, enjoyed considerable success as a poet, translator, and political activist for Jewish refugees during the 1880s. Perhaps best known for her poem, "The New Colossus," written in 1883 for a charity drive to pay for the building of the pedestal for the Statue of Liberty; the poem would eventually be displayed on the base of the statue in 1904. Like Levy, Lazarus received a classical, if not formal, education and was especially capable at translations. For the purposes of this chapter, I will focus on how Lazarus read and translated Heine, and how she interpreted his style and "intention" in order to compose two pseudepigraphic poems to complete Heine's unfinished trilogy. I read her two "imitations" as a counter-history of Heine's life. Lazarus does not fabricate new details to redeem Heine's exile and protracted death but rather she reframes Heine's obsession with dualism as the consequence of larger systems of violence—not universal evils—but historically located examples of national/cultural conflict. In doing so, Lazarus like Levy telescopes the distant past to reframe Heine's writings as both a reparative practice—redeeming "Harry"⁴—and as cultural critique of her own historical moment (*Poems* vii).

⁴ Lazarus refers to Heine as "Harry" rather than his Christian name of Heinrich (Schor 75)

Between 1877 and 1881, Lazarus worked on translating Heine's collection of verse and various correspondences for publication. It was Lazarus's detailed reading of Heine's "note" about the poem "Donna Clara" that inspired her to complete the unfinished trilogy. Although set in fifteenth-century Spain during the height of the Inquisition, "Donna Clara" was, according to Heine's note, autobiographical. Lazarus's translation notes: "The ensemble of the romance is a scene of my own life—only the Park of Berlin has become the Alcade's garden, the Baroness a senora, and myself a St. George or even an Apollo" (Schor 74). Provided this key, Lazarus carefully reconstructs and interprets the poem entitled "Donna Clara." Lazarus's most recent biographer, Esther Schor, notes that "what Emma Lazarus found in Heine's dualism was a dark nightmare vision of the double life she was trying to live as an American and as a Jew" (210). From this position, Lazarus accurately embodies what Gyatri Spivak defines as an "intimate reader" who can follow the dualistic logic of Heine's work (Spivak 186). Yet, Lazarus, trained in German and Heine's personal history, is able to read the silences and breaks in the work as well. As Schor notes, Lazarus identifies and sympathizes with Heine throughout her life, which was shortened by cancer. The final product of this sympathetic bond is a sonnet she composes to write their histories together.

When Lazarus began to feel the effects of her Hodgkin's lymphoma, she traveled to Paris to see, as Heine saw, the *Venus de Milo* at the Louvre. In her December 1884 sonnet, "Venus de Louvre," Lazarus writes an ode to the poet. Where Heine had wept at the feet of the *Venus de Milo*, Lazarus recasts the sorrow as Heine's realization of the armless Venus's message: "do you not see that I have no arms, and that I cannot help

you? (“The Poet Heine” 211; quoted in Cavitch 22). Heine’s devotion to Hellenist conceptions of art and beauty, much as Levy showed, were also used to subordinate Jews and women. Nor was the Venus de Milo able to compare to Lazarus’s “New Colossus”: the Venus did not have the capacity to embrace exiles; rather, she was emblematic of the very ideals that inspired alienation and homelessness.

Moving back to Lazarus’ translation of “Donna Clara,” I will analyze the translated poem to track the continuity of themes between original and what I term the pseudepigraphic “imitations” of Heine. Written in Heine’s signature free verse, the poem “Donna Clara” establishes its structure through a refrain of inquisition-style questions and anti-semitic responses that were used as safeguards of Christian identity. While the poem is about two lovers, the dialogue reveals the pervasiveness of the Catholic dogma of the inquisition that infiltrated and shaped the social and cultural order.

The premise of the poem follows the trajectory of Donna Clara, the Alcalde’s daughter who falls in love with a knight, whom it is later revealed to be the son of the Rabbi of Saragossa. The irony and yet tragedy of the play rests in the deferral of the knight’s identity until after the consummation of their love, much to the detriment of Donna Clara. Throughout the poem, the knight asks three distinct questions to which Donna Clara responds with both a fervent sentiment and the anti-semitic response. Here’s one example:

The enchanted roses greet them,
And they glow like love's own heralds;
"Tell me, tell me, my beloved,
Wherefore, all at once thou blushest."

"Gnats were stinging me, my darling,
And I hate these gnats in summer,
E'en as though they were a rabble
Of vile Jews with long, hooked noses."

"Heed not gnats nor Jews, beloved,"
Spake the knight with fond endearments.
From the almond-tree dropped downward
Myriad snowy flakes of blossoms. (ll. 25-36, 210)

In the second set of stanzas below, we see a repetition of the line "Myriad snowy flakes of blossoms" that are falling and shedding a fragrant odor, one intensified by their deterioration. Rather than the flowers blooming as a signal of their love, the flowers illustrate the impending expiration of the lovers' affection.

Myriad snowy flakes of blossoms
Shed around them fragrant odors.
"Tell me, tell me, my beloved,
Looks thy heart on me with favor?"

"Yes, I love thee, oh my darling,
And I swear it by our Savior,
Whom the accursèd Jews did murder
Long ago with wicked malice."

"Heed thou neither Jews nor Savior,"
Spake the knight with fond endearments;
Far-off waded as in a vision
Gleaming lilies bathed in moonlight. (ll. 37-48, 210-211)

The repetition of the question, response, and then shift toward the external environment propels the next moment. Following, the third subsequent question and repetition, Donna Clara and the knight make love in the forest. Afterwards, Donna Clara is called away by the sunrise, and then the dramatic response to her first and last question, "What is your

name?” reveals her lover knight to be the son of the distinguished but hated Rabbi Israel of Saragossa.

As mentioned earlier, Lazarus credits her translation to an understanding of Heine’s “intention” revealed in a letter she found attached to the poem. Heine’s note describes the poem as one really about the order of the world and the forms of antisemitism from an autobiographical standpoint: “an individual circumstance, and at the same time, something general and universal—a moment in the world’s history which was distinctly reflected in my experiences, and I conceived of the whole idea in a spirit, which was...serious and painful, so much so, that it was to form the first part of a tragic trilogy (Lazarus 213). In this “intention” Lazarus finds an opportunity to compose a double counter-history of sorts. She brings both the history of Jewish suffering in fifteenth-century Spain and the tragic, controversial history of one of the most important Jewish poets of the nineteenth century into greater proximity to say something about her own cultural moment. By bridging these moments, Lazarus forces a congruency that de-universalizes Heine’s tragic romance into a more accurate critique of romantic blood-and-soil nationalist logics. Like Amy Levy’s critique of Heine’s too-easily accessible translation of Jewish humor, Lazarus respectfully garbs Heine’s autobiographical claim with “imitations,” or as I argue pseudepigraphic poems, as a way to avoid the reduction of Heine’s “Donna Clara” to the legend of persons offered by his “note” (213). Guided by the structure of Heine’s poem, Lazarus writes two imitations to complete the tragedy: “Don Pedrillo” and “Fra Pedro”.

The plot of each poem picks up the narrative some years later, when Donna Clara's son, Don Pedrillo, is just a boy. Using free verse, Lazarus reproduces the three-part refrain of question, answer, follow-up response, but departs from the dramatic revelation in order to preserve Heine's modernist denial of the just resolution the reader may desire. What is relevant to this chapter is the way that Lazarus reframes Don Pedrillo's "lawful hatred" as one of the poisonous effects of the religious dogma. This is achieved through Lazarus's depiction of Don Pedrillo's interaction with the "yellow-skirted Rabbi" he does not know is actually his father (213).

In the scene, Don Pedrillo is playing with a parrot asking him "Thief and Traitor? To which the parrot responds, "thief and traitor is the Yellow-skirted Rabbi" (215). Through this example, the tenets of the inquisition are constituted and reaffirmed through mere repetition, a parroting back of the dogmatic and bigoted ideology. In the midst of this play, Don Pedrillo looks up to find the "yellow-skirted rabbi" in his midst. Don Pedrillo is at first ashamed but the Rabbi expresses concern and

shares a lesson from the Talmud,
Thrice cursed is the tongue of slander
Poisoning also with its victim
Him who speaks and him who listens (ll. 61-64, 216)

The potent lesson exposes the systemic and cyclical life of violence as it is perpetrated over time. Here Lazarus draws on the history of Don Pedrillo's Christian namesake, the apostle Peter, who slanders his former teacher Jesus by denying he ever knew him, which according to the biblical text, he repeated three times before a rooster crowed. Yet, in response to this lesson the young Don Pedrillo continues to mock the Rabbi. Then the

Rabbi asks a second question—
In his youth my youth renewing
Pamper, fondle, die to serve him,
Only breathing through his spirit-
Couldst thou not love such a father? (ll. 93-96, 217)

Tempted to tell Don Pedrillo of his parentage, the Rabbi is discouraged by Don Pedrillo's indignant reply: "When I meet these unbelievers,/ With thick lips and eagle noses,/ Thus, I scorn them, thus revile them, thus I spit upon their garment" (ll 105-108, 218). Lazarus contrasts the Rabbi's earnest present subjunctive mood with Don Pedrillo's rigid proofs given in his tripartite statements structured by the circular reasoning of "thus" rather than a thoughtful consideration of the question or of the Rabbi. Such thinking, Lazarus shows is a violent rationale that privileges doctrine over the humanity of others, in this case the Rabbi.

Building on Heine's original characterization of the earnest knight in "Donna Clara," Lazarus styles the Rabbi's questions in "Don Pedrillo" to disrupt the logic of the Inquisition that was mapped onto all social relationships—between lovers and now even father and son. The foundational relationship of patriarchal society, the relationship between father and son, is dismantled and poisoned by dogmatic ideology that obscures the kinship system. In her pseudepigraphic poem, Lazarus channels Heine's own tumultuous history as the Knight St. George, but reincarnates the character's Jewish identity as the new "yellow-skirted Rabbi." In "Donna Clara," the tragedy of Heine's experience was that he was a Jew. In Lazarus's poem, she shows, through her knowledge of Heine's later life and letters, that the tragedy of his life was that he loved a woman and a world that could not recognize his humanity and "thus" could not return his love (213).

Lazarus refigures this love in “Don Pedrillo” as through the Talmudic lesson that recognizing the humanity of the self lies in the humane treatment of others, for hatred “poisons...him who speaks and him who listens” (216). Lazarus’s pseudepigraphic poem translates the history of Heine’s “autobiographical” experience into a tale about the poisoning effect of group identities dependent upon exclusionary racial, religious and, for Lazarus’s moment, gender logics.

In Lazarus’s second pseudepigraphic poem, “Fra Pedro,” Lazarus completes the tragic trilogy with a portrait of the complete effacement of Don Pedrillo’s reason and humanity when he ironically becomes the Dominican Fra Pedro, a Catholic order defined by its intellectual approach. The poem features Fra Pedro presiding over a review of his priests’s “Acts of Faith,” specifically the report of a Jewish physician and his daughter who escaped when the priests tried to burn down the home of the “most beloved Jewish physician in the region” with the physician’s family still inside (221). Lazarus draws this story from the well-known history of Joseph Ben Judah of Ceuta, a physician with two daughters and a wife who suffered unknown violence at the hands of Christian zealots. Maimonides dedicates his most famous work, *Moreh Nebukim* (A Guide for the Perplexed), to Joseph Ben Judah.

Unlike “Don Pedrillo,” “Don Pedro” is a neatly structured poem of twenty-seven quatrains echoing the popular form of medieval Roman form but with the modern twist of Heine’s signature blank verse. Thematically, Lazarus again reproduces the contrast between medieval violence now systematized into an institutional mandate of “extermination” and the respectful Jewish community (Lazarus 219). Lazarus emphasizes

the three virtues of the Jewish community—skill, filial love, and beauty—in order to show the Jewish community’s beneficial and even therapeutic presence. When confronted with these virtues, Fra Pedro insists with “quenchless zeal” that there is no room for Jews in the community, calling all Jews “in themselves an abomination” (219). The priests then narrate the details of their “Act of Faith” and how the house burned down with the physician’s disabled wife inside along with the daughter who would not leave her side. Ben Judah escapes carrying his daughter Donna Zara, who is the “city’s pearl of beauty” (220).

The friars explain that Ben Judah and his daughter have since enjoyed three years of security in Saragossa where those in the city “‘hath respected/ His false creed; a man of sorrows,/ He hath walked secure among us,/ And his art repays our sufferance.’” (221). Despite the overtones of the friar’s judgment, Lazarus makes plain that the community of Saragossa respected Ben Judah because his humanity as a “man of sorrow” became legible when he and his daughter remained among them, continuing his good work to heal a community that hates him. As the friars try to suggest that Judah’s security is tied to the reciprocity of tolerance for beneficial services, or a logic of toleration based on use-value, Lazarus argues that something else, something the friars cannot recognize, took place between the community and the “man of sorrow” (221) Lazarus plays with Heine’s theme of secret histories as she weaves the final ironic twist with Fra Pedro’s final judgment:

‘Tis enough; my vow is sacred.
These shall perish with their brethren.
Hark ye! In my veins’ pure current
Were a single drop found Jewish,

I would shrink not from outpouring
All my life blood, but to purge it.
Shall I gentler prove to others?
Mercy would be sacrilegious. (ll. 92-100, 222)

Here Lazarus again shows how Fra Pedro's "sacred" vow is tied to logic that denies the recognition of the humanity of even himself: the irony, of course, is that Fra Pedro's blood does not run "pure" (222). However, the tragedy that Lazarus sets up is not that Fra Pedro does not realize his Jewishness, as if then he would recant his merciless hatred. Rather the tragedy is that Fra Pedro already exists within a paradoxical prison of self-hatred because of his interpretation of Christianity, in which "mercy would be sacrilegious" is at odds with the concept of a Christian Savior to whom the friars say their "vesper" of contrition (222). While I am not arguing that Lazarus is making anti-Christian statements, I do hold that she sees such anti-humanist logic of any exclusive national belonging as tethered to extremist logics of "extermination" of people they deem "abominations" (219-220). To further support this, Lazarus shows that Fra Pedro's hatred of Ben Judah has nothing to do with him as a person, a human, or subject. Fra Pedro will not choose to see the humanity of any Jews: He reminds his friars

Ne'er again at thy soul's peril,
Speak to me of Jewish beauty,
Jewish skill, or Jewish virtue.
I have said. Do thou remember? (ll. 101-104, 222)

To see the humanity of the people he hates would underscore the inhumanity of his sacred vow, the source of his constructed identity and power. The poem abruptly ends with the toll of church bells summoning the friars to evening prayers, and Lazarus lets the irony and tragedy resound as the final poetic note. While the peal of the bells marks the

rituals that call the friars to their prayers, they also inoculate them from remembering, mentioning, or perceiving Jewish beauty or virtue. As a result of this final sensory gesture, Lazarus brings two distinct historical moments, medieval Spain and the late nineteenth century, into greater proximity, as overlapping lenses, to see anew Lazarus's contemporary moment.

In particular, as Russian pogroms push the Jewish communities even beyond the Pale of Settlement and mass immigration threatens to considerably change the demographics of England and America, Lazarus calls upon her readers to listen to the resounding note of historical violence for a lesson that derives its authority from Heine beyond the grave. The rupture in the temporal narrative suggests Lazarus, like Heine, is turning the modern gaze to the past to show that the tragedy of antisemitism continues to play a large role in shaping both Jewish and non-Jewish national and collective identity. Through shared histories of suffering, Lazarus builds a counter-history that connects old hatreds to new historical contexts. However, Lazarus is careful not to translate these historical events into a universalized truth. Such a view offered by Heine's autobiographical note haunted but did not define Lazarus's experience as an American Jewess. Instead, Lazarus shows antisemitism has a history, contexts and conditions that are not reproduced without the consent of communities. This conclusion to Lazarus's pseudepigraphic poem is what, I argue, inspires her to consciousness-raising activism among Americans, Jews and non-Jews. Still, it is important to consider that her activist career begins with her poetics of counter-history and representing the lives undergoing historical erasure by violent systems of oppression. Revivifying the past through a form

(re)writing history was an important part of Lazarus's connection to Heine as a kindred, suffering spirit.

Conclusion:

Within the context of Jewish nationalist discourses, Levy and Lazarus's responses to antisemitism were doing a very different type of Jewish consciousness-raising than their contemporary proto-Zionist, Leon Pinsker, and I want to briefly mention why their work is so different. In 1881, Lazarus was still working through her response to Russian pogroms and anti-semitism in Europe, which she would go on to develop into a state ideal in her 1883 essay, "The Jewish Problem." However, even in this article, Lazarus is clearly making important connections between antisemitism and certain forms of group identities that rely on violent "Self/Other" forms of nationalism, or a subtler, but equally problematic, tolerance based on assimilation. Both Levy and Lazarus locate gender or racial exclusion in specific forms of institutions, either the state or the church, but also in cultural traditions of "civilization" and race science. As the Jewish Question became steeped in new race science of "types" and "heredity," Levy and Lazarus's work reminds their readers that women and Jews need more than "auto-emancipation" achieved through the reproduction of violent cultural logics (Pinsker 1).

As a point of qualification, while I trace the relationship between their works, sources, and political contexts, Emma Lazarus and Amy Levy—as far as the historiography is concerned—were like two ships passing in the night. During the last years of Lazarus's life due to the spread of cancer, she visited England in 1886 and stayed with her dear friend and author Henry James and his sister Alice. Esther Schor's

extensive literary biography of Emma Lazarus notes that during this summer trip Lazarus stops writing her novel and turns back to poetry as the result of her coming across Amy Levy's translation of poems by Carmen Sylva, the *nom de plume* for the Romanian queen consort Elisabeth of Wied. In response, Lazarus wrote "To Carmen Sylva," which Schor describes as a "paean to the Romanian poet-queen who dressed in peasant garb" (Schor 228-29). In a similar vein, an epigraph in Amy Levy's first novel, *The Romance of a Shop* (1888), cites a translation of Heine from Emma Lazarus's work. However, my argument is not contingent upon their friendship or personal similarities. Levy and Lazarus have already endured these superficial comparisons in life and in death. Schor notes, "most of Levy's obituaries compared her, in passing, to Emma Lazarus, just as the obituaries of Emma Lazarus would cite the late Anglo-Sephardic poet, novelist and theologian Grace Aguilar, about whom Emma also left no comment" (229). This chapter is not purposed in reading a personal kinship between Lazarus and Levy, nor does it intend to speak for all their work. Rather, this chapter has made visible the particularities of their work, lives, and politics in a way that shows them responding to similar cultural and political issues. I would like to believe the lack of comment between these well-read and well-known writers is a way of saying *Shibboleth* to each other—part of the untranslatable history of these women who knew of but, for all intents and purposes, did not know each other.

Reading Levy and Lazarus's pseudepigraphic poetry as counter-histories of Jewish experience in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provide an important counterpoint to their canonization as Jewish or American or Victorian poets. I

have shown that in counting Levy's use of dramatic monologue as equal to Browning's, we remember that it is and it is not. Her use of the poetic form requires a different understanding of her position as a minor poet and as a Jewish woman whose access to culture and political representation were very different from Browning's position as a poet and his development of the form. Therefore, I have discussed her poem as pseudepigrapha to expose these tensions and map the political significance of her counter-history. Levy and Lazarus's work reminds their readers that how we tell history matters, especially for marginalized communities. And when the historical record itself enacts a sort of violence, these poets bring that conflict into new visibility to challenge the ethical claims of the widely-accepted representation of history.

Lastly, I want to highlight that the legacy of Levy and Lazarus's work finds its way into the May 1896 volume of *The American Jewess*. Ada Robek, an American Jewish woman writer from the Chicago area, wrote a regular segment for the journal on various thinkers or writers and their importance to "Woman" (Robek 335). In "Heine and Woman," Robek re-presents Heine and his work as part of a collaborative network of the various women in his life (335-39). During a moment of intense cultural debate about the placement of a memorial to the poet in Manhattan, Robek uses counter-history and a pseudepigraphic poem to make her case about the importance of Heine's work to the New York Parks department. In 1893 the Arion Society of New York, a German singing group, set in motion a fundraising campaign for the creation of a marble statue in memory of Heinrich Heine, the "German" poet. A similar statue had already been commissioned in Germany by some of Heine's admirers originally intended for his

hometown in Germany. However, Heine's criticism of German government while in exile still loomed large and as punishment the German government denied his acknowledgment as a German poet and rejected the sculpture. In response, some prominent German-Americans believed that their reposting of the monument would be a rebuke to Germany's continued prejudice against the poet. The New York Parks department thought otherwise. Notorious for their selective tastes (they turned down a statue of American President Chester A. Arthur in 1893), the New York Parks Department rejected the monument designed by Ernst Herter, a well-known Berlin sculptor. In 1895, *The Times* noted that the Heine monument was "an example of academic mediocrity, worthy of erection, but not worthy of erection as our chief municipal ornament" at the plaza at 59th and Fifth street in Manhattan. Here the politics of art in public spaces takes a decidedly nationalist turn that continued for the next three years. Enter the American Jewish author: Ada Robek, whose affinity for Heine stems from his being "the love-poet par excellence" (Robek 335).

Writing for a general and Jewish audience, Robek moralizes Heine's love of beauty and truth into a moral love of woman, "the physical revelation of divinity," that was also informed by a network of actual women writers, thinkers and friends (335). This is Robek's qualifying move into a more nuanced discussion of feminist politics and the marginalization of Heine's work. The woodcut below appears in the issue as a visual representation of Heine as part of a kinship of women:



HEINE,
His sisters and friends.
(From an old German wood-cut.)

Figure 1: From “Heinrich Heine and Woman.” *The American Jewess*, Vol. 2, Issue 7, April 1896, p. 338. Public Domain.

Robek goes on to give brief biographies of the portraits surrounding Heine’s portrait: noting Heine’s commitment to the women of his family including his mother Betty Heine, his sister Charlotte Heine-Embden who reviewed his work; Karoline Stern, an older woman who mentored him; his first love and cousin Amalie Heine; Rahel Varnhagen v. Ense, the renowned German-Jewess salonerie who “recognized [Heine’s] genius and succeeded in making others believe in him (337); Heine’s beloved wife, Mathilda Crescentia Mirat; French writer Karoline Jaubert; Princess Christine Belgiojojo;

George Sand; and “la mouche” pen-name Camille Seldon, who was Heine’s “true love ideal” (337) .

Robek presents the contested historical details of Heine’s life to show his work as a tribute to the actual women he loved rather than simply for the sake of the Hellenic ideal. While these readings may or may not be entirely accurate, within the political contexts of the debate over the value of Heine’s work in a public space, Robek marks his exclusion as a form of gender and Jewish discrimination. From the niceties of biographic detail Robek turns the article toward Heine’s final work, “Romanzero” a poetic dream, in which she sees the “eternal extremes of history united, pleasure-loving Greece and the God idea of Juda [sic], united by woman’s love—woman destined to end the quarrel between beauty and truth. That is Heine’s last tribute to the sex he so ardently loved” (339). As a fusion and solution to Arnoldian dualism, Robek reads “Romanzero” for its political import to her present audience, hoping that women will continue to see Heine as an advocate of woman and “mildly judge the frailties and faults of genius” (339). Her counter-history of Heine’s life is purposed in developing a feminist political response to the historical and artistic debate waged over the role of a Jewish feminist artist in the American public sphere.

As philosopher Willi Goetschel argues in his 2007 article on “Romanzero” the three-part sections, “Histories”, “Lamentations” and “Jewish melodies,” confirm Robek’s reading, as they “offer three different perspectives on individual life and its relation to history” (Goetschel). Perhaps most important is that “Romanzero” introduces a theory of historiography that looks for the “story hidden by historiography, whose broad

brushstrokes cover over the small but decisive details” (Goetschel). Such a practice resonates with the feminist recuperation of Heine’s work, as well as reiterates Heine’s importance to Jewish women rewriting the historical record with verse. As the controversy over the monument brought American cultural politics to the fore, Robek’s encouragement to read “Romanzero” is an invitation to engage in support of the monument to contest its further historical marginalization.

Immediately following Robek’s article, a poem entitled “Severed Affinities” is published by “Zenobia,” a pseudonym for the Jewish queen of antiquity who led a revolt against the Roman Empire (Robek 339). Like Plato’s Xantippe, Zenobia was a well-used historical figure, summoned by aesthetes, feminists, and male novelist like William Wares and Nathaniel Hawthorne, for various and diverse purposes. However, the poem is an important pseudepigraphic complement to Robek’s counter-history because it models the important links between Heine’s work on historiography and the contemporary politics of Heine’s monument relationship with women’s changing public roles. The poem is an abstract characterization of the consequences of “Severed Affinities”: for “Sympathy...when severed” is “subservient to nature’s law of falling bodies,/ Force increased, with square of distance” (339). Quoting Galileo’s theory of “falling bodies,” the poem goes on to describes the aftermath of severed affinities of “faith” and “sentiment” to be equally violent. With respect to the poems audience, the conditions of immigration and assimilation into the American body politic required a “submerging of soul in another soul” (339). For the souls and literal bodies separated by the downward force of history, Ada Robek’s counter-history of Heine generates a reparative model of

identity. While I cannot claim to understand all the complex and specific contexts of the piece nor all its cultural valences, reading Robek and “Zenobia” together offers insight into the productiveness of counter-history and pseudepigraphic texts as a reparative political practice for American Jews. And, in 1899, much to the surprise of Heine’s supporters, Heine’s monument was displayed on 161st Street and the Grand Concourse in the Bronx (Gray, C. np).

Chapter 2

Exposing the “Secret History”: Translation and Biblical Midrash

In the last chapter, I showed how Emma Lazarus and Amy Levy’s pseudepigraphic poetry raises important questions about their roles as literary and cultural translators. In this chapter, I explore Anglo-Jewish and Jewish American women poets and translators who function as cultural mediators and arbiters of social change. While the discourse of pseudepigrapha directly engaged the politics of historiography in relation to contemporary political contexts, translations as a form of transnational cultural mediation functioned to create new histories (or afterlives) of texts beyond their original contexts. Following Walter Benjamin’s theories on translation as ‘midway between poetry and doctrine,’ Susan David Bernstein’s recent work on Victorian women writers and translation circles in the British Museum suggests that translation is a form of cross-cultural meaning-making that emerges from the after-life of a work, a “reciprocal transformation between original and translation that promotes a circulatory network” where the translated afterlife becomes part of a larger mode of signification (Bernstein 46). If, as Gayatri Spivak argues, “translation is the most intimate act of reading... where language is only a clue to where the [discursive] self loses its boundaries,” then AAJWWs were “intimate” readers both of texts and their historical contexts as well as of their own contemporary political and social landscapes.

This chapter is broken into two parts: In the first part I consider the works of Eleanor Marx-Aveling, Lady Katie Magnus, and Amy Levy to reframe translation as a counter-historical practice used to intervene in political discourses about Jews and women within a predominantly Christian and Anglo-European context. Here, I show how

Marx-Aveling and Levy use their translations to critique the gender dynamics within a liberal and capitalist society. In the second section, I consider how translations played a role in shifting Jewish intra-communal dynamics. For example, Magnus's *Jewish Portraits* (1888), partly enabled by Levy's translation work, reframes the history of Jewish medieval poets in order to advocate for Liberal "Reform" Judaism and changes in Jewish women's communal roles. Lastly, I show how AAJWW's translation networks worked within an increasingly diverse Anglo-American Jewish context to give way to new forms of Judaism and women's roles as translators of Hebrew texts and of the Hebrew bible. These new opportunities gave women like Nina Davis Salaman and Rachel "Ray" Frank-Litman standing as cultural producers—as poets, essayists, public speakers—and granted them access to male-dominated areas of religious authority and leadership in their communities. Both Salaman and Frank-Litman would become the first women to preach in synagogues in England and United States, respectively.

To illustrate the different feminisms enabled by translation, I will contrast Magnus, Salaman, and Frank-Litman's form of biblical feminism and midrash with Levy and Marx-Aveling's literary feminist counter-history translations. I examine how Amy Levy flips the genre of the dirge by translating and rewriting German Romantic poet Heinrich Heine's 1824 poem "Mein Herz." Notably, Levy uses her poem "A Dirge" to present a counter-history of Romanticism's dialogue with German and Jewish Romantics. I also consider Marx-Aveling's translation of Gustave Flaubert's novel, *Madame Bovary* (1886), and in a parody of Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, "A Doll's House' Repaired" (1891). By holding up these two different types of AAJWW, I show how counter-history

was both a literary practice and a political posture used to navigate British and American liberal culture to radically different ends by a diverse group of Jewish women writers. As Jewish women ‘upon the thresholds’ of British imperial culture, Marx-Aveling and Magnus’s contemporary translations raise important, albeit different, questions about the gender, race, and class limitations of citizenship.

Translation as feminist Counter-History: Marx-Aveling and Israel Zangwill

In 1881, when AAJWW Amy Levy and Emma Lazarus were translating Heinrich Heine, Eleanor Marx-Aveling was finalizing corrections and proofs for the English translation of her father’s most influential work, *Capital* (Bernstein 40). However, this was not her first translation nor her last. Beginning in 1877, Eleanor Marx-Aveling spent much of her time at the British Museum writing and translating novels, articles, and plays into English in order to fund her “unpaid political activist labor” and influence popular debates on women’s roles in society (Bernstein 35). Marx-Aveling was not alone either. In her 2013 monograph, *Roomscape: Women Writers in the British Museum from George Eliot to Virginia Woolf*, Susan David Bernstein argues “a new generation of women who frequented the British Museum [a vast network including Olive Schriener, Beatrice Potter Web, Clementina Black, Amy Levy and Eleanor Marx-Aveling, in the 1880s] engaged in a veritable social translation of women’s roles,” as a result of their translation of texts. To translate, according to these women, was to create new layers of meaning. Translation was a powerful act that was often not recognized as such because of the gendered power relations implicit in discourses about authorship in the nineteenth century (36).

As Lori Chamberlain notes, such translation labor, historically reserved for those with minimal university education (i.e. women), reproduces a gendered paradigm of anxiety over originality and authorship that mimics patriarchal kinship systems (Chamberlain 457). In fact, Chamberlain argues that gender issues are always invoked in discussions of translation— as faithful or beautiful translations are favored over adulterations of the original (459). Chamberlain also shows how these forms of authorial control were represented in terms of colonization, as “a means of enriching both the language and the literature appropriate to the political needs of expanding nations” (459). While such issues around the politics of translations are certainly what Amy Levy describes in her 1886 essay “Jewish Humour,” the transformation of other cultures into consumable spectacle, and what Gyatri Spivak describes as the translation of other languages “from a position of monolinguist superiority”, Eleanor Marx-Aveling’s perspective of English translation as a form of feminist and socialist political activism is explained in her introduction to her 1886 English translation of Gustave Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary: Provincial Manners (Jewish Humour* 8-9; Spivak 194).

Marx-Aveling’s introduction describes translation as capable of intervening in the contemporary cultural moment because it circulates new ideas and ways of being, which have the potential to effect social change (Marx-Aveling-Aveling xii). In particular, the thirty-year gap between the French publication and its English translation is considered by Marx-Aveling as an example of the censorship of ideas by bourgeois interests in oppressive domestic roles for women. For Marx-Aveling, responsible translation brings to light the “secret history” of the text’s production and circulation. For example, in the

“secret history” of Flaubert’s novel “worth referring to,” Marx-Aveling recounts the “historical trial” of the French publication that entailed the scandalous “mutilation” of Flaubert’s original text by overeager publishers who misunderstood his realist style (vii).

Thus, for Marx-Aveling an effective translation requires an understanding of the aesthetic genre the author participated in or created without regard for the moral expectations of the audience. Instead, Marx-Aveling creates a critical distance between her English translation and the conventional morals and cultural expectations of her English readers. By doing so, she avoids a colonizing vantage point and encourages what Benjamin would later define as the translator’s task to not “serve the reader” (Benjamin 70). To further illustrate her point, Marx-Aveling insists that classifying Flaubert’s work with Zola’s is inaccurate—“Zola is a photographer, who occasionally indeed produced a likeness, but who more frequently distorts and caricatures his models” (xvi). Drawing on the aesthetic debates about photography, Marx-Aveling considers Flaubert an important realist author who in his faithful representation of “female pleasure” also makes visible the banal oppression women experience in bourgeois patriarchal family life.

In closing her essay on translation, Marx-Aveling creates three classifications of translators. First is “the genius” translator who literally “recreates a work in his own language,” which she attributes to Baudelaire’s translation of Edgar Allan Poe (xxi). Here, Marx-Aveling introduces an aesthetic hierarchy that in some ways problematically reproduces the gendered paradigm of original creativity versus the faithless reproduction of texts by a “hack” translator (xxi). Marx-Aveling characterizes the “hack” as the uncritical translator who lacks cultural awareness: “armed with a dictionary [he] rushes in

where his betters fear to tread...his work is often a perversion, not a rendering” (xxi). While “faithful” translation is the rule of her method as a “conscientious worker,” Marx-Aveling provides only a sketch of her methodology—“not adding or suppressing a line or word... strives to do [her] best; to be honest, earnest”—which leaves much to be interpreted or perhaps translated by her audience. Such classifications raise important questions about the nature of translation as a genre in the nineteenth century and how women’s appropriation of the genre affected networks of power.

In her 2007 article “Taskology: Translation as genre as literary labor,” Emily Apter interprets Eleanor Marx-Aveling’s theory of translation as a revision of Marx-Aveling and Engel’s theories that “crosses art and labor...[to underscore translation labor as that which] enabled texts to circulate beyond their languages and nations of origin, [and] that gave impetus to a Marx-Avelingist translational genre that militates against capitalist models of literary exchange” (Apter 1405). Through the lens of Marxism, Apter claims Marx-Aveling’s theory of translation as a “genre of the modern scribe, a medium of reading as rewriting that helps make literature universally accessible and therefore egalitarian in its reception and uses” (1405). Informed by Benjamin’s “Task of the Translator,” Apter describes this complex rendering as an example “l’œuvre à venir, the worked and working text. No longer a stable object owned by a single author, it emerges as a site of translational or editorial labor” (1411). Apter builds on Benjamin’s description of a text’s afterlife and how that afterlife characterizes the relationship between translation and original as connected but separate. As Apter proves, such a theory of textual “afterlife” is an especially productive concept to reconsider Marx-

Aveling's translation of *Madame Bovary* and her essay "The Woman Question."

Regarding my own argument, I think considering Marx-Aveling's translation theory of "cross-cultural negotiation" reveals that she understands translation to be a political and an aesthetic process (Bernstein 41).

Marx-Aveling's personal commitment to changing women's roles in Victorian society was evident in the simultaneous publication of her translation of *Madame Bovary* and her essay "The Woman Question," co-authored with her partner Edward Aveling. Marx-Aveling and Aveling wrote "The Woman Question" in 1886 as a response to English and German critics' misinterpretation of August Bebel's "Woman—past, present—future." The partners argued that Bebel's political role in the country as a leading socialist and enemy of the capitalists and aristocrats caused the essay to be censored by the government and condemned in the press. With regard to the English translation, Marx-Aveling and Aveling expose the "carelessness of the publishers" through their naïve translation and sloppy printing errors. They place less blame on the translator, Dr. Harriet B. Adams Walther, as her work revealed "an apparent want of acquaintances with economic words and phrases [which] produced ambiguity," and instead, criticized the printer's errors in type, spelling, and punctuation, which in 164 pages totaled "at least 170 blunders" (Marx-Aveling & Aveling 4). Marx-Aveling and Aveling wrote "The Woman Question" as a rendering of Bebel's essay for English readers, who they hoped would circulate socialist ideas about women's roles in society.

The essay followed Marx-Aveling's model of a "conscientious" translation with its aim to expose the "secret history" of Bebel's essay, the politics of its censorship, and

mistranslation as the basis for their political intervention. Rather than transliterate Babel's essay into English, Marx-Aveling and Aveling instead captured the main points and translated them into the relevant contexts of British legal history, citing specific contemporary examples of the unjust treatment of women that were sanctioned by the law. In this way, they translate the ideas of Bebel into a specifically British application and, thus, carry forward the "afterlife" of Babel's essay into new signification (Benjamin 71). For Marx-Aveling and Aveling, gender inequality was the product of capitalist economic structures that required the subjugation of women to ensure its existence, following, and perhaps even translating, Karl Marx's reading of the lower classes in *Capital*. However, their translation of Bebel problematically reproduces a teleology of social advancement with their prescriptive plan for women's future liberation to begin with the emancipation of their child-like minds. Despite the problematic infantilizing of women, the essay does model an important theory of translation as a type of counter-history of the present in order to achieve a political outcome.

Perhaps one of the most convincing examples of this counter-history translation is Marx-Aveling's more direct efforts to intervene in British liberal culture with her 1891 parody of Henrik Ibsen's "A Doll's House," co-authored with Anglo-Jewish writer Israel Zangwill. Ibsen's play "A Doll's House" was first performed in London in 1889, but the first amateur staging of the play took place three years earlier in Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling's shared flat across from the British Museum (Bernstein 41). In January 1886, Marx-Aveling organized a casual reading of "A Doll's House" among an eclectic group of friends using Henrietta Frances Lord's translation of Ibsen's play.

Marx-Aveling played Nora; Aveling played her husband, Torvald; George Bernard Shaw, played the conniving Krogstad; May Morris, William Morris's daughter, played Christine Linde. The performance, although not reviewed, made a statement among her literary peers. In the throes of her translation of *Madame Bovary*, Marx-Aveling's at-home performance called attention to her unconventional lifestyle with Aveling, a man married to another woman, and her active resistance of gendered cultural expectations. Marx-Aveling's endorsement of Ibsen's play was politically charged as the English production of "A Doll's House" received scathing reviews for its portrayal of the main character, Nora, leaving her post as a wife and mother in search of her own identity. For many reviewers of the play, the source of contention seemed to hinge on their misreading of Nora "as though she were a real woman, living a life of her own, quite apart from the poet's creative intelligence" (Archer 32)" (quoted in Bernstein 49). In the *Fortnightly Review*, the editor notes that such visceral, dogmatic responses were the result of "the strange literalness of the English mind" [and] "its inability to distinguish between drama and dogma," given that some people assumed that Ibsen's ultimate message was "that awakened wives ought to leave their husbands and children in order to cultivate their souls" (49). Nora was in effect "lost" in translation (49).

To remedy English audiences's too literal reading of Nora, Marx-Aveling teamed up with sympathizing Anglo-Jewish author Israel Zangwill to conduct a social experiment aimed at not just translating but transposing the final act for an English audience. As with Marx-Aveling's "The Woman Question," faithful translation meant reading the cultural and political contexts of the text and ideally "recreating a work [or as

Spivak notes “a world”] in [her or his] own language” (Marx-Aveling 45). To attempt this type of “genius” translation, Marx-Aveling and Zangwill crafted a parody that could successfully translate the “intention” or spirit of Ibsen’s play into the political, cultural, and economic contexts of British society. Building on her argument in “The Woman Question,” Marx-Aveling worked with Zangwill to show how deeply a liberal-market rational influenced domestic relationships by using the extremes of parody to highlight the dehumanizing logics that overlaid women’s “holiest” roles as wives and mothers (Marx-Aveling & Zangwill np). To achieve this, Marx-Aveling and Zangwill relied on inverting Ibsen’s original dialogue between Nora and Torvald in the play’s final scene. By substituting the gender of the speakers, the scene conveys new comedic and satirical effects. The latter is primarily achieved by giving English critics of the play the ending they preferred: Nora staying in her domestic role as mother and in the domestic space of her home. However, Marx-Aveling and Zangwill show that Nora’s home is not her own.

In their translation of the “A Doll’s House,” the domestic sphere is a microcosm of public, political, and economic orders. Torvald is the good liberal and capitalist who treats everyone around him as if they belong to and work for him. While some of Torvald’s speeches about women’s “holiest duties” are a little heavy-handed, the clever manipulation of their audience’s expectations exposes the implicit violence of their traditional morality within a society that denies women political and economic rights. This is most viciously depicted when Torvald takes their children away from her until she “shall become [his] little squirrel again” (Marx-Aveling & Zangwill np). As part of their grand finale, Nora grovels for forgiveness but Torvald matter-of-factly dismisses her

from their bedroom, insisting she is to reside in the study “as a guest” until she learns her “holiest of duties...to keep up appearances” and to obey her husband (np). Inverting Ibsen’s ending, the play concludes with the slamming of Torvald’s bedroom door and Nora’s pathetic sobs. The effect of the last scene moves the play from parody to satire and translates Ibsen’s message into an argument for the full enfranchisement of women in English society. Furthermore, Marx-Aveling and Zangwill show their conservative audience the banal violence women endure within a society that does not politically recognize them as citizens by carrying forward the premise of natural inequality to the extreme. While politicized translations were the bread and butter of Marx-Aveling’s career, overt public critiques of Victorian society were not the only ways that Marx-Aveling’s contemporary colleagues at the British Museum sought to effect social change. This is especially true for her colleague Amy Levy.

Translating Heine and Halevi: Amy Levy’s counter-history of British Romanticism

Amy Levy’s departure from Marx-Aveling stems from her attention to the “translatability” of texts, generally, and, more specifically, the politics of rendering the intention behind their translation for an unintended audience (Benjamin 70). In 1882, Levy’s stance on translation followed from Heine’s conception of the lamentation. In his last work “Romanzero,” Heine embraced the subjective position of the “poet’s point of view, an angle of vision pointedly different from the Romantic subject position” of his earlier poetry, and what Levy would go on to characterize as the position of a minor poet (Goetschel). And it was Levy’s 1882 translations of Heine that inspired her to try out the

popular version of the lamentation—the dirge—used by acclaimed poets like Shakespeare, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Christina Rossetti to put forward views on the meaning of life and the event of untimely death.

In particular, Shelley’s “A Dirge,” published⁵ posthumously by his wife Mary Shelley in 1824, embodied the tenets of the Romantic literary movement and its proto-modernist angst over the solitary alienation of the poet mirrored back in the landscape as the ““lasting misery and loneliness of the world”” (Shelley; quoted in Casaliggi & Fermanis 75-78). While Shelley’s eight-line poem recalls the character of the “Wild Spirit” of Nature as both the “destroyer and preserver” of life in his “Ode to the West Wind,” “A Dirge” presents Nature as lamenting its own destruction but also over the “world’s wrong” (Ode, Stanza I, line 13-14):

Rough wind, that moanest loud
Grief too sad for song;
Wild wind, when sullen cloud
Knells all the night long;
Sad storm whose tears are vain,
Bare woods, whose branches strain,
Deep caves and dreary main,--
Wail, for the world’s wrong! (Dirge, ln 1-8)

Shelley imagines that the chaos of the environment is not arbitrary but a response to the collective ills of the world, a perspective that seems to destabilize the autonomy of the Romantic individual. As first imagined by Shakespeare, the dirge was a way for the

⁵ In his 1905 Oxford Edition of Shelley’s poems, “never before printed,” editor Thomas Hutchinson remarks that preface takes up the issue of the translation of Shelley’s work posthumously by Mary Shelley and then William Michael Rossetti as imposing their own authority upon the text that has in some ways taken on new afterlives not intended.

deceased to speak beyond the grave to a social body of which they were no longer a member. For Shelley, then, this short poem and the genre of the dirge became a way for the poet to exceed the limits of the poet's subjective, mortal position.

Similarly, in Christina Rossetti's poem "A Dirge," first published in 1875, the poet's subjective position is marked by the repetition of rhetorical questions that decry the failing of not only a Romantic conception of Nature but also the fallibility of the divine. In the poet's view, humanity is not granted the privilege of Nature's seasonal and, therefore, promised cycle of life and death:

Why were you born when the snow was falling?
You should have come to the cuckoo's calling,
Or when grapes are green in the cluster,
Or, at least, when lithe swallows muster
For their far off flying
From summer dying.

Why did you die when the lambs were cropping?
You should have died at the apples' dropping,
When the grasshopper comes to trouble,
And the wheat-fields are sodden stubble,
And all winds go sighing
For sweet things dying. (ll. 1-12)

These two six-line stanzas recall the tragic loss of young life as an inversion that upsets the natural order with the repetition of "You should have" in both instances of birth and death, suggesting the former foreshadowed the latter (Rossetti 189). The untoward cycles of birth and death follow Shelley's description of the "Rough wind" wailing for the "world's wrong" and suggest that it is the death of youth that makes "all winds...sighing/ for sweet things dying" (189). For Rossetti, the premature death pairs with the loss of promised potential.

Returning to Levy's use of the dirge, we find that she appropriates the funeral song genre to offer insight into the social death and alienation experienced by women and Jewish writers during the nineteenth century. In her poem, "A Dirge," Levy moves away from both Shelley's depictions of romantic experience and Rossetti's privileging of youth to, instead, emphasize the experience of those on the margins of society. Levy distinguishes her poem with an epigraph from a poem by the German Romantic poet Heinrich Heine written in German. Levy's poem, it could be argued, is a type of "genius translation" that reimagines the content of the poem for an unintended audience while remaining faithful to the perceived intention of the poem (Marx-Aveling xxi). Where Rossetti turned to Shelley to reimagine the plight of modernity, Levy looks to Heine's poem to see a modernity that is figured in the perpetual alienation of the Jew from Christian society.

As Sheila A. Spector has argued in her anthology *The Jews and British Romanticism*, the multiple permutations of British Romanticism were the result of the mutual influences exerted by British-Christian and British-Jewish communities (8). Specifically, Spector claims the Jewish *Haskalah* was "a significant resource for Romantic intellectual revisionism, in much the same way that British Romanticism provided the cultural basis through which the British-Jewish community was able to negotiate between the competing obligations to ethnicity and nationalism" (8). Thus, it is significant that Amy Levy highlights these tensions in her own poem by pointing to the case study and legacy of the ostracized German-Jewish Romantic Heinrich Heine.

Heine, as noted in chapter one, represented the challenge of modernity for Western European Jewish communities: namely, that the path to citizenship could only be achieved through secularization. While the Jewish Haskalah mounted a defense against this ultimatum, spawning new variants of Judaism such as the Reform Movement and Liberal Judaism, the pressure to assimilate through secularization was at the forefront of inter- and intra-communal debates during the late nineteenth century. I read Levy's "A Dirge" poem as an homage to this conflict as figured through the history and poetry of Heine's "failed" assimilation despite the poet's conversion to Christianity. It is also significant that by invoking Heine, Levy gives the figure of the Jewish poet new resonance within the legacy of British Romanticism. Written circa 1824, the same year as Shelley's "A Dirge," as part of Heine's "Pictures of Travel: Homeward Journey," Heine offers a scene of the unnamed countryside town transformed by industry and nationalism ("Dirge" 74).

According to two translation sources, an 1882 translation of Heine's poems and a contemporary translation, Heine's poem chronicles the poet as bystander, watching the swirl of modern life in front of but also apart from them: with a "weary heart" the speaker looks out at the "town-moat" to see "a boy in a boat" fishing; a "beautiful varied picture...fair houses, and gardens and people"; "young maidens...bleaching linen"; the sound of the "mill-wheel" churning; "a young red-coated soldier" "pacing" on "yon old gray castle" (Heine 112). Levy's selection from this poem as her epigraph, "Mein Herz, mein Herz ist traurig/ Doch lustig leuchtet der Mai," can be translated as "my heart, my heart is weary/ Yet merry May is bright" (Stratheir 125), or as, "My heart, my heart is

mournful; yet May glows so blithely” (Ezust). In each of these translations, the subtle nuances of the intention behind the glowing May weather as either innocuously “bright” or insensitively “blithe” is a tension that runs throughout Heine’s poem. What appears to be picturesque is transformed by the melancholy gaze of the poet, which culminates in the final stanza of Heine’s poem.

The last stanza, according to the first translation source (1882) reads: “Now he [the soldier in red] handles his musket/ That gleams in the sunlight red./ Now he presents and shoulders--/ Would he might shoot me dead” (Stratheir 126). According to the second translation source, the stanza reads: “He is toying with his musket/ that gleams in the sunset’s rays,/ presenting and then shouldering it;/ I wish he would shoot me dead.” (Ezust). While these translations differ ever so slightly, their differences reveal that rendering the poet’s exact meaning conveyed in the original German remains elusive. Even so, by juxtaposing these translations, it becomes clear that Heine’s untitled poem expresses an ironic lament over the inconsequence of the individual and their alienation from nature. Furthermore, Levy’s “A Dirge” can be read as translating the intention and mood—the “history of the language, the history of [Heine’s] moment, the history of the ‘language-in-and-as-translation’” into something for her own moment.

In Levy’s “A Dirge,” for example, she renders a new a “translation” of Heine’s lament by inserting her own poet into Heine’s original poetic landscape. Instead of Heine’s narrator looming above in a gray tower, Levy’s narrator is standing on a bridge amidst the woods described in Heine’s poem. From this vantage point, Levy’s poet imagines that the stripling practicing military drills and the maiden “bleaching linens” in

the river have fallen in love: “his eyes are glad with springtime,/ Her face is fair with May” (“Dirge” 74). Departing from the Romantic subject of Shelley and Rossetti, Levy creates a fictional encounter between Heine’s poet and the poet of her own, each of which are located within subjective positions within the poem. Yet, Levy’s translation of Heine’s poet brings to light the “secret history” of Heine’s exile and unrequited love, often referenced in his own poetry, in her poem.

Using Heine’s signature style, Levy structures the final stanza with the same abrupt turn, the juxtaposition of signs of life and crushing morbidity: “Of warmth the sun and sweetness/ all nature takes a part;/ The ice of all the ages/ Weighs down upon my heart” (Dirge 74). Rather than winter or tragic death, Levy translates Heine’s poet’s morbid desire for death, “I wish he shoot me dead,” into the poet being at odds with the natural and social order that exclude them. This type of “intimate” reading, I hold, is borne out of Levy’s different but shared marginalization and oppression. Although the words of Heine and Levy’s poems are literally legible, the “logic [that] allows us to jump from word to word by means of clearly indicated connections” is ambiguous (Spivak 181). As Spivak poignantly notes,

The jagged relationship between rhetoric and logic, the condition and effect of knowing, is a relationship by which a world is made for the agent, so that the agent can act in an ethical way, a political way, a day-to-day way; so that the agent can be alive; in a human way, in the world. Unless one can construct a model of this for the other language, there is no real translation. (181)

Amy Levy’s rendering of “Mein Herz” reads as a form of literary counter-history to make visible, even if not entirely legible, the continuities of their historical moments that are cause for her “dirge.” Although translation carries the “(im)possibility of translation,” a

message that “cannot be passed on” to all readers (Spivak 180), Levy and later Spivak capitalize on this (im)possibility as a position of resistance to cultural colonization through too easily accessible translations (Spivak 196; Dirge 74). Instead, Levy crafts a poem that causes the unknowing reader to pause or, at best, to recognize themselves as not the intended audience. Like Levy, those readers who can find themselves in the poem are permitted to explore what it is to be on the fringes of English society, to be included only through one’s marginalization in both the existing narratives and social structures.

Jewish politics and translation: Amy Levy, Katie Magnus and Nina Davis Salaman

However, Levy did not only feel alienated from the centers of English culture. She also felt a similar alienation from members of her Jewish community, including other Jewish women writers. Levy may have translated Heine for Lady Katie Magnus’s 1882 essay, but she did not entirely agree with Magnus’s treatment of the poet’s life. Magnus’s *Jewish Portraits* was purposed in presenting historical portraits of Jewish writers and thinkers who were important to contemporary British Jewry. With this agenda, Magnus used Levy’s translations to take interpretive liberties in her chapter *Heinrich Heine: A plea*. “Read[ing] between the lines,” Magnus reworked lines from Heine’s poem to moralize Heine’s “bribed” conversion as the “[selling of] his soul” from which “he never lost the sickening sense of humiliation” (Magnus 73). Altered by Magnus’s moral lens and political angle, Heine appears as a coward and a self-hating Jew who says, “I get up in the night and look in the glass and curse myself” (74). Magnus’s reading of these decontextualized quotes and verses are not so much reading between the lines as much as

they are reading to hold certain social and religious lines in place. Magnus's *Jewish Portraits* is an important work that performs an important function for Jewish women readers in England and America, which I discuss in chapter four. However, Magnus's personal politics are imprinted on this portrait as "a plea" for a specific type of Jewish education and religious reform. Thus, Levy's translations and interpretation of Heine, as I show in the previous chapter, were more akin to Emma Lazarus's reparative reading of Heine as exemplary of the crisis of modernity for secular European Jewry.

However, when it came to parsing out secular, cultural, or religious Jewish identities, Levy's translations of the Medieval Hebrew poet Jehuda Halevi similarly departed from the expectations of some Hebraists, specifically the renowned Anglo-Jewish scholar and poet Nina Davis Salaman. As scholars Cynthia Sheinberg, Nadia Valman, and Linda Hunt Beckman have pointed out, Levy's approach to Judaism and Jewishness cannot be understood without acknowledging her context as having come of age following the Jewish emancipation era, a forty-year span that included the removal of civil and political disabilities from Jews, and even saw the first and only Jewish Prime Minister of England. It was not uncommon for these post-emancipation writers to move away from explicitly Jewish themes or religious discourses. However, one of the first sets of essays Levy wrote for the British *Jewish Chronicle* in 1886 was a travel piece that attempted to depict—even translate—the scene of the once "palace-prison" of the Jewish Ghetto at Florence for her English and Anglo-Jewish audiences (Levy 520). She describes the unsettling—even haunting—effect of the dilapidated ruin and narrates both her affinity and repulsion to the space as a reflex of her "inherited memories," which

have traveled down through stories and tales from older generations. More notably, this essay seems to inform her understanding of the past as “inherited” and memory as inherently mobile and always needing to be translated for the present. This view, I hold, forms the basis of her approach to the Medieval Hebrew Poet Jehuda Halevi.

To give you a better picture of her approach, Cynthia Scheinberg has catalogued the ways Levy digresses from the German translation and the Hebrew translation of Halevi’s “Parted Lovers” poem, noting that Levy usurps the devotional tone of the poem with an earthly depiction of lovers parting. Not only does she change the pronouns to reverse the traditional gendering of God (masculine) and his people (feminine), but she also translates what was originally 76 lines of Hebrew, and roughly the same in German, into twelve lines of English. By doing so, she removes many of the references to Judaism in her articulation of the universal spirit of Halevi’s text (Scheinberg 64-65). While some translators, like Nina Davis Salaman, would find this problematic, we can use Argentine poet Juan Gelman’s idea of translation, which he uses to appropriate Ladino or Judezmo Spanish, as a “com/posing” and “writing together” to better understand Levy’s deployment of resistant registers which are latent but evident in the content of Halevi’s poem (Gelman). In Federico Italiano’s recent work, *Translation and Geography*, he makes a case for a theory of translation that is modeled on Juan Gelman’s works as com/posites, created through a process of :

‘com/posing’, that is more of a ‘writing together’ rather than a rewriting of the text[–] a translational dialogue (“en todo caso, dialogue con ellos”) with authors of past epochs, a translation that due to its dialogical dimension implies a difference from the source text, and which transcends the usual difficulties and strategies inherent to linguistic transfer, allowing, almost by definition, divergences, suppressions, and interpolations. (Italiano 2016)

This view of translation as a “com/posing” or “writing together” rather than rewriting the text is useful for repositioning—even synchronizing—these different writers’ approaches to translating Halevi’s work. Each translation, then, reveals how the translator creatively engaged with the texts, and more often with the historical details of Sephardic Jews in Medieval Spain, as means to process and reorient their authors’s, at times, conflicting visions of modern Jewish identity. Federico’s model of translation as cultural composites is also useful for reconsidering Levy’s removal of the religious as commentary on modern translations as partial representations rather than reductive ones: Levy offers a “com/posite” of the translation that reminds its readers of its approximation and inability to convey or capture the actual historical or religious significance, but rather presents the translation for a contemporary audience.

On the other spectrum of translation, Nina Davis Salaman can be best understood, to use Marx-Aveling’s term, as a “faithful” translator of Hebrew, Yiddish, and Rashi script texts. As one of the most accomplished and overlooked Jewish women writers of her time, Salaman was an acclaimed poet, translator, and Hebrew scholar. She was trained as a Hebraist by her father Arthur Davis, founder and president of the Jewish Historical Society in England. During her lifetime, Salaman translated many difficult texts and worked with many Jewish scholars as a historical consultant, including several Medieval Hebrew texts for the English *Routledge Festival Prayer Book* (now called the *Service of the Synagogue*) and some of the first English translations of Yiddish writers like Chaim Bialik; and Nfatoli Herz Imber’s “HaTikvah,” which would become the Israeli national anthem. She was the first Jewish woman to preach in a synagogue in

England and the first woman elected president of the Jewish Historical Society for her important scholarship and adept translations. These accolades and life experiences set her apart from her colleagues, and establish one of the major differences between Salaman and previously discussed translators. Namely, Salaman's attention to religious imagery, historical context, and biblical reference corresponds to her understanding and subsequent expansion of Jewish women's roles within the Jewish community and Jewish institutions.

Where Levy translates "Parted Lovers" to convey the loss of romantic love, in part to make the Hebrew poem accessible for a secular audience, Salaman resists such revisions, not only on principle, but also because of the political and social implications of this type of translation: "the oriental flavor is lost, and the poet is made to speak with the voice of a modern western writer, while clearly he was neither western nor modern" (*Selected Poems* xxvii). The ideal of secularization that had been championed by Jewish communities in England did not fit Salaman's view of Jewish identity. In the Hebrew poets, like Solomon Ibn Gabriol and Jehuda Halevi, she found examples for making a way for Jews to be both a part of non-Jewish cultures without diluting or abandoning their devotion to their communities or their religion. This argument runs counter to Levy's conception of modern Jewish identity, which is first and foremost secular. It is important to note that Salaman's translations are not simply more conservative. Rather, Salaman pursues historical accuracy and details with an understanding that their representation is not whole truth but a truth, one way of how a poet or writer navigated the conditions of exile—and knowing these particularities—holding them in tension—

and not smoothing them over is what she believed was integral to a robust modern Jewish identity.

By filtering their concepts of modern Jewish identity through diasporic voices of the past, both Levy and Salaman translate and transvalue the dominant ethical structures of their social realities to different but equally significant ends that mirror the major debates of the time. They translated specific Jewish writers into English for a wider reading public, but they did so primarily as a way to educate their coreligionists and non-Jews in Jewish history and literature. And yet, the legacy of these works—how they circulated and the discourses in which they participated—changed the social realities of those after them and encouraged new Jewish identity formations. Their translations were more than transliterations and, at times, even extended or reimagined the content for their audiences. Such authorial moves were important in their cultural moment and into the 20th century; for example, many of the Halevi translations by Salaman were reprinted well into the late 1970s, with some still used in prayer books today.

As translators, poets, and artists, these women participated in exposing the “secret history” of a text (Marx-Aveling xiv) in order to bring forth not just the letter but the spirit of the work for a new audience. As Bernstein has noted, many Anglo-Jewish women writers considered their work in terms of a “reciprocal transformation between original and translation that promote[d] a circulatory network” of intercultural dialogue (Bernstein 41). While translation networks opened new public avenues for Anglo-Jewish women writers to influence the dominant cultural narratives of their moment, other Jewish women writers were using translation to redefine the role of women within

Judaism and Jewish institutions. Magnus and Salaman are examples of a specific type of Jewish feminism that relied on reinterpreting the Hebrew bible and texts to negotiate greater social and religious leadership roles within the Jewish community, which often meant they were less active in the secular feminist movements in England.

In her recovery of over one hundred female evangelical preachers in America during the early nineteenth century, Catherine Brekus termed the discrepancy in public political and public religious feminist participation as the legacy of “biblical feminists,” women who believed that “women’s rights weren’t natural rights but authorized by the precedents set by biblical women” (Brekus 6). Similarly, the next set of writers I consider followed this model in moderation. They were perhaps the most geographically separated, England and California, but they offer the most extensive example of a transatlantic dialogue among Anglo-American Jewish women on the topic of Jewish identity and Judaism carried out over twenty-five years of correspondence, half of which is currently located at the American Jewish Historical Society archives in New York.

Through “Reflected light”: Anglo-American Jewish women preachers and feminist midrash

Nina Davis Salaman (1877-1925) and Rachael “Ray” Frank-Litman’s (1861-1948) transatlantic relationship, documented through extensive correspondence, is important because, while they individually played a large role in shaping discussions of Judaism, together they help us understand shifts in Jewish women’s roles as religious leaders during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. To be clear, each had her own trail-blazing career, but their relationship is less often discussed (See Pamela S. Nadell

and Ellen Umansky's works as exceptions). Beginning in 1893, Salaman and Frank-Litman bonded over major life events, from their engagements and marriages to the births and deaths of their children (American Jewish Historical Society, Ray Frank Litman Papers). They often wrote to each other about current events like the Dreyfus Affair (1894) and common interests such as the World Council for Jewish Women, but mostly they wrote with earnestness about their shared concern over shifts in Judaism and rising Jewish nationalism. For the purposes of this section, I will highlight three of these shared concerns that appear throughout their correspondence but also in their published works, which can help us better understand how their ideas circulated and were situated within specific public discourses about Jewish identity.

In particular, I am looking at their work as translators of biblical content and contexts, *midrashim*, for their respective Jewish audiences. The two published texts that make the importance of Salaman and Frank-Litman's relationship most visible are their Jewish sermons. As the first women in their respective countries to preach in a synagogue, their inaugural sermons are telling. Although given twenty-nine years apart, the texts complement one another and juxtaposing them reveals important distinctions related to their socio-historical contexts, individual strengths and differences, and how Frank-Litman may have influenced Salaman's own thinking about Judaism. Even so, their shared concerns in recovering a dynamic, flexible Judaism helps them build a modern notion of Jewish collective identity that is distinct from their contemporaries, especially political Zionists of the same period. Their correspondence about ideas explored in their sermons also reveals why their work should be read together to better

understand this significant, if overlooked, moment in Anglo-American Jewish feminist history.

Ray Frank-Litman's sermon titled "A Lay Sermon by a Young Lady" was published in the *American Hebrew* journal shortly after it was given on Yom Kippur eve in October 1890 in Spokane, Washington. At the time, Ray Frank was an unmarried woman, who began her career as a teacher at a Sabbath School in Nevada and then moved to Oakland, CA. Her most famous pupil, Judah Magnes (1877-1948), would go on to become a famous Reform Rabbi and an avid proponent of a binational state in Palestine. After working as the principal of her school in Oakland, Frank began lecturing on issues relevant to the Jewish community and writing for various news outlets on Jewish and non-Jewish issues, during which time she became known as the "Girl Rabbi of the West" (AJHS, RFL Papers). While on assignment in Spokane, she encountered a Jewish community so divided between Reform and Orthodox issues that they had neither synagogue nor a Sabbath school that held regular services. One member suggested that if she would agree to give the sermon, they would come together to hear her on Yom Kippur eve. Her sermon situates the community's current issues as part of larger Jewish intracommunal debates and as an effect of wider political, cultural, and economic forces. With specific references to the consequences of Americanization and capitalism on the community, she explains the moral cost to congregants who did not want to "close the shop on the Sabbath" (Litman 8). More importantly, Frank gives her audience an understanding of Judaism that is "not compulsory" but an ethical ideal flexible enough to encompass multiple variations of Judaism. She preached that the community should

worship and live together because they agree to the same beliefs and reminded them that homogeneity is not a precondition for solidarity.

It is important to recognize that in 1890's California, the Jewish sermon was itself a site of intracommunal debates and intercommunal relations. In Mirela Saim's noteworthy essay "The Modern Renewal of Jewish Homiletics and the Occurrence of Interfaith Preaching" she argues that during the nineteenth century the newly codified Jewish sermon "became both the target and the icon of change and progress" for Jewish communities in Western Europe, England and the United States (Saim 459). Following emancipation in England and the Civil War in the US, the Jewish sermon flourished in synagogues across both countries. Saim argues that the shift in the liturgy was due to a shift in Jewish-Christian relations, specifically that there were greater stakes and incentives for Jews to assimilate into their respective communities. The modernizing of Anglo-Jewry had followed the lead of the Reform movement in Germany where synagogue services were modeled on German Protestant services. The sermon was the first notable addition that changed the focus of weekly Jewish religious services. By 1890, rabbis who wrote and read sermons in the vernacular English or German were, according to the *Jewish Chronicle*, "no longer exotic" but popular and "given often," with the exception of some more Orthodox synagogues (462).

Saim notes that in the United States the genre of the Jewish sermon took on new meaning for a few reasons: 1) there was greater diversity among Jewish and non-Jewish communities, which 2) prompted the need for interfaith engagement as a gesture of good faith in American civil society, and 3) the overall cultural and social pressure to

assimilate into their local communities. In this instance, the Jewish sermon “delivered from the bima (the pulpit) became the very icon of religious modernity” as it developed more and more into a standalone address that was to be both personally “edifying and instructive” (459-60). As such, it became indispensable to American reform communities to “align their liturgy with the sermonic discourse delivered from neighboring Christian pulpits” (460). More importantly, it became necessary for this sermonic discourse to “focu[s] on moral exhortations that could be all-embracing” and speak to a variety of issues from the wider secular environment (473). However, as scholars like Daniel Boyarin and Luke Devine have argued, the push to make Jewish texts relevant to each generation is a long-established practice and integral part of Judaism, in the form of Rabbinic Midrashim (Boyarin 8; Devine 69).

Building on Boyarin’s seminal work, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, Devine notes, the rabbis “historically produced midrashim to explain parts of the biblical text that were confusing, or they may have filled in a missing scene, reinterpreted a text...or explained two contradictory passages” (69). I emphasize that these practices, foundational to Judaism and its historical longevity, were also critical for AAJWW, like those discussed in this chapter, to forge their identities as Jewish women by expanding the range of possibilities for women within Judaism. Thus, the biblical women of the past become the exemplars of Jewish feminist leaders, providing precedent for Salaman and Frank-Litman to take up the mantle of religious and communal leadership without contradicting their roles as wives and mothers. Devine’s monograph focuses on the parallels between such “first-wave” Jewish feminists and the methods of later second and

third-wave feminist movements in the US and UK, a comparison which is possible, he argues, because “[t]he boundaries [of interpretation] are infinite as midrash can analyze a primary text from an original angle or draw an unusual or previously unexpected conclusion” while upholding “[t]he overriding theme [of the purpose of midrash]... to make a biblical text relevant[,] to speak ‘to us in our idiom’ (Graetz)” (quoted in Devine 69).

While I agree with Devine’s assessment that these Jewish women writers anticipated the feminist practices and methods of later Jewish feminists, I argue it is because they often anticipated critiques to modernity and Jewish nationalism that were fundamental to debates of the twentieth century. In particular, as Frank-Litman’s sermon would emphasize, the central problem of modern American nationalism that confuses homogeneity with solidarity or patriotism also affects Jewish communal dynamics at the end of the nineteenth century. Thus, the cultural context of Ray Frank-Litman’s 1890 address—the sermonic discourse of her moment—was one where Jews were expected to assimilate into American society and adhere to the civil authority of the United States. Yet, how such assimilation might influence their ability to be “good Jews” remained a point of contention between Orthodox and Reform Jewish communities (Litman 8-9). Aware of the implications of this conflict, shorthanded as the transcontinental schism between old and new Judaism, Frank offers a midrash and translates the spirit of the scriptures for the Spokane congregation to help them develop a more flexible conception of Jewish collective identity:

There are here, I know, certain disagreements as to the form of worship, whether we should cling to the old orthodox style or take up the reform that has gradually

been instituted in the Jewish church. This is a progressive age, and some of the customs of two or three thousand years ago will not do for to-day, and at the same time many customs which were good then are just as good now, and can be just as appropriately used. It would be well for you to throw aside all little disagreements and unite in the one cause—that of upholding the creed of our religion. (8-9)

Frank-Litman emphasizes the major contours of “creed” over the particularities of matters of observance because the division among the community poses, in her opinion, a greater threat that they would “forget to worship at all!” (Frank 8-9). She also chides the congregation to not mistake reform with the slippery slope of moral relativism: she insists that Jews should not be “too reformed to be good ones” (9). In her final call to have the audience “form a permanent congregation,” Frank-Litman reminds the congregation that “this is the time for action—right now, and our solemn Yom Kippur is the right now of our existence” so they should “from to-night on resolve to be something” (9). In this charge to the congregation, Frank-Litman imbues the moment with the historicity of Yom Kippur, a day of atonement, and the “novelty” of her preaching to convince them that their fates hang in the balance: “One must believe in something, and one must have faith in something or become a menace to society” (9). Here, Frank-Litman draws a circle around Jewish religious life as the thing that preserves their unity and allows them to best contribute to their host society, which is a counter-narrative to the idea that assimilation is best achieved through secularization. Furthermore, Frank-Litman’s concern for striking a middle-ground between these two opposing communities was something she tried to do throughout her career, reiterating that as “Israelites” the Jews had to “look up to [their] creed and live up to it” no matter the differences among them (8-9).

Yet, the differences between Reform and Orthodox Judaism would remain a topic of intense debate from Frank's 1890 sermon to Salaman's in 1919. Both Frank-Litman and Salaman were concerned about the effects of the sectarian divides and crafted sermons aimed at bridging seemingly incompatible facets of the Jewish community. In her sermon, "Jacob and Israel," given at a synagogue near Cambridge University on December 5, 1919, Salaman approached the intracommunal debate through a retelling or midrash of the foundational story of how the Jewish patriarch Jacob was given the name Israel. Drawing on her knowledge of Hebrew scriptures and rabbinic commentaries, Salaman's bilingual Hebrew and English sermon reinterpreted the narrative of the father of Israel as exemplary of the story of Jewish people throughout time. As Jacob strove with "gods and men" to come out not only as a new man but also as a man with two names, so too must the Jewish people continue to strive to find a way for both old and new to coexist ("Jacob" 2). She remarks:

But the struggle remains unceasing and gigantic. A struggle indeed with gods and men! What is the message this week's Sedrah gives us? [Hebrew translation provided by Salaman: And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day... And he said: "Let me go, for the day breaketh." And he said: I will not let thee go except thou bless me." But he said unto him: "What is thy name?" and he said: "Jacob." And he said: "Not Jacob shall they name be called any more but Israel; for thou has striven with gods and with men, and hast prevailed..." And he blessed him there.] (2)

Salaman goes on to explain that this is the "crisis of Jacob's life" and one that has much to teach: the Jewish people like Jacob "shall nevermore be said that the blessing came to thee through supplanting and deceit, but through striving and openness" (3). Yet, Salaman is quick to note that the "name Jacob was not made obsolete" unlike the case of Jewish patriarch Abram who became Abraham (3). She questions her audience: "Can we

see any reason for the difference?” She goes on to offer a midrash to explain this disparity:

May it not be that we are intended to remember that Israel began as Jacob—that, in Israel, Jacob still survives, that the traces of the upward struggle of humanity are traces which cannot be obliterated and ought not to be forgotten? The very fact that Jacob developed into Israel is of the utmost inspiration to all of us... In Abraham’s case, the change of name concerned rather the change in his relation to the world, from the individual to the father of nations. In Jacob, the change was rather concerned with his own nature. And we are still both Israel and Jacob to this day. (3)

While this fits the *bildung* model described by Saim as a staple of the Jewish Reform sermon, Salaman does not end with a message for the personal betterment of her audience. Instead, she expands the narrative to speak to what she understands to be the larger debate about Judaism and the Jewish people at a critical moment of Jewish nationalist consciousness raising. In 1919, two years after the Balfour Declaration made the possibility of a Jewish homeland in Palestine a prospect, Salaman and her husband Redcliffe Salaman were avid supporters of the resettlement of Palestine. Even so, Salaman was wary of the political Zionist’s secular aims and disregard for primacy of Judaism to unite global Jewry. So, at this moment, Salaman writes a new vision of Jewish national identity that is premised on a more global conception of justice as a mandate of all Jewish people, one that resonates with the biblical call of Israel to be a blessing to all nations. Drawing on the work of her mentor, Salaman cites the then late Joseph Jacobs’s introduction to *Jewish Contributions to Civilization*:

‘Tis a little people, but it has done great things. When in the land in which it first came to national consciousness, it created a conception of the Highest Being of the universe, which has been adopted in essence by the foremost races of humanity... yet its thinkers and sages with eagle vision took into their thought the destinies of all humanity, and rang out in clarion voice a message of hope to the

down-trodden of all races. Claiming for themselves and their people the duty and obligations of a true aristocracy, they held forth to the peoples [sic] ideals of a true democracy founded on right and justice. (4)

Salaman quotes Jacobs at length to emphasize a vision of modern Jewish identity that is not at odds with Judaism's mandate and fits the aims of both the British or American empires—and rather understands itself as their forerunner. The challenge of this vision is that it is deeply informed by the imperialist aim of the British civilizing mission, even if Jews still sit on the threshold of these empires. To be fair, the sermon is significant for challenging the idea that Judaism could be or ever was homogenous, “we are both Jacob and Israel,” and resisting the idea that a consensus among all Jewish communities was needed to fulfill the mission of Judaism, which, according to Salaman, was for Jewry to be a blessing to all other peoples despite their persecution (1). While I have offered but brief snapshots of Frank-Litman and Salaman's sermons as biblical translations or midrash, I want to close by tying together how these sermons illustrate three overlapping concerns for both writers.

“Striving with gods and men”⁶: The “conscious” Judaism of Salaman and Frank-Litman

The shared concern that first brought them together was the nature of Modern Judaism as a “fusion of Old Judaism with the modern western world,” an idea which was at the forefront of their published work and private letters (Koren 9). Frank-Litman and

⁶ “Nina Davis Salaman ends her sermon with the call for the Jewish community to become Israel through continued struggle for unity and global justice. She says then and only then will they “have striven with gods and men and prevailed” (“Jacob & Israel” 5).

Salaman's moderate position on Judaism as the central component of Jewish identity put them at odds with cultural Zionists of the early 1890s and later political Zionists in 1897, as both groups revised the importance and relevance of religious identity to Modern Jewish identity. To be clear, Salaman and Frank-Litman were unique examples of women in public and communal leadership roles who also ascribed to traditional domestic duties of wives and mothers. For example, Salaman would go on to have six children during her lifetime while also publishing many translations, books of poetry, and the first biography of Rahel Varnhagen. It should be noted that Salaman, nee Davis, was from a very wealthy family and received her education from her father Arthur Davis, rather than through formal university training. Although she married a man of moderate means, Salaman was able to rely on the help of nannies and domestic servants to care for her children while also pursuing her professional career. Frank-Litman, on the contrary, was a governess and *shul* teacher from an early age. Yet, both women would go on to find their identities and even agency in assuming Jewish religious models of leadership, even though to be modern women and Jews seemed to reject such traditions. This was especially challenging for Jewish women who had to negotiate the Christian-centric bias of early feminism and at the heart of the enlightenment ideals. Historically, assimilation often meant letting go of Jewish traditions or outright conversion (Ragussis; Gracombe; Valman). Thus, Frank-Litman and Salaman often argued for a re-reading of the biblical past to present their vision of a fusion of old and new Judaism.

A second shared concern extends from their desire to articulate a new vision of flexible Judaism by expanding the role of Jewish woman with fresh angles on the history

of Judaism. In the opening of her sermon, Frank-Litman cites historical marginalization as evidence of an outmoded social structure: “From time immemorial the Jewish woman has remained in the background of history, quite content to let the fathers and brothers be the principals in a picture wherein she shone only by a reflected light” (Litman 8). Frank-Litman would go on to argue that in the light of “the present, post-Enlightenment” moment the Jewish woman is able to participate more fully, if not equally, in the religious life of her community.

Often cited in print as the “Girl Rabbi of the Golden West,” Frank-Litman was quick to state that, while she had no aims of becoming a rabbi, she believed women could and should occupy additional intellectual and leadership roles within the Jewish community to the benefit all. In her coy op-ed in a San Francisco newspaper titled “If I were a Rebitizin,” Frank-Litman offers a series of hypothetical statements to flesh out a feminist critique of the common practices associated with male religious leadership and to advocate a more expansive intellectual role for women:

While the rebitizin is undoubtedly the better half of even a rabbi, she is generally considered the lesser half; a paradoxical problem, which were I a rebitizin, I would not care to accept as part of my mathematics... Why should she not share equally of the rabbi’s mental and moral exaltation? (“If I were” np)

Frank-Litman’s description of a more equitable marriage arrangement and intellectual discourse between rabbis and their wives is not only novel in its proposal but integral to her understanding of Judaism as primarily concerned with remedying gender hierarchies. Frank-Litman’s feminism follows the line that gender difference does not mean gender inequality. Given the historical context of California, the logic can be said to be indicative of the times where the “separate but equal” model of racial segregation was

recognized as the law of the land by the Supreme Court in 1896 with *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Similarly, Frank-Litman saw access as the key issue to disrupt the inequality embedded within the religious leadership structure. And while Frank-Litman opposed women's suffrage in favor of women's domestic leadership, she also was avid reformer of those domestic duties insisting: "Were I a rebitizin, the rabbi would know better than to expect me to give all my time to preparing...dinner; for while all should be orderly and in its place, the time and place for a mental meal should not be lacking" ("If I were"). Over and over again, education becomes the model for women to raise not only themselves up but also raise the Jewish people to new and nobler heights.

Salaman, similarly, was less comfortable arguing for women's suffrage, though she would eventually go on to support feminist measures. This was, in part, like her colleague Frank-Litman, due to her distrust of the feminism touted by suffragettes. For example, women's rights, as articulated by first-wave feminism, threatened to destabilize or devalue Jewish women's identity and role within Judaism because of its more traditional patriarchal structure. Ironically, this was true of their approach to Jewish women's organizations, as well. As supporters of Jewish Women's Council, Salaman and Frank-Litman played an ancillary role, unsure whether the aims of the movement fit their religious convictions. Thus, while Salaman and Frank-Litman imagined expanded roles within Judaism and the Jewish community, their identities were first and foremost defined as "consciously Jewish" (Litman).

Lastly, it is this sense of "conscious" Jewish identities that Frank-Litman and Salaman spent much of their time refining and negotiating amidst debates about national

Jewish identity. By the late 1890s, both women had expressed sympathies with the pioneering and resettlement efforts in Palestine and with Israel Zangwill's Jewish Territorial Organization, which ended up settling 10,000 Russian Jewish refugees in Galveston, Texas, with the help of American millionaire Jacob Schiff. In a 30 May 1899 letter to Frank-Litman, Salaman wrote about the horrible plight of the Russian refugees and references reading the remarkable story by a young girl named Mary Antin, who had written a memoir of her travels and for which Israel Zangwill had written the foreword (AJHS RFL Papers). The letter describes the need for a refuge for Jews fleeing persecution, but is less convinced that Theodore Herzl's movement to resettle Palestine will be sufficient in helping them in the short term. Indeed, the nascent Political Zionist movement, according to the minutes from the Second Zionist Congress in 1898, had no financial means of alleviating the influx of Jewish refugees from Russia and Eastern Europe with resettlement in Palestine (Marcolli, Petry, Zeugin 250-256).

Instead, Herzl and Max Nordau were touring Palestine for the first time in 1898 and busy lobbying the Ottoman Sultan and German Kaiser for a chance to purchase Palestine. Yet, when called to serve the first Jewish brigade in Palestine during the Great War, Dr. Redcliffe Salaman would write many letters to Salaman detailing the potential of Palestine to be a new national homeland. The Great War introduced new problems for Jewish immigration, which had already been a source of division at the 1905 Zionist Congress, the first following Herzl's death, with the British Jews League and other factions determined to forego a national homeland for a more immediate solution of resettling refugees anywhere the British Government would offer. Salaman's close

friendship with Israel Zangwill also reveals her concern about the consequences and decisions about what a Jewish homeland would look like. In particular, Salaman returns to the issue of naming.

Salaman's later work in *Songs of Many Days* reinterprets Halevi's work as a call for a Jewish nationalism that is inclusive—a "Judah" not "Israel"—that envisions diaspora and Zion as two necessary components of Jewish history. While this interpretation hints at some of the major problems of Zionism, it would be inaccurate to cast her work as overly critical of the colonial effort or political Zionist movement. In fact, Salaman's scholarship and translations connect her to some of the top Zionist leaders of her time, despite the omission of her name from more contemporary records of Zionist history. In 1916, Salaman was one of two women included in the anthology *Zionism: Problems and Views*. This anthology features Nahum Sokolow, Louis D. Brandeis, Achad Ha'am, Eliezer Ben Yehuda, and even Max Nordau. Even so, Salaman's name is not as well known, in part, because she does not easily fit within the feminist, Zionist, or diasporic frameworks of American Jewish Studies models. Her work, while calling for peacemakers and a diverse global Jewry, also embraces the resettlement of Palestine through the imperial expansion of the British Empire. After Salaman passed away from cancer in 1926, Frank-Litman began writing a biography of her beloved friend's life that would remain unpublished (AJHS-RFL Papers). She wanted to make sure that there was a historical record of Salaman's work as a Jewish woman writer and scholar: as noted in Frank-Litman's sermon, women often appeared in history through

reflected light—and it is evident that Frank-Litman wrote the biography to illuminate her colleague and friend for future generations.

As I hope to have shown throughout the chapter, by examining the networks and collaborations among these AAJWW, I recover how they collectively influenced Judaism and engaged in the Jewish Question debates during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This chapter has traced the multiple ways that Anglo-American Jewish women used counter-history as critical strategy to navigate their social and political roles within Jewish and non-Jewish spaces. As intimate readers, critical thinkers, and activists, AAJWW and their work offer important insights into their respective historical moments, as they were forced to navigate their complex identities among and within different public spaces. By considering AAJWW works through the theoretical framing of translation and biblical midrash, new connections between their writings and politics can emerge for future analysis.

Chapter 3:
Novel Counter-histories: Contesting the “Jewish Type” in the works of Amy Levy and Israel Zangwill



Figure 2: (Partial) Galton’s composites of the Jewish type (Jacobs 1885: 269).
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College, London.

The image above is not one but many. “By a simple contrivance,” argues Sir Francis Galton, the well-known father of eugenics and cousin of Charles Darwin, “the photographic process of [composite photography], enables us to obtain with mechanical precision a generalised picture...[that none]...would doubt its being the likeness of a living person. Yet, as I have said, it is no such thing; it is the portrait of a type, and not of an individual” (Galton 97). I begin with this well-cited passage because, for many scholars of the Victorian period, Galton’s composite photographic types are synonymous with the apex of Victorian race science that used new technologies and media to justify the expanding and, in some places contracting, reach of the British Empire (Jusova 3-4). The portrait of the “Jewish type,” pictured above, however, is also an important starting point because it makes visible the dynamic interplay of British liberal and imperial ideologies and how this assemblage of discourses shaped the narratives about Jewish

identity along lines of gender, race, and class during the late-nineteenth century. Specifically, my chapter considers how these assemblages, “networks of affect, intensity and movement,” rather than merely intersections of British liberalism and imperialism first created and then relied on composite technology to reorder the social body, past, present and future in key political contexts.

The composite method, Galton effectively argued, offered a new way of seeing the nation: a shift in not only thinking about individuals as identities, bodies as texts, but also of viewing social and class groups within a hierarchy of sub-populations within the nation (Thomas 211-212). Indeed, with an increasingly heterogeneous empire, British imperial interests were heavily invested in ordering, managing, and containing the “degenerate” classes (McClintock 46). Galton’s composite photographic method, an example of panoptical disciplinary practices, met this need as it was able to collate images of Others by superimposing the faces of individual portraits to create the fictitious image of a “statistical” average of features: a “type” (Novak 168). Through the camera’s eye, Galton was able to capture the criminal, the insane, and the racialized other and then dissect, categorize, and re-assimilate their abstract bodies into a series of definable traits. By exposing multiple portraits to the same sensitized photographic plate, Galton’s ability to fabricate the portrait of a “type” that was both no one and presumably anyone is an example of how the composite photographic technique naturalized and facilitated the androcentric hierarchies of empire (97). Specifically, Galton argued for “many” potential benefits of composite photography: he insisted the three primary reasons to use composite photography were to 1) give an account of the “different races of men;” 2) to

better assess the past and gain a more accurate “picture of historical persons;” and 3) to better understand the future distribution of hereditary traits within families and larger demographics (Galton 98). In Galton’s “type,” then, the seedlings of eugenics find fertile soil in the implicit assumptions of late-Victorian liberal models of progress and civilization on a teleological scale also used to authorize British imperial expansion. In the following sections, I show how composite photography, as a technique, logic, and rhetorical trope recapitulated these biases and represented the “type” as a set of verifiable, “statistical” data that projected future population dynamics. Furthermore, these composite photographs also quite literally attempted to rewrite history with an abstract transhistorical body of the “type” in place of an actual “individual.” In this way, Galton could boast of the benefits of composite photography as a way to wrangle the heterogeneous national body through fixing its past and future along an axis of racial and imperial progress.

As Benedict Anderson and Anne McClintock have individually argued in the case of Western European nationalisms, the representation of national time and spaces in print culture were crucial to the creation of an imagined community, a concept vital to both the ideological framework of liberal subjectivity and British imperialism. Building on McClintock’s argument in *Imperial Leather* that Victorian discourses of time, space, and representations of the nation hinged upon a specific male liberal subjectivity, I argue that the composite portraits of criminals, hysterical women, and Jews lay claim to the force of imperial ideology with their visual rubric of the “races of men” and women. The technique of composite photography was, after all, another way to establish and protect

the purity of the white English body. More importantly, the subtext of each of these photographs presumes that each composite was the focus of a study by an English “liberal subject” behind the camera that had uneven capacity to simultaneously represent and distort, to make visible and to obscure, the representation of the final portraits of the types. I also explore Galton’s composite photographs of the “Jewish type” as important discursive sites which make visible the explicit connections between the homogenizing impulses of political liberalism and the imperial force of typologies.

As scholars like Susan David Bernstein and Daniel A. Novak have more recently shown, Galton’s composite method, previously applied to criminals and the mentally insane, was turned toward the Jewish type in 1883 at the request of one of his students, Jewish historian and social scientist Joseph Jacobs (*Ruben Sachs* 26; Novak 62). Eitan Bar-Joseph and Nadia Valman argue in their introduction to the *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture: Between the East End and East Africa* that Jews like Jacobs “appealed to the concept of race” and “reworked the premises or stereotypes of conventional racial thinking” within very specific contexts, such as the increasing amount of Jewish immigration and rising antisemitism in Europe (Bar-Joseph & Valman 10). Additionally, Bernstein considers Jacobs’s involvement with the creation of the “Jewish type” as evidence of “double-consciousness,” an interpellation by the racial scientific discourses of his day (*Reuben Sachs* 3). Jacobs’s work has also been characterized by Novak as a response to, and an extension of, George Eliot’s descriptions of the Jewish people in her novel *Daniel Deronda*, which problematically concedes that the obfuscation of Jewish difference through assimilation is necessary to make Jews compatible with

liberal tolerance (Novak 60). While I agree, in part, with all these readings of Jacobs, I want to begin my investigation by considering the various afterlives of Jacobs's work on the "Jewish type" and how it shaped, even "haunted," discourses about Anglo-Jewish identity and Jewish collective identity during the fin-de-siècle and early twentieth century (Novak 74). I reconsider Jacobs's work with Galton as the site, perhaps the very picture, of the mutually imbricated and reinforcing discourses of liberalism and imperialism and show how specific Anglo-Jewish writers and thinkers, including Jacobs, use the "Jewish type" to expose the violence of liberalism in a way that destabilized the technological fictions of Galton's composite photography and its pervading logic.

Jacobs's 1885 analysis of his work on the "Jewish type" in his essay "The Jewish Type, and Galton's Composites" in the *Photographic News*⁷ emphasizes the contrast between Galton's opinions about the "Jewish type" with his own. Where Galton saw the "calculating gaze" of the Jewish immigrant school boy, Jacobs read the face of "a dreamer or thinker rather than merchant" (Novak 102). The discrepant readings offer an access point of sorts into the composite portrait as a site of competing discourses, a network of interests expressed in the presumed surface of objective science. Thus, this chapter focuses on photographs of the "Jewish type" as important sites of negotiations. Specifically, I consider how the "Jewish type" functioned within the complex intracommunal and intercommunal debates about Jewishness and the Jewish Question

⁷ The journal *Photographic News* was an interesting choice for Jacobs to publish his counter-analysis of Galton's composites. The journal circulated widely but was primarily focused on technique and processes. Galton's findings, however, were published in *Nature*, a predominantly polemic scientific journal.

during the late-nineteenth century. Jacobs's collaboration with Galton provides a literal map of the competing interests embedded within the logic of the composite method, and how such interests are then remarkably mapped on to the literal photographs of immigrant children, thus, exposing composite photography as a tool for the management of bodies from an institutional and imperial perspective.

And yet, Jacobs's manipulation of the camera's gaze to create a new stereotype requires further examination into how photographic techniques, and the camera itself, provided a rhetoric by which Anglo-Jewish writers could address the problems with European liberal culture. As such, Jacobs's work sets in motion a discussion about the benefits and consequences of a composite photographic logic for the Anglo-Jewish community. Thus, my chapter examines the discourse of composite photography as a technology and cultural logic of liberalism, which I argue is useful for rethinking the complexities and incongruities of emerging Jewish nationalisms during the fin-de-siècle.

The second aim of the chapter is to show how some Anglo-Jewish writers continued to use photographic techniques, specifically composite and mirror photography, to articulate the increasing challenges of a liberal-state model of Jewish collective identity for the Anglo-American Jewish communities. According to John Gray's work on European thought, "the two faces of liberalism," indubitably embedded within classic liberalism, form the basic paradox of political liberalism. Specifically, the premise that the universal implementation of certain liberties or a "best way of life" are necessary to secure tolerance for plural value systems and cultures sets up a faulty premise of congruity, or tolerance for likeness (Gray 5). Thus, Anglo-Jewry's

engagement with the techniques of composite and mirror photography, a product of the cultural formations of the time, make visible what McClintock terms the “dangerous” side of liberal nationalism—specifically its “relations to political power and to the technologies of violence” (McClintock 98). And by “dangerous” I mean liberalism’s universal, homogenizing impulses, which are exposed in the mechanisms and photographic techniques that attempt to conceal these dangers.

It is the *composite photographic logic of liberalism*—presenting the illusion of one image where there are many—that is figured as dangerous by two important Anglo-Jewish writers, Amy Levy and Israel Zangwill. I examine how Levy and Zangwill use these related but divergent forms of composite and mirror photographic techniques in their novels to articulate the challenges of shifting cultural dynamics within the Anglo-Jewish community. Additionally, I consider their work within the historical contexts of emerging Jewish nationalist discourses of Political Zionism and Jewish Territorialism to offer a new vantage point to these two political movements. From the vantage point of women and Jewish refugees fleeing persecution, my chapter considers how these photographic techniques were used to undermine “the type” as a stable category and, in the process, destabilize the very premises of liberal and imperial progress at the heart of the existing social structure. These writers and their work brazenly take up the uneven ground between assimilation and nationalism and foreground dynamic local modes of collective Jewish identity. The discursive network of these writers give readers and scholars alike a different snapshot of the historical record, another part of the existing

dialogue and, perhaps most important to my own work, a different way of hearing dissenting voices in Anglo-Jewish history.

Composite photography and the Jewish Question



Figure 3: Galton's composites of the Jewish type (Jacobs 1885: 269). Based on my research Louis Zangwill's portrait is located at top right corner (a2). Reprinted with permission from Cambridge University and University College, London.

Reproduced here in full form, I begin this next section with the end product of Joseph Jacobs's collaboration with Galton on the "Jewish type" to highlight the purpose of this section as an exploration of the processes by which the "Full Face" "Components" on the right side of the page were transformed into Galton's "Composites" on the left

side. At first glance, the relationship between the images despite their juxtaposition is unclear as the orientation of the visual narrative begins with the composites as the “Jewish type” and the smaller portraits of actual Jewish schoolboys are subordinated, both in narrative order and size. The visual composition seems to suggest that the composites are intricately connected to the components, but the processes and matrix of discourses that shaped their literal composition are obscured. The composite photographic method, its invention, and uses are, I argue, inextricable from the sociohistorical and political moment of the nineteenth century. Thus, this section explores how a specific set of discourses, commonly abbreviated as the Jewish Question, inspired Galton’s new technique and his collaboration with Joseph Jacobs on the “Jewish Type.” In this section I will show how the results of their work functioned in three critical capacities: 1) the experiment highlights how the half-century of debate on the Jewish Question first made composite photography possible; 2) the event also makes visible how the terms of the Jewish Question shaped the new technique’s implementation and Jacobs and Galton’s subsequent analysis of the data; and 3) Jacobs’s analysis foregrounds the potential of the new technological method to frame important discussions about Anglo-Jewish identity, as well as the method’s bearing on future discussions about Jewish national identity.

But before I address how the Jewish Question facilitated the development of Galton’s composite photographic technique, I must acknowledge that this perspective can only be achieved through an understanding of the Jewish Question as intricately connected with European liberal culture throughout the nineteenth century. Historically,

it is important to note that Galton develops his composite photographic method several years before he collaborated with Jacobs on the “Jewish type,” which may seem to make my first assertion that the Jewish Question was part of the driving force for composite photography difficult to support. However, if the Jewish Question in England, as Michael Galchinsky rightly argues, is a subset of England's "Other Questions,"⁸ which were equally shaping and putting pressure on the question of English national identity, then Galton's new race science shares important political and cultural contexts with the Jewish Question.

In Galton's May 1878 *Nature* article, he makes this argument: the first, and seemingly foremost beneficial use of composite photography is to “give us typical pictures of different races of men” the method “being a perfect test of truth” (Galton 99). The method, then, is a response to the question of empire’s “others” and worked to create a visual grammar of types that could be used to narrate the order of an internally heterogeneous empire. Galton’s article recounts the preliminary data of criminal “types,” which Novak suggests shows Galton’s method was first concerned with isolating criminality rather than a specific focus on racial typology. I, on the other hand, think it is impossible to see Galton’s composite method outside of the context of existing racial typologies—even if Galton “insisted his main interest was always inheritance” (Novak

⁸ Galchinsky insists that the Jewish Question was a subset of other questions about how "Europe's Other might be brought into relation with the emerging nation-states and empires" and to privilege the Jewish question would be to sever the debate from its contexts, foreclosing more accurate understandings of how Anglo-Jewry engaged with other minority communities that were also finding their position within the empire (Galchinsky 47).

63); I make this distinction because to try and separate Galton's "main interests" in inheritance as a purely scientific or non-racialized pursuit from the political contexts of those interests is problematic. McClintock's *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* convincingly argues that the intersectionality of the scientific treatment of criminals as both gendered or racialized is consistent with imperial discourses of primitive and degenerate types (McClintock 119).

Using Galchinsky and McClintock's critical methodology, I ask that we consider Galton's method and even his interest in inheritance as part of the same discursive network where liberalism informs imperial discourses; as I will show in the coming paragraphs, the impetus for composite photographic logic is liberalism's paradoxical treatment of "others"—both racialized and gendered—in fin-de-siècle England. But also, apart from methodology, historian Janet Browne describes how *Nature*, the journal Galton chose as his forum for his new method, was "far more than any other science journal period... was conceived, born, and raised to serve polemic purpose" (284). Instead of the refereed journals of the Royal Society, the forum his cousin Charles Darwin used to publish his own scholarship, Galton presented his new "more scientific" method of photography in a journal that explicitly served the purpose of representing scientific knowledge as critical to national progress and prosperity. Beginning with the contexts of Galton's composite method widens the field of vision and offers a new perspective on the function of composite photography as first enabled and then facilitated by various strains of liberal and imperial ideologies. It also then makes it possible to see how composite

photography, as a technique, exposes the very process by which these ideologies work to conceal their own inconsistencies.

These questions of “Others,” whether Catholics, Jews, Irish, or women, all point to the inconsistent historical application of “universal” principles of liberalism’s conception of propertied subjectivity that shaped the political structures of the nineteenth century (Tucker 22). Despite the fact that the Jewish communities in England enjoyed a relatively tolerant society, scholars Bryan Cheyette and Nadia Valman, among others, have reconsidered the many permutations of anti-semitism in England rooted in foundational narratives of European liberal culture (Cheyette & Valman 1). In particular, liberalism’s great feat of the modern period was the secularization of the state and the declaration of religious tolerance. However, the Jewish community’s efforts to be recognized as citizens took decades of negotiation and then decades more for even the partial removal of civil disabilities.

Most nineteenth-century histories of Anglo-Jewry mark Jewish emancipation with Thomas Babington Macaulay's speech in 1829 to the House of Commons, which is widely considered the turning of the tide in favor of the Jewish emancipation bill; however, the bill Macaulay proposed was not passed for another thirty years (Galchinsky 54-5). The emancipation of Catholics and the Second Reform Bill (1832) set the precedent for expanding the franchise to more of England’s diverse citizens, but even after the Jewish Relief Act, the question of the legality of Jewish citizenry became secondary to xenophobic arguments about whether Jews should be allowed to fully assimilate because of their religious and cultural differences. In 1858, the Jewish Relief

Act finally passed and legalized the official removal of civil disabilities, but only for some Jews in England. Jewish emancipation was “achieved” in England but it took years to implement and was not universally applied—as there were still class and gender restrictions on rights to representation.

By the 1860s and 70s, the opponents of Jewish assimilation cloaked their old antisemitism in the garb of new race science, which used the empirical data of physiognomy and phrenology to map the bodies of "the races of men" and reinforce imperial hierarchies and social Darwinian models. But, in the second half of the nineteenth century, Iveta Jusova argues, these scientific methods were intertwined with new technologies that facilitated the biopolitical aspirations of the imperial state: "Victorian science was invoked to distinguish between 'those who must live and those who must die' within the nation--between those who presumably did and those who did not pose a threat to the "quality" of the nation's population" (Jusova 8-9)⁹. Galton's composite photography along with Cesare Lombroso's new science of criminology are two examples of new race science techniques that facilitated this new European-liberal state perspective of individuals, particularly because of the way it textualized the body as a set of verifiable data (Thomas 21-22). Whether the angle of the brow or the frequency of the pulse, the technique of composite photography or the lie detector, these new technologies embedded and normalized the state's ability and right to regulate the

⁹ Jusova builds her argument upon Ann Stoler's work, which considers the extension of Michel Foucault's biopolitics within the context of new technologies of empire. See Ann Stoler's *Race and Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*. Duke University Press, 1995.

reproduction of "fit" and "unfit" bodies. Still, it is important to note that these technologies betray the cultural logics that first made their existence possible.

Cheyette and Valman's *The Image of the 'Jew' in European Liberal Culture* explores how representations of Jewishness and the Jewish Question were a product of European liberal culture confronting the challenges of modernity and an increasingly unstable empire. According to Galton, the composite method is capable of confronting these issues because of its unique relationship to time and detail: the method more "accurately" presents "past historical figures" and predicts "future" types, and it can smooth over the particulars of context to create the transhistorical abstract portrait. For Galton, the ability to change the historical record and forecast the future was integral to national progress because it naturalized and, thus, secured a narrative of British cultural and racial superiority. In 1878, as Daniel Novak notes, the belief in photography as an objective science was not universal (*Realism* 4-7). Considering this, it is significant that Galton's creation of a new scientific form of photographic technique was featured in the journal *Nature* and separated from other "less scientific" photographic techniques of the period, including stereoscopes, prisms, and even mirrors. This detail offers insight into which discourses contributed to the shift in the use of photography to a scientific technology critical to British national identity and progress. One way Galton encouraged this shift is with his claim that the alternate methods of stereoscopes and mirrors failed to remove the individual details and did not provide a mechanism for averaging photos into a statistical body or type.

In a 2012 article, Martin Danahay argues that Galton's thinking and entire career was motivated by what he terms "Bio-optimism," "a view of biology that tried to read evolution solely in terms of cooperation and progress" (Danahay 472). Bio-optimism, therefore, mixed two key strains of liberal progress and imperialism's "civilizing mission" to create the perspective of "dangerous classes" as a national liability that must be managed for the sake of national progress. These dual purposes of national progress are possible because of the ways that Bio-optimism obscures the violence implicit in universals by delineating the "best way" through phrases like "national interest" or for good of the species. Galton's new race science, Eugenics, and composite photography were the practical extension of such bio-optimist thinking: he could use his composite experiments to argue for the humane goal of eradicating sickness, pain, and suffering by institutionalizing inhumane methods and criteria of desirable, beneficial traits of the "fitter" species that should reproduce and the sterilization of those "less fit" (471). Galton's typology merges the existing imperial discourses with liberal ideology into a bio-optimist perspective of the English nation that hinges its success, much like composite photography, on its ability to reduce the subject to a statistical average of features or data. As Galton notes, the "portrait of a type" facilitates not only the knowledge of the "different races of men" but confirms their racial identity and circumscribes their appropriate place and participation in the nation.

Although the term eugenics was not used in his 1878 article in *Nature*, Galton's description of his preliminary findings bears within it the tacit assumption that the progress of the nation is dependent upon the state's ability to manage the future

reproduction of its citizens. The invention of the composite method and new racial typologies were an important site where the paradox of liberal tolerance and imperialism met. Stacked like a “pack of cards,” Galton transformed the “individual” portraits of criminals, women, and immigrant Jews into a singular type that fit the bio-optimist narrative of national progress, insisting that typologies helped contain and manage dangerous others to the benefit of the British Empire.

The Jewish Question & the Composite Photographic Logic of Liberalism

During the same month as Galton’s 1878 article in *Nature*, Goldwin Smith, a British historian and well-known Victorian liberal, published an article titled “Can Jews be Patriots?” in *The Nineteenth Century* that cited the irreconcilability of the Jewish people into English social and political institutions because they were a “race apart” (Smith 223). Smith argued that Jews, interestingly enough, should be excluded because they separate themselves, or opt out of the English nation, because they “refuse” to intermarry (225). Smith argued that only through radical assimilation through intermarriage and the gradual intermixing of blood could the Jewish people profess to be true patriots of an English and not a Jewish nation (226). Like Galton’s early composite photographs of criminals, Smith sees the Jewish community as a threat to the stability of the nation, citing their communal structures and religion as a “political danger” (225). And like Galton, Smith’s solution to the Jewish Question in England is the management of its citizens’ future sexual reproduction. The radical solution calls for the dissolution of

all that is “specially [sic] Jewish and plutopolitan¹⁰” through a proposed assault on the Jewish body. Smith rails against religious tolerance that is “identified with the race” because “a Jew is not an Englishman or Frenchman holding particular theological tenets: he is a Jew, with a special deity for his own race” that supersedes an “allegiance to humanity” (225).

Smith’s views illustrate the parameters of British liberal culture that paradoxically supported tolerance for those willing to acknowledge the universals of the liberal-state over and against any other universal belief system. Smith’s intolerance did not go unnoticed; his contemporaries were quick to mark his views as contrary to liberalism’s tolerance for religious difference. Chief Rabbi Hermann Adler publically responded to the particulars of Smith’s argument on multiple occasions and in one of his last responses summarizes Smith’s “‘panacea’ as equivalent to “I will tolerate you Jews...when you cease to be Jews; I will tolerate your religion when you reject it” (227). Adler recognizes the faulty logic of Smith’s argument and engages him point for point, a public and printed dialogue which has historically made up the core tenants of the Jewish Question debate.

Their exchange, widely read, had a transnational audience and special relevance in America, where Rev. Dr. Isaac Schwab published a pamphlet of the same name, “Can the Jews Be Patriots?: An Historical Study,” in New York in 1878. In this lengthy response to Smith’s claims Schwab shifts the debate from “Can the Jews be Patriots?” to “What is a country?” (Schwab 6). Schwab reframes the question of liberal tolerance by invoking the very core tenets of classic liberalism—that man leaves a “state of nature”

¹⁰ Smith’s own word-ism.

and enters into society in order to secure one's property—and that this contract between “inhabitants by the ties of common laws and human rights makes their surroundings their country, may they differ ever so widely from one another in their religious persuasions” (6). Schwab goes on to argue: “[n]or should the national descent, foreign or native, or the relations of race and the peculiar complexion, be made a test of one's attachment to one's country,” insisting that Jews and non-Jews are patriotic because they imagine their well-being as bound up in the well-being of the state and not because they fit a specific racial or religious profile (7). Schwab, like several others, was able to use the tenants of liberalism to justify their claims to citizenry, but had to do so carefully to avoid the danger of liberalism's homogenizing “best way” of life (Gray 2). By 1880, new waves of Jewish immigration brought different challenges to the Jewish Question debate. With increasing nationalist movements in Europe and pogroms in Russia, Anglo Jewry had to develop a new response to liberalism's claim on a best way of life with regard to the assimilation of Jewish immigrants and use their resources to manage the public opinion of thousands of predominantly Russian and Eastern European Jewish refugees showing up on England's doorstep.

Creating the Jewish Type

“It is time,” Jacobs wrote in 1881, “that the English public should become aware of the character and extent of the persecutions which the Jews of Russia have undergone during the past year” (“Persecution” 2). In an eighty-page pamphlet with an appendix and maps, Jacobs details the horrors that have “ravaged” the Pale “of which people outside

that country have not the faintest conception” (2). A journalist, historian, literary critic, sociologist and folklorist just to name a few of his many titles, Joseph Jacobs was a prominent advocate of Jewish immigrants and refugees during the fin-de-siècle. He was also a well-respected voice in the Anglo-Jewish community, both in England and America. Born in Sydney, Australia in 1854 to English Jews, Jacobs moved to Cambridge to attend St. John's College in 1873 and later, after not securing a fellowship position at Cambridge, he studied anthropology and statistics with Sir Francis Galton in the 1880s (Bernstein 26; Novak 100).

Having sketched an outline of the historical contexts of the Jewish Question, I will now focus on how those contexts came to bear on the actual details of Jacobs's work with Galton and the creation of the “Jewish type.” Novak's *Realism, Photography and Nineteenth Century Fiction* (2008), provides an extensive description and analysis of Galton and Jacobs's collaboration, the details of the composite method, and the points of tension in the analysis of the results. I want to extend Novak's work to better understand how the new pressures and dynamics of the Jewish Question brought on by increased immigration shaped Jacobs's work with Galton and his unique response to race science and composite photography. As previously noted, Jacobs worked with Galton beginning in the 1880s, around the same time as his articles on Jewish persecution in Russia were circulating. When Jacobs commissioned the “Jewish Type” in 1883, he was the one who selected the specimens and took the portraits of the Jewish boys at the Jews' Free School in Spitalfields, one of the main charitable institutions to help new immigrant and poor children assimilate (Bernstein 26).

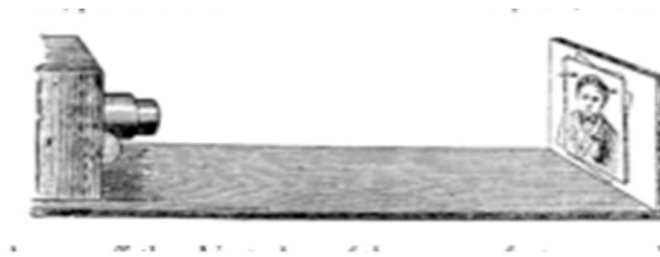


Figure 4: Galton 1878: 97.

The portraits were then “compound[ed]” by Galton by lining them up like a “pack of cards” and exposing each photo to the same sensitized plate for equal amount of time (Galton 98). Jacobs wanted to isolate the “Jewish expression,” the universal quality of Jewishness that was elusive but also critical to defining the community. Jacobs’s analysis of the composites was shaped by the terms of the Jewish Question in that he assumed the task of revising stereotypes about the inferiority of the Jewish race and their ambivalent place within the nation.

Jacobs was familiar with Galton’s work on the criminal type and current trends and debates within the new field of race science. In response to these narratives, Jacobs decided to further collaborate with Galton and design an experiment to disprove what he found to be race scientists’s penchant for anti-Semitic stereotypes (Novak 60). As a complement rather than contradiction to his work to help Jewish refugees, Jacobs believed Galton’s composite method had important political stakes for the Anglo-Jewish community. With increasing persecution in the Pale, Jacobs was troubled by the English representations of Jewish immigrants as criminals or vagrants that, according to social

Darwinism, had no future in England. Cesare Lombroso, Jewish Italian criminologist, was also concerned by the ‘antisemitism’ of racial typologies and refuted the existence of a “Jewish type,” insisting instead “there was no single Jewish race” (Cheyette & Valman 98). But Jacobs saw the “Jewish type” as an opportunity to beat “anti-semitic” race scientists using their own terms and technique, composite photography, to ward off attacks on the growing Jewish community in England (Bernstein 26).

The second political stake was in the Anglo-Jewish community itself. Jacobs was very aware that the Jewish community was, in fact, not a singular community at all; however, he did realize, and perhaps tried to politicize, the benefits of representing them as one. More specifically, Jacobs thought it was critical to the wellbeing of the refugees to show that the two main cultural, ethnic, and class divisions of the Anglo-Jewish community could be distilled into a common racial identity (*Racial* 24-5). In 1878, the Anglo-Jewish community was primarily composed of Sephardic Jews, or Jews of Spanish or Mediterranean descent, and German and Dutch Jews that were firmly middle-class and had widely integrated into the political and financial institutions of England since 1858¹¹. But during the mid-to-late nineteenth century, the modern “Hep-Hep” riots and pogroms in Russia and Germany created an influx of Ashkenazi, Jews of Russian and Eastern European descent, into London that threatened to destabilize the established Anglo-Jewish relationships with their English compatriots. By the 1880s, the surge of 150,000 predominantly Ashkenazi Jews shifted the demographics of Anglo-Jewry and caused

¹¹ This is the year Lionel de Rothschild was the first person of Jewish faith to enter the House of Commons as an elected member of Parliament without having to take the Christian preamble of the parliamentary oath (Marcolli 117).

tension between the Sephardim and their more orthodox coreligionists. However, despite deep cultural differences, the real tension was overwhelmingly class-based, as many of the immigrants were involved in trade or were “destitute” upon arrival (Marcolli 117). Anglo-Jewish writers described this class-division in terms of East and West. The wealthy London West End and the proletarian Jewish East End “ghetto” characterized by sweatshops and beggary came to symbolize the two divergent communities (118).

Therefore, Jacobs’s experiment attempted to bridge the communal divides with an ideal “Jewish Type” that would fuse a biological Jewish “race” with a secular and universal “Jewish expression” that could unseat local particularities and the variations in Jewish religious affiliation (Novak 68-69). Jacobs used the technology of composite photography to show that the Sephardim and Ashkenazi were in fact part of the same race (*Racial* 25). He gave Anglo-Jewry a literal image of a common past, a picture “more like Spinoza,” and an ideal type that “was more Jewish than the individual portraits,” a composite image of a corporate but not yet realized future national body (70). Jacobs’s response to the Jewish Question with the “Jewish Type” seemed to brilliantly side-step the controversy over religious affiliation and intermarriage by again changing the terms of the debate. A secular “Jewish Type” scientifically vetted as not dangerous but as a complimentary race to the Aryan/Teutonic races upset the religion-only argument and galvanized an ethnic/racial identity for those non-practicing Jews to negotiate for their political rights as Jews. It was a win-win solution for Anglo-Jewry, or so it seemed.

Jacobs opened the composite method and typologies up for debate in his article in the *Photographic News*, where he deviates from Galton’s interpretation of the composite

portraits. With scientific precision, Jacobs made clear his contrasting viewpoints of the portraits, exchanging stereotypes of hooked noses with a more exact phrases of “accentuat[ed] and flexib[le] nostrils” (Jacobs 268). Seeing all “10 Jewish boys ‘rolled into one,’ the shape of the nose [was] markedly blurred showing there [was] no uniformity” (268). Instead, Jacobs saw uniformity in another facial feature: the “Jewish eyes” (268). For Jacobs, Jewish eyes, “[t]he size, brilliance, and darkness of the iris,” and accentuated “nostrils” made up the entirety of “Jewish expression,” so much so that he perceived the composite portraits were more Jewish than any of the individual portraits (268). Replacing negative stereotypes, Jacobs used composite photographic techniques to recode the physiognomy of stereotypical images of “the Jew.”

The method importantly opened old data for new interpretation. Even if Jacobs conceded the “cold scanning gaze” Galton described in older male Jews (Composite D), he did not miss the opportunity to shift the narrative. Insisting that those who displayed such looks were those “who have had to fight a hard battle of life by that early age,” Jacobs brought historical inequalities and the history of the Jewish diaspora to bear on the new portraits by crafting his own bio-optimist narrative of Jewish identity (243;268). Jacobs interpreted the composite photographs as evidence of the Jewish community’s endurance and racial purity. Although highly problematic, Jacobs recast the young Jewish immigrant boy (Composite A) as “something more like a dreamer and thinker than a merchant,” who, given better circumstances, could flourish as well as any English child (268). Composite A, Jacobs fondly describes, “reminds [him] of several Jewish

youngsters of my acquaintance,¹² and might be taken for a slightly blurred photograph of any of them” (268).

In the very act of appropriating the portrait data in his analysis, Jacobs highlights the weaknesses of typological thinking—the construction process, the inconsistent means of identifying "dominant traits" and, most importantly, the subjective qualities present in the development of scientific systems. Jacobs's disagreement with Galton on what counted as “Jewish expression” deconstructed the objectivity of the camera's gaze and emphasized how the subjective perspective of the photographer or the analyst could be used for a variety of purposes. Hence, Jacobs notes the anti-Semitic potential of the "type" in the wrong hands to reinforce negative stereotypes under the guise of scientific authority. The imprecise science of composite photography raised the complex challenges of the Jewish Question in a new arena. As a photographic technique for ordering society, composite photography was the product of an already existent cultural formation of liberal ideology and British imperialism. Composite photography ironically displayed liberalism's homogenizing logic as it was exercised in the name of national progress; however, because its method laid bare the artificial, subjective process, composite photography was also a method that undermined its own authority, as multiple interpretations were possible.

¹² Ironically, some thirty-three years later, Israel Zangwill's eulogy of Jacobs recounts the fact that Louis Zangwill, his younger brother, was one of the more prominent faces of the young school boys, presumably Composite A. The relevance of this relationship will be discussed later in the chapter.

As I have already discussed, the Anglo-Jewish community was acutely aware of the double gesture of liberal tolerance. The Jewish Question was fundamentally a discourse about the problems with liberalism, the inequitable politics of Jewish assimilation and the tensions that ensued when assimilationist strategies and tactics were exposed as colonial policies of containment. What Israel Zangwill would later call "Anglicization" was the well-known unequal assimilation of the minority Jewish community into the majority of the British body-politic, which sought to sanitize, reeducate, and contain the Jewish immigrant population in London without extending the promises of liberal tolerance to them. The "Jewish type," therefore, was the new rhetorical strategy to both invoke and undermine liberal notions of progress and national identity. It could be used to articulate the limits of liberal tolerance as it was used to further "Anglicization" as a type of "progress" through institutions like the Jews' Free School, but it could also be used to unite a diverse and divided Jewish community with varying religious and cultural interests. In the latter case, the terms by which Jewish collective identity would be consolidated through a Jewish type was reappropriated by Political Zionists in 1897, albeit in reductive and potentially harmful ways.

But as Jacobs shows, the influx of immigrants forced the community to develop new ways to coordinate various forms of Jewish particularity and make concessions as well as manage the image of the "Ghetto" of East End London as it was juxtaposed with the wealthy West Enders. Assimilation was middle-class Anglo-Jewry's status quo. Between the Jewish Board of Guardians, the Jews' Free Schools, and other charitable organizations created for the physical and cultural re-education of new immigrants, West

End Jewry remained committed to a program of Anglicization; they were invested in an Anglo-Jewish rather than an independent Jewish identity. Such programs implemented a similar kind of composite photographic liberal logic that sought to reform the immigrants into proper subjects of the British Empire, offering them sanctuary and resources for their public adherence to dominant cultural norms.

The composite photographic method reinforces the problem of liberal tolerance but it also calls attention to the discursive trap door by highlighting *visually* the palimpsest of the individual in the type, thus, undermining the method. The composite portrait relies on not only a “mechanics of likeness”—as if assimilation techniques ever really worked to create homogeneity—but also on the visual *appearance* of likeness. In this way, composite photography is the clumsy sleight-of-hand trick that fails to smooth over liberalism’s paradoxes. Therefore, as the composite image presumably dissolves the particularities of each Jewish portrait into an abstract, ideal type, Jacobs follows Galton’s bio-optimist trajectory and uses the composite method to reframe the history of Jewish persecution, to see “Spinoza as a lad,” and also gesture toward the future potential of the “dreamer or thinker [rather] than merchant” as a way to project an abstract, fictional body and unite the not yet realized “heterogeneous body-politic of Israel as an organic whole through a body that is not a body”¹³ (Novak 60).

¹³ However, Novak’s allusion to composite photography’s effect on later forms of Jewish nationalism is left unexplored, perhaps simply beyond the scope of his project. For Novak, the trajectory from Eliot to Jacobs focuses on the problems of liberalism’s “mechanics of likeness” that Eliot argues is the cause for “the Modern Hep! Hep! Hep!” in her essay of the same title in 1879, just a year after Galton’s new composite method; Novak shows how Eliot’s insistence on liberal tolerance depends on “a deeper likeness” a common ground she presumes can transcend racial or cultural “peculiarity.” Eliot’s

Many historians—and Anglo-Jewish literary scholars alike—have made convincing cases for the ways in which liberalism’s infrastructure is dialectical by balancing the progress of the nation on the negotiation of universal claims and a tolerance for plural value systems. So, instead, I hope exploring the contexts of these specific negotiations allows us to zoom out and expand the frame by shifting the focus onto how composite photography and its problematic logic continued to shape how Anglo-Jewish writers imagined their Jewishness, both individual and collective, during the late-nineteenth century. Coming full circle, I have shown that Galton and Jacobs’s divergent opinions about the "Jewish type" underscore the problems with the composite photographic method, but more importantly, I have shown that composite photography and its flawed logic played an important role in giving the Anglo-Jewish community a new way to articulate the problems of liberal intolerance. In Galton and Jacobs’s attempt to produce the "Jewish type" through a radical assimilation of individual portraits, they made visible the problematic premises of a liberal tolerance based on a mechanics of "likeness" that perpetuated the chimerical processes of Anglicization for Jews in England.

The composite photographic process, indeed a form of "science fiction," facilitated this new approach to Jewish collective identity as envisioned through a liberal state paradigm (Novak 60). More specifically, to appease demands for the assimilation of Jews into proper citizens, Jacobs’s use of composite photography mirrors the premise that only through the dissolution of difference could the Jewish body find a place within the

argument resonates with what I am arguing is in line with Galton's composite photographic logic--a logic that has a particular valence for the Jewish Question well before *Daniel Deronda* in 1876.

nation and/or become a nation. This approach did not unsettle any of the liberal premises of progress-through-assimilation viewpoints and sent a message to the Anglo-Jewish community that Jewishness had to be united into a common, singular identity in order to have a future at all. This variation of a “bio-optimist” narrative about Jewish racial identity ended up playing an important role in debates about Jewish collective identity in Victorian England, specifically in variations of Theodore Herzl’s political Zionist formula.

While Jacobs’s work with Galton is most certainly not revolutionary in its acceptance of the premises of race science or liberal-state perspectives of individuals, Jacobs’s work was novel in his appropriation of technological methods to intervene in the discourse of racial typologies. Jacobs deterritorialized, or interrupted, the context of racial typological discourses with his reappropriation of the scientific narrative. Even if the new narrative reproduced some of the same troubling ideas about the legitimacy of racial hierarchies, the fact that Jacobs showed the narrative could be interrupted by applying the technological method to work towards a counter-discourse of Jewishness and Jewish collective identity was significant. Although Jacobs's "Jewish type" is quickly reabsorbed by the dominant discourses about "the Jew," he exposed the potential of the camera, the photograph, and the reproduction of these images to shift the grounds of the debate on the Jewish question. In other words, Jacobs's use of composite photography to negotiate a new narrative about the Jewish community is important because it diversified the grounds of debate and established the "technology of the age" as the new lingua franca to effectively engage the Jewish Question. Anglo-Jewish writers like Amy Levy and Israel

Zangwill, among others, realized this shift and engaged the new technological method to develop their own ways of talking about and visualizing the problematic composite photographic logic of liberal tolerance.

Photography and Three-sided Mirrors—The Woman & Jewish Questions

Let me in conclusion recommend...any photographer who intends taking up composite portraiture, to try his hand—but not his ‘prentice hand—on composites of Jewesses. I am inclined to think that there is less variation in Jewesses than in Jews, so that the composite ought to be even more individual. Besides, in their case portraits can be taken at a later age without fear that any part of the face will be concealed from view, and we should thus be able to study the features when more set than in the case of the Jewish lads. The enterprising photographer who adopts my suggestion need have no anxiety about procuring components. I make bold to assert that my fair co-religionists are as constant visitors to photographic studios as any class of her Majesty’s subjects.

--Joseph Jacobs, “The Jewish Type, and Galton’s Composite Photographs.”
Photographic News (April 1885)

The above quote is from Jacobs’s final paragraph about the “Jewish Type,” and he uses the final inches of his analysis to recommend the “enterprising photographer” to compound composites of “Jewesses” (Jacobs 269). Jacobs also takes this opportunity to address his English readers’ assumptions about the Jewish community’s treatment of women—whether they are veiled or cloistered within the community. Jacobs insists on their modernity by explaining that they are “constant visitors to photographic studios,” circulating in the public social sphere as well as in print because for Jacobs, the Jewess was a ready-made type, with little variation (269). Whether anyone created composites of Jewesses is unknown to me; however, Amy Levy, as I will show uses her first two novels to engage the discourse of composite photography and the “Jewish type” through the discursive lens of the Woman Question which, I hold, she sees as vital to disrupting the

typological narratives about women and Jews. As recent scholarship has shown, Levy offers an important perspective on some of the problems with the pervading bio-optimist narratives about Anglo-Jewish identity, especially as they relate to gender and class.

As mentioned in previous chapters, Levy experienced firsthand the difficulties of assimilating into a predominantly non-Jewish and male university and learned very quickly the limits of liberal tolerance. Bernstein's research on Levy's personal letters reveals that Levy was aware of Jacobs's status while he was at Cambridge, as she wrote to her mother that he was "try[ing] for his fellowship" and was ultimately rejected because he was a Jew (Bernstein 26). It is no far stretch of the imagination, then, to assume that Levy was not only familiar with Jacobs but also with his work with Galton on the Jewish type, especially the well-known composite photographs. Bernstein also notes that Levy's intimate circle of friends "viewed [eugenics] as an antidote to degeneration, the morbid deterioration of racial groups" and that "many of Levy's contemporaries and acquaintances were eugenicists, including Jacobs, who she knew slightly and Grant Allen, a better acquaintance of hers" ('Mongrel Words' 218). Levy's familiarity with such perspectives plays an important role in helping her define her own approach to the composite photographic logic of liberal culture and the failures of liberal tolerance.

Like Jacobs, Levy used photography, albeit in different ways, to negotiate and critique existing narratives about minority identities, including women's and Jewish identities and their place within English society. For Jacobs, photography provided the mechanism and rhetoric to transform negative racial typologies into new "positive"

narratives about the Jewish community. For Levy, photography was "a motif for nineteenth-century debates around art and technology" but also, according to her own writing, a technological method of potentiality ("Introduction" 11). Levy saw the camera and photographic process as a pivotal technology of perception that could construct specific narratives about individuals and their place within the nation; but, more importantly, the camera was also capable of deconstructing the very narratives it facilitated. Since the early 2000s, literary scholarship has emphasized the way Levy deconstructs her readers's assumptions about the narrator/author relationship by destabilizing traditional conventions of points of view. For example, Gail Cunningham hinges her own reparative argument of Levy's short story career on the writer's unstable narrators and shifting points of view, insisting that to align her narrators' opinions with the author produces problematic readings (Cunningham 86-7). Susan David Bernstein, Cynthia Scheinberg, Naomi Hetherington, and Linda Hunt Beckman all foreground Levy's unconventional, shifting but productive use of point-of-view to unsettle a linear narrative structure throughout her works.

In this section, I argue that Levy's deconstruction of the narrative conventions of the novel can be read as an engagement with the aesthetics and politics of photography. In particular, I read Levy's engagement with photography and then the "Jewish type" as a way to highlight the problems with composite photographic (i.e., eugenicist) logic that also found expression in the representations of women and Jews. Bernstein describes Levy's double critique of eugenicist and liberal discourses as best evidenced by her use of free indirect discourse as a way of "diluting borders between narrator and character,"

which disallows “any unified perspective on authentic Jewish identity, and by extension, authentic Englishness” (Bernstein 36-7). Building on Bernstein’s analysis of Levy’s first two novels, *Romance of a Shop* (1889) and *Reuben Sachs: A Sketch* (1889), I argue that Levy’s interest in the constructedness of boundaries and typologies is what makes photography and the camera an invaluable part of her methodology. In an almost Deleuzian fashion, Levy’s understanding of the apparatus, the camera, anticipates Deleuze’s argument that the camera was “a machine of expression that [was] capable of disorganizing its own forms, of disorganizing the forms of content, so as to free up an intense material of expression” (Deleuze xvii). Levy’s awareness of this productive capacity of the camera’s apparatus to undermine the discourse of liberalism’s universal claims about the individual and national progress is evidenced in her first novel, *A Romance of a Shop* (1888). In *A Romance of a Shop* (1888), I argue Levy takes a cue from Jacobs’s engagement with the “Jewish Type” to call liberalism’s bluff on the Woman Question and destabilize the perception of woman as a “type” and the presumed uniformity of their interests. In her second novel, *Ruben Sachs: A Sketch*, published just three months later in January of 1889, Levy raises explicit questions about the “Jewish Type” by building on her previous criticism of “types” as reductive and yet critical to the maintenance of the cultural and social order of English society and the British empire.

To start, *The Romance of a Shop* was published in late 1888 and tells the story of four sisters, the Lorimers, who open a photography studio to support themselves after their father’s unexpected death. Gertrude and Lucy, the middle siblings, start their photography business with their father’s old equipment and training from their father’s

friend, Mr. Russell. Russell even teaches Lucy and Gertrude the chemical processes and how to print and roll their own stereoscopes rather than having to pay for a printer's service. In short, the sisters are legitimated as professionals by their signatory residence at 23 Baker Street, the home of all self-made, self-authorized professionals¹⁴. Throughout the novel, Gertrude's work as a photographer opens new spaces and relationships that would otherwise be off-limits to a middle-class woman, in particular the omnibus, galleries, studios and bedrooms¹⁵ in the homes of Lords. Additionally, the reader is positioned by the limited and later omniscient narrator(s) to see in the Lorimers' story for survival in the public market place as the "old, old story...a strife of type and type, of class and class, rather than individuals" that were unfairly bound by gender expectations they could not afford (131). In strikingly similar language to Galton's description of his composites, Levy's narrator frames the central conflict of the novel as typological v. individual.

¹⁴ Levy's reference to Holmes seems appropriate since the "woman" tout court is the only "type" to have ever slipped through his grasp because the "criminal," Irene, disguised herself through cross-dressing across gender and class lines. Holmes payment in *The Scandal of Bohemia* is after all a photograph of "the woman." It seems that Levy's nod to the "type" master's one career failure is heightened by the fact that these women are photographers. The ability of photographs to extend or challenge narratives about the gender and class of the subjects is highlighted in the case of Holmes and troubled in the case of the Lorimers as not simply the objects of the male gaze but in many ways her characters are the ones looking back.

¹⁵ One of the first professional jobs the Lorimers receive is to "photograph a dead person," Lady Watergate. Gertrude is called into the interior of the palatial Sussex Place to photograph the body and also encounters Lord Watergate where "for one brief, but vivid moment, her eyes encountered the glance of two miserable grey eyes...[that together with his mournful face] formed a picture which imprinted itself as by a flash on Gertrude's overwrought consciousness" (87) This encounter forms the basis for Gertrude and Watergate's relationship, and she goes on to marry him at the end of the novel.

Levy vividly describes the ways Gertrude feels this conflict as she moves through the city and throughout the novel, but unlike the narrator of the story who can provide that typological framework, Gertrude is unable to articulate the process of interpolation on her own. Instead, Levy's use of free indirect discourse reframes what Gertrude feels, narrating beyond Gertrude's consciousness. For example, when a wealthy aesthete, Darrell Sydney first "looks" at Gertrude while she is photographing one of his oil paintings, Gertrude "suddenly [becomes] conscious that her hat was shabby, that her boots were patched and clumsy... What was there in this man's gaze that made her, all at once, feel old and awkward, ridiculous and dowdy; that made her long to snatch up her heavy camera and flee from his presence, never to return?" (107). The use of rhetorical questioning frames Gertrude's experience of Darrell's gaze as a moment of class-consciousness and self-discipline. And yet, Levy adds another layer with a shift in the narrator or separate sensible narrator's interjection that questions the first narrator's interpretation: "What, indeed? Gertrude we know, had a vivid imagination, and that perhaps was responsible for the sense of oppression, defiance and self-distrust" (107). Levy plays with the narration in this instance to make visible the process of interpolation of subjects' class and gender identities: Gertrude "found herself beginning to take part not only against herself but also against the type of woman to which she belonged" specifically loathing her place as a "public" working woman but also as a woman who is "cowed" by a man's "indifferent politeness" (107). Rather than disrupt narratives of identity, Levy exposes how the camera compounds them within multiple hierarchies; whether gender or class or even aesthetic hierarchies—Darrell's original work of art and

Gertrude's photograph of the painting—Levy crafts the novel to further dramatize the intricate webs of oppression for women and the lower-classes bound to the pre-molded forms of legible “type” identities.

Even so, Levy carefully uses the Lorimer sisters to critique and exceed the boundaries of types. In the span of a paragraph, Levy shifts point-of-view and challenges her reader to consider how they read the Lorimers: do we see the characters as “types” or discrete individuals with their own narrative arc? Bernstein argues this point in her introduction to *A Romance of a Shop*, suggesting that Levy uses Gertrude as a variation of the “new public woman”; Fanny and Phyllis as bookends of the Victorian binary of “‘the angel in the house’ and the fallen woman all to offer more mixed portraits of modern femininity” (40). Where Gertrude leaves the artist's studio “with a desponding sense that she had no right to her existence,” Phyllis escapes into the studio for an affair with Darrell even though she knows he is married (176). Here the narrator holds two presumably incompatible visions of femininity in tension—insisting that modern femininity is irreconcilable. Each sister may pair off in the novel, but the differences exceed “types” as each woman represents complex, competing and diverging interests that are perhaps only united by the common enterprise of their mutual subsistence on the photography studio.

If Jacobs was able to utilize photography to replace old typologies with new ones by exposing the subjective nature of the composite, Levy's novel exposes how the composite photographic logic of “types” functions along gender lines that could not be revised using a composite model of identity. Levy's characters exceed and cross

boundaries in ways that are far more slippery than Jacobs concedes women or “Jewesses” can be. Whether in front of or behind the camera’s lens, Levy crafts her “public women” to show the multiple ways the violence of “type” constructions are culturally embedded and enacted through the minutiae of everyday life. Levy pairs gender and racial exclusion with the discourse of photography and the medium of the camera in her first novel, *A Romance of a Shop* (1888), and introduces a counter-model of identity, the literary “mirror photograph,” in her second novel *Ruben Sachs* (1889). As these texts were practically written in tandem, I find it useful to consider how they together offer a critical perspective of Jacobs’s “Jewish type” and foreground the problems with the composite photographic “logic” of types for the Anglo-Jewish community.

Undeniably, Levy’s most controversial novel, *Ruben Sachs: A Sketch* (1889), offers an unconventional satirization of Jewish and English society that cost Levy her literary career. While the novel does not address composite photography explicitly, it strongly critiques Anglo-Jewry’s acceptance of what I term the composite photographic logic of liberalism through radical forms of assimilation. Again, Levy destabilizes generic conventions: *Rueben Sachs*’s narrator assumes the antagonistic, skeptic persona that pops up in *The Romance of a Shop*. Yet, *Ruben Sachs* explicitly traces the story of two Jewish characters, an assimilated, politically ambitious man named Ruben Sachs, and an emotionally, underdeveloped young Sephardic woman named Judith Quixano.

Ruben Sachs, as can be imagined, was not well received by Anglo-Jewry, as it ironically reproduced a slew of the most “vulgar” stereotypes about West End Jews from the position of an ambivalent and, at worst, unsympathetic narrator. I read *Reuben Sachs*’

vulgar representations of Jews not as evidence of Sander Gilman's Jewish "self-hatred," but as an extension of Levy's critique of such typological discourses. Bernstein's essay "Mongrel Words: Amy Levy's Jewish Vulgarities," convincingly proves that Levy consciously manipulates "'vulgarity,' [as an aesthetic category of impure, mixed, hybrid identity] to shore up her critique of sexism within Anglo-Jewish culture. But more often, [Levy shows how] these combinations expose the asymmetrical strands of different equations of Jewishness" (Bernstein 136). Valman concurs that *Reuben Sachs*, as a feminist novel, foregrounds several issues relevant to the Woman Question debates; however, she argues, Levy achieves this only by reproducing Evangelical conversionist stereotypes about Jews and Jewesses (Valman 91). And while I agree with these arguments, I think Valman's reading of Levy's work falls short when held up to the rest of Bernstein's argument, which is that "the idea of vulgarity is crucial to the logic of stereotypes, and Levy's multiple uses of vulgarity challenge the discourse of a unified Jewish identity in Victorian culture" (Bernstein 136). Taking this argument one step further, I will offer another crucial example of how Levy engages Jacobs's work on the Jewish type and the Jewess in her representations of Reuben and Judith.

From the outset of the novel, Levy deconstructs Jacobs's ideal "Jewish type," by presenting Reuben as the "dreamer or thinker," who is also physically fragile and weak, he is almost as disembodied and self-reflexive as a composite portrait. To achieve this new "portrait," Levy again relies on point of view. She slides from Judith's thoughts to third-person-limited and even second-person perspective narrators. Like a prism, Levy reflects portrayals of Reuben through the thoughts of other characters' perception of him:

Judith's perspective of Reuben and Reuben's perspective of Judith contrast sharply with Bertie-Lee Harrison's view of both Judith and Reuben. Each perspective interprets the other through a ready-made "typological" identity that good or bad, reduces the other to a fiction. In this way, I argue, Levy deconstructs the composite method of "type" making through literary impressions of her characters' subjective perspectives—each character's portrait of another character is exposed for a fraction of the narrative. Whether vulgar or ideal portraits, we find that the multiple permutations and variations of their Jewishness blur the whole picture such that the only commonality is that all Jewish characters are Jewish in a way that is not consistent, stable or translatable.

Responding to the composite logic of types, Levy offers descriptive physiognomic portraits of each of her main characters that are strikingly similar to Joseph Jacobs's description of Jewish faces. When first introduced to Judith Quixano we glimpse the ideal form of Jacobs's unwavering and unchanging Jewess:

She was twenty-two years of age, in the very prime of her youth and beauty; a tall, regal-looking creature, with an exquisite dark head, features like those of a face cut on gem or cameo, and wonderful, lustrous, mournful eyes, entirely out of keeping with the accepted characteristics of their owner. Her smooth, oval cheek glowed with a rich, yet subdued, hue of perfect health. (*Reuben Sachs* 62)

Like the other Jewesses described before her, Levy hyperbolizes the fullness and shine of their eyes in much the same fashion as Jacobs, who insisted eyes were the most telling aspect of Jewish expression. These subjective characteristics of "glittering eyes," "melancholy eyes," invoke the "Jewish type" as a way to subsequently challenge its continuity. If Judith is Jacobs's ideal Jewess, it is also because she is at first sight "unconscious" of herself and her "outlook on life was of the narrowest; of the world, of

London, of society beyond her own set, it may be said that she had seen nothing at first hand; had looked at it all, not with her own eyes, but with the eyes of Reuben Sachs” (63).

Reuben Sachs, on the other hand was Jacobs’s ideal type, according to the narrator, the “heavy dreaminess, the imperturbable air of Eastern gravity; then lo!...the fire of speaking eyes” fall in line with Jacobs’s “dreamer or thinker [rather] than merchant” (*Reuben Sachs* 65; Jacobs 228). And like Jacobs’s “Jewish type,” Reuben’s body still bore the marks of Jewish persecution, “malformed, ill-healthd [sic]” (*Reuben Sachs* 65). Levy creates these contrasting images of Jewish difference between the Sephardic and Ashkenazi “types,” which on one hand reaffirms stereotypes and on the other hand undermines the “fixity” of the images. The novel’s plot, after all, presents the challenges of reconciling of these two individuals in marriage but also two communities of Sephardim and Ashkenazim. But Levy resists Jacobs’s charge to bring the two together. The greater danger, for Levy, is to concede that Jewishness can be reduced to a singular type—even if that type is “complementary” or positive. “The novel both cringe(s) and cling(s) to Jewish difference,” Bernstein argues, and it is this double motion that seems like the only logical response to the politics of radical Jewish assimilation, or “Anglicization” into British liberal culture (‘Mongrel Words’ 144).

Jacobs used the “Jewish type” to give the Anglo-Jewish community a common portrait to unite a heterogeneous community. Levy’s engagement with the “Jewish type” shows that the community is harmed by such reductive logic, offering instead a vision of Judith, whose name literally means ‘Jewess,’ as multiple and dynamic—even if tragic. I

am not arguing that Judith is a revolutionary character or that Levy is justified, right or wrong in her representations of Jews in the entirety of her novel; rather I am more interested in the very brief but powerful way Levy provides a counter-image to the composite logic of the “Jewish type” (*Reuben Sachs* 125). At the turning point of the novel, when Judith realizes Reuben chose his political career over marrying her, she experiences a “mental vision, grown suddenly acute” by the harsh realization that she loves but cannot be loved by Reuben because of their different class standing, etc. In the next moment, Judith, “glowing with a strange exultation as her pride reasserted itself,” “caught sight of her own reflected face” in a “mirror, a three-sided toilet mirror hung against the wall” (125). In it she saw her “wild eyes and flushed cheeks; her face which was usually so calm” (125); and then Judith has an epiphany: “Calm? Had she ever been calm, save with a false calmness which narcotic drugs bestow?” (125). Judith describes her neatly ordered identity, what she often describes as a “mask” as a form of ideological narcotic, which throughout the novel is suggested as the process of assimilation.

Judith’s experience is one of reverse interpolation—a moment when the supposedly firm ground of dogma is shown to be the shifting sand of ideology: she “frightened herself, of her own daring, of the wild, strange thoughts and feelings which struggled for mastery within her” (125). The experience, a coming into awareness of her desire and place in the world, offers a new vantage point of Judith as complex and many-sided. Levy emphasizes the “three-sided mirror” rather than a single vanity mirror because, I argue, it illustrates what Levy identifies as the very problem with liberal tolerance’s progress-through-assimilation model. The mirror offers a contrasting image of

Judith that reverses the composite logic of “types” by showing her identity is multiple, complex, and contradictory. Judith suppresses her “brief moment of clear vision, of courage” the next morning, by returning to her toilet mirror to reorganize “with even more care and precision than usual” the semblance of her old “self-respect,” presumably the name of the “narcotic calm” of “double-consciousness” (*Reuben Sachs* 127; Bernstein 37). This brief snapshot of Judith in the three-sided looking glass has its limits. It is not a moment of victorious triumph or resistance—it is a moment that makes visible the effects of the composite photographic logic of liberalism on marginalized groups, and the aftermath of conceding the ground of individual or group identity to typological narratives (*Reuben Sachs* 127).

The mirror reflects the complexity of Judith as an individual as it cannot be represented within the contemporary discourses of Anglo-Jewish identity. This moment should make us cringe and it should shock the reader that three pages later Judith goes on to marry the most ridiculous character in the novel, Bertie Lee-Harrison, the “reverse-converso” (Bernstein 36). Lee-Harrison reads Judith through the lens of Orientalist fantasy of “Sephardic mystique” and on numerous occasions attempts to read those around him so as to “assemble codes of a ‘fundamental type’ of ‘Jewish character,’” what Bernstein describes as a “vulgar way of reading” Jewishness as types (“Mongrel Words” 150). The “excessive display of a variety of Jewish stereotyping” in the brief sketch of a novel, along with Judith’s retreat into their familiarity, extends Levy’s critique of typology as entirely inadequate to unify a community torn by the composite photographic logic of British liberal culture (150).

Jacobs's composite method and Levy's "mirror" critique find an audience and respondent in the work of Anglo-Jewry's most prominent writer, Israel Zangwill. Zangwill's most popular novel, *Children of the Ghetto* (1892), deals squarely with the problems of representing the Jewish community as a singular, composite type, as well as the chimerical goals of assimilation. Although friends with Joseph Jacobs, Zangwill was critical of the composite photographic logic of "vulgar imaginations" that seek to reduce Jewishness into a singular type (*Maccabeans* 42; quoted in Novak 68–69). In this next section, I consider how Zangwill built upon Levy's approach to the "Jewish type," specifically her strategy of overwhelming the "Jewish type" with so many different portraits of Jewish life that no one image could be successful. I also examine how Levy's "mirror" model inspired Zangwill's own literal and literary take on mirror photography, which like Levy's *Reuben Sachs*, offer an important counter-image for the Anglo-Jewish community.

Confronting the “Jewish Type:” Israel Zangwill, Composite and Mirror Photography

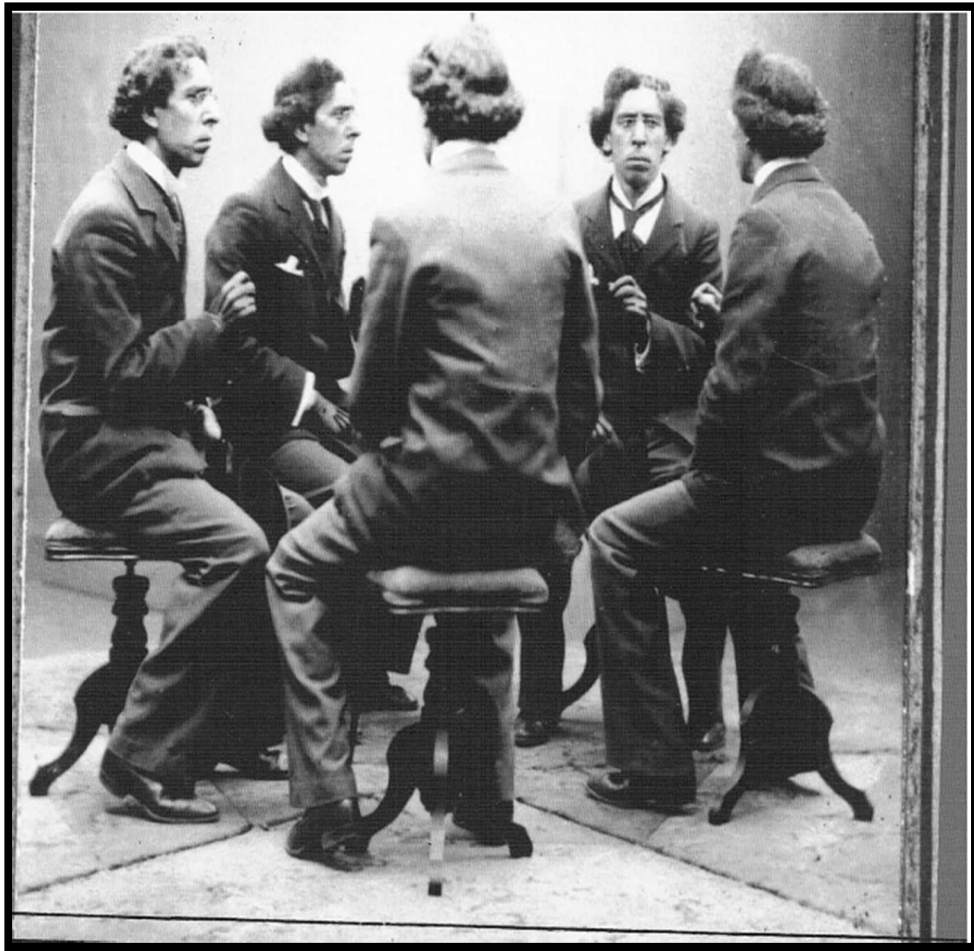


Figure 5: Israel Zangwill, hinged-mirror photograph, late 1890s. Courtesy of the Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.

Along disrupted axes forbidding perfect symmetry, this “turn-of-the-century” photograph of Israel Zangwill, arguably the most famous Anglo-Jewish writer of the nineteenth century, grants its audience insight into the many-sided writer, critic, and

political activist.¹⁶ Using full-length mirrors, the unknown photographer captured and copied Zangwill's image, obscuring the distinction between the real Zangwill and his many reflections. On a closer look, the rotation of the images and mirror edges reveal that the real Zangwill is seated with his back to the camera; thus, to effectively "see" Zangwill, the viewer must rely on the multiple reflections.

Zangwill's mirror photograph is a monument to the complex role photography played in the fin-de-siècle Victorian imaginary. Popular in the 1890s, the "five-way," "hinged-mirror" photograph was an important cultural form of the time.



Figure 6: Multi-photograph or five-way image set at 75-degree angle (Woodbury 285).

¹⁶ I first encountered this image on the cover of Meri-Jane Rochelson's complex literary biography of Israel Zangwill, *A Jew in the Public Arena: The Career of Israel Zangwill*. In many ways, Zangwill's hinged-mirror photograph informs the logic and structure of her work. Rochelson's biography does not attempt to account for all of Zangwill's life but presents the thoroughly researched chapters as vignettes, which she notes would have been Zangwill's preferred mode of representation (see Rochelson 3–4). This section is indebted to her research.

The technique reflected Victorians' preoccupation with the medium of photography as both an aesthetic and authentic mode of representation. Yet, it also reflected Victorian modes of classification and authentication of individuals along a spectrum of imperial and domestic hierarchies. For example, during the 1890s, angled-mirror photography was also used in English prisons to capture multiple aspects of criminals in a single exposure. Indeed, mirror photography underscores the cultural tensions of the time, particularly a greater awareness of the instability of individual and national identities. However, Zangwill's portrait also demonstrates how photographic techniques like mirror photography offered the Anglo-Jewish community a mechanism by which to navigate modernity, its challenges and effects (Novak 39).

Throughout his literary and political career, which straddled the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, Zangwill had an interesting and tense relationship with the medium of photography, not in the least because of its frequent comparison with the realist literary genre. According to Meri-Jane Rochelson, Zangwill was not shy about dismissing the inherently real or authentic quality of photographs: "the photographer 'aspires to art' and 'treats his pictures, indeed, as though they were actors and he the dresser'" (Rochelson 78–79). As demonstrated in Novak's monograph, *Realism, Photography and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, Zangwill's views on photography were those of the majority: Novak argues that Victorians, in general, were already reading photographs as crafted narratives and novels as photographic in their capacity to represent what was "more true than real" (76). Zangwill's hinged-mirror photograph plays with these aesthetic conventions at a time when various forms of photography were

also changing the face of the Jewish Question. Novak's key example of the political effects of this aesthetics is the influence of George Eliot's treatment of Jewishness in *Daniel Deronda* — which departs from the conventions of realist genre — on Joseph Jacobs, composite photographs of the “Jewish type” in 1883 (Novak 91). However, the pseudoscientific process of double exposure actually revealed that the “type” was a site of contested political and cultural meaning (Novak 90–91).

It is precisely the political and cultural meaning implicit in these photographs that Zangwill engages and challenges in his literary and political work: Jacobs's “Jewish type” is an important, if overlooked, context for Israel Zangwill's approach to Jewish identity in his novel *Children of the Ghetto* as well as for his self-styled hinged-mirror photograph. Regardless of his intention, Zangwill's mirror photograph invokes critical links between the role of photography and questions of Jewish identity, institutional visibility, and the boundaries of the nation at the turn of the twentieth century. To better understand these links, I examine the role that composite and mirror photography played in Zangwill's personal life and the way in which he models, engages, and contests these techniques in his novel *Children of the Ghetto*.

As early as July 1893, Zangwill connected the pervasive stereotyping of Jews in Victorian culture with the logic that underwrote composite photography:

Doubtless to the vulgar imagination the Jew still looms as a combination of all these three types [money lenders, old clothes dealers, and pauper aliens] and though the attributes are palpably contradictory, the impossibility of the amalgam is no more a bar to the persistence of the concept than incongruity of facial characteristics is to the formation of composite photographs. (1937: 42; quoted in Novak 68–69)

The connection between these two kinds of logic is not coincidental. Zangwill was quite familiar with Joseph Jacobs's work with Galton on the "Jewish type" because during roughly the same period of time, Jacobs and Zangwill were colleagues. Their joint ventures included membership in the "Wanderers" at Kilburn club, "an informal circle of Jewish scholars who met at one another's homes for intellectual discussions on Jewish topics"; several members of this club went on to found the Jewish Historical Society in England (Nahshon 15). Israel Zangwill and Joseph Jacobs were heavily invested in "Wanderers" and regularly met with other Jewish writers, thinkers, and scientists "whose work would have an enormous impact on the modern study of Judaism" (15). There is also another reason to consider Zangwill's uneasy relationship with Jacobs's "Jewish type" as an important context to Zangwill's novel *Children of the Ghetto*.

In an 1885 article for the *Photographic News*, Jacobs explains that he took photographs of local Jewish schoolboys at the Jews' Free School and then asked Galton to "compound" them into composite photographs of the "Jewish type" (Jacobs 268). Over thirty years later, during a memorial lecture honoring Jacobs, Zangwill recounts the indelible memory of Jacobs's trip to the Jews' Free School and the impact of the experiment not only on the Anglo-Jewish community but also on his own family. In fact, Jacobs had photographed Zangwill's younger brother, Louis, and used his image to compose the final "Jewish type" (Figure 3), a portrait that, Zangwill argued, looked "curiously like [Louis]" (*Voice* 354). From this perspective, Zangwill's continued engagement and struggle with the question of the "Jewish type" throughout his career takes on new significance. Zangwill was unsettled by the implications of the

photographic experiment, specifically that it assumed social tolerance and unity were contingent upon “likeness,” or how well Jewish immigrants could assimilate into British culture. It is this logic that Zangwill contests throughout his career—the composite photographic logic of liberalism that predicated tolerance on the radical assimilation of Jewish difference and sutured national progress to the institutional mechanisms for managing populations through typologies. Zangwill points out in his memorial lecture that Jewishness was far too diverse to be subsumed in a single image. For example, the experiment may have recoded Louis Zangwill’s portrait as an emblem of Jewishness, but the indexical trace — Zangwill’s recognition of Louis’s likeness — was a haunting reminder of the violence of dissolving the Jewish boys’ particular features, historical identities, and social differences into a narrative of a common “Jewish type,” and by implication a homogenized Jewish history.

Jacobs wished to unite the diverse Jewish community in England, composed of Sephardic and Ashkenazi, orthodox and non-practicing, assimilated and new-immigrant refugee Jews, by redefining Jewishness as a secular racial category (Novak 107). He strategically crafted this experiment to ameliorate Victorian attitudes toward the Russian Jewish immigrant and refugee community — to show that given the right environment their cultural and physical peculiarities, caused by centuries of persecution, could be properly assimilated away. For Zangwill, the “Jewish type” was a dangerous political construction which exposed the increasingly hostile attitudes toward Jews in England. It was especially dangerous for Jewish immigrants fleeing Russian pogroms who were all too often characterized as criminals and as contagion that threatened the health of the

nation (Glover 4). Such narratives about Jewish immigrants circulated in a range of media with increased frequency in fin-de-siècle London, which saw an addition of 100,000 Jews within the span of twenty years (Marcolli 117–18). Indeed, amidst these contexts, Jacobs’s decision to use Galton’s method, first purposed in classifying society’s undesirables — criminals, hysterical women, and the insane, so they could be more effectively studied and managed by the state — risked reinforcing negative stereotypes of Jewish immigrants.



Figure 7: Portraits of criminals, c. 1890. From the criminal register at Wormwood Scrubs prison, England. (Copyright National Media Museum / Science & Society Picture Library).

Like composite photography, the later technique of mirror photography also blurred boundaries between science, politics, and art and emerged out of similar historical contexts. First used in France and later in England in the 1890s to photograph criminals, the angled-mirror method was adopted as a cost-effective means of securing multiple

perspectives with one exposure (Figure 7). Considering this institutional practice, Zangwill's mirror photograph circulated at a moment when indigent Jews were increasingly criminalized, a moment when "Jew" became almost interchangeable with "alien" (Glover 4). Within these socio-historical contexts, Zangwill's marked Jewish body conjures up the specter of British institutional practices that used mirror photography to transform "criminals" into verifiable identities that could be studied and managed. However, Zangwill's photograph also points toward the limitations of such representations. In the case of the angled-mirror mug shots, the underlying assumption is that the marks of a criminal's identity exceed any one vantage point and require multiple perspectives to fully apprehend. Zangwill's hinged-mirror photography, with its plurality of images simultaneously captured on one photographic plate, takes the point one step further.

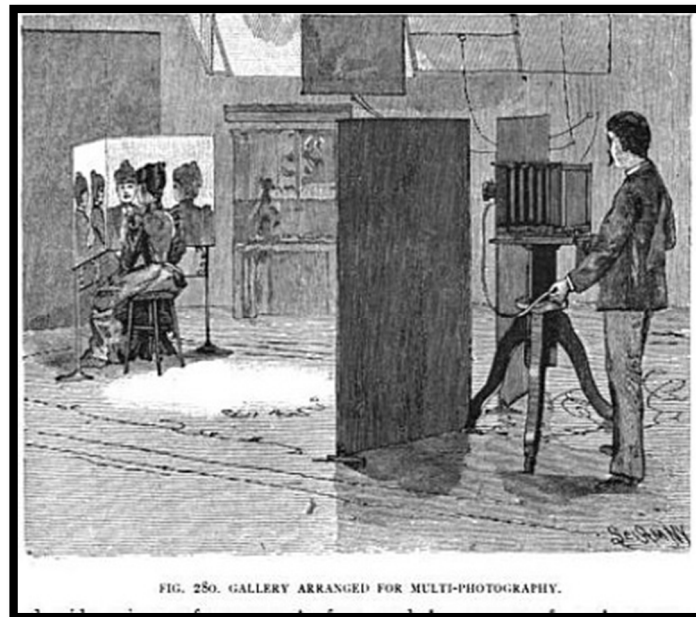


Figure 8: Multi-photography (Woodbury 285).

In particular, mirror photographs are productive because they upset the logic of composite types. The mirrors, as in Amy Levy's *Reuben Sachs*, foreground the irreducibility of the subject to any single portrait, and, perhaps more importantly, highlight the artifice of every picture and its contexts. Zangwill's mirror photograph also reveals that to see him all at once requires the artificial juxtaposition of images that opens a virtual space of "double regression," a space that has no correspondence in reality and is most akin to montage in film (McManus 131). Benjamin argues that in a montage "the superimposed image disrupts the context in which it is inserted" and new significance is made possible through the interruption (2008: 90). Mirror photographs interrupt their contexts by showing their limits — the mirrors' edges are visible and the pose is carefully arranged and, as a result, they undermine the authority of the individual or institutional gaze. There is no pretense of the photograph aspiring to reality; rather, it communicates a truth about the instability and unaccountable aspects of identity. While the limits of the mirror reflections seem obvious, I shall explore how such limits betray a productive logic within mirror photography's optical illusion, one capable of disrupting existing cultural narratives about identity "types" (McManus 131).

Although little has been written about mirror photography, also known as "hinged-mirror," "multi-photography" or "five-way portraits," the technique was a popular form of "trick photography" at the turn of the twentieth century (Hopkins 451). James McManus provides the most detailed account of the process of making five-way portraits with hinged mirrors and the new technology of the photo postcard machine, which cheaply reproduced three postcards "made and delivered on the spot in ten

minutes” (128). According to McManus, the method was used to produce photographs of key artists in the twentieth century; a set of well-known five-way mirror photographs of Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia, and Henri Pierre Roché taken at Broadway photo shop in New York in 1917 have garnered recent scholarly attention for the ways the images correspond to challenges of modern identity (125). In *Unpacking Duchamp: Art in Transit*, Dalia Judovitz argues that Duchamp uses the hinged-mirror technique to “refuse a stable identity as an artist. . . . Playing the ready-made field, among ‘I’ and ‘me,’ Duchamp discovers ‘antiart’: a game that eschews any specular reduction, since it is governed by the generative power of nonsense” (156). And though Zangwill does not practice the same Dadaist forms as Duchamp, in *Children of the Ghetto*, set at a moment when Anglicization was the order of the day, he uses a literary version of the hinged-mirror technique to hold in tension the productive multiplicity and the violent fragmentation of modern Jewish identity.

While *Children of the Ghetto* and other works by Zangwill challenge the rudimentary conception of Jewish types, the mirror photograph of Israel Zangwill, like the literal composite portraits of his brother, brings him into a peculiar intimacy with technological modes of representation that have deeper political significance. Thus, photography, mirror and composite methods, are two cultural forms that visualize the competing tensions of the time for Zangwill. The composite method underscores the paradox of liberalism’s universalizing claims and tolerance for plural value systems, whereas mirror photography, in effect, reverses composite photographic logic by destabilizing the individual portrait and the individual subject through multiplication.

Instead of presenting the illusion of one image where there are many, mirror photography relies on illusion to expose narratives of identity as constructions.

Zangwill's self-conscious and sometimes unsuccessful effort to challenge or manipulate typologies has become the preamble of most scholarly critiques. This complicated issue, I contend, can be reframed with an explication of the relationship between typology and specific forms of historiography. Zangwill disliked the genre of biography, regarding it as complicit with typological narratives: the "difference between 'facts' & truth" sufficed for him to think that "formal biographies [were] all bad"; and he expressed ambivalence towards society's desire to have "a picture of a man's soul," the official narrative of an author's life as if he were one of his characters (Rochelson 1). Zangwill's mirror photograph is an expression of this skepticism — the many Zangwills pictured make a statement about his identity which, he argues, cannot be reduced to a single portrait or narrative.

Still, Zangwill's many personas are a source of frustration for a fair share of recent scholarship. Nadia Valman, Bryan Cheyette, and Naomi Hetherington have expressed their own ambivalence concerning Zangwill's impact on the canon of Anglo-Jewish literary studies because of his unorthodox and at times contradictory engagement with British liberal and imperial discourses (Cheyette and Valman 103; Hetherington 186). Even historian Arie Dubnov believes that Zangwill's participation in "Jewish normalization discourses" and his lukewarm Zionism warrant the summary label "impressive intellectual failure" (Dubnov 142).

I find Dubnov's reading troubling because the contradictory elements that he points out only emerge from the biographer's or historian's vantage point, a perspective that creates narratives about subjects in hindsight. A biographer's desire to reveal the "man's soul" may introduce the problem of authenticity if discovery of the "real" Zangwill is sought without taking full measure of the unproductiveness of the quest. As his mirror photograph suggests, Zangwill defies this perspective: with his back to the camera, Zangwill insists on being viewed through the non-linear refractions of the hinged mirrors. And if there is a common thread in his literary works, it is the theme of identity as multiple and no more diachronic than synchronic. Like mirror photography, biography attempts to capture multiple aspects of the subject in one summary shot. But unlike biography, mirror photography exposes the limits of such logic by emphasizing the plurality of the subject which cannot be fully captured in a single portrait.

Mirroring the "Jewish Type" in *Children of the Ghetto*

In *Children of the Ghetto*, Zangwill confronts the "Jewish type" and extends Anglo-Jewish writer Amy Levy's critique of typologies by offering a literary model of mirror photography capable of holding in tension a dynamic and polyphonic representation of London's diverse Jewish communities. This was no small task given the varying interests and politics of the community. Several groups, including Hovevei Zion, later known as cultural Zionists, led under the banner of "A Jewish state not just a state for Jews," and Reform Judaism that sought to modernize Jewish traditions to fit within contemporary Anglo-Jewish life, competed for communal authority, each offering a

different definition of what Jewishness was or should be. In the wake of Russian anti-Jewish pogroms, Jacobs's work on the "Jewish type" attempted to redefine Jewishness along secular and biological lines so that Anglo-Jewry as well as non-Jews would view new waves of Jewish immigrants, their different, region-specific cultural and religious practices, as complements rather than threats to the British body politic. As a way to build this sympathetic bond, Jacobs made his case relying on the composite photographs of the lowest of the low, children of the East End ghetto.

Within these contexts, Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto*, with his "study of a peculiar people" and the re-presentation of multiple individual "portraits" of children from the ghetto, is a counterargument to the composite photographic logic of Jacobs's project. First published in 1892, *Children of the Ghetto: Being Pictures of a Peculiar People* appeared in two installments: "Children of the Ghetto" and "Grandchildren of the Ghetto." The Jewish Publication Society of America commissioned the book in 1891 for the purpose of capturing a cross-section of the Anglo-Jewish community in a sympathetic light, "a Jewish *Robert Elsmere*" that would champion constructive liberalism. Despite such a mandate, Zangwill insisted that he did not write "a Jewish *Robert Elsmere*," that his aim was to "paint a community," acknowledging the mediated form that would not and could not "tell [the whole] story" (Nahshon 29).

Children of the Ghetto received critical acclaim from many Jewish and non-Jewish critics for its realistic representations of East End life. Other critics found something to be desired in its form, a collection of vignettes coalescing around two plot lines. The subtitle for the first edition, "being pictures of a peculiar people," aptly

described the sketch-like collection of stories: the “pictures” show how diverse the Jewish community was by offsetting certain stereotypes with a large ensemble of characters — the sheer number of characters and the realistic exposition of the East End cityscape earned Zangwill the complimentary title of the Jewish Dickens (Zangwill 1998: 55; Rochelson 1998: 12). Zangwill’s style of representation took to task the impulse to produce an idealized Jewish type, and the book aspired “to show that Jews are more than despised Fagins or the idealized Mordecai and Mirah of *Daniel Deronda*” (“Language” 399).

To emphasize this point, Zangwill changed the subtitle of the third edition (1893) to what had been the original title: “a study of a peculiar people.” Noting in the preface, “The book is intended as *a study, through typical figures, of a race* whose persistence is the most remarkable fact in the history of the world, the faith and morals of which it has so largely moulded” (55; my emphasis). Like Joseph Jacobs’s composite experiment, Zangwill’s use of “typical figures . . . of a race” relied on reframing the rhetoric of race science in a way that encouraged a sympathetic reading of the Jewish community. However, unlike Jacobs, Zangwill did not use his novel as an apologetic platform for Jewish assimilation. Zangwill’s childhood memories of the Ghetto, Jacobs’s photographing Zangwill’s brother Louis for his famous “Jewish type,” and his experience with philanthropic institutions like the Jews’ Free School unsettled his belief in the liberal progress-through-assimilation models.

In the proem to *Children of the Ghetto*, Zangwill recalls the terms of Jacobs’s composite photographs of the “Jewish type,” insisting that the people who “compose

[his] pictures are [also] children of the ghetto” (61). In what I read as a nod to the mechanisms of composite photography, Zangwill dramatizes the connection between “faults [that] are bred of [the Ghetto’s] hovering miasma of persecution” and Jacobs’s explanation of Jewish difference in *The Photographic News*. Although Zangwill agrees that nurture and not nature were responsible for the disparity between impoverished and wealthy Jewish communities, he contests that even if these “pictures” are “straightened” through rigorous Anglicization, even those “who have won their way beyond [the Ghetto’s] boundaries must still play their parts in tragedies and comedies” because conforming to “types” is simply another form of “ghetto gates” (61).

In an interview about the purpose of *Children of the Ghetto* as a “study,” Zangwill insisted that “Jews, like Englishmen, could not be ‘summed up in any single, or indeed in any score, of types” (Nahshon 22). Zangwill acknowledged the limited capacity of his novel to “answer” the Jewish Question and, instead, offered a way to think about Jewishness as multiple and dynamic, a perspective that challenged conventional typological viewpoints. Throughout Zangwill’s career his work dealt with the varied problems of the representation of Jewishness and the need to represent those who, for a variety of reasons, were excluded from representation, particularly women and immigrants.

Possibly responding to Jacobs’s offer to create a composite Jewess type or, perhaps more accurately, to the issues of Jewish women’s rights raised by Amy Levy’s *Reuben Sachs*, *Children of the Ghetto* presents two plot lines centered on female protagonists. Esther, the daughter of poor Russian immigrants, and Hannah, the daughter

of an assimilated but orthodox rabbi. Both protagonists must come to grips with their hybrid, “anglicized” but marginalized identities and learn to forge their own relationship to Judaism and the Jewish community. After living her whole life in the Ghetto, Esther wins a scholarship at the Jews’ Free School and is adopted by the Goldsmiths, a West End “anglicized” couple. After completing her degree on the Continent, Esther finds herself out of place in a community that is greatly different from the one in which she grew up. After the pseudonymous publication of her novel critiquing West-End Jewry, Esther returns to the ghetto with plans to travel to America. Meanwhile, Hannah’s story begins with a crisis of faith that is amplified when she falls in love with a “link-Jew,” a non-practicing Jew. Through a whirl of serio-comic circumstances, Hannah is unable to marry David because of a literal interpretation of Jewish law.¹⁷ After much hesitation, she chooses to forego an elopement and devotes her life to philanthropy.

Throughout these two plot lines, Zangwill’s narrative leaves the question about a single “Jewish type” open, as something that cannot be answered once and for all. Rather *Children of the Ghetto* suggests that Jewishness can only be debated in the here and now of a given moment and then it is left for the next moment, the “grandchildren of the ghetto” and their children, to decide. As a result, Zangwill’s novel confronts intra- and intercommunal debates about the “Jewish type” in three important ways. First, from the

¹⁷ The conflict is over the strict interpretation of the divorce laws barring Cohanim from marrying divorced women. Hannah is “accidentally” married to her friend who jokingly puts a ring on her finger and says the marriage formula in the presence of two witnesses. The “marriage” then must be dissolved by Hannah’s father. Once Hannah’s father finds out she fell in love with a man who is a Cohen, he refuses to allow her to marry him because she is technically a divorced woman.

outset Zangwill defines Jewish identity as polyphonic and made up of contradictory yet coexisting stances; second, the novel corrects and, thus, foregrounds the lack of representation of women and the poor in discussions of Jewish collective identity; and third, Zangwill ends *Children of the Ghetto* with multiple possible futures for Anglo-Jewry without foreclosing the success of one or all them.

Zangwill's novel is a balancing act of different "types." The opening scene presents a plethora of characters as reflections of Jewishness. Zangwill's aural description guides us through a crowded street ironically titled "Fashion Street" (73), where numerous Jewish voices offer glimpses into the "peculiar" features of their lives. The first "portrait" of a "female street singer" focuses on the "piercing melody" of her song rather than her physiognomy. Then the focus shifts to a "pair of slatterns with arms akimbo [reviling] each other's relatives" (73). A drunkard, "babbling amiably" rambles by; next, the organ grinder sets "some ragged children jigging under the water rays of a street-lamp" (73). The street, alive with these "familiar details," offers a snapshot and a literary soundtrack of the cacophony of the East End Ghetto, which is both diverse and united by an "underlying identity" of a shared Ghetto life. Zangwill evokes this unity through the line at the charity house, as culturally diverse Polish, Russian, German, and Dutch Jewesses appear "mutually apathetic" yet united in their need and their collective "pressing forward" through the soup kitchen doors.

Amidst these characters, Zangwill introduces Esther Ansell and uses her wide-eyed commentary to frame the complicated relationship between poor East-Enders and the "semi-divines" of West End Jewry who support the charities. Esther notes the

relationship between the two communities as illustrative of the “theory of the universe held by most people around her” (75). There were those who had very little despite their toil and had to rely on the generosity of the “Takeefim” or “rich people[,] who gave away what they didn’t want” (75). Still, Esther’s perception does not “compound” the disparate images of the opening scene in a way that might resolve tensions: there is no way Dutch Sam’s robustness and the Old-Clothes man’s frail frame can be averaged out into a composite image. Nor can the “motley crowd” pass through the “narrow aperture” of the charity house unless “squeezing painfully” through the entryway, an act that shook “a plate glass window pane” in “the crush” of so many bodies (77). Zangwill’s description, here, presents a more literal interpretation of the composite photographic process. Where multiple portraits were captured through the aperture of the camera and exposed on a single glass plate to present a single image, Zangwill describes a crowd of Jewish immigrants driven by poverty to conform to the Anglicizing mission of the charity institution, lest their “case” be denied (77). The comparison between Anglicizing institutions and composite photography here is more than mere coincidence of language; rather, Zangwill’s critique depends on comparing the implicit violent effects of both processes.

Jewishness, from the outset of the novel, is far too dynamic and variegated even in the small quarters of the Ghetto to be “expressed” in a single specimen or type. Zangwill, furthermore, foregoes reducing the distance between the East and West End in order to portray the Jewish community as united, which makes a discovery of a unified collective national identity all the less possible. Where composite photography was used

to create a single, abstract “type” from the many pictures of Jewish immigrants, Zangwill’s novel examines so many different characters that they could hardly be gathered under a “superficial category” as the “Jewish type” (*Voice* 742).

In a move that aligns him with contemporary Anglo-Jewish women writers, Zangwill sketches Jewish identity through the experience of Jewish women in order to show consanguinity between the liberal and imperial discourses that marginalize immigrants, Jews, and women. As a daughter of an indigent Russian Jewish immigrant family, Esther is first presented holding a low cultural status as a poor displaced and dispensable person. Not quite a British citizen nor fully a practicing Jew, she exists on the thresholds of two communities and nations. As Nadia Valman points out, the “feminist subtext” of *Children of the Ghetto*, like Zangwill’s other work, is “framed with a skepticism about the politics of Jewish emancipation” (Valman 209). As a result, Zangwill’s representation of gender and class difference dominates the novel’s discussion of intracommunal identity, while the various national affiliations of the characters help to decenter race as a critical category of Jewish identity, contrary to contemporary racial typologies. Whereas one of the main goals of the Jacobs-Galton composite experiment was to show that Jews of different national affiliation were of the same race, Zangwill’s ambivalence toward Jewish racial identity stemmed from his concern for those it excluded and his worries about the political cost of such exclusion. However, after Esther leaves the ghetto and enters the West End Jewish community, her racially-marked body is made visible by her new contexts. In fact, Esther is only described as the “dark little girl”

when she is viewed through middle-class Jewry's Anglicized sensibilities or characters (Zangwill 78; 327; 328; 333; 337).

The chapter "The Christmas Dinner" invokes this paradigm. Esther, as the "dark little girl" from the ghetto, offsets the Goldsmith's recognition of the Christian holiday. Esther views her new West End friends as dangerously hollowed out by their own desire to assimilate into English society. Recalling Amy Levy's *Reuben Sachs*, Esther pseudonymously writes a book indicting what she views as West End materialism (325; Valman 208). The dinner crowd berates the book and demands more sympathetic "portraits" of "cultured Jews." Esther "scornfully smiles" when they drop the names of Lessing and George Eliot as "the only writers who ever understood" the Jewish character (Zangwill 331). Zangwill's allusion to *Reuben Sachs* extends Levy's critique of the typologies that frame the Jewish community. In this scene, Zangwill suggests that the idealized or positive Jewish types offered by non-Jewish writers are as problematic as negative Jewish stereotypes as both are reductive and embrace the faulty premise of the composite photographic logic of liberalism. In doing so, Zangwill shows that accepting positive stereotypes concedes that the Jewish communities' right to exist is only secured through their capitulation to liberal cultural forms of identity.

Citing Homi Bhabha's work, Bernstein argues that racial typology and the rhetorical strategies of stereotyping "'sign[s] of cultural/historical/racial difference' were crucial in 'the ideological construction of otherness'" as both techniques reiterated British superiority (Bernstein 139). In the form of typologies or verifiable "identities," "the Jew" was managed to the benefit of the British imperial-state (Jusova 8). Keenly aware of such

manipulation, Zangwill saw composite photographic logic as part of a larger, systemic problem of Anglicization, which he aggressively critiques in the proem of *Children of the Ghetto*. Progress, he argues in the proem, is dependent upon the Anglicization of the Jewish communities, privileges Englishness¹⁸ as the epistemological center of “civilization” and marginalizes traditional forms of Jewish culture, history, and religion. Zangwill, who identifies himself as an English Jew, does not discredit the advantages gained by sharing culture; however, he perceptively recognizes and contests the violence of Anglicization. In fact, Zangwill insinuates that West End Jews’ attempt to Anglicize East End Jewry is more insidious than the segregation and the abuse of medieval anti-Semitism (Zangwill 35). Zangwill’s *Children of the Ghetto* effectively describes and analyzes the social mechanisms of Jewish assimilation and shows how they are the product of both liberal discourses of subject-making through reeducation and the British imperial civilizing mission.

Zangwill examines this paradoxical premise of assimilation mainly through the development of the novel’s main character, Esther Ansell. Her failed Anglicization offers a critique of assimilation by demonstrating how institutional apparatuses, like the Jews’ Free School, are the material structures supporting the logic of the empire, structures that recreate the ghetto within the subject. Throughout the novel, Esther’s experience at the

¹⁸ For the purposes of this chapter, I use the term Englishness in deference to Zangwill’s appropriation of manners, education, and taste — Matthew Arnold’s culture as “the best of what has been thought and said in the world” (Arnold 1963: 6). More often Zangwill’s use of the term “Anglican” delineates the highest order of Britishness, Englishness, but also remains distinct from it. Zangwill plays with the gaps created by these categories to emphasize the elusiveness of Englishness.

Jews' Free School leaves her feeling isolated and estranged from her family and the East End Jewish community. Zangwill insinuates that Esther's simultaneous dislocation and containment of her subjectivity is a direct effect rather than an unforeseen consequence of her Anglicization. In the novel, Esther articulates this crisis through a question about types: was she Jewish or English? (152). At first, Esther entertains the either/or logic of her question. But after reflecting on the question, she concedes her dual identity to be the natural by-product of her leading "a double life, just as she spoke two tongues" (152). Esther may set Jewishness and Englishness on equal footing as linguistic tools that she can use to navigate between two social worlds; however, such is not the case. Zangwill shows that no such footing can be established when there is a pervasive cultural bias against Jewish culture and religious practices. In order to make his point, Esther explains how she defines herself:

The knowledge that she was a Jewish child, whose people had had a special history, was always at the back of her consciousness. . . . But far more vividly did she realize that she was an English girl; far keener than her pride in Judas Maccabaeus was her pride in Nelson and Wellington; she rejoiced to find that her ancestors had always beaten the French . . . that Alfred the Great was the wisest of kings, and that Englishmen dominated the world . . . that the English language was the noblest in the world and men speaking it had invented . . . everything worth inventing. (Zangwill 152)

Esther's double "consciousness," viewing her Jewish identity through English chauvinism (cf. also Baumgarten 4-7), was in part "absorbed . . . from the [Jews' Free School's] reading books" (152). In *Home and Harem* Inderpal Grewal demonstrates that class formation and identification within the English nation and British Empire relied on an imperial education that created "a view of the world as consumable and colonizable" (Grewal 14). In the above passage, the reader can clearly see how Esther's view of the

world and her place in it is colored by imperial sentimentality, but not in a way that may be expected. Her patriotism marks not only her recognition of her Englishness but an interpellation into the discourse of British imperialism where she imagines herself as the colonizer while recapitulating her imperialized, if not completely colonized, position.

As Esther reads her identity through the British imperialist version of history, her conflict of identity recalls Amy Levy's representation of Judith Quixano's identity crisis in the three-sided toilet mirror scene in *Reuben Sachs* (*Reuben Sachs* 127). Where Judith consciously reads her reflection as exceeding the possibilities of her social position, Zangwill has Esther rehearse the cultural narratives that cause her to participate in her marginalization. Convinced that her identity is related more to her historical sympathies than cultural or ethnic affinities, Esther holds to specific English values systems and reproduces the narrative of British superiority across geographies and temporalities. Unlike Judith's acceptance of her place in the social hierarchy, Esther's "narcotic calm" is her belief that she shares in the legacy of imperial domination (127). Her portrayal illustrates the complicated ways in which identity, individual and collective, is intricately bound up with the discourse of history. For Zangwill, this is what is at stake for the Anglo-Jewish community: the privileging of Englishness, or Anglicization, and the subsequent suppression of certain histories, languages, and cultures of the Jewish communities in the name of Progress.

If, as Benjamin's "Theses on the Philosophy of History" posits, "every document of civilization bears within it the traces or documentation of barbarism" ("Theses" 260), then this dialectic is surely present in Esther's haunting rehearsal of and identification

with British imperial history. Zangwill considers Esther's reading herself into British history as a dangerous effect of Anglicization that internalizes Jewish particularity as inferiority. As in Jacobs's composite photographic process, Esther's narration of her identity as English parallels the subordination of her own history to the trajectory of imperial progress. In doing so she smooths over the past historical violence of imperialism, which she also perpetuates in her own individual history, as she alienates herself from her Jewish identity.

It is only when Esther takes to writing her own historical account of Jewish life in the West End that she comes into a new recognition of her experience of Anglicization as the psychosomatic experience of "headaches," which prevent her from pursuing her education plan. Esther experiences these headaches when her class and gender identities, as an immigrant and "daughter of a schnorrer," are juxtaposed with the Anglicized West-End Jewish lifestyle (Zangwill 408). Rather than feel at home in the safety and plenty of the West End, Esther experiences the effects of radical assimilation as painfully alienating: the violence of Anglicization become more than she can bear. In a farewell letter to her host family, the Goldsmiths, Esther writes, "the sphere in which you move is too high for me; I cannot assimilate with it and I return, not without gladness, to the humble sphere whence you took me" (430). Coming full circle, Zangwill shows that Anglicization is what reinscribes the violent logic of the historical ghetto, "isolation imposed from without," within the Jewish community so that it "come[s] to seem the law of their being" (62). Esther's headaches correspond with her consciousness of the ghetto, it "hovers in [her own] psych[e]," and in the rhetorical questions about her dislocation

from the West and East ends (Baumgarten and Jaffe 4). Murray Baumgarten argues that such dislocation comes to define the paradox of modern urban Jewish identity well into the twentieth century (5-6).

But perhaps even more convincing is Baumgarten's claim that Zangwill uses the history of the ghetto to negotiate the very concept of Jewish identity at the fin-de-siècle, at precisely the moment when history was becoming the master discourse of a secular Jewish identity (Baumgarten 14; Gotzmann 498). The turn of the twentieth century saw the birth of a host of Jewish historical societies, universities, and research consortiums to unify the diversity of Jewish identities under the umbrella of a common past by reproducing *Wissenschaft des Judentums* models of history (498), ironically not unlike Jacobs's composite "Jewish type." According to Biale, *Wissenschaft* models were more concerned with historiography that put Jewish history in terms of "fitness" and "civilization," which also resonates with Galtonian models of national history (Biale 135). *Children of the Ghetto* disrupts this model of Jewish history and Jewish identity with a nuanced discussion of ghetto space and time.

Zangwill's representation of the East End in the last half of the novel is an important extension of his analysis in the proem. Esther's nostalgia for the ghetto of her childhood while living in the West End is irreversibly transformed by her literal return to the East End. Esther wrote her critique of West End Jewry from the threshold vantage point of a child of the ghetto. However, upon return to the ghetto Esther recognizes her displacement from that space and alienation from the community. Bused into the East End wearing her fine clothing, Esther is taken by a local Jewish woman to be a "spy"

from one of the local charities. Esther's manners and speech set her apart as well: when spoken to in Yiddish, Esther responds in proper German. Walking the narrow streets and surveying the landscape, Esther is drawn to and repulsed by the familiarity of the ghetto space. Life in the West End has changed her perspective, and she realizes that she cannot live in the ghetto in the same way as before. Esther is startled to find that it no longer takes six paces to walk across a familiar street; rather she finds that she cannot inhabit the space the same way nor live where she once lived. As a "respectable" woman, Esther cannot live alone or stay in the ghetto without a male family member. As her body signals an incongruity in her memory, not that the memory was false but that it is no longer accurate, Esther is forced to come to terms with the ghetto as a dynamic rather than a stagnant, anachronistic space. Rather than being able to go back to the East End to find some essential home, Esther is forced to find home and identity in the cultivation of memories of her family, her people and their history.

However, such is not the case for every Jewish character. Zangwill contrasts Esther's relationship to the ghetto with those who find meaning in *shtetl* life, like the second heroine of *Children of the Ghetto*, Hannah Jacobs. Hannah chooses to make a space for herself as a Jewish woman in the ghetto through service-oriented work and activism on behalf of new immigrants rather than religious faith and marriage. For Hannah, the ghetto exists as a threshold between older and younger generations: it is a refuge for persecuted Jews, a place where their children can "jig" down the street. As many characters funnel in and out of the ghetto, the space is described as an important historical site in the memories of the people who pass through its gates. In the final

gesture, Zangwill ends the novel with Esther unable to stay in the ghetto or in England. She replaces the binary of Jewishness and Englishness with a much more fluid conception of her identity as multiple and incomplete. We last read of Esther on a container ship bound for America, intent on reuniting with the people with whom she shared memories of a home long ago. Zangwill's refusal to define Esther's home, her life's trajectory, or her Jewish identity offers a more nuanced literary photograph and a more productive conception of Jewishness and Jewish history than those offered by Jacobs's composite "Jewish type." Esther represents a specific vantage point where her past informs rather than determines her future.

Zangwill thus unhinges reductive narratives of progress-through-assimilation and faulty resolutions. For this reason, perhaps, Zangwill's literary refractions of mirror photography are more apt than "composite photography" for representing a complex modern Jewish identity. Where Jacobs uses photography as a synchronic medium to create the illusion of a single Jewish type, Zangwill uses a diachronic and fragmented art form to deconstruct that illusion and its guiding logic. Esther's story does not and cannot swallow up the stories of a diverse and complex community. However, her story provides an example of the dangerous consequences of myopic visions of Jewishness. For Zangwill, then, *Children of the Ghetto* became a way to ask better questions. Rather than trying to determine the "Jewish type," Zangwill spent his career considering the political, social, and economic interests behind such questions for non-Jewish and Jewish nationalist movements alike. Zangwill's skepticism regarding photography as a realistic

medium or regarding historiography's greater claims to history 'as it really was' is rooted in a distinct understanding of all histories, identities, and nations as constructions:

On a walk through an impoverished area, for example, the historian, the scientist, the economist, the poet, the philanthropist, the novelist, the anarchist, the intelligent foreigner — each would take away a different impression of the street, and all these impressions would be facts, all equally valid, all equally true, and all equally false. . . . What is farce to you is often tragedy to the actual performer. (qtd. In *A Jew* 79)

Zangwill's criticism of Joseph Jacobs and his composite photographs are clearly rooted in Zangwill's larger critique of Anglicization. While initially aimed at helping Jewish immigrants, Jacobs's experiment promoted the violent logic of types and insisted that the progress of global Jewry was predicated on the removal of Jewish religious and cultural particularity in favor of a common racial identity.

Zangwill viewed this deracination of the Jewish body politic as the most troubling aspect of the experiment. Like the composite process, the Jewish community experienced the violence of liberal progress through various institutions mandated to efface their distinct differences in favor of British customs. Jacobs's use of Zangwill's brother Louis for the composite offers insight into the profoundly personal nature of the literal "compound[ing]" of Jews by Jews (*Voice* 354). Zangwill's response to the "Jewish type" with *Children of the Ghetto* and his mirror photograph illustrates his evolving but consistent distrust of typological narratives and his preference for a polyphonic and dynamic Jewish identity.

Going back to Zangwill's 1916 memorial lecture for Joseph Jacobs at the Jewish Historical Society, I want to consider briefly how Zangwill interpreted Jacobs's life and work to show how even Jacobs's own identity exceeded a single typological narrative.

Following the mirror photography model, Zangwill describes Jacobs as a “great and so many-sided scholar” (352). He mentions Jacobs’s ability to work in multiple fields, in multiple languages and universities (351). Jacobs’s ability to move between cultures, Zangwill argues, was due to the advantage of his “sense of the relativity of values which comes from belonging to two communities” (352). Jacobs was a man of many professional and personal interests; he was, among other things, founding director of the Jewish Historical Society. And as mentioned in the introduction, “Louis [Zangwill], now a member of [the Jewish Historical Society Council], was one of the boys” that Jacobs photographed (354).

Zangwill also joked that only Jacobs was qualified to “disentangle this veritable Jewry of Jacobses, study ‘The Comparative Distribution of Jewish Talent’ among them, and put them all together into a composite photograph” (365). Though he disagreed with the very logic of composite photographs, his eulogy reparatively re-presents multiple Jacobses to cast him as an overall champion of liberal humanism. Zangwill uses the lecture as an opportunity to reflect, in the midst of the Great War, on Jacobs’s commitment to peace and humanity. Building upon one of Jacobs’s articles, Zangwill notes how “vain” it is “to sunder the human family by the artificial boundaries of States, religions, countries, ambitions, hatreds,” since “underneath and through it all goes the same flesh and blood, and the human nature that politicians drive out with a pitchfork reasserts itself in all its divine identity with a song or a proverb” (365). While these sympathetic remarks seem to contradict Zangwill’s distrust of composite photography as a scientific practice meant to contain or limit Jewish identity, the comments are marked

with a sensitive awareness not only of Jacobs's death but also of the death of so many men lost to a war brought about by chauvinistic nationalisms.

By 1916, Zangwill had departed from the political Zionist movement and had for over ten years been negotiating on behalf of displaced immigrants as the President of the Jewish Territorial Organization. It says something about Zangwill's experience in the twentieth century that he would embrace the language of universal humanity for the political purposes of pacifism. In the presence of ardent Zionists in the memorial lecture audience, Zangwill insists that nationalist visions should never take precedence over the actual people they are made of or made to represent. In fact, Zangwill had carried this conviction since his break with the political Zionists in 1905, shortly after Theodore Herzl's death and the political Zionists' rejection of the Uganda plan (*A Jew* 152). Zangwill's embrace of a universal humanity premised upon a tolerance of plural values systems and beliefs was, like his reading of Joseph Jacobs, a result of his affiliation with more than one community. Rather than holding a detached cosmopolitan viewpoint, Zangwill, even as the author of *The Melting Pot*, does not seek to reduce difference to a commensurable multiculturalism.¹⁹ As John Gray has argued, if liberal humanism has any place within a modern world, it must give up the belief in a universal best way of life

¹⁹ Zangwill's play at first seems to be homage to the very processes that, I argue, he critiques. However, the British Alien's Bill of 1905 posed a huge problem for Russian Jewish refugees who were seeking asylum. America had yet to pass similar immigration restrictions, and Zangwill's play tried to help maintain a political relationship. Not coincidentally, President Theodore Roosevelt was at the second performance of the play and commented on how well it portrayed America. For further analysis of the complexities of this play, see Rochelson's *A Jew in the Public Arena: the career of Israel Zangwill*. Wayne State University Press, 2008, 180-189.

(Gray 3). Zangwill's acute awareness of this paradox of liberal culture is evidenced in his distrust of typological thinking and in his ardent political work to ensure that bodies and not only nations flourish under conditions of a more tolerant global community.

Coda:

In the next chapter, I examine how the "Jewish type" shapes discussions of Jewish nationalism in the 1890s. Zangwill's participation in the English Zionist movement and in the first Zionist congress holds in tension the problems of representing "Israel" within a liberal-state model on one hand and the increasing need for Jewish collective, transnational representation on the other. The movement, according to Zangwill is heavily invested in unifying the Jewish people through a composite photographic representation of likeness, both literally and rhetorically.

At the first Zionist Congress, Max Nordau champions the all too familiar composite model of "emphasiz[ing] everything that unites [the Jewish people] and put[ting] behind us all that separates us" as the sure road to legitimating the Jewish nation (Zeugin 146). The diverse delegation of Jews, in Zangwill's description of the Congress, seems to confound a common "Jewish type" (*Dreamers* 742); however, the dress code

and photographs produced after the Congress “compounds” the delegates into a composite document that suggests otherwise.

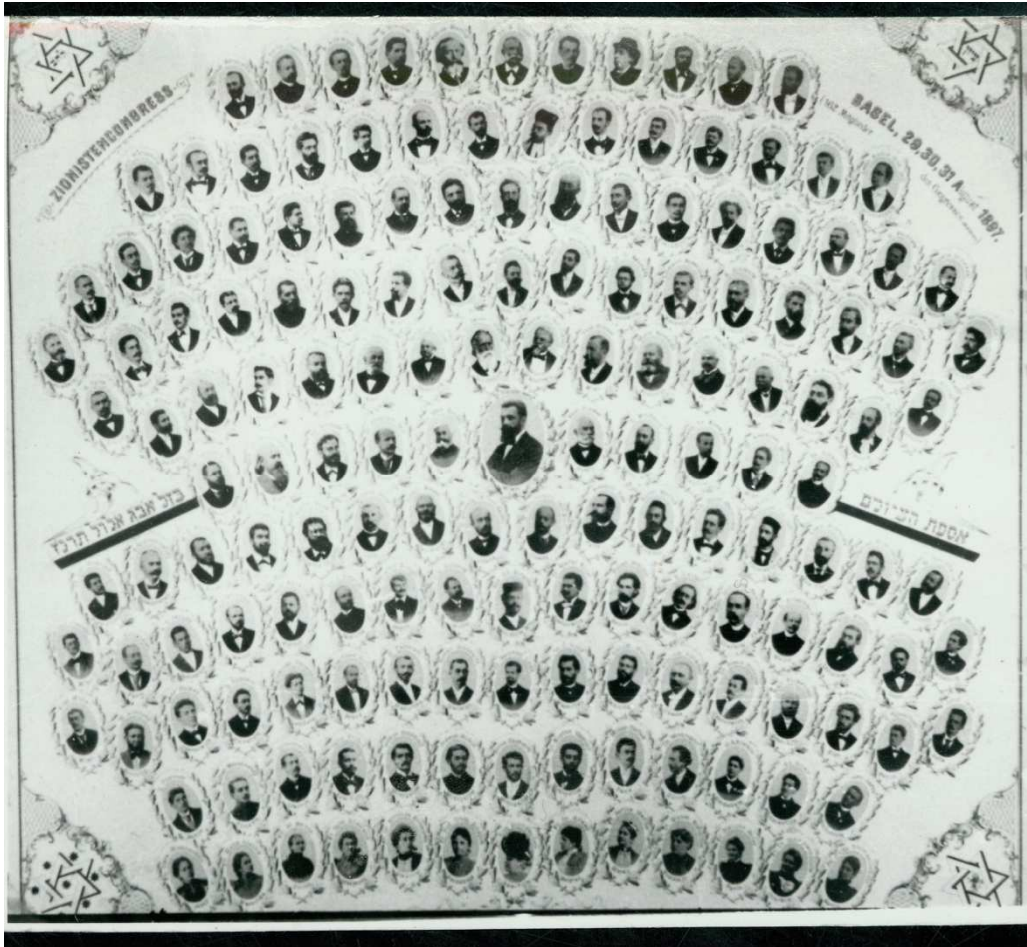


Fig. 9 . First Zionist Congress prepared after the congress. Courtesy of the Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.

The picture above is just one example of the legacy of composite photography, taking pictures of portraits to create an aggregate, but rather than a statistical average, this method was used to cut across Jewish difference and language barriers to represent the national body as composed of like men. The fourteen non-voting female guest delegates on the bottom row make up the typical margins that denote their place within the Political Zionist model. Zangwill, too, in the upper right hand corner occupies the other fringe

group of the delegation, English Jews. At the center, Theodore Herzl's noticeably larger image is reminiscent of the layout of the Jacobs-Galton's composite portraits: as the individual faces are merged into a single composite image, so too does Herzl's image come to stand in as the "face of the nation," an idealized patriarch that is "more Jewish than the other individual portraits" (Jacobs 223). And perhaps for this reason, Herzl confidently declared in his personal reflections on the First Zionist Congress on September 3, 1897: "If I were to summarise the first Congress in a few words—which I would be wary of uttering public—I would say this: In Basel I founded the Jewish State" (Haumann 2).

Chapter 4

Counter-Photography: History as Identity in Early Alternative Zionist Discourses

This chapter further examines the complex legacy of Jacobs's composite method and the "Jewish type" as it informed a myriad of transatlantic debates about Jewish national identity during the late 1890s in England and America. I begin with Joseph Jacobs because he was the first to use composite photography to revise the history of Jewish persecution and ethnic difference in order to underwrite a race-based national identity. In this chapter, I examine how later Anglo-American Jewish writers and activists leveraged a literary rendition of the composite photographic method to rewrite Jewish history to support their model of Jewish collective identity. These literary composite photographs, or composite "sketches," further expose the intimate relationship between photography, historiography, and national identity in the late nineteenth century.

Nowhere is the legacy of Jacobs's "Jewish type" more visible, I argue, than in political Zionist's representations of the First Zionist Congress. Michael Berkowitz and Todd Samuel Presner in their separate books have articulated the significant role Zionist aesthetics played, even if in unconscious ways, in creating a Jewish national body where none existed (Berkowitz 18-29; Presner 9, 11). Theodor Herzl, a Viennese journalist and playwright, founded the political Zionist movement and led the First Zionist Congress in Basle, Switzerland in August of 1897. The Zionist Congress brought together Jewish delegates from all over Europe and the Americas to, like Joseph Jacobs, re-imagine a Jewish national identity that could stand up to increasing antisemitism in Europe. At the First Zionist Congress, Theodor Herzl and Max Nordau, Austro-Hungarian physician and author of *Degeneration* (1895), argued that only through a secular national movement

could Jews be “free men on [their] own soil” (Herzl 102). As Berkowitz, Presner and Mikhail Dekel have shown, political Zionism stressed a predominantly androcentric, bourgeois, and muscular form of Jewish national identity, which became increasingly problematic for the existing communities of global Jewry (*Zionist Culture* 48-50 ; Presner 64; Dekel 123-125).

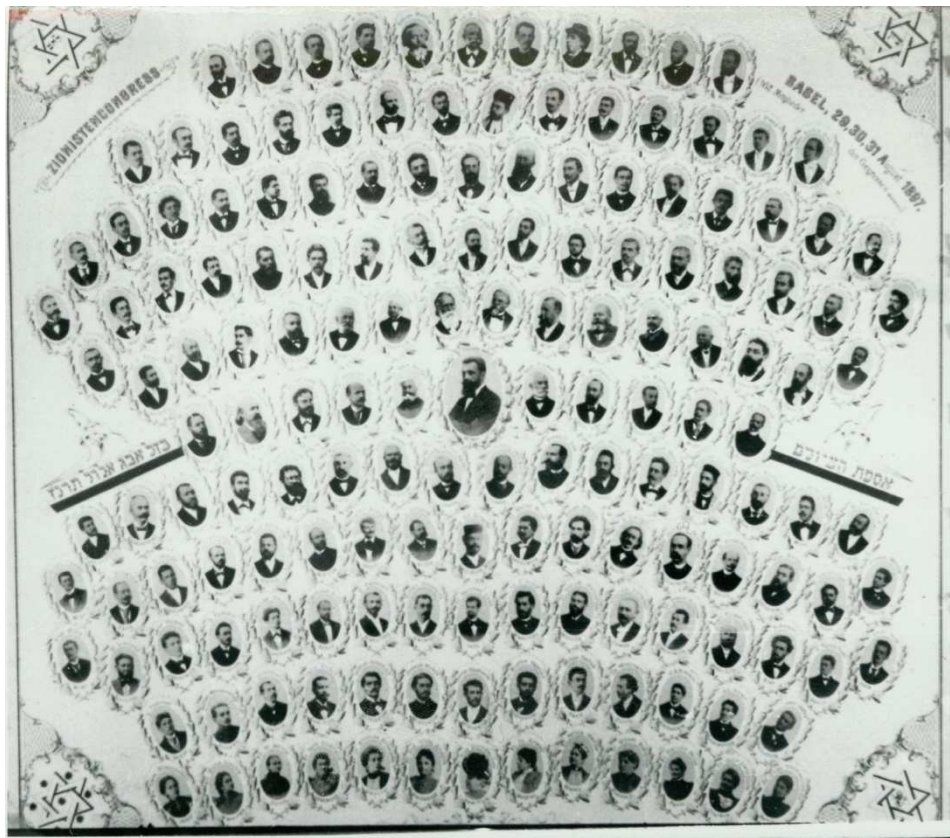


Figure 10: First Zionist Congress prepared after the congress. Courtesy of the Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.

The poster above illustrates the challenges posed by this Eurocentric model of Jewish identity in two key ways: 1) in the material composition of the poster made from pasting multiple portraits together to convey unity, and 2) in the hierarchal center-periphery orientation of the multiple photographs around a much larger portrait of Herzl. Like

Jacobs, the unknown photographer of this composite document, a photograph of many photographs in one exposure, used photography to write the history of the Congress into a single document. To be clear, the poster was not composed through the Galtonian composite method, exposing multiple photos to the same sensitized plate. But, as Jacobs strove to create an ideal “Jewish type” by presenting many portraits as one image, so too does this composite document use many portraits to create the single image of an ideal Jewish national body. The individual portraits convey a uniform-like quality. Dressed in formal attire, the portraits demonstrated that the participants fit a certain “type,” which smoothed over their ethnic, religious, language and most importantly their class differences with a visual representation of the national body as composed of like men.

The poster also depicts the fourteen non-voting female delegates on the bottom periphery, giving shape to political Zionism’s outer limits. These women appear below all other portraits indicating their lower status and/or ornamental function at the Congress. Anglo-Jewish writer Israel Zangwill, notably, is also on the margin of the group in the upper right hand corner and stands in for the other fringe group of the delegation, English Jews. At the center, Theodore Herzl’s noticeably larger image is also reminiscent of the layout of the Jacobs-Galton’s composite portraits: as the Galtonian individual portraits were merged into a single composite image, this composite document communicates the hierarchy of the many smaller portraits, which are ultimately subordinated to Herzl’s larger image. Herzl’s image stands in as the “face of the nation,” an idealized patriarch who was at subsequent congresses perceived like Jacobs’ “Jewish type” to appear “more Jewish than the other individual” attendees, even though Herzl did

not consider Judaism to be essential to Jewish self-determination (Jacobs 223). And perhaps for this reason, Herzl confidently declared in his personal reflections on the First Zionist Congress on September 3, 1897: “If I were to summarise the first Congress in a few words—words I would never say out loud, I would say this: In Basel, I have founded the Jewish State” (Haumann 2).

However, the poster also highlights the troubling contradiction between the professed mission of Zionism as a return to Jewishness and its methods for crafting a secular bourgeois, liberal European national movement. Founding father of cultural Zionism, Ahad Ha’am, also known as Asher Ginzberg, attended the Congress (located in left quadrant of the poster) and lamented this tension between the “mass politics” of bourgeois nationalization and political Zionism’s ambivalent relationship to Judaism and Jewish culture (*Zionist Culture* 36). Stuart A. Cohen gives a full account of the conflict between cultural and political Zionists as well as their common adversary of devoutly British Jews in his book *English Zionist and British Jews: The Communal Politics of Anglo-Jewry 1895-1920*. The core conflict between cultural and political Zionism can be summarized as differing opinions of what should form the basis of national belonging: Ahad Ha’am wanted a truly Jewish state not simply Herzl’s dream of a secular state for Jews (Zipperstein 23-24). Much ink has been spilled parsing the important differences articulated by each group and outlining the subsequent foundational debates about Jewish Diaspora and national identities well into the twentieth century; however, my focus here is to stress the obvious but overlooked formal components of the poster that work to obscure these tensions. (Cohen 40-42)

The poster is a photograph of a composite document of photographs and text, a mid-nineteenth century, amateur technique primarily used to insert deceased family members into later family photographs (Triggs). The paste-up method was a way of remembering the deceased and giving that memory a tangible, even if artificial, place in the future. Like Galton and Jacobs's later technique of composite photography, the unknown composer used the arrangement of the photographs to instantiate the importance of the Zionist Congress as a legitimate portion of history and, as such, the poster is an example of what I term political Zionist technique of "fauxtographic historiography." The "fauxtographic" history presented in the poster rewrote the historical outcome of the Jewish Congress as united and conveyed a single brand of Jewish identity that did not yet exist. This poster, thought to be composed anywhere between 1898-1904, was created during the war years, a time of flagrant intracommunal debate and Zionist political posturing to secure communal dominance in England and America (Cohen 40-50). Still, what is commonly left out of these discussions of Jewish national identity, and what will make up the remainder of my chapter, is an analysis of those groups left on the margins of the poster and those not pictured at all. It is not a coincidence that political Zionists failed to effectively incorporate Jewish women and poor immigrant Jews into their movement. These separate groups experienced different forms of social and class exclusion, which were byproducts of political Zionist's adoption of liberal political structures that they willingly reproduced. And while many of the Jewish women's groups that mobilized to support Jewish immigrants were predominantly

middle-class, several women's groups leveraged their economic capital to influence the Zionist political structures.

Returning now to the bottom periphery of Anglo-American Jewish women present at the 1897 Zionist congress. Rosa Sonneschein (center portrait on the bottom row) attended the Congress as editor-correspondent for the influential new journal *The American Jewess*. Established in 1895, the bi-monthly journal touted on every cover that it was the “only publication devoted to the interests of Jewish women” (*The American Jewess* np). Sonneschein's journal was an important venue for emerging Anglo-American Jewish women writers, especially those who did not fit the publishing agendas of other Jewish presses like the Jewish Publication Society of America, which was “unofficially” edited by future American Zionist leader Henrietta Szold. Despite Sonneschein's glowing report of the First Zionist Congress, she notes distinct points of tension within the Congress's overall celebratory mood.

Sonneschein reports Herzl and Nordau's dismissal of other colonization efforts that have populated Palestine with “professional beggars,” who must be “annihilated,” revealing the movement's orientalist and classist attitudes towards Jewish philanthropy (Sonneschein 14). Herzl, Sonneschein writes, proclaimed at the close of the conference: “on the day when the plow is used again by Jewish farmers, the Jewish Question will be solved” (19). Much like Jacobs's “Jewish type,” Herzl's masculine depiction of the Jewish farmer redeeming the Jewish nation with Jewish muscle fixed the future of Jewish identity on the young male, restored body. Herzl and Nordau—while they used the massive Jewish refugee populations to support their versions of Jewish history in

Europe— did not believe the movement had a responsibility to bring about the immediate relief of Jewish refugees (14). Furthermore, the Zionist movement’s disavowal of charity as that which had historically stood in the way of Jewish self-reliance was not the only thing left out or dismissed from discussion during the conference. Sonneschein ends her article with an apology to her readers for the “Zionists [who] began their proceeding by disenfranchising women” (20). Furthermore, Sonneschein reads this dismissal of women and that of Jewish charity to be just a few of the main challenges the Congress will have to address the following year.

One example of a response to the First Zionist Congress’s position on Jewish refugees and women is Anglo-Jewish writer Lady Katie Magnus’ extended edition of her Anglo-Jewish history, *Jewish Portraits* (1888; 1897). The 1897 version published just after the Congress included a short socio-historical analysis of the function of “Charity in Talmudic times” and three new chapters: “The National Idea in Judaism”; “Story of a False Prophet”; and “Now and Then: A composite sketch.” These chapters, as I will explore in the next section, are examples of how Magnus engaged and challenged the scope of political Zionism at the fin-de-siècle. More specifically, Magnus disagrees with political Zionism’s conception of Jewish history as distinct from the history of Judaism; furthermore, she argued, like cultural Zionists, that the history of Judaism is what inspires the “national idea” of Jewish cultural and ethical values (*Jewish Portraits* 148). Magnus insisted that only by keeping these forms of Jewish history in dialogue could Jewish national identity become inclusive and capable of holding together important diasporic and nationalist strands of Jewish identity. Magnus’s own “composite sketch” about

Jewish women's role in intracommunal debates about Jewish identity and in Judaism represents the history of Jewish women as adept and active participants, rather than as passive observers (178). In her retelling of Jewish history, Magnus made room for a non-idealized, dynamic Jewish womanhood that had historical precedence in the Talmud to enter predominantly male debates on Jewish nationalism. By compounding the stories of biblical Jewish women, Magnus crafted a counter-history that expanded the reach of Jewish women not through a typological model but rather through the radical blurring of the limits of Jewish women's historical role in Judaism.

My chapter further analyzes the network of Anglo-American Jewish women writers (AAJWW) who challenged and extended the discourse of Jewish nationalism to incorporate those left out of the political Zionist national model. Beginning after the First Zionist Congress, I examine the transatlantic responses to political Zionism's mission and how AAJWW challenged the premises of the movement with their own representations of Jewish counter-histories, which exposed the ethical limits of political Zionism's mission. In the first section of the chapter, I map out how AAJWW like Lady Katie Magnus, Henrietta Szold, Emma Wolf, Martha Wolfenstein and Rosa Sonneschein actively revised the breadth and scope of Jewish historiography in order to expand the possibilities of Jewish collective identity beyond a liberal state solution. Their counter-histories exposed the complicated and important relationship between diasporic and national discourses which were equally important to Judaism's concept of social justice. This group of AAJWW engaged multiple genres of literature, photography, historiography, and philanthropy to shape the possibilities of Jewish nationalism

alongside and beyond the political Zionist movement. In the second section, I examine a series of fictional biographies by Israel Zangwill in *Dreamers of the Ghetto* (1898). The texts reconfigure the historical trajectory of political Zionism through a “composite-conversation” or sketch of Jewry’s famous but ultimately unsuccessful dreamers. This text strikes a transatlantic nerve for AAJWW. The anxiety over the success of political Zionism emerges in the literary responses to *Dreamers*. In the final portion of this section, I examine a composite photograph of Theodor Herzl meeting the German Kaiser Wilhelm II in Palestine in October of 1898 to show how the uncertainty of the movement’s success was smoothed over with strategic photographs that authenticated the forward trajectory of the movement.

AAJWW use counter-history to enter debates on Jewish collective and national identity

In 1888, the same year Amy Levy published her first novel *A Romance of A Shop* about four sisters who own a photography studio, her colleague Anglo-Jewish writer Lady Katie Magnus published her own “gallery,” *Jewish Portraits*, which offered snapshots of Jewish history from medieval Spain, the German ghettos, the Jews’ return to England, and Moses Mendelssohn’s *Haskalah* movement. Each short biographical essay exposes the reader to a different set of historical conflicts between the Jewish community and the dominant culture of that moment in history; however, the conflict is not the highlight of the work. Rather the multiple portraits, not unlike Joseph Jacobs’s composite “Jewish type,” reveal common contours of the stories and the Jewish community’s response during each to engage, endure and collaborate with surrounding communities.

Magnus, a teacher and writer, also supported the Jewish Reform movement in England, which sought to modernize Judaism. Magnus was an ardent advocate for a complex Jewish identity—as religious, cultural, and biological. From this position, Magnus and her husband Sir Philip Magnus, a liberal politician and education reformer, were committed to re-presenting Judaism to young Jews in a way that allowed them to maintain their religious and cultural identity alongside their modern lifestyles. Across the Atlantic this same year, the Jewish Publication Society of America (JPS), formerly the failed American Jewish Publication Society, was reborn on June 3, 1888 with the focus of bringing the Jewish community together through non-denominational publications seeking a “remedy for major communal problems of the day” (Sarna 24). Their first publication was a republication of Lady Katie Magnus’ 1886 *Outlines of Jewish History*, which included a new section on the Americas co-authored by two members of the JPS, Cyrus Adler, a well-known Hebraic scholar, and Henrietta Szold, an adept translator and former school teacher for newly-arrived immigrants in Baltimore.

In this section, I will examine how history became “the ‘master discourse’ of modern Judaism” and competing forms of Jewish collective identity in fin-de-siècle England and America (Gotzmann 498). Photography, as I have shown, was an important technology that facilitated the shift toward a “biooptimist” concept of national history, which was bound to the discourse of progress and fitness (Danahay 472). For Jacobs, composite photography smoothed over the variations of Jewish ethnic or cultural identity as only a product of recent history. In doing so, Jacobs was able to reify the image of the “Jewish type” as a document verifying the longevity and fitness of the Jewish people and

the endurance of Jewish civilization. Thus, Jacobs's method literally rewrote the past in order to project a united Jewish collective identity, which shared a "civilized" past (Gotzmann 505). Despite its faulty science, Jacobs's composite photographic method showed his contemporaries that the Jewish Question had to be solved on the level of history. Andreas Gotzmann's thorough analysis of late-nineteenth-century historiography in Western Europe examines European and American Jewish communities' general anxiety about the "unraveling of Jewish identities and anti-Semitic challenges of the fin-de-siecle" and the subsequent creation of a host of historical research societies and institutions that sought to defend themselves against colonial discourses that presented Jews as unfit and uncivilized (53).

German Jewish scholarship pursued this goal through the research model of *Wissenschaft des Judentum*, which sought to secularize Jewish history and redefine Jewish identity apart from Judaism. Gotzmann poignantly notes that since the German *Haskalah* put Judaism within the context of the larger history of Jewish civilization, religion no longer served as the dominant means of individual and national identity (497). Jacobs's work is one example of how secular, race-based conceptions of Jewish identity privileged history as the medium of individual and national identity. However, in doing so, the model of history reproduced anti-Semitic undertones toward religious Jewish communities and foreclosed the possibility of a "living" model of Judaism for Orthodox and Reform communities (Montagu 1). As a result, British and American historical and publication societies sought to unseat the prominent and controversial German models of *Wissenschaft* models with new histories that could "bear witness" to Jewish history and

the history of Judaism (*Outlines* 333). The following section will consider how key British and American Jewish presses and their publications attempted to rewrite Jewish history in order to provide a new model of Jewish identity that could counter antisemitism and unify Jewish communities in England and America (505).

Jewish historian Nils Roemer insists that such transnational institutions are important and often overlooked discursive pockets of cultural transmission during the nineteenth century, which reveal insight into the complex self-fashioning of Jewish national identity (Roemer 53). Building on this work, I examine the transatlantic dialogue between English and American Jewish publications of two key Anglo-Jewish historiographies that played an important role in challenging *Wissenschaft* models of Jewish history. Beginning with an analysis of the two publications of Lady Magnus's *Outlines of Jewish History* and the subsequent JPS revised edition of Heinrich Graetz's *History of the Jews*, I show how this complex relationship between Anglo and American Jewish writers and publishers is a microcosm of the transnational discussion of Jewish collective identity. In relation to my larger argument, these fin-de-siècle historiographies reveal how two AAJWW, Katie Magnus and Henrietta Szold, despite their important differences consciously constructed an inclusive model of Jewish collective identity that was capable of holding in tension diasporic and national expressions of Jewish identity. Contemporary gender politics in England and America also play a large role facilitating a Jewish feminist consciousness among these writers and deserves further explanation here. I am interested in further fleshing out the intersection of gender and race for these writers as they are expressed in their counter-histories, translations, and the works they edited.

“Exposing the ‘sidelights’ of Jewish historiography: Henrietta Szold and Lady Katie Magnus respond to Heinrich Graetz’s *History of the Jews*”

In 1890, the newly branded Jewish Publication Society of America published its first text: an extended edition of Anglo-Jewish writer Lady Katie Magnus’ *Outlines of Jewish History* (1886). Just one year later in 1891, the JPS took on the task of publishing the first English translation of Heinrich Graetz’s six volumes of *History of the Jews* (1853). It is no coincidence that the JPS published Magnus and Graetz’s histories in reverse order. Aside from copyright negotiations, this section considers how two Jewish women, Henrietta Szold, acting editor of the JPS, and Lady Katie Magnus, an educator and advocate for Reform and Liberal Judaism, shaped transatlantic discussions of Jewish historiography.

I draw on the methodology of Lady Katie Magnus and offer three snapshots that succinctly illustrate how they intervened in these narratives. First, I want to briefly situate Henrietta Szold’s work at the JPS and her well-known engagement with Graetz’s work as part of an emerging transatlantic semitic discourse about Jewish collective, rather than explicitly national identity. Second, I will (re)introduce Anglo-Jewish author Lady Katie Magnus and her two important narrative histories, *Outlines of Jewish History* and *Jewish Portraits*, and their critical engagement with *Wissenschaft* historian Heinrich Graetz’s *History of the Jews*, its methods, aims and legacy. And in the last portion of this section, I highlight some notable critiques and methodological questions Szold and Magnus pose about Graetz’s magnum opus, which I argue anticipated later observations and views of history made by Gershom Scholem and Walter Benjamin in the twentieth century.

From 1888 to 1898, Henrietta Szold and Lady Katie Magnus became unlikely colleagues. Szold, as acting editor of the Jewish Publication Society of America (JPS) from 1888 to 1916, played a pivotal role in shaping the discourse on Jewish history and literature (Michael Brown, JWA). It is no exaggeration to say that much of the best that has been thought and said in the Jewish canon was made possible by Szold's often unremarked and unpaid labor as editor, translator, fact checker, and contributor. This is certainly true for the first two publications that put the JPS on the map: Magnus' *Outlines of Jewish history* and Graetz's *History of the Jews*.

First, Szold and Cyrus Adler, an established Orientalist and future president of the Jewish Theological Seminary, collaborated with Magnus to update and expand the 1886 *Outlines of Jewish History* to include a new section on the Americas. There was some anxiety by the Publication Committee about whether an American press should publish a book by a British author as its inaugural text, but Magnus's text fit the mission of the new JPS: to bring multiple facets of global Jewry together without advocating on the behalf of any one group interest over another. This slowly changed at the turn of the century, but in 1888-1891 the goal of the Press was to build an awareness of a collective but not homogenous Jewish identity. Szold was also impressed by Magnus' narrative template in *Outlines*, which included a cast of notable Jewish women. In her section on the Americas, Szold integrated American Jewish women like Rebecca Gratz and Emma Lazarus. As I mentioned, the JPS chose Magnus's 1886 *Outlines of Jewish History* because it was so successful at bringing Jewish history and the history of Judaism together, without alienating a broad spectrum of Anglo-American Jewry. The original

Outlines of Jewish History broached the massive topic of Jewish history as a series of highlights and flashpoints that could be easily accessible for both adult and “youthful readers” in order to increase general knowledge about “the whole sad, beautiful, ‘heroic history’” of the Jews (Preface viii). But more than a description of history ‘as it actually happened,’ Magnus’s history used Jewish and Christian sources, Medieval Hebrew poetry and contemporary British poetry among other materials to contextualize and frame the events so as to build a running commentary about their cultural and religious significance.

At times bordering on homily, the original *Outlines* made its biases and purposes clear. The history should inspire readers to a sympathetic understanding of the complexity of Jewish history indicative of an “advanced... civilization” (Magnus vii-viii). Within its context, this version of Jewish history was an important political counterpoint to the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* research on the continent, in particular, Heinrich Graetz’s *History of the Jews* published in German in 1853. At the time, Graetz’s history was already under contract to be published in English with the British press, David Nutt in the Strand. Bella Lowy and Israel Abrahams were in the throes of translating the multiple volumes in consultation with Graetz, who was in declining health. However, issues with the veracity of Graetz’s claims seemed to pose more challenges than originally anticipated. Written from a decidedly anti-reform point of view, Graetz’s *History of the Jews* played fast and loose with several historical details in his attempt to fit them into his Hegelian-infused narrative history of the Jews since biblical times. On the continent, Graetz’s work had already caused quite a stir among Orthodox and Reform Jewish

communities, and it was decidedly not the work that the JPS could underwrite as its inaugural publication (Sarna 30-35; Schorsch 31-47).

However, after the financial success brought by the republication of Magnus's *Outlines*, the JPS secured the rights to Graetz's *History of the Jews*. Szold took the lead on proofing and indexing what was believed to be the monumental publication of the first comprehensive English translation of the multi-volume history. However, Szold's precision editing found not only translation mistakes but also numerous incorrect citations and factual errors (Sarna 38). Additionally, Szold, as an unpaid volunteer, compiled a 492-page index to make the then six-volume work searchable (38). In the 1891 JPS publication of *History of the Jews*, Szold and Adler inscribed the drama and conflict of their efforts into the front matter of the book, noting:

Owing to the necessary revision by the American editors, there has been a delay in the publication of this work beyond the time announced for its appearance. It is hoped that in the future such delay may be avoided. [Signed] The Publication Committee. (Graetz xi)

Immediately following, Graetz and Lowy each provided their own prefatory remarks that, unsurprisingly, made no reference to the American editors or the revised and improved format of the book, except for Lowy's brief note about "various hands" that brought it into English but that only she was responsible for the edited and revised text. In addition, Graetz makes no mention of Szold or Adler's labor. I read this exchange as owing to a variety of factors, not the least of which was a turf war, of sorts, but also about the purpose of the English translation of Jewish history to bridge communal divides.

While Graetz and Magnus had distinctly different aims, both their histories emphasized the power of narrative historiography to shape the contemporary political

contexts of global Jewry. In the preface of the English translation of Graetz's history, he expresses his hope that English language readers "will read, [take] to heart, and [act] in response to his history, as they have done with other texts" (Graetz v). Graetz wanted his history to be the lens by which Anglo-American Judaism could see a discrete, unified, and nationalized vision of Judaism. Magnus's *Outlines*, I argue, was an important counterpoint because it showed that while some practices and rituals had remained unchanged there was historical evidence of how Judaism had changed throughout history based on communal consensus.

Still, the first edition of *Outlines* had its problems. Adler and Szold were the members of the publishing committee assigned to both Magnus and Graetz's works and were responsible for ensuring that the JPS published works that fit the mission of the society and were of scholarly merit. In relationship to Magnus's text, Szold and Adler were put in charge of revising the heavy emphasis on British Jewry and the creation of a section devoted to the history of Jews in the Americas, as it did not bode well for the new American-based JPSA to establish its reputation as an American publisher with a British author who ignored the importance of American Jewry. Szold and Alder produced a substantial addition about Jews in the Americas beginning in 1492 through the 1880s. Aside from filling in geographical gaps, Szold interspersed her portions of history with American Jewish women writers's contributions to Jewish history in the Americas. The epigraph of the opening of the "Americas" section is from Emma Lazarus's 1883 poem "1492," which is a poem that examines the silver lining of the Spanish expulsion of the

Jews and Columbus's arrival to the Americas (Magnus 334). Szold also highlights the labor and literature of Rebecca Gratz (1781-1869), an educator and philanthropist (356).

Szold notes that Gratz was friends with Washington Irving and the inspiration for Sir Walter Scott's Rebecca in *Ivanhoe* (356-7). Through her incorporation of American Jewish writers, women and men, and the importance of their work to American and British culture, Szold rewrites the Anglo-American Jewish relationship as one of collaboration between peers and represents the Jewish community as a complementary, even patriotic people to their respective countries. This is but one example of how the JPS opened an important transatlantic network of cultural exchange that was critical during the late 1890s when pogroms, Zionism, and immigration restrictions began to polarize and foreclose these collaborative and inclusive models of Jewish identity.

I want to emphasize that Szold's work as editor and contributor to both *Outlines of Jewish History* and *History of the Jews* exposed the fault lines of Jewish intracomunal debates about the role of Judaism within Jewish history already playing out as Reform v. Orthodox Judaism in Anglo and German Jewish communities. Phillip Bloch, Graetz's biographer, notes that Graetz's Orthodox leanings absolutely informed his historiographical ambitions (4-5). Unfortunately, even Graetz's version of Orthodox Judaism put him at odds with the Orthodox community in Berlin, specifically with his former mentor Samson Raphael Hirsch, the spokesman for German Jewish Bourgeois Orthodoxy (Myers 58). As part of the JPS's new mandate, Szold and Adler adeptly navigated Magnus and Graetz's narrative histories to keep their readership broad by precisely relying on historiography to act as common ground for disparate Jewish

communities in England, Europe, and the United States. It is important to situate this strategy within common practices of late-nineteenth-century historiographical practices because the JPS was part of a larger, emerging network of Jewish institutions.

As previously mentioned, Andreas Gotzmann argues it is precisely during this moment of the early 1890s that history became “the ‘master discourse’ of modern Judaism” and the medium of competing forms of Jewish collective identity in fin-de-siècle England and America (Gotzmann 498). Similarly, in his essay, “Outside and Inside the Nations: changing borders in the study of the Jewish past during the nineteenth century,” Nils Roemer analyzes a host of historical research institutes in Europe and the United States founded at the turn of the century to support his claim that history was the new lingua franca of collective, national, and religious identity (Roemer 28, 53). Within these contexts, then Szold and Magnus’s work has new significance as part of a counter-*Wissenschaft* perspective.

In *Outlines*, Magnus’s reform agenda was clearly staking out a contested site of Jewish identity and not just in opposition to *Wissenschaft* research, but to Graetz’s orthodox treatment of the parts of Jewish history that did not fit his model, specifically, his treatment of mystical or Karaite sects. For example, in her 1886 publication of *Outlines*, Magnus revises the history of Karaites as heroes rather than heretics, a decision Szold kept in the 1891 edition. For Magnus, Karaites were not harmful as much as they modeled that Judaism was capable of reforming its laws based on communal consensus. The Karaites were also important because they included women as equal participants in religious life. In Magnus’s later historical narrative, the second edition of *Jewish*

Portraits published with David Nutt in the Strand in 1897, Magnus removes previous reference to Graetz, including a note about him as a “sober historian” and readily challenges his methodology (Magnus 198). Magnus specifically reframes figures like Jehuda Ha-Levi, the Rothchilds and even the heretical Sabbatai Zevi within a more flexible framework of Jewish collective identity that has room for multiple expressions of Jewishness, even those considered harmful, failed, or “naturally unsettled in character” by Graetz’s classifications (*History Vol. 3* 138).

Magnus’s *Jewish Portraits* was decidedly different in form and scope from her *Outlines*. While following a chronological format, the historical sketches were crafted as responses to contemporary events, a sort of exegesis of Jewish history and scriptures that Magnus used to critique her contemporary political moment. In the 1897 edition, Magnus’s new genre of historiography used the seven original chapters of the earlier edition of *Portraits* to re-vision Jewish communal identity through the lens of Jewish history’s heroic movers and shakers—through past “patriots,” poets, philanthropists, and philosophers,” who in hindsight succeeded in bettering the Jewish community. As I will show throughout the remainder of the section, *Jewish Portraits* was a double social experiment with the genre of Jewish history: the first publication in 1888 was crafted to provide a narrative to strengthen the bond between the socio-economic divides between wealthy and assimilated West End Jews and newly emigrated Russian Jewish refugees in late-nineteenth-century London. The second 1897 extended edition with publisher David

Nutt²⁰. was an important response to and critique of political Zionism and the First Zionist Congress's missed opportunities to collaborate with Jewish women and charitable institutions for the relief of poor Jewish refugees.

Magnus's sympathetic socio-historical approach to each Jewish portrait captures a fragment of the life and works of each writer in eloquent and thoughtful prose. Quoting from Charles Kingsley, "the literature of nation is its autobiography," Magnus emphasizes the stakes of her counter-history of Halevi's literary merits as an example of Jewish civilization's "sweetness and light" (Magnus 4). In her summary analysis of Halevi, Magnus emphasizes the idea that history can only ever be a portrait that must be interpreted by every age. Magnus supports this by citing multiple historical interpretations of Halevi's poetry and prose. In doing so, she points out that history in general "speaks neither loudly nor in chorus" and that is not necessarily a problem (5). Rather, Magnus views the incompleteness of every historical record to require the historian to identify the values systems at work, "a man's ideals," as they appear in the literature of history; Magnus puts this model of history in contrast to the museum historians who focus and perhaps commodify facts like "the very pen with which [Halevi] wrote and the desk at which he sat" (6).

Magnus explains the challenge of recovering Jewish history, for it has been obscured by the "din and dust of 'chivalrous' crusaders" over many centuries (Magnus

²⁰ David Nutt was publisher JPSA negotiated with the get the rights to Graetz's *History of the Jews*. While perhaps a trivial detail, I am trying to confirm whether or not it was important political statement to publisher her critique of Zionism with a British publisher following the Zionist Congress.

199). Benjamin's analysis of historical documents makes this same point fifty years later: the dialectical image of a "cultural treasure" of civilization is also a document of barbarism—a narrative of conquest and violence (Benjamin 265). Magnus spends much of her own *Jewish Portraits* pointing out the subjective nature of history, the layers of "varnish" applied to the centuries by different conquerors (*Jewish Portraits* 3). In doing so, Magnus identifies the risk incurred by myopically hanging the value of the poets on the historical facts, which seems to leave Jewish national identity twisted up with conquerors (6). Pushing beyond mere description and the collection of data, Magnus insists the task of the historian is never to ascertain a complete picture but to work to understand the fragments revealed by the "side-lights" of a particular period. In doing so, a more "honest" history will contain multiple reflections of the single portrait, and not attempt to artificially produce a single, authoritative narrative (11). Thus, Magnus's history is dynamically but not ahistorically connected to her contemporary moment. This model also allows Magnus to "brush history against the grain" and repurpose contemporary writers like Charles Kingsley to say something new about the role of medieval Hebrew poetry (Benjamin 257).

The subsequent chapters of *Jewish Portraits* build and complicate Magnus's notion of history as a form of national autobiography. "The story of a street" chapter is an important play on this idea of the witnesses of history, whether poets, artists. Magnus suggests that while much of Jewish history has been obscured by the dust of crusaders, she crafts a fictionalized retelling of the Frankfort ghetto by using the very stones and ruins of the street as witnesses. The "Story of a Street" traces the history of the Frankfort

ghetto, the *Judengasse*, from 1430 until her contemporary moment as a way to chronicle the life and struggle of Jews in Germany. By focusing on the history of the *Judengasse* ruins, Magnus offers historical snapshots of the how the infrastructure of the ghetto and other spatial qualities mirrored the shifts in the centuries of systematic violence against the Jewish community. From the perspective of anthropomorphized stones embedded in the street, Magnus imagines the raising of the ghetto walls and installing metal gates. The stones become the anchor for Magnus to bring the past to life through a parade of historical fragments from the *Judengasse*, since much is missing from the annals of Jewish history. Magnus glosses the trauma of ghetto shanties burned to the ground in favor of showing how they were built up again and again. It is this defiant and enduring spirit of the Jewish community that the essay highlights.

To this end, Magnus is quick to contrast the ubiquitous poverty with Sabbath day festivities, where once a week, the ghetto and its inhabitants were transformed by their faithful observance. No matter how poor, Magnus notes, on Saturday the ghetto was transformed with bright white linen table cloths, food enough for all, and celebratory rest. The chapter ends with the introduction of one of England's most prominent families, the Rothschilds, emerging from the Frankfort ghetto with the deconstructed pieces of their ghetto home. In the final scene, the family decides to reconstruct their ghetto home in Frankfort "as a depot of charity" and refuge for displaced Jews (*Jewish Portraits* 15). Magnus connects England's wealthiest members with a history of persecution to recall the importance of Jewish charity toward the downtrodden as the source of Jewish national identity that has, in her opinion, pervaded throughout Jewish Diasporic history.

The 1897 edition makes these connections between Jewish identity, Judaism, and charity clearer with the chapter “National Idea in Judaism.” In the wake of the First Zionist Congress, Magnus recounts the Jewish national idea as inextricably linked to the Exodus story; this was an important counterpoint to the ambivalent relationship between political Zionism and Judaism as a way to pointedly ask: What was this secular movement doing taking up the task of political restoration to Palestine? Magnus responds by revisiting the Exodus story as the moment the Jewish body politic was created. Jewish identity, for Magnus, could in no ways be disassociated from the monumental moment the Jewish people accepted the Law; not that the Law or the Torah dictate national expression, but rather Magnus was convinced any permutation of Jewish national identity needed a cultural if not religious center. “Political restoration,” Magnus argued, “would be a retrogressive step, narrowing and embarrassing the wider issues” of Jewish diasporic experiences (156).

Despite her critique of Zionism’s political goals, Magnus sees the political Zionist movement as an opportunity to bring the diverse interests of global Jews into contact. The second additional chapter to the 1897 *Jewish Portraits*, “Story of a False Prophet,” considers the consequences, both positive and negative, of false prophets throughout Jewish history, especially the failed seventeenth-century messianic campaign of Sabbathai Zevi. Condemned as a heretic in Graetz’s *History of the Jews*, Magnus reframes Zevi’s story with an unorthodox use of the proverb: “where there is no vision the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18). A proverb meant to celebrate the adherence of the people to the law, Magnus argues that Zevi’s messianic campaign interrupted the sixteen

hundred years of “captivity” of the Jews in Smyrna with an “undying hope,” which she argues “is the secret of vision” (159). Even illusion has had a role in helping the Jewish people survive: “this to our consolation be the teaching of history anent those whom [history] impartially dubs imposters...[though false and failed, they] lose something of their hopeless sadness, and in the transfiguration even failures and false prophets are seen to have a place and use” (159). By brushing history against the grain, Magnus is able to find new meaning in the past failures, and in doing so offers a counterpoint to her own bias against the political Zionist mission. As a self-proclaimed “student of history,” Magnus does not foreclose the possibilities of political Zionism to rejuvenate, even if only for a moment, the Jewish body politic (Magnus 148).

The last chapter of the 1897 edition of *Jewish Portraits*, “Now and then: A composite sketch,” most clearly exemplifies my argument that composite photographic adaptations of historiography had an important function for Jewish collective identity during the fin-de-siècle. While Jacobs’s composite photographs flattened or smoothed over Jewish particularity to produce an ideal type, Magnus’s literary adaptation of the composite method had the opposite effect. “Now and Then,” takes up the topic of Jewish women’s role in the creation of Jewish national identity, a topic that was strategically avoided at the First Zionist Congress. The sketch is a counter-history of biblical Jewish womanhood that exposes portrait after portrait of Jewish women who actively shaped their historical moment. Magnus’s literary portraits are not idealized Jewesses, they are “Jewish maids and matrons, not ‘faultily faultless’ by any means, yet presenting...a delightful continuity of wholesome, [“strong of heart as of hand”], womanhood, an

unbroken line of fit claimants for fitting woman's rights" (177). Here, the rhetoric of fitness plays to the cultural discourses of the time, but it also responds to political Zionism's call for Jewish male "muscle" (Presner 25). Magnus cleverly replaces the rhetorical equation of fitness and Jewish muscle with "fitness" and the ethical responsibility of "fit" liberal nations to recognize women's rights.

Despite her appeal to evolutionary and gender hierarchies of the day, I argue that Magnus's complex counter-history of Jewish-womanhood offers so many different variations of biblical matriarchs that the composite is "blurred" into a sketch—a rough outline defined by action rather than essential qualities. For example, Magnus connects the historical outlines of the biblical "Jewish daughters of the desert," Rizpah, Rachel, Ruth, Michal, Shiloh, Hannah, Rebekah, Esther, Miriam, and Deborah, and their relevance for "[the] daughters of today" with their ability to work within the political and social structures to secure women's rights to representation and a voice in communal matters. Magnus is also careful not to disparage "old-fashioned" approaches to obtaining greater freedoms through marriage (182). Still, she does emphasize that women, married or not, are deserving of equal rights through their active presence and labor in their local Jewish communities in domestic as well as public spaces (182-3). What this final chapter offers is a picture of the gaps between political Zionism's liberal and androcentric model of Jewish collective identity and those offered by AAJWW like Magnus. Magnus punctuates the 1897 *Jewish Portraits* with the image of the Jewish woman and their labor as an important counterpoint and counter-image to the exclusive forms of Jewish "muscle" of political Zionism.

While Magnus insists on the incompleteness of any portrait of history, she recognizes the danger of histories that profess to be complete. Hence her request for the honest historian that show their limits. A more “honest” history will contain multiple reflections of a single portrait and not attempt to artificially produce a single, authoritative narrative (*Jewish Portraits* 11). In contrast, Graetz’s conception of historiography is, which in his essay “The Structure of Jewish History” (1846) he states: “the totality of Judaism ... [is] discernable only in its history. Its complete nature, the sum of its power, becomes clear only in the light of history” (Graetz 65). And while Magnus’s *Portraits* does not escape problematic Victorian binaries of enlightenment rhetoric of light and darkness—reading history by the sidelights—her methodology seems to confound a telos of blind and inevitable progress by punctuating her histories with inquiries and contemporary comparisons. In this way, Magnus’s history is dynamically but not ahistorically connected to her contemporary moment.

Before moving on to the next section, I want to briefly consider the question that these writers grappled with “What is Judaism?” What is Jewishness or Semitism? These are questions that have and continue to reverberate in contemporary discussions in Jewish Studies. It is only fair to acknowledge that this question is what started Jewish Studies. Susannah Heschel’s brilliant essay “Jewish Studies as counter-history” weighs in on behalf of *Wissenschaft* research model’s attempt to wrest Jewish identity from Christian-centric scientific models. In the essay, Heschel leverages Biale’s concept of counter-history, a term he first used to describe Gershom Scholem’s systematic critique of *Wissenschaft*, to bring the historical origins of Jewish Studies to bear on the then recent

(1990s) debate about the relationship of postcolonial studies and multiculturalism with Jewish Studies in the academy. I reference Heschel because she sees the debate between Graetz and Abraham Geiger, or Orthodox v. Reform as part of the same emerging Semitic discourse. Building on this approach, I offer a counter-history of Graetz's later work as a way to foreground the historical role Jewish women played in offering a critical perspective of the still Christian-centric methods adopted by *Wissenschaft des Judentums* historians like Graetz.

It is not a stretch of the historical imagination to say that Graetz's work was indebted and influenced by interactions with Jewish women writers across England, the Continent, and the United States. In fact, Graetz imagines as much in an anonymous fifteen-letter exchange published in a German journal in 1883. The exchange presumably takes place sometime before 1883 between him and an "English Lady" pseudonymously named Edith. The gist of the exchange is that, Graetz, as he is in the midst of writing yet another volume of "History of the Jews," either imagines or actually engages an Anglo-Jewish "lady" as his correspondent to whom he attempts to parse out the effects of degeneration on the Jewish community and his own antidote for a more Orthodox view of Jewish history and Jewish life. One of the most notable aspects of the exchange is that Edith's "feminine logic" bests Graetz's "masculine logic" and forces him to revise his thesis (193, 223). He even notes at one such moment, "one should not admit to a woman that she is right, because she will detect therein the concession that she is never wrong" (Tenth Letter, Schorsch 223). What I want to highlight here is that through the sidelights of Schorsch's research and publication of Graetz's correspondence, we see how women

were figured, even if in only the imagination of one of the great historians of Jewish history, as an genuine interlocutor, which mirrors the shift in the status of women from helpers to cultural producers I have traced throughout this chapter. I am by no means suggesting these AAJWW women were universally acknowledged for their contributions, but I am arguing that during this moment they gained new prominence through their work. Furthermore, Szold and Magnus were two important cultural producers who intervened in male-dominated arenas of history to articulate their own ideas about ethical historiography and its role for their contemporary communities. Still, although their work shaped modern Jewish discourse, these women were not always credited for their labor.

During her tenure at the JPS from 1893-1916, Szold was paid as a secretary but held the duties and responsibilities of editor, translator, and fact checker for over 87 publications. In part, Szold was not only a competent administrator but also an adept translator. She possessed comprehensive knowledge of many languages and had an exceptional command over elements of English style. Szold's position as translator was another aspect of her important role as a mediator of American Jewish culture and also of larger transnational cultural networks. Szold translated many important JPS publications from Russian, German, French and Hebrew (Sarna 30). However, her interest turned toward the topic of Jewish nationalism during her philanthropic work with new Jewish immigrants at a night school her father ran in Baltimore. She recounts her experience helping Russian-Jewish immigrants learn English as life shaping. She was moved by their belief that the creation of a society in Palestine could help Jews in Diaspora maintain a meaningful connection to their Jewish identity (Sarna 31). Szold spoke of such a Zionist

effort as early as January 26, 1896 in a speech to the non-Zionist National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) chapter in Baltimore, a whole month before Theodore Herzl published his treatise, *Judenstaat*. Szold was convinced that Moses Mendelssohn's *Haskalah* was an important model for Jewish national regeneration, as it focused on the revival of the Hebrew language and culture without falling into the "trap of national conceit and Chauvinism" (Reinharz & Raider 25). Shulamit Reinharz and Mark A. Raider suggest that Szold's attraction to Zionism was rooted in a "love for the Jewish cultural inheritance, an essentially humanistic and universalistic national endowment...[a] heritage stemmed from the ethical message embedded in 'Hebrew ideals that are amiable, noble and peace-oriented'" (26). While I agree with Reinharz and Raider, it is also true that Szold was, like Nina Davis Salaman, equally drawn to the spiritual mission of Judaism to care for the downtrodden and persecuted Jewish immigrants, which was often left out of the political Zionist message during the early years.

It was Szold's commitment to this spiritual Zionism and the issues related to Russian refugees that brought the JPS its first unifying political cause. The JPS, unable to completely satisfy Orthodox or Reform audiences, united its diverse constituency with its campaign, perhaps even propaganda, against the Russian pogroms and the displacement of Russian Jews. However, it was not until the late 1890s that these hotbed issues really opened a space in the JPS for Zionist sympathies, while still remaining separate from the political Zionist platform. As Jewish nationalist discourse continued to polarize American and English Jewish communities, the JPS kept its distance from the politics of political

Zionism. Instead, the JPS focused on the importance of historiography and literature during the late 1890s.

The JPS's early publication successes with Magnus and Graetz's histories encouraged the society to focus on extending their historical publications but rather than move away from *Wissenschaft* research, the JPS publication committee decided to lean into the model (Sarna 57). In doing so, the possibilities of another *Outlines* to raise questions about the genre and its treatment of Judaism was shifted to the task of the fiction and folklore they published. Still, Magnus' *Outlines* was critical to the start of Anglo-American relations that continued between British Jewish writers and scholars throughout the fin-de-siècle. One such example of this shift is JPS tasking Anglo-Jewish author, Israel Zangwill, to write a novel that gave a sympathetic reading of contemporary Jewish community in England. This resulted in Zangwill's very successful novel *Children of the Ghetto*, published in 1893 with the JPS. As I mention elsewhere, *Children of the Ghetto* was an important text that, like *Outlines*, fostered a sympathetic cultural imaginary for Anglo-American Jewry with Russian and Eastern European Jewry. Such "transnational loyalties" forged alongside region-specific loyalties opened up possibilities for English-speaking Jews to imagine a Jewish national identity that was not antithetical to Diaspora or threatening to their hard-won emancipation. The JPS played an important role in opening these spaces for competing viewpoints, albeit with varied success, and the JPS continued to be purposed in holding together the multiple strains of Judaism and Jewish cultural identity well into the twentieth century (Sarna 3).

“The story of a Dream that has not come true”: the role of Jewish historical fiction during the early years of political Zionism

Five months after the First Zionist Congress and the publication of Lady Magnus’s *Jewish Portraits*, Harpers Brothers and the Jewish Publication Society of America concurrently published Israel Zangwill’s *Dreamers of the Ghetto* in January 1898. Zangwill’s *Dreamers* was not a conventional novel but rather a series of fictionalized biographies of Jews who had fallen on the wrong side of history. Under the guise of “fiction” Zangwill grappled with conflicting historical sources to compose literary snapshots or episodes describing the well-known flashpoints of infamous Jewish heretics and converts, as well as the “failures” of beloved idealists. Meri-Jane Rochelson argues that *Dreamers* had two main goals: 1) to show the “fate of idealism, both Jewish and Christian, in European life” and 2) to naturalize Jewish experience as an integral part of European cultures (Rochelson 111). While Zangwill acknowledges in his letter “To the America Jew,” which accompanied the American edition, his “book was written for the world, for Christian and Jew alike.”

Dreamers quite controversially frames the historical sketches with a poem about Zangwill’s dream of “two Jews,” Moses and Jesus, exchanging glances as history has made them strangers (*Dreamers* 525; xiii). In the second stanza of this poem, Zangwill describes a Church and the Synagogue separately but simultaneously singing from the Psalms and “then for the first time met [Moses and Jesus’] eyes, swift-linked/ In one strange, silent, piteous gaze, and dim/ With bitter tears of agonized despair” at the recognition of the historical divide separating them (*Dreamers* xiii). The sentimental but haunting description sets the tone for the rest of the fictional biographies, which we are

told in the preface are all of “Dreamers” of “a dream that has not come true” (iv). Thus, from the beginning of *Dreamers* it is clear that meaning will not be deferred to the ending but rather it will rest in the interstices of the juxtaposed vignettes. And while scholars have focused on Zangwill’s incorporation of Christianity and Christian history, I agree with Rochelson that these reproductions do not fit a conversionist narrative of “Christianity in place of Judaism [but] as in a good many of his other writings, [Zangwill] insists on the commonalities between the two faiths” as a political corrective to Christian antisemitic representations of Judaism (Rochelson 111). To further support this reading, Zangwill supplements his apologetic agenda with a complex and critical analysis of the “dreamers” in his pages, explaining that modern nationalisms and history are the new forms of old religious conflicts.

While the JPSA clearly did not want to strike a political chord with its non-fiction essays, pamphlets and monographs, Zangwill’s *Dreamers* tackled the gamut of political issues in its ambitious but daunting 537 pages. It was quite possibly the most controversial text the JPSA published to date because of how it reimagined the topic of Jewish history and the political role of historical fiction in Jewish national consciousness. Perhaps influenced by Magnus, Zangwill describes his biographies as sketches, even calling his chapter on Heine “a sort of composite conversation-photography, blending, too, the real heroine of the little episode with ‘La Mouche,’” a rumored account of Heine’s lover. In this instance, Zangwill uses composite photography in “conversation” or in literary form to contest the boundaries of “Truth” and “artistic truth,” the latter being Zangwill’s goal (*Dreamers* iv). However, what is most striking is that Zangwill’s

Dreamers calls attention to those epistemological boundaries and forces us to reconsider the reasons and interests supporting the fortification of some boundaries and where others could or should be blurred. Zangwill implies throughout the text that every reader should consider the boundaries of capital “T” truth presented in historical works which are, in fact, far from secure. Zangwill even goes on to suggest that historiographies are just as constructed as narratives of fiction. Thus, I argue that as Jewish historiography became further polarized between assimilationists and apologetic goals, historical fiction played a prominent role in shaping responses to Jewish nationalism by exposing the tensions within political Zionism and anti-Zionism. This is most apparent in Zangwill’s chapter *Dreamers in Congress*, a literary rendering of his own experience at the First Zionist Congress.

Dreamers in Congress unsettles the reader’s expectations about Jewish support for Political Zionism, as Zangwill’s vivid description of the Congress gives way to irony and pointed criticism. The tone shifts early on when Zangwill is confronted with a “statue of Moses with a Table of the Law on which are written the words: ‘Who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage’;” this phrase inspires a critical distance between Zangwill and the modern Moses, Theodore Herzl, and the Congress (430). Such skeptical distance is explained through the Congress’s seemingly impossible task of unifying a diverse Jewish body through discussion of the “tragic issues of an outcast nation” and the solution for political restoration in Palestine. The “strange phantasmagoria of faces” from all over Europe, England and America seem to be so

varied and their interests so irreconcilable that Zangwill is wont to ask, “Who speaks of the Jewish type?” (432).

Still, as the remainder of *Dreamers in Congress* emphasizes, the “Jewish type,” its creation and propagation, shapes political Zionists discussions and eventually the politics of which Jews out of the crowd will be allowed to settle Palestine. Zangwill characterizes Herzl as a “majestic Oriental figure” but also a Jewish dreamer whose dream “talks agriculture, viticulture, subvention of the Ottoman Empire...stocks and shares, railroads, internal and to India...all the jargon of our iron age” without the least practicality of the cost and risks of his plan (433). Zangwill brings his personal knowledge of Herzl to support his critique: “Of the real political and agricultural conditions of Palestine [Herzl] he knows only by hearsay. Of Jews he knows still less” (434). Zangwill’s evaluation of the movement holds in tension the problems of representing “Israel” within a liberal-state model on one hand and the increasing need for Jewish collective, transnational representation on the other. The movement, according to Zangwill, is heavily invested in unifying the Jewish people through a composite photographic representation of likeness, both literally and rhetorically. Only from a position of outside privilege or ignorance, Zangwill argues, does it seem possible for “all specific colorings and markings” of global Jewry to be “blurred...into the common brotherhood” (435). Transcripts from first Zionist Congress support this literary impression, according to Heiko Haumann, it is Max Nordau who champions the all too familiar composite model of “emphasiz[ing] everything that unites [the Jewish people] and put[ting] behind us all that separates us” as the sure road to legitimating the Jewish

nation (Haumann 146). And yet, Zangwill is increasingly concerned with the ethics of such a model. Especially, as Herzl makes certain that “his movement,” according to Zangwill, is not “confounded with those petty projects for helping Jewish agriculturalists in Palestine” (*Dreamers* 433). Zangwill critiques the political function of the composite model of the “Jewish Type” used to sort out those who fit within the political Zionist model of the muscular, modern Jewish farmer. In the final movement of the chapter, Zangwill’s initial hesitations are turned to vehement disbelief at the Zionist Congress’s objection to displaced refugees immigrating to Palestine because of their poverty:

And even, with Palestine for the ultimate goal, do you counsel delay, a nursing of the Zionist flame, a gradual education and preparation of the race for a great conscious historic role in the world’s future, a forty years’ wandering in the wilderness to organize or kill off the miscellaneous rabble—then will you, dreamer, turn a deaf ear to the cry of millions oppressed to-day? Would you ignore the appeals of these hundreds of telegrams, of these thousands of petitions with myriads of signatures for the sake of some visionary perfection of to-morrow? (437)

Zangwill’s barbed inquiries frames his remaining description of the Congress’s enthusiastic responses to both Herzl and Nordau’s closing speeches; wrapped in the present moment charged with the historical significance of two thousand years of Diaspora, Zangwill closes the chapter with a haunting reminder: “The world in which prophecies are uttered cannot be the world in which prophecies are fulfilled” (440). Such sobering rhetoric reminds the reader of the “irony of history” and in doing so he blurs the boundary of fiction and history—as it seems that is exactly what “dreamers” do.

Zangwill’s attention to political Zionism’s class and later gender problems seems to be rooted in his own status as a child of the ghetto. In the preface to *Dreamers of the Ghetto*, Zangwill acknowledges that “A Child of the Ghetto” is the first story because

“almost all Dreamers had some such childhood, and it may serve to explain them. It is the early environment from which they all more or less emerged” (viii). Such an explanation, like Magnus’s *Jewish Portraits*, assumes that sympathy with the downtrodden, the poor and homeless is what critically defines Jewish national identity over and perhaps against the liberal model of self-determination. In fact, this conflict is what is most misleading about the first Zionist Congress’s claim to ameliorate the life-conditions of the Eastern Jews through the acquisition of Palestine while refusing to let them settle there.

Zangwill’s *Dreamers of the Ghetto* was not the first or last to notice this disparity. On his train ride back from the First Zionist Congress, Zangwill met the editor of *The American Jewess*, Rosa Sonneschein, who was one of the fourteen female delegates at the Congress. In her report of the first Zionist Congress, as I mentioned in the introduction, she praised the ideals of the Congress, in particular, the establishment of a national homeland in Palestine was described in the pages of *The American Jewess* to the National Council of Jewish Women in October of 1896 in response to Herzl’s *The Jewish State*. Her ardent articles calling for more Jewish women’s involvement in political and religious spheres were radical but not unwelcome. As a divorced wife of a prominent Cincinnati rabbi, Sonneschein supported herself with her journalism, becoming the editor of *The American Jewess* in 1895. *The American Jewess* was an important publication despite its short tenure between 1895-1899, as it was the first journal to expressly represent the interests of Jewish women as more than domestic. The journal, in contrast to the Jewish Publication Society, was an openly pro-Zionist publication and covered a

wide range of political topics with features by prominent American and British scholars, including Israel Zangwill. *The American Jewess* was also important because it provided up-and-coming AAJWW opportunities to contribute their original works.

Below, I examine the *The American Jewess*' 1898 publications as they document key exchanges leading up to the controversial second Zionist Congress. When *Dreamers of the Ghetto* was published in January of 1898 it was favorably reviewed by Jewish and non-Jewish journals. The May 1898 issue of the *American Jewess* featured two responses to *Dreamers of the Ghetto*, a review and a poem, which show how the historical biographical fictions resonated with American women writers Emma Wolf and Martha Wolfenstein. In her review of *Dreamers*, Emma Wolf, the well-known author of *All Other Things Being Equal* (1892), praises the form of the work as a medium that enables an invested critique of Jewish history from the sympathetic vantage point of fiction. In particular, Wolf credits the "passion, power, pathos" of Zangwill's "romantic pen-pictures" that are able to interweave multiple stories throughout the ages to show a series of dreams as connected by a similar "Jewish ideal" (Wolf 118). The composite format of *Dreamers*, for Wolf, gives expression to a "Jewish ideal" of the practice of dreaming instead of a specific Jewish type, confined by gender, ethnicity or class. Wolf credits Zangwill with offering Jews and non-Jews alike an opportunity to feel the "beauty" and "bitterness" of Jewish diasporic history through an ethical representation of the Jewish race and creed from a Jewish perspective that was capable of being "of [the community], yet above it, in being able to stand off and judge it tenderly" (118). Most of Emma Wolf's papers have yet to be published, however, there are ten letters from Israel

Zangwill to Emma between 1896 and 1900 that attest to their literary relationship as colleagues (these letters are held by her great-niece Barbara Goldman Aaron). Zangwill's review of her novel in the *Jewish Chronicle* just the previous year in 1897 described her writing as "luminous and arrestive" ("New Jewish Novelist" 19). Thus, as these historical fictions circulated and resonated within a transatlantic forum, the novel itself set up a useful model of Jewish identity capable of holding in tension multiple "dreams" and voices.

While *Dreamers* proved useful for Wolf, the book was a potent inspiration for AAJWW Martha Wolfenstein. Martha Wolfenstein, a forgotten American Jewish woman writer, was described as "the best Jewish sketch writer in America" and hailed as full of promise by Israel Zangwill (Sarna np). A German Jewish immigrant, Wolfenstein began her literary career as a translator of German works, which put her on the radar of the acting editor of the JPSA, Henrietta Szold. Szold, whose own story resonated with Wolfenstein's, denied Wolfenstein's early submissions, which then found a place at *The American Jewess* (Sarna 36). Wolfenstein contracted tuberculosis in 1902 and died in 1906, but in 1905 the JPSA published a collection of her short stories, *A Renegade and Other Tales*. Wolfenstein's poetic response "A Dreamer" to Zangwill's *Dreamers* offers an interesting insight into the unifying theme of "dreamers" (Wolfenstein 136).

Wolfenstein's poem begins by hailing Zangwill as "too a Dreamer, newest born of all" and characterizes his work as a prophet whose warning and vision have gone unheeded (134). And like the dreamers of his biographical sketches, Zangwill is a writer out of joint, a sufferer for his art. Wolfenstein's idealization of Zangwill in his "lone watch-

tower” places the moral or message of his dreamers, perhaps his critique of political Zionism, as beyond the scope of his audience:

Thy great heart’s message in prophetic tone,...
They stand below, the deaf, the mute the blind/
They gaze yet see thee not. Thy high songs pass;
Float by dull ears, like echoes on the wind...Alas!
Thy song but joins the music of the spheres
Alone thou with thy joys and thy tears. (134)

The praise takes an ambivalent turn in these last verses as the value of such “dreaming” can be only accessed in hindsight. While it is unclear whether Wolfenstein politically advocated for political or cultural Zionism, her poem takes the tone of Zangwill’s last line in “*Dreamers in Congress*”: “The world in which prophesies are uttered cannot be the world in which prophesies are fulfilled” (*Dreamers* 439). Meant as a critique to political Zionism’s heady ambitions to capture Palestine, Wolfenstein turns the phrase back on Zangwill’s *Dreamers* as a bittersweet labor that can only be recognized in another world.

Leading up to the Second Zionist Congress scheduled for Aug 29, 1898, the once flowing tides of Jewish support for political Zionism after the first Congress were ebbing from uncertainty. Among the causes were the intracommunal struggle amongst English and American Zionist organizations, as they were also struggling to maintain local support. These groups were also individually trying to figure out the practical next steps of political Zionism’s mission. The obvious financial needs required the development of a Jewish fundraising committee; but there was some hesitancy over the development of a Jewish Colonial Trust, which in effect would be the first Zionist bank and financial instrument of the Zionist Organization to obtain capital and credit to buy Palestine from

the Ottoman Empire. Thus, the majority of Zionist funds went toward the negotiation of Palestine or other territory for the sovereign homeland of the Jews. As previously noted, the use of Zionist funds for work deemed philanthropy were almost non-existent. Thus, leading up to the Second Zionist congress, Rosa Sonneschein and Israel Zangwill both contributed pieces on the state of Zionism and their personal concerns and anxieties about the upcoming Second Zionist Congress's ability to live up to its mission.

“Whatever the aspect of the second congress in Basle may be,” Sonneschein writes, “it will hardly be equal the first one in importance and enthusiasm” (Sonneschein 5). Sonneschein's first section “Looking Forward” examines the “more practical questions” the Second Zionist Congress will have to face such as the “religious matters [to be] ventilated,” defining the movement's relationship to the socialist Zionists, and of “woman's right to vote and to participate in the debates, which was suppressed [the year before]” (5). This last topic, Sonneschein assures her readership, will not be “shelved” as the Zionist chapter in New York had delegated Emma Gottheil to represent the city along with her husband Richard Gottheil. Emma Gottheil was a lecturer of French literature at Columbia University and translated French works into English. During the Second Zionist Congress, Theodore Herzl asked Gottheil to translate his message into French, Italian, and English and before the end of the Congress he charged her with rallying American jewesses for the Zionist cause. It is worth noting that Emma Gottheil along with Henrietta Szold became one of the founding members of the Daughters of Zion chapter of the American Zionist Federation, which eventually became the separate entity of Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization in 1912. Sonneschein's article goes on to

evangelize for the political Zionist mission, with a few troubling terms, insisting that “no orthodox Jew need part with his heirloom through the material efforts made by Herzl; he can cherish the belief ‘that the redeemer will come to Jerusalem’” since there is no specific prophesy explaining how Palestine will be secured (6). Sonneschein’s treatment of Orthodox concerns as “heirlooms” of an outdated Judaism suggests her Reform leanings, which other publishers like the JPS attempted to avoid so as to not alienate pockets of their readership. Sonneschein’s defenses to popular critiques of Zionism are followed by a short story in section II, “Looking Back” that describes a humorous first meeting with Israel Zangwill and Max Nordau on a train to Paris (9).

In contrast to Sonneschein’s fond memories and defense of political Zionism, Israel Zangwill’s subsequent piece takes a hesitant tone toward the Second Zionist Congress. Zangwill summarizes his “whole interest” in Zionism as its possibility to solve two key problems: 1) “how to ameliorate the life-conditions of the Eastern Jews” and 2) “how to prevent the gradual absorption of the Western Jews” (50). Zangwill’s blunt assessment of the purpose and value of Zionism is effective for an American audience because it does not represent Zionism as antithetical to their American loyalties. In this way, Sonneschein and Zangwill both work to dispel such perceptions of Zionism; however, as with most of Zangwill’s writing, the final gesture is far more ambivalent and even a critique of Zionism’s lack of “a conception of a spiritual role” for its national ambition (51). Zangwill argues that a secular Jewish national identity benefits “European nations” as Jews bring “color and energy” into their European cultural centers; but “the Jews themselves, distorted and distracted internally, even when not persecuted

externally” are unable to profit from a revived Jewish spirit. In this way Zionism, and perhaps more so cultural Zionism, functions to counter the effects of imperialism on the Jewish community, the double-consciousness of an Anglicized hybrid subjectivity. Zangwill ends his article with this sentiment: “But as a mere European subject, I either want to go, or I want my distorting double-patriotism to go, and only my religious differentiation to remain” (52). In light of this statement, Zangwill’s complicated relationship to Zionism seems to stem from the ever-present burden of hybrid subjectivity that put him at odds with so many throughout his career, including himself.

The actual Second Zionist Congress in August 1898, despite settling on a plan of action, confirmed the fears of both Sonneschein and Zangwill. In particular, the Jewish Colonial Trust was created to raise money to purchase Palestine from the Ottoman Empire. Herzl’s rapport with the German Kaiser Wilhem II gave him hope that the Sultan would hear the Zionist offer through a trusted intermediary. Significantly, a small collective of Zionist organizers were commissioned to visit Palestine and Constantinople to meet with the Kaiser and Sultan and negotiate the terms of a Jewish state. The other notable policy created was Herzl’s call for Zionists to mobilize in their local communities and to “capture” the centers of Jewish communal authority (Cohen 39-60). Obviously, this was not well received by British Jews, especially those who were already annoyed with political Zionism jeopardizing relations with the British government. The intracommunal war years are well documented by Stuart A. Cohen, but the main results were that by 1903, the English Zionists had secured seats within several Anglo-Jewish

institutions, including a direct line to the British Home Office: The Jewish Board of Deputies.

Moving back to the significance of historical fictions to the political machinations of Zionism, I hold that much of political Zionism's success between 1898 and 1904 was due to their marketing of the Zionist Organization on the "stage of history" (Barthes 12). Roland Barthes argues in *Camera Lucida*, that photography put the "individual on the stage of history," and in doing so the image brings the identity of self as an objectified other into existence (12-13). In the case of political Zionism, historical fictions or strategically crafted visual narratives that reveal an aura of the movement's historicity, become integral to the maintenance of the Zionist Organization as a viable political entity. In the introduction of this chapter, I examined how the image of the composite document of the First Zionist Congress relies on specific aesthetic features of portraiture to communicate the significance of the movement as one worthy of history. This is true of the final composite image I will discuss in this section, one created after the Second Zionist Congress during Herzl's trip to meet with German Kaiser Wilhelm II in Palestine.

In the midst of Jewish intracommunal strife, Herzl was trying to stave off his own doubt about the progress of the movement. In October 1898, he and a few other Zionist members left for Palestine with the intention of documenting their trip in pictures. In particular, David Wolfssohn, who would become President of the Zionist Organization after Herzl's death in 1904, was charged with taking photographs of Herzl in Palestine, answering criticisms that Herzl had never been to Palestine, and showing him meeting heads of state in an official capacity. In its second year at the time of the visit, political

Zionism was enduring its fair share of criticism as an impractical enterprise; many thought the movement incapable of holding diverse Jewish communities together long enough to safely secure a Jewish homeland (*Zionist Culture* 50-1).

Responding simultaneously to a moment of internal crisis, Herzl attempted to redefine the identity of political Zionism by traveling to Jerusalem to meet with the German Emperor and convince him to petition the Ottoman Sultan for a new Jewish settlement in Palestine, which, he argued, was in the best interest of both empires (Presner 194-6). The following day, Herzl and Wolfsohn waited outside of Mikveh Israel, an agricultural school, for the Kaiser to meet them and acknowledge Herzl in public and secure the much-needed photo opportunity. While the historical details show that Herzl's visit was not as successful as he had planned—the Kaiser did not support Herzl's proposal to purchase Palestine—the photographic evidence of Herzl's encounter was crafted to suggest otherwise (196).

First, the meeting location of Mikveh Israel was a crucial selection by the Zionist cohort because it had a historical significance as a Jewish settlement. The agricultural school sits on 750-acres of land leased to a French Jew named Charles Netter, the secretary of Alliance Israelite Universelle, by the Ottoman Sultan in 1870. The arrangement between the Sultan and Alliance was the first of its kind and set a historical precedent for recovering Palestine one parcel at a time. The political Zionists, to be sure, were aware of this history and agreed to this location for their meeting to conjure support for their own negotiations with the Ottoman Empire through the intermediary of the German Kaiser.



Figure 11: Theodor Herzl meets Kaiser Wilhelm II photographed by David Wolfssohn (Oct. 1898). Courtesy of the Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.

The meeting lasted only a few minutes during which time Wolfssohn took a few pictures, and then they were done. Later on, Wolffsohn realized that, due to the

excitement of the moment, he botched the photograph, only capturing Herzl's arm and leg and the Kaiser in close proximity (Haumann 274). The photograph, labeled "Original Photograph" (Figure 10) captured the Kaiser on a white horse, a member of his entourage on a black horse, and Herzl's left arm.



Figure 12: Theodor Herzl photographed by David Wolffsohn (Oct. 1898). Courtesy of the Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.

To remedy the issue, Wolffsohn created a composite photograph by cutting and pasting together the old photograph (Figure 11) with a new separate posed photograph of Herzl (Figure 12) and then he photographed that composite document to make a new image (Figure 13).

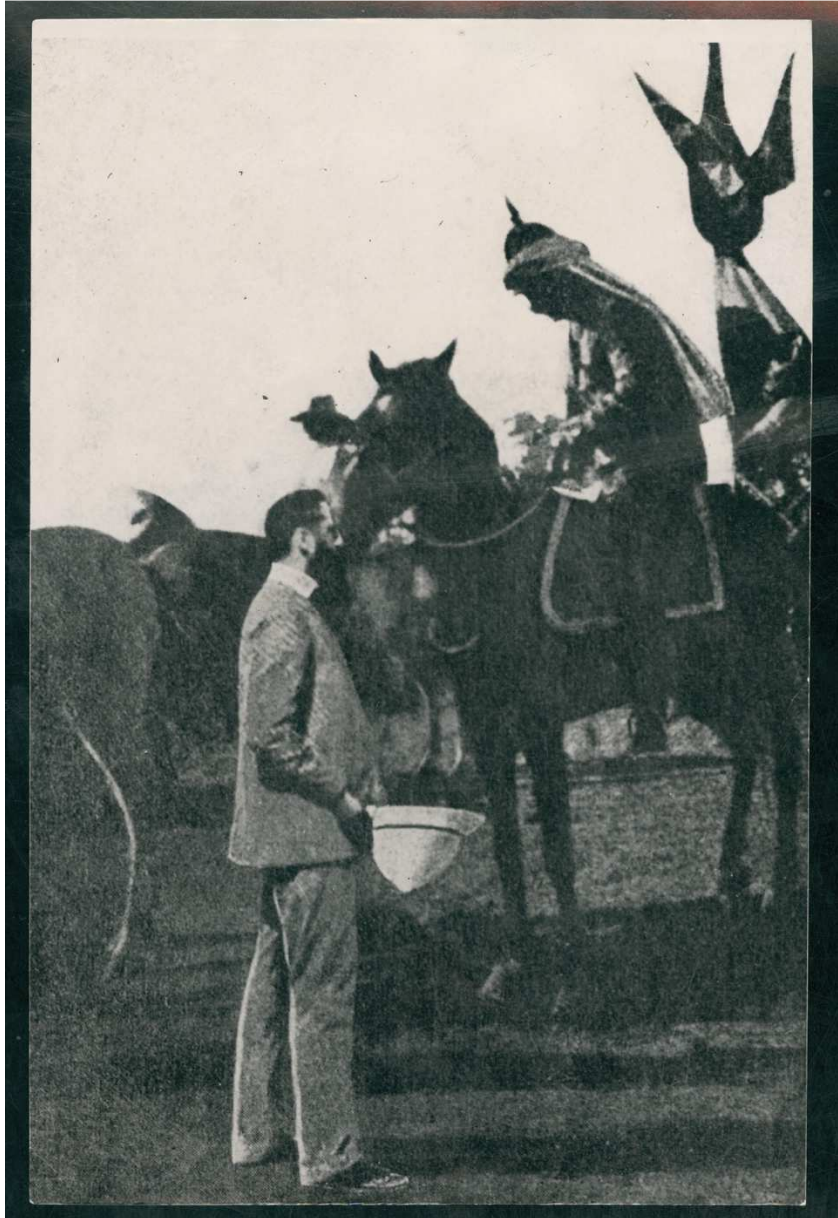


Figure 13: Herzl meets Kaiser Wilhelm II Composite Photograph by David Wolfssohn. Courtesy of the Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.

The final product presents a grainy black and white photograph with a detailed Herzl in the foreground and a darkened silhouette of the Kaiser on a black horse, instead of the original white horse, in the background. At the time, Wolfssohn's composite photograph

of Herzl and the Kaiser became an important “historical” document that validated the movement’s efforts to their constituents, especially to Jews in England and America.

And yet, the photograph derived from an actual event was a historical fiction and another example of Zionist “fauxtographic historiography,” which put Herzl and by extension the Zionist movement on the “scale of history.” In doing so, the Zionist Organization increased its image as a viable and historically-relevant movement evidently authorized to represent Jewish national aspirations during the fin-de-siècle. This photo spoke across the language divides of the diverse Congress and, perhaps more importantly, it generated multiple enduring myths about the meeting. Thus, the artificial composition of these two photographs of the First Zionist Congress and Herzl meeting Kaiser Wilhelm II create a unified image as evidence of a unified national body where none existed. The danger of this, as I will consider in the following chapter, are the consequences of political Zionism’s model of nationalism and composite history which, rather problematically, struggled to address the major issues facing a growing number of marginalized members of the Jewish community, namely women and poor Jewish refugees during the turn of the twentieth century.

Chapter 5
***From Plotzk to Boston: Mary Antin’s Human Document: Immigration, Genre,
and Citizenship***

On a spring morning in 1894, Maryashe “Mary” Antin, then a thirteen year–old Russian Jewess, along with her mother and three siblings bid farewell to their native Polotsk, Russia and headed west in hopes of reaching Boston, Massachusetts, where her father Israel Antin had immigrated three years earlier. Traveling during this time was difficult for Russian immigrants but especially so for Russian Jews because it was illegal for them to leave the country. To make matters worse, many European countries denied entry to transmigrants from states affected by the 1892-94 cholera epidemic. Amidst these historical and political contexts, the Antins joined hundreds of thousands of Russian Jews escaping the harsh living conditions of the Pale of Settlement during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Like other immigrants and transmigrants, the Antins managed their way out of Europe and across the Atlantic as steerage-class passengers, enduring, at times, humiliating experiences just to make it to the next border checkpoint.

Shortly after arriving in Boston, Antin began writing a letter in Yiddish detailing the family’s journey to America for an uncle that was still living in Russia. One night, Antin spilled kerosene from her reading lamp on the letter and was forced to re-write a copy of the original sixty-page letter. This accident would later prove to be a fortuitous twist to Antin’s immigrant story. After two years of grammar school, Antin’s teacher and father encouraged her to translate the once kerosene-soaked letter into English. With the aid of her teacher, Antin could show Lina Hecht, a wealthy Jewish philanthropist of

Boston's Back Bay community, her work. Hecht believed the work worthy of publication and contacted Anglo-Jewish author Israel Zangwill to get a second opinion. Zangwill was immediately impressed by Antin's story and he put Hecht in touch with Phillip Cohen, the well-established publisher and editor of the New York magazine *The American Hebrew*.

Published in three installments, Antin's essay was so well received that Hecht financed a separate booklet version entitled *From Plotkz to Boston* with a new foreword by Zangwill and additional prefatory essay by Antin. The text would run into second prints within the first year, and all the profits from the book sales, as noted in each publication, went to funding Antin's secondary education at the elite Latin School for girls in Cambridge, Massachusetts. A few years later, Antin would graduate, marry and move to New York, where she attended Barnard College and then wrote her most popular text, an immigrant autobiography entitled *The Promised Land* (1912). This later text not only redefined Antin's public persona but has since been the focus of critical scholarship about Mary Antin and her place in American and Jewish Studies canons.

Much of scholarship about Antin from the last twenty years focuses on the problematic ways Antin characterizes herself in *The Promised Land*, specifically her America-first attitude and endorsement of Jewish assimilation. Antin's representation of herself in her autobiography has been thoroughly discussed by American Studies scholars like Keren McGinity, Linda Joyce Brown, Mary Dearborn and Joyce Antler, to name just a few. Keren McGinity's article "The real Mary Antin: A Woman on a Mission in the Promised Land" (1998) was one of the first to argue that Antin was consciously omitting

information from the published version of her autobiography to appeal to a “Gentile” or non-Jewish audience and the gender hierarchies of American culture (McGinity 285). Brown extends such critiques by considering the role of race in *The Promised Land*, insisting that Antin’s narrative is about fashioning herself as a white Protestant American (Brown 15). Similarly, historian Joyce Antler reads Antin as a tragic case study of radical assimilation into a Christian-centric culture that puts her at odds with her Jewish identity and with later Jewish feminists (Antler 18).

In 2013, the scholarly consensus about Antin’s problematic self-fashioning shifted thanks, in part, to an article by Yiddish and Jewish Studies scholar Sonny Yudkoff, who translated and examined the original sixty-page Yiddish letter that served as a source for both her memoirs. She then compares the letter to two later versions of Antin’s immigration story that appear in *From Plotzk to Boston* (1899) and the much shorter “Exodus” chapter of *The Promised Land* (1912). Her findings are significant for a few reasons. First, Yudkoff shows that Antin significantly revised and “manipulated” her character in each text to appeal to different audiences. While this was established knowledge about Antin’s *The Promised Land*, Yudkoff argues that there were major discrepancies between the Yiddish and English translations of the source letter, and that, for “eminently practical reasons,” Antin changed the text to appeal to the Jewish-American audience that would buy her booklet and, thus, fund her education (Yudkoff 1-2).

This representation of *From Plotzk to Boston*, while useful for thinking about some of Antin’s changes, takes for granted important transatlantic cultural, literary and

political contexts that made Antin's portrayal of her character as a "precocious booklover" a necessity and a type of currency. Instead, more attention to these transatlantic contexts could help us understand why Antin had to fashion "a self" in the first place. In the past, American studies scholars have read Antin's autobiography *The Promised Land* as participating in American literary genres of spiritual autobiography and immigrant autobiography that also use conversion narratives to convey their new citizen status. However, Antin's *From Plotzk to Boston* is doing something very different as it begins and ends with Antin as an immigrant and not as an assimilated citizen. In fact, Antin fashions herself as a heroine in transition and on a journey of self-improvement, if not self-realization. Antin's decision to link her mobility with education gives the impression of a "precocious booklover," I argue, because that *bildung* model already had currency for British and American reading publics. By situating her text within wider transatlantic contexts, we better understand how Antin also drew from British literary genres and engaged British cultural debates about immigration to convey her migrant narrative as worthy of a transatlantic public interest and her "self" as an *individual* worthy of a general public's sympathy.

Some might argue that British contexts are anachronistic to Antin's story because 1) she traveled through Hamburg, Germany and never made it to London and 2) Antin was primarily focused on her Jewish-American interlocutors (Yudkoff 13-14). These claims, however, are not so much inaccurate as they are incomplete representations. First, the Antins traveled through Hamburg because of larger European political responses to Jewish immigrants. For example, by 1894 England's Home Office began to refuse entry

to many “aliens” of third-class ticket holders: in other words, indigent immigrants. One effect of these new economic restrictions in England was that such immigrants were then routed through alternate ports (3). David Glover’s important cultural history of the Aliens Act of 1905 shows that official correspondence from the Home Office, as early as 1892, discouraged displaced and destitute transmigrants and refugees from landing on British shores. As a result, many Eastern European and Russian transmigrants and refugees traveled through Germany to the United States. With this in mind, the Antins may have similarly transferred through Germany and not England because the connection became too difficult and costly. Another reason to consider British and Victorian contexts is that Zangwill, as the unofficial voice of Anglo-Jewry, significantly influenced both Antin’s understanding of her immigrant experience through his writings and the reception of Antin’s booklet. Many reviews of *From Plotzk to Boston* begin with a reference to Zangwill’s praise for the work as a credible and valuable endorsement, and Antin’s correspondence with Zangwill reveals that she saw herself, and her Jewishness, in and through Zangwill’s characters in *Children of the Ghetto* (Salz 5-7). And Zangwill’s text is not the only one that informed *From Plotzk to Boston*. Indeed, Antin not only references canonical British literary texts like Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, but also grafts their narrative and generic features into her own story.

Furthermore, Antin’s text should be considered within the field of Victorian Studies because of the way it characterizes and engages the discourse of the immigration crisis of the late nineteenth century, which notably reenergized a literary subgenre of invasion fiction in England. As I will show in the first section, Antin’s actual journey not

only takes place during the rise of invasion fiction and a time of growing public support for immigration legislation in England and the United States, but the actual fashioning of the text five years later redresses some of the more damaging stereotypes put forward about Jews and Jewish immigrants. By further situating *From Plotzk to Boston* within the context of British invasion fiction, I analyze how Antin's text engages and inverts the key tropes of the genre and, more importantly, the public anxieties they mutually inform and represent. In other words, where invasion fiction reduces Jewish immigrants to stereotypes, specifically stock villains that threaten the health of citizens and the nation alike, Antin's narrative expands the reader's sympathy for immigrants by asking them to imagine her humanity in each moment that it is contested by state authorities. As a result, she replaces the stereotype of dangerous immigrant with her own experience, which, for some of her contemporary readers became the new lens for viewing all "bedraggled immigrants" as potential Mary Antins (*British Friend* 132).

My second section extends this argument by showing how Antin's case for her humanity, while foundational, is not the only task of her story; rather, she casts herself as both heroine and author to illustrate her self-possession—a prerequisite of liberal citizenship. In order to trace the complexities and significance of these issues, I analyze Antin's genre-blending and genre ambiguity—"Is this autobiography, historiography and/or a bildungsroman?"—and discuss the stakes of reading Antin's text as a "human document" for contemporary critics, many of whom were concerned about the authenticity of her text as a record, her abilities as an author, her youth, immigrant status, proper gender expression, and English proficiency.

By reading *From Plotzk to Boston* as in dialogue with popular British literary genres, we better understand how Antin, as a non-Western immigrant used Western literary conventions to make a case for her shared humanity at a moment that was increasingly hostile to “alien” Others (Glover 2). Victorian Studies scholars would benefit from considering Antin’s text as an exemplary counter-narrative to invasion fiction and as an important counter-history to the political discourse about Jewish immigration. This latter claim has important relevance for those interested in the theoretical and methodological overlap between Postcolonial and Jewish Studies. Specifically, Antin and Zangwill present *From Plotzk to Boston* in the prefatory materials as a type of counter-history to mainstream narratives about immigrants invading America. Zangwill’s foreword transforms the text from artifact, or evidence of a past event separated from the present, into a human—living—document. In another way, Antin’s prefatory essay reframes her migrant narrative as one of critical historical importance. While she never explicitly identifies her work as counter-history, her preface promises to provide another historical vantage point of the “mighty wave of the emigration movement” and reframes the narrative of Jewish immigration as an Enlightenment project, moving them “from tyranny to democracy, from darkness to light, from bondage and persecution to freedom, justice and equality” (Antin xv-vi). Antin and Zangwill’s prefatory material taken together appropriate Enlightenment rhetoric, specifically the discourse of humanity, to broaden the scope and influence of *From Plotzk to Boston*. As a “human document” and not an artifact of a specimen of state-less persons, Antin’s text embeds its own historical contexts as dynamically related to the

present conditions of Jewish immigrants. As noted in *The British Friend* 1894 review of *From Plotzk to Boston*, Antin's text *does* something to the sympathetic reader:

[T]he humanity of the little book is its charm, its merit, its benefit to the reader.... [N]o one who has read it can, whether at railway station, wharf side, or at sea, contemplate a set of poor weary bedraggled emigrants, without being brought into deeper sympathy with them, through the thought that there may be some amongst them with the capacities and quick feelings of Mary Antin. (132)

In this instance, the "little book" is valuable for its ability to not only broaden the scope of readers' sympathetic feelings for the "bedraggled emigrants," but also to potentially change the reader's social consciousness that they might see and "contemplate" the actual emigrants waiting at the railway stations or wharf sides (132). Audrey Jaffe claims in *Scenes of Sympathy* (2000) that this is how modern sympathy works, as it is "fundamentally involved with representation" and the ability of readers to imagine a relationship to others (Jaffe 7-8). But Antin's text, as I hope to show throughout the chapter, achieves an even greater feat: it uses Western narrative techniques to cultivate a "politicized intimacy" or form of citizenship with a community that imagines her as fundamentally Other (Berlant 37).

Section I: Inverting the Invasion Genre

"About eight o'clock we reached Hamburg. Again, there was a gendarme to ask questions, look over the tickets and give directions. But all the time he kept a distance from those passengers who came from Russia, all for fear of the cholera. We had noticed before how people were afraid to come near us, but since that memorable bath in Berlin, and all the steaming and smoking of our things, it seemed unnecessary"

--Mary Antin, *From Plotzk to Boston*

This scene demonstrates the central conflict of the text, which recurs throughout her narrative. The Antins, along with other immigrants, are on a journey to America to a

better life, and the main obstacles and source of conflict are the institutional policies and procedures that not only impede the movement of immigrants but simultaneously perpetuate the xenophobic logic that created the policies. This central conflict is both a literary device and cultural commentary on the historic rise of modern border patrolling practices. From the outset of the story, the various checkpoints in Russia, Germany, and America structure the dual plots of Antin's autobiographical narrative. The first plotline focuses on the external journey that the Antins, as a family, endure. The second plotline emphasizes the internal growth and development of Mary Antin along her journey to the United States. These storylines run parallel and, as I will show in the next section, are mutually constitutive. But the first plotline deserves further consideration here because it utilizes the external conflict with state institutions to point toward an even more dangerous threat to immigrants in the late nineteenth century: the cultural apparatus supporting the endurance of xenophobia and, in particular to this time period, a xenophobia that gave rise to what one English journalist would describe as "legitimate Anti-Semitism" (White 167). More importantly, the epigraph above, and others like it, expose how multiple networks of medical professionals and police were key to creating a sense of national borders and boundaries by figuring the immigrant body not only as other but also as a type of contagion. In doing so, Antin's description of her journey to America reveals that the greatest challenge immigrants faced were the stereotypes about them as threats to the health of the nation and its citizens. Antin clearly identifies this trend when she explains to her reader that "[her family] had noticed before how people were afraid to come near [them]," "all for fear of cholera" (46). Antin's allusion to the

most recent cholera outbreak, which claimed several tens of thousands of Russian lives between 1892-1894, offsets her observation that this concern about contagion was also connected to another story, another narrative, which kept German gendarme and passengers alike wary of her and her family's presence, even after several health screenings and obligatory sanitation procedures.

The first part of this section will discuss how these other anti-alien narratives were echoed throughout popular British texts in the 1890s, especially the years between Antin's journey in 1894 and the publication of *From Plotzk to Boston* in 1899. Rather than an in-depth case study of each text, I will sketch the major plotlines and character features of the most popular invasion fiction narratives in 1894, which provide important literary contexts for understanding the nuances of Antin's inversion of these plots and features in *From Plotzk to Boston*.

While I do not have evidence that Antin read invasion fiction or intended to invert stereotypes propagated by the genre, I do think reading Antin's *From Plotzk to Boston* amidst the historical and cultural contexts of her moment reveals that invasion fiction contributed to cultural attitudes and popular narratives about Jews, immigrants, and invasion that changed the semitic discourse in England and the United States. Israel Zangwill explicitly highlights these contexts in his foreword to *From Plotzk to Boston*, comparing the common understanding of Jews, immigrants, and invasion fantasies in his ironic remark about Antin's tale: "Mary Antin's vivid description of all she and her dear ones went through, enables us to see almost with our own eyes how the invasion of America appears to the impecunious invader" (Antin 8). No stranger to the demeaning

stereotypes about foreign-born Jews, Zangwill was keenly aware of the challenges immigrant Jews faced abroad as well as the major obstacles of assimilation once they arrived in England or the United States. Specifically, the threat of immigrant invasion was part of a larger transatlantic discourse that corresponded to the changing geopolitics of the late nineteenth century.

By focusing on a cross-section of 1894 texts, the period of Antin's journey, and those produced circa 1899, the year *From Poltzk to Boston* was published, we gain perspective of the major shifts in the literary narratives about Jewish immigrants that influenced popular attitudes toward Jewish immigration. Glover's study of the 1905 Aliens Act demonstrates how print culture—novels, newspapers, journals along with “popular entertainments of fin-de-siècle Britain”—perpetuated a culture of xenophobia around “the alien question” that eventually informed the development of legal restrictions on aliens in 1905 (Glover i). However, Glover also shows that prior to 1905 it was the period of 1894-1897 that saw the politicization of xenophobia in literary works that made Jew synonymous with alien and made the 1905 Alien's Act—its provisions and extra-judiciary mechanisms—the start of modern immigration reform and policies that we still see today. Most notably, the “Act to amend the Law with regard to Aliens,” as it was officially titled, created the decentralized bureaucracies of local authorities and agents and even invented the “immigration officer” (1; 3-4).

And yet these shifts in definitions of what constituted “immigrants” or “aliens,” “citizen” or national boundaries, for that matter, were the result in changing conditions and ideologies about political allegiance in England, “where feudally-derived model of

sovereignty was directly challenged by changes in the nature of the modern state” (37). This was especially true following the French and American Revolutions, but also during the rise in global migration from all parts of Britain’s empire from the 1870s, with the passage of the Naturalization Act, and the mass migration of 200,000 Eastern European and Russian immigrants beginning in 1881. Heidi Kaufman has argued that in the case of the latter group, Jewishness became integral to defining British citizenship as contradictorily rooted in complex notions of inherited, Christian and racialized citizenship, which was tangled up with a Jewish history and culture it both sprang from and attempted to absorb (Kaufman 5). However, my attention to the semitic discourse at these specific moments in time allows for a different perspective of Antin’s work as first and foremost an intervention in the semitic discourse through her text’s inversion and interruption of Jewish stereotypes. To make the stakes of Antin’s interruptions and inversions visible, I offer an outline of transatlantic conditions and contexts for Jewish immigrants that inform the literary and cultural attitudes toward Jewish immigration in England and the United States, as both countries were actively or on the verge of revising their terms of citizenship and immigration policies during the last decade of the nineteenth century.

England, not to mention the British Empire, has a long history of managing the threats posed by foreign nationals. However, some of the first legislation attempting to manage foreign nationals was offered by Lord Grenville in 1793 to ensure political stability in the wake of the French Revolution, “monitoring or excluding those troublesome outsiders—spies, subversives, agitators, and fanatics”(Glover 1). While

these measures were rarely used, Grenville's legislation had real effects for those residing in England, namely, the redefinition of the terms "foreign nationals" and "subjects" post-French Revolution. Specifically, the concept of citizenship as based on popular consent versus "indelible" allegiance to the British Crown exposed gaps in the political structure that questioned Britain's jurisdiction over foreign nationals (38-39). The Naturalization Act of 1870 sought to redress these gaps while also not restricting the flow of "aliens" into the country, which was achieved by relaxing passport and visa restrictions. Yet, Part II of the Act, outlined as "Rights and Duties of Aliens," insists that aliens had several restrictions on their civil liberties—ineligibility for public office or enfranchisement and could only be admitted to military service under special appointment by the Crown—and aliens would hence forth be subject to the full force of England's laws as if they were a "natural-born citizen" (Naturalization Act 309).

The 1870 Act even created the label of "alien enemy" along with increased restrictions for those from countries currently or recently at war with England (309). In the years following, the steamship ushered in a period of large-scale global migration, bringing immigrants and colonials to England's shores and under its jurisdiction in greater capacities than previously known. And, to be clear, immigration to England was not on scale with immigration to America, but the scale of immigration into the city of London exceeded what it had been in the recent past. By 1881, we see how the terms of the 1870 Naturalization Act both enabled and restrained the flow of a particular class of immigrant: the Eastern European and Russian Jewish refugee fleeing a wave of deadly pogroms. As a result, managing the influx of Russian Jewish immigrants becomes a

major concern in cities like London and New York. Sensing this shift in the tide, Mayer Salzburger of the Jewish Publication Society commissions Anglo-Jewish author Israel Zangwill in 1892 to write a novel presenting a sympathetic portrait of the Jewish community (Rochelson 13). By 1893, Zangwill's novel *Children of the Ghetto* is published with wide acclaim for his depiction of Anglo-Jewry's many-sided immigrant community. The novel's main protagonist, Esther Ansell, is the daughter of indigent Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. The story of her pursuit of education and upward mobility culminates with Esther, as a published author, boarding a steamship for America. The triple-decker novel had broad appeal among both Jewish and Christian audiences. Not only did it go into multiple editions, it was said to have successfully garnered enough public sympathy for London's East End Jewish immigrant communities that early plans for an English Aliens Bill were scrapped for lack of public support (Garrand 31; quoted in Childers 222).

Similarly, in the United States, immigration was undergoing a major transition in 1892. Despite Congress renewing the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act for another ten years, the largest immigration station, Ellis Island, was opened and would become the major entrance point of three-fourths of all immigrants coming to the U.S. between 1892 and 1910 (Ancheta 25; Brinkmann 2). But it is crucial to reiterate that by 1894, public opinion of the Eastern European and Russian Jewish immigrants in Britain and the U.S. was at a tipping point. During this time, a new stream of anti-immigrant writings, specifically about Jews and immigration policies, were published in English in England and the United States. These anti-immigrant writings were not unique to Jewish

immigrants, nor were they the first or most often associated with invasion narratives. Edlie L. Wong's article, "In a Future Tense: Immigration Law, Counterfactual Histories and Chinese Invasion Fiction" (2014), notes that the "circulation of the trope of invasion popularized by Yellow Peril discourses and fiction" in the mid-nineteenth century provided a foothold for anti-immigrant groups to create and uphold the political and legal restrictions on Chinese immigrants (514). Wong's identification of the symbiotic relationship between literature and legislation has bearing for thinking about invasion fiction and Jewish immigration.

While there were many literary genres that addressed issues surrounding the immigration of Jews, I focus on the one genre that emerged because of growing concerns about foreigners, technological advances, and competing empires: invasion fiction. Specifically, invasion fiction increases in popularity around the 1870s and then reaches a pinnacle in the 1890s, with the publication of two 1894 "best sellers": invasion fantasy *The Great War in England in 1897* (1894) and the genre-blending novel *Trilby* (1894). As Elaine Showalter noted in her introduction to the novel, *Trilby* was the first American best-seller and was wildly popular in both the United States and England, as it combined elements from popular genres at the time, autobiography, gothic, and the xenophobia characteristic of invasion tales (Showalter 3-6). By juxtaposing the two texts, I consider how these contemporary publications relied on invasion narratives that were also circulating in political journals during this same moment. In 1894, anti-alien advocates journalist Arnold White and British MP Major William Evans-Gordon campaigned using similar rhetoric and tropes to affirm nativist fears about the immigrant other among their

constituents. The challenge, I acknowledge, is not to conflate the uniqueness and specificity of each text or the real effects they produced, especially as some posed more immediate threats to immigrants than anti-alien novels. Even so, the texts that emerge at this moment are an effect of existing views about Jews, but they also add to the cultural discourse about immigrants and Jews for an Anglo-American audience, as well as transnational Jewish readership.

Invasion Fiction Finds an Audience in England and the United States

Between 1891 and 1893, the Russian and French governments signed a series of accords to establish joint foreign policies and mutual military interests against the quickly expanding German Empire and its Triple Alliance with Austria-Hungary and Italy in 1882 (Kobtzeff 304). After a coordinated naval exhibition in Toulon, a major French military port critical to the British during the Napoleonic Wars, rumors of impending war and potential alliances between England and Germany proliferated throughout the press. Additionally, 1893 saw stock markets destabilized in the U.S. and England, the threat of war between Russia-France and Germany's Triple Alliance loomed large (304). Following this war scare of 1893, the first best-selling invasion novel, *The Great War in England in 1897* by William Le Queux, was serialized in the journal *Answers* in late 1893. Published as a printed book in 1894, the novel would run through sixteen print editions by 1899.

To summarize, Le Queux's novel imagines an ultimately unsuccessful Russian invasion of the British Isles following the actual 1893 Franco-Russian alliance. The

master villain is a “polished cosmopolitan” Russian spy posing as a German aristocrat in London, though actually born in the “Jews’ quarter at Frankfort” (Le Queux 28-9). Not coincidentally, the Jewish-coded spy is passing British military intelligence to Russian government officials, a slight twist of the fictions crafted against a French Jew and army captain Alfred Dreyfus²¹, who in 1894 was wrongfully sent to prison after allegedly selling French military secrets before being released due to international press coverage. However, Le Queux’s invasion narrative did more than regurgitate salacious headlines. The plot kept a frenzied pace, driven by one-hundred uses of “suddenly” to describe changed circumstances. In most of these instances, characters are taken by surprise because of their misplaced sense of security in the British Empire’s superior technology, military, or the morality of English government officials. Interestingly, Le Queux’s novel identifies the advanced means of transportation as the first and greatest threat to the British island. The steam-powered ships and trains, at least in the novel, were the greatest liability when fending off an invasion, as it multiplied the available access points and moved information and people faster than the military could anticipate. Thus, it becomes necessary for England to make an uneasy alliance with Germany to survive invasion from Russia, successfully establishing the British and German empires as the superior world powers. Throughout the melodramatic ending—the unremorseful spy is shot by the firing squad and a co-conspirator, racked with guilt, commits suicide—Le Queux emphasizes that modern technology has made British national borders perilously porous and they, in

²¹ A full memoir by Capt. Dreyfus about the trial and imprisonment (1894-1899) of Dreyfus was published by McClure, Phillips, & Co. (New York) in 1901.

turn, must be more aggressively defended against potential, internal traitors in order to save the British Empire, “the world” (20).

Another important literary context for Antin’s journey is the 1894 serialization of the popular novel *Trilby* by George Du Maurier in *Harper’s Monthly*. By 1895, *Trilby* was an unparalleled sensation in both the United States and England, selling over 200,000 copies in its first year and close to half a million copies by 1900 (Jenkins; Mott 189, 209). Unlike Le Queux’s invasion fiction, Du Maurier’s novel does not focus on rigidly defined national borders; however, individual borders, physical and psychic, are a major theme. It is also widely accepted that the narrative focuses on the increased vulnerability of British bodies under foreign (cultural) influences.²² Building on the political and aesthetic discourses of the early 1890s, Du Maurier’s novel touches on issues of national identity and foreign influence in a story about a thwarted romance between an English painter, Little Billee, living abroad in Paris and a half-Irish Parisian model named Trilby. The central conflict occurs when class and racial differences prevent Little Billee from marrying Trilby. As a result, the antagonist, an Eastern European Jew named Svengali, who is often characterized as a spider-like incubus (137), uses his mesmeric powers to hypnotize the tone-deaf Trilby into a singing sensation and then his wife—La Svengali. Driven by a desire to conquer Europe through music,

²² See Freedman, Jonathan. *Temple of Culture: Assimilation and Anti-Semitism in Literary Anglo-America*. Oxford UP, 2002; Gracombe, Sarah. “Converting Trilby: Du Maurier on Englishness, Jewishness and Culture.” *Nineteenth Century Literature*, vol. 58, no.1, University of California Press, 2003, pp. 75-108; Stern, Kimberly J. “Rule Bohemia: The Cosmopolitics of Subculture in George Du Maurier’s *Trilby*.” *Victorian Literature and Culture*, vol. 38, no. 2, Cambridge UP, 2010, pp. 547-570.

Svengali uses Trilby to gain access to the British metropole. The turning point of the novel is during La Svengali's final performance for a London audience at the Royal Drury Lane Theatre. During the performance, Svengali suddenly dies of a heart attack leaving Trilby deathly ill due to her dependent condition. However, Du Maurier resists resolving the novel with the death of the villain, nor does he fully explain the magic behind the acclaimed duo's performance. Instead, Trilby suffers a mental breakdown after Svengali's death, and despite the best efforts of her friends she sinks into poorer health. On her death bed, Trilby receives a package from "a remote province in Eastern Russia—the poisonous East—birthplace and home of an ill wind that blows nobody good" (432). The package contains a photograph of Svengali in a military uniform, a Hungarian band uniform to be exact, that upon opening hypnotizes Trilby into song one last time before she dies. However, the climax of this deathbed scene comes after her death when the doctor pronounces that Madam Svengali may have been dead from the moment of her hypnosis.

Svengali and Trilby's demise in this popular text reiterates three of invasion fictions major tropes: first, *Trilby*, like *The Great War of England in 1897*, represents Jews and Jewishness as predatory, parasitic, and good only in very small "homeopathic" doses (6). In one of the many images included in the novel, the image of Svengali building a web to trap Trilby emphasizes the subhuman nature of the villain who lies in wait for its prey (137). Similarly, Svengali is often characterized as roaming the earth for people he can "cheat, betray, exploit" (59). Second, *Trilby* and *The Great War of England in 1897* suggest that too broad of sympathy and toleration of foreigners in civil society,

often coded as Jews who exploit the nation for its own survival, make the British body vulnerable, even weakened. Third, the narrative that expanding technology and transportation networks bring the British into a dangerous intimacy with foreigners—whether it was the veracity of a photograph or the speedy transportation of hazardous materials across borders. Both Le Queux and Du Maurier’s successful novels rely on these cultural anxieties about individual and national borders to demonstrate that the integrity and survival of one seems predicated on the other.

And by 1895, as Glover argues, Paul Potter’s dramatization of *Trilby* with the help of the popular actor Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s “legendary” performance²³ of Svengali made “important substantive alterations to the script based on audience responses to the Svengali death scene, so that the play ended with the death of Svengali and the reunification of Trilby and Little Billee. By cutting out the ending and playing up the arch villain’s “Jewishness,” the audience was presented with a distinctly different nationalist narrative that could only be achieved through the death of the alien other. Such a narrative, interwoven with social Darwinist implications, had counterparts in British political discourse of the same moment that formalized what was suggested in the literature.

In 1894, English journalist and anti-immigrant lobbyist Arnold White published *English Democracy; Its Promises and Perils*. In this book, White suggests that real immigration control has not been implemented because the major offenders are

²³ See George Taylor’s study of the Beerbohm Tree’s annotated prompt-copy of the play (cited in Glover 95).

predominantly of “one race and faith” and they are protected by British men’s professed tolerance, or as he understands it, fear of being perceived as an anti-semite (Glover 84). White insists: “the very presence of the Jews [has] eroded British national self-confidence by inducing a ‘supersensitive timidity’ towards them, because the fear of being thought anti-Semitic is so great that the ‘charge of being anti-English is accepted as a compliment, being merely equivalent to having cosmopolitan sympathies’ (157-158)” (quoted in Glover, 85). Echoing Goldwin Smith’s earlier public claims that so long as Jews are Jews they can never truly be a part of the nation, White further explains that the consequence of liberal tolerance toward Jews in public was “extensive bigotry in private, ‘for nothing is more common, when no Jew is present than to hear anti-Semitic sentiments expressed with quite as much fervor in England as in Russia’, as if acts of self-censorship were practically inciting feelings of hostility” amongst the highest and lowest ranks of Englishmen (84-5).

While these arguments against tolerance are obvious examples of racial and class prejudice, Arnold’s book is important because it attempted to recode the concept and language of anti-Semitism to, according to Glover, make it appear “natural (the reality behind the polite façade) ...unstoppable...and self-imposed (the Jews brought this on themselves) and therefore “legitimate” if used to protect British interests through the implementation of immigration legislation” (85). Glover goes on to show that despite receiving public censure and criticism for their views, White and his colleague Major William Evans-Gordon struck a chord with many members of the working class and affiliates who were dispersed across several discrete special interest groups. During the

1890s, White and Evans-Gordon began to organize these separate interests into a grassroots anti-immigration lobby that by 1899 would grow into the proto-fascist British Brothers League. White's "legitimate anti-Semitism" may not have changed popular opinions about the term in 1894; however, White's book revealed "the extent that anti-Semitism was both contested *and* pervasive" in British life and intricately connected to the characterization of immigrants as "alien" or "foreigners" and that, over time, these terms became increasingly interchangeable with 'Jew' (85).

All three of these 1894 texts, while very different, introduced or reiterated key tropes that would shape the literary and cultural contexts contemporaneous with Mary Antin's original epistolary narrative, written during her family's journey from Russia to the United States that same year. Specifically, each text reiterated the stock character of the Jewish villain who threatened to contaminate or upend English morals and bodies with their presence and degenerate ways. The main characters' fear of such contamination is heightened by the parallel anxiety about the villain's unfettered access to centers of culture, society, and empire. Invasion fiction's trope of "the traitor in our midst" made every foreigner a threat, with special attention to the paradoxical figure of the cosmopolitan parasite, who was often Jewish. It was this latter image of the Jew as parasite that Du Maurier carried forward and promulgated in his fin-de-siècle tale.

By 1899, the year Antin published her autobiographical story, tropes put forward by invasion fiction and *Trilby* would be recombined with darker aesthetics of imperial gothic, elements of science fiction, and strands of earlier invasion fiction's concern about technology and empire (Brantlinger 236). Roger Luckhurst has argued that gothic and

science fiction genres share overlapping themes in the nineteenth century because they each “regard the impact of (Modernity and) Mechanism as profoundly traumatic...in which the [English] human subject is pierced or wounded by invasive technologies that subvert, enslave, or ultimately destroy” them (Luckhurst 5). In Bram Stoker’s 1897 *Dracula*, for example, modern technology is often what makes England and specific characters susceptible to Dracula’s invasion and designs. The imperial networks of steamships, rail systems, and telegraph wires “accelerated the speed of change transforming the rhythm of everyday life” and sutured together parts of the globe previously inaccessible (3). In *Dracula*, the consequences of this technologically driven change are irreversible. The major characters are traumatized by Dracula’s penetration of the metropole, as one bite from him threatens to reduce them to the primitiveness of a vampire. More importantly, even after Dracula is killed, the characters remain uneasy about the porousness of both national and individual boundaries. Roger Luckhurst argues that for these reasons Gothic fiction and science fiction are “constantly in dialogue” at the end of the century because the source of trauma in these texts is the very condition of modernity (5). Luckhurst’s attention to cultural discourses at work in the late nineteenth century show that ambivalence about technology’s impact on the human subject was a long-standing question from Carlyle to Matthew Arnold. The latter writer famously reiterates these sentiments about society’s “faith in machinery” to be the country’s “besetting danger” in his essay series *Culture and Anarchy* (quoted in Luckhurst 4; Arnold np). By comparing these elements of gothic and science fiction with those

prevalent in invasion fiction, it becomes clearer how fear of mechanized modernity is tethered together with the anti-alien discourses circulating at the same moment.

Furthermore, the scientific romance, the nineteenth-century label for science fiction, or gothic novels of the late 1890s, like Stoker's *Dracula* and H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds* (1898), also illustrate how these texts carry forward invasion fantasies and anti-alien narratives with a specific focus on Eastern European and Russian Jewish bodies. While some would argue that *War of the Worlds* is more firmly grounded in science fiction, Luckhurst reminds us that generic classifications, invasion fiction v. science fiction, are less useful in this context because science fiction is indebted to the cultural conditions that made these anti-alien stories possible (23). Instead, it is more historically accurate to understand these texts as participating in the legacy of invasion and "reverse colonization" fantasies (Arata 623). As literary critic Stephen Arata has famously argued, *Dracula*, as gothic horror fiction, tapped into the growing English anxieties about reverse colonization, as the expansion of their imperialist network to make trade lines between the colonies and the metropole even more accessible they also made British citizens vulnerable to the outside world. Given the influx of non-English British subjects during the 1880s-1890s into London's East End, approximately 200,000 of them Eastern, Central European and Russian Jewish immigrants, Stoker used these contemporary details as a literary device to drive *Dracula's* plot in fantastic and racially charged ways. Jack Halberstam's well-known argument in *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters* underscores the way Stoker represents Dracula through the anti-Semitic stereotypes of Eastern European Jews to link the character with a type of

medicalized degeneration widely accepted at the time to be associated with criminality. According to these stereotypes, Jews were parasites and traitors because they had no “fatherland” and were the embodiment of avarice (Halberstam 92). By 1899, *Dracula* had certainly contributed to the popular characterization and conflation of Eastern European Jews as the ultimate alien other, as new legislation was drafted this same year that used “Alien” and “Jew” interchangeably to convey the need for immigration restrictions to protect the health and stability of the British nation (Glover 10). Wells, too, depicts his aliens as above all parasitic, with “oily brown skin” and “small black eyes,” but also with inhuman features of tentacles and mechanized tripod bodies, reminiscent of the spider-legged caricature of Svengali in *Trilby*. Such hybrid creatures symbolically combine both anxieties and stereotypes about Jews and modern machinery that, in short, enable them to pose a double threat to humanity. Like earlier invasion novelist Le Queux, Stoker and Wells place modern science and technology at the fore of their narratives as tools that both enable the British to conquer Others but also fail to contain them. Unlike Le Queux, however, both Stoker and Wells invoke aspects of Christianity to reconcile these failures and lend the old magic of religion to stemming the rampant spread of moral contagion and degeneration brought in by the alien or demon invasion. These later invasion fantasies’ parallel emphases on fears of moral degeneration, the medicalization of the foreign body as threatening disease, and the insertion of religion to draw boundaries around threatening others echo the earlier invasion fiction’s conflation of individual bodies and national bodies, where the porousness of one is a threat to the other.

Returning to Arata's work, these literary slippages between English bodies and English national borders is part of what makes the fear about "reverse colonization" palpable. Arata chronicles how Stoker's novel brings together the supernatural vampire with the geopolitical discourse of the Eastern Question in a way that taps into the late-Victorian nightmare of reverse colonization through the threat of Dracula "colonizing bodies and land indiscriminately" (Arata 465). As a result, Stoker sets in motion the idea that the Count's aggressions against the bodies of individual characters are also aggressions against the body politic: the Count endangers Britain's integrity as a nation when he penetrates the bodies of English subjects (465). Stoker's representation of the Count's Carpathian origins, Arata argues, doubles the threat of Dracula's lust for blood as also a lust for imperial conquest, which is at the heart of the reverse colonization narrative.

By looking at a cross-section of the most popular invasion fantasies and fictions during this historical moment, we can see how across genres the threat of invasion stands in for Anglo-American anxiety about the stability of the British Empire and although enabled by liberalism, capitalism, and technology, these same ideologies could lead to the demise of the empire due to a fatal miscalculation of the Other in their midst. Similarly, the United States is at a crucial juncture of its own, as the influx of Eastern European and Russian Jews increases in proportion to the rising anti-Semitism and lack of economic opportunities in Europe. Thus, the cultural impact of this genre—its ability to shape public opinions with its representation of immigrants, especially Jewish immigrants—is of great concern to Anglo-American Jewish communities, and one of the reasons why

both Israel Zangwill and Mary Antin acknowledge and challenge these invasion narratives in the forematter of *From Plotzk to Boston*.

Inverting Invasion Tropes and Cultivating Sympathies in Mary Antin's *From Plotzk to Boston*

In Israel Zangwill's short foreword to *From Plotzk to Boston*, he carefully sets up the memoir as a response to the political and public discourse about the "great wave of Russian Jews" migrating to the United States:

The contribution with which Mary Antin makes her debut in letters is, however, saved from the emptiness of embryonic thinking by being a record of real experience...Even so, and remarkable as her description is for a girl of eleven—for it was at this age that she first wrote the thing in Yiddish, though she was thirteen when she translated it into English—it would scarcely be worth publishing merely as a literary curiosity. But it happens to possess an extraneous value. For, despite the great wave of Russian immigration into the United States, and despite the noble spirit in which the Jews of America have grappled with the invasion, we still know too little of the inner feelings of the people themselves, nor do we adequately realize what magic vision of free America lures them on to face the great journey to the other side of the world. (Antin 7-8)

In this quote, Zangwill credits but also critiques how American Jews have "grappled with the invasion" of America, suggesting that their efforts have not done enough to understand the issue or reframe the crisis for their American neighbors. He insists that such work is integral to stemming the anti-alien sentiments in the US, and if we could capture and share the "inner feeling" of the "impecunious invader" we may undermine the rhetoric of invasion all together.

In the prefatory essay that follows Zangwill's note, Mary Antin, too, immediately sets out to reframe her story as an effect of global and historical currents. From her first

sentence, we see how Antin aims to reposition her story as more than her own humble journey.

In the year 1891, a mighty wave of the emigration movement swept over all parts of Russia, carrying with it a vast number of the Jewish population to the distant shores of the New World—from tyranny to democracy, from darkness to light, from bondage and persecution to freedom, justice and equality (Antin 11).

Antin, like Zangwill, relies on the metaphor of the “wave of emigration” to acknowledge the manifold influx of Jewish immigrants but then uses that metaphor to redefine their journey as compulsory: they are moved by the waves of geopolitical forces toward the shores of America. The effect of this first sentence also disabuses the reader of the misconception that these immigrants are invaders, as they lack the intention of invaders and any agency over their journey. Instead, Antin suggests they are fellow travelers of the Europeans before them in pursuit of civilization: “from tyranny to democracy...from darkness to light...” (11). In this way, Antin aligns Russian emigrants and their exodus with the same historic currents that sent British Puritans to America to find a place to “earn their bread and worship their God in peace” (11). By making this appeal, Antin uses the prefatory essay to reframe her original text for an American audience who would be sympathetic to such narratives. However, I hold this first sentence does more to capture the original rhetorical force of *From Plotzk to Boston* aimed at a transatlantic audience familiar with stereotypes and anti-alien tropes put forward by popular invasion narratives.

The rhetorical structure of Antin’s first sentence is a two-pronged approach to addressing anti-alien attitudes by first dispelling invasion rhetoric commonly associated with Jews emigrating from Russia, and then replacing that language with a narrative that

appeals to European Enlightenment values. The first gesture reorients the reader's relationship to a common stereotype circulated in public discourse, often popular invasion fiction, by engaging and then deconstructing those images with a vivid depiction of her own experience. Thus, the reader moves from seeing the immigrant as a class of person to encountering, "as if with their own eyes," the experience of Mary Antin and her family (8). This subtle rhetorical move also allows her to counter the xenophobia and anti-mechanism impulses of the invasion genre without directly stating so for her audience. For example, the final image of the prefatory essay is Antin moving toward "freedom, progress, knowledge, light and truth, with their glorious host of followers" after she boards a westward bound train to the Russian-German border (15). Here, as Poltzk fades into the distance, it is the train that heroically "carried" her away and ushers her toward the New World, the land where her father has already gone. This closing image reiterates the sentiments of the opening by presenting the journey as compulsory and the travelers as brave individuals in pursuit of knowledge and freedom in the western world. It is this second gesture of replacing the stock image of the Jewish immigrant with one that aligns with European enlightenment narratives about Western civilization that makes Antin's work so unassuming and compelling. In Antin's story, modernity is cast as a benevolent force interrupting centuries of historic persecution with technology that literally carries her from the old world of Russia and liberates her from the traumatic effects of ethnocentrism. As I will go on to show, Antin's work proceeds to engage and invert the major tropes of invasion fiction of her time with her narrative and, in doing so, deconstructs the public anxieties they inform and represent.

From Plotzk to Boston begins *in medias res* with Antin sitting on a train to the Russian-German border grappling with the residual emotions of her departure. The opening lines lack a proper introduction of characters; rather, we are immediately situated in the mind and confidence of the author, whom we assume is Mary. It is not until much later at the second checkpoint when introducing another family that we learn the Antin family includes her mother and three other siblings, of which we know one sibling is named Fannie. It is clear from the lack of detail that Antin is less concerned with documenting their individual identities and actions than she is with documenting the experience of the journey, especially the obstacles and challenges they faced when crossing various borders. Additionally, Antin structures the story around four specific checkpoint experiences, beginning at the Russian-German border stop, then Berlin, and quarantine at Hamburg before boarding the “Polynesia” steamship for Boston. In lieu of chapter breaks, these checkpoint encounters provide the structure of the story and thematically unite the narrative through their depiction of the harsh realities of emigration. Thus, with every checkpoint, the reader is reminded of the hostile treatment of Eastern European and Russian immigrants by border and boundary agents, ranging from armed gendarme to nurses and doctors.

Yet, I argue, these checkpoints are not simply descriptions of the Antins’ hostile treatment; rather, each experience is structured as an engagement and then inversion of the anti-alien tropes prevalent in the invasion fiction of the same moment. This structure illustrates the consequences of anti-alien narratives in the form of harsh border policies on the bodies of immigrants: they are treated like a disease from the outset and forced to

pay exorbitant fees to sanitize themselves and their things before being allowed to pass to the next point. In the following close readings of three key checkpoint scenes, I show how Antin highlights specific encounters to destabilize the dominant narratives about Jewish immigrants that, in her view, inform the harsh border policies and treatment of actual immigrants like her family. More specifically, I will show how Antin's text inverts what I identify as the three major tropes of invasion fiction of the 1890s: 1) stereotypes about Jewish immigrants as dangerous duplicitous traitors, parasites, or criminals because of their stateless status and lack of fatherland ; 2) stereotypes about Jewish bodies as dangerous: as hosts for contagious diseases that threaten to contaminate the social body and undermine national health; and 3) the conditions of modernity, specifically a dependence on technology, threaten to weaken the nation and make it vulnerable to foreign threats. In the following examples, Antin uses her own experience to invert these popular narratives and create new opportunities for the reader to relate to the Jewish immigrant.

The first example comes from early in the text, shortly after the Antins have boarded the train taking them from Polotzk toward the Russian-German border. Until now, the Antins have had luck navigating through the Pale of Settlement with the help of their family in Vilna, where they stayed while they waited to procure the final documents or "special passports" they would need to cross into the Eidtkunen station in Germany (23). Thus, it comes as a great shock when the German gendarme board the train one stop early at Verzbolovo, the last station in Russia, and are unsatisfied with the Antins' documents. In an anecdotal aside, Antin explains further what had only been alluded to

up until now: that her family is of a class or status of Russian that cannot freely travel. Antin acknowledges and abbreviates these historical and political contexts with an aside, as a way to show rather than tell the reader what her marginalized and precarious immigrant status meant at the time of her journey. In this scene, Antin explains the “difficulties” of their journey through a story about the different “ruse[s]” that emigrants used to cross the Russian-German “boundary” by “stealth” (23). Antin provides a two-sentence backstory explaining in a matter-of-fact tone why “stealth” crossings were necessary: “At the time, cholera was raging in Russia, and was spread by emigrants going to America in the countries through which they travelled. To stop this danger, measures were taken to make emigration from Russia more difficult than ever” (22-23). Antin’s word choice here, and throughout the entire text, is careful to avoid the overdetermined label “Jews” and instead uses “emigrants” or later on “traveller” to carefully convey the issue of boundary crossing as an issue for all Russians because of fear of “cholera” (23). However, despite this careful maneuvering of labels, Antin’s anecdote goes on to reveal that the ambiguous “measures” taken were designed to prevent specific persons from “crossing the boundary” (23-4).

As Antin explains in further detail, “travellers” had to disguise themselves in order to cross the border and the most common disguise was as a “mujik,” or Russian peasant, who was going to a town on the German side to sell goods (23). This tells the reader quite a bit about the types of bodies allowed to move across the border in contrast to the Antins’ experience until now. In fact, this seemingly insignificant detail reminds the reader that the “emigrants” and “travellers” Antin describes in her story are not

Russian peasants but persons of a particular class and status in Russia who are not allowed to travel between towns or leave the country. Such status Antin explains in her prefatory essay was reserved for Russian Jews; however, Antin's generic labeling produces a slippage already happening in print in Europe and the United States, where terms like "alien" or "Russian immigrant" became culturally synonymous with 'Jew' (Glover 10).

While Antin uses these generic terms to make the stories of emigrants' "very risky" ruses sound humorous, she is quick to explain that such "stratagem" is only "very diverting" in hindsight and that most families could not cross in such a way. More importantly, Antin relies on her readers to make these "emigrant" and "Jew" connections as she connects these stories about "travellers" to her own family's decision to procure falsified documents or "a special passport" (23). By refusing to use the label "Jew" in this scene, Antin relies on the anonymity of generic terms to facilitate a more sympathetic reading of her and her family's immigration experience for a general, non-Jewish reader. Antin's decision to not identify the characters in her anecdote as Jews is one important way she navigates the negative political and cultural discourses about Jewish immigrants throughout her narrative. I read this careful maneuvering as part of Antin's overall strategy to not reinforce stereotypes about Jews as duplicitous, cunning, or defying state authority—which her family's special passports could be misconstrued as. As a footnote to the anecdote, Antin hints that there were "vague rumors" that even these special documents would not work as they were "not as powerful an agent as it used to be" (23-

24). At this turning point in the text, Antin gives her reader an understanding of the risks and prepares them for the harsh realities of what it means to travel as a stateless person.

As the train prepares to stop in Verzbolovo, Antin and her family see “several men in blue uniforms, gilt buttons and brass helmets...[and] each wore a kind of leather case attached to a bronze belt. In these cases they carried something like a revolver, and each had, besides, a little book with black ail-cloth covers” (25). As the German gendarmes enter their car, Antin ironically describes her feelings of fear as the same that she felt when living under the “friendly protection” of the Russian policeman (24). Her aside to the reader is punctuated with the darker irony than her previous explanation of why some immigrants had to use stratagem or procure special passports; rather, Antin asks her reader to understand her response to the gendarme from her experience of living at the mercy of unchecked state authorities. In doing so, she captures the helplessness of her family’s situation, which is both punished by Russians for existing and punished for “attempting to part with [their] much-beloved mother country, of which act, to judge by the pains it took to make it difficult, the government did not approve” (25). With this first checkpoint, then, Antin shows the reader learned that national borders exist as they are defined and performed against the bodies of those considered threatening to the social or economic order.

When her family is stopped in Keebart and forbidden to cross the German border, Antin anticipates harsh treatment because of her experience with Russian policemen governing the Pale. As expected, the German gendarmes detain the Antins in a separate car and bring in a “doctor and third gendarme” to gather their personal information,

specifically about their “health, and what nationality [they] were” and how much money they had with them (25-6). Antin quickly realizes that something is askew as the conversation turns again toward monetary concerns:

This done, he shook his head with his shining helmet on it, and said slowly (I imagined he enjoyed frightening us), “With these third-class tickets you cannot go to America now, because it is forbidden to admit emigrants into Germany who have not at least second class tickets. You will have to return to Russia unless you pay at the office here to have your tickets changed for second class ones...I find you will need two hundred rubles to get your tickets exchanged; and, as the finishing stroke to his pleasing communication, added, “Your passports are of no use at all now because the necessary part has to be torn out, whether you are allowed to pass or not.” (25-6)

In this short transaction between the Antins and the gendarmes, the invasion fantasy of the duplicitous swindler Jew is inverted. Here the Antins have done precisely the opposite to procure the necessary documents only to have them invalidated because now the class of ticket they purchased is insufficient. The class criteria, Antin shows, was one way governments created obstacles aimed at preventing the movement of poor emigrants (Glover 3). In Glover’s cultural history of Jewish immigration within the British context, he shows how such measures were implemented after the influx of indigent Russian Jews in the 1880s to make sure one country’s poor did not become another country’s problem (3). Shocked by the pronouncements of this “cruel man,” the Antins scramble to figure out their next step as they are told they would be left at the Russian border, effectively “homeless, houseless, and friendless in a strange place” (26). Hence, it’s important to remember the pains Antin took to navigate this stereotype about indigent immigrants attempting to cross borders by “stealth” or “stratagem”: they had chosen not to do so and paid for the necessary passports to avoid trouble with the gendarme. Yet, Antin is not

only trying to dispel stereotypes about Jews as manipulative, but she is also inverting the idea that it is the foreigner who is threatening to take advantage of the nation. The gendarme's cold speech and quick calculation of the additional costs come across as "cruel" because it seems that the gendarme, as an agent of the government, is extorting money from the most vulnerable for their own gain (26).

Within the contexts of invasion fiction, the experience reads as inversion of the trope that the conditions of modernity bring the nation into a perilous intimacy with foreigners. Instead, those conditions, as represented by the railway, reveal the opposite is true for emigrants like the Antins. In the paragraph following the gendarme's pronouncement, Antin describes the experience as having endured a type of assault: they received a "wound they knew not how to heal" (27). Antin's characterization of their experience as a wound is important because it inverts the premise of invasion narratives by showing the modern state as feeding itself by draining the immigrants of the very means they need to make a new life. As with invasion fiction, Antin underscores the relationship between borders and foreign bodies in her narrative to show the ways bodies outside the nation are threatened and aggressively handled for the protection of the state. In the next paragraph, Antin insists that the conflict between these boundaries and bodies is created and not natural, and they can be ameliorated with the expansion of human kindness.

After her family is examined and removed from the train, Antin immediately calls the gendarme cruel but then takes it back when, after the supplications of her mother and the tears of her siblings, the man is moved and gives them the name of a Jewish

philanthropist Herr Schidorsky at Keebart to sponsor their journey across the border.

Antin says that after his “kind advice” she “began to be sorry I had thought him cruel, for it was easy to see that he was only doing his duty and had not part in our trouble that he could be blamed for, [well] now that I had more kindly thoughts of him” (27). Antin’s change of heart reads both as an inversion and an antidote to the severity of immigration policies that threaten to reduce the humanity of both parties. More importantly, Antin’s characterization of the sympathetic gendarme carries forward her argument that to see the humanity of the foreigner is required to enforce national boundaries in a way that does not also degrade the moral standing of the nation.

Antin echoes this concern and warning during her second checkpoint experience just outside Berlin. Having successfully navigated across the German border, the Antins are taken to a special train depot just outside the city limits of Berlin. At this secluded processing center, the immigrants are forced off the train and through another round of questioning, medical examinations, and a mandatory sanitation of their bodies and belongings.

This was another scene of bewildering confusion, parents losing their children, and little ones crying...those white-clad Germans shouting commands always accompanied with ‘Quick! Quick!’; the confused passengers obeying all orders like meek children, only questioning now and then....Here we had been taken to a lonely place...our things were taken away, our friends separated from us; a man came to inspect us, as if to ascertain our full value; strange looking people driving us about like dumb animals, helpless and unresisting; children we could not see, crying in a way that suggested terrible things; ourselves driven into a little room where a great kettle was boiling on a little stove: our clothes taken off, our bodies rubbed with a slippery substance that might be any bad thing; a shower of warm water let down on us without warning; again driven to another little room where we sit, wrapped in woolen blankets till large, coarse bags are brought in, their contents turned out we see only a cloud of steam, and hear the women’s orders to dress ourselves, quick, quick....” (42-3)

In this “bewildering” scene, Antin offers a snapshot of the immigrants’ simultaneous experience of chaos and the rigid order imposed by the German nurses. Antin achieves this with the combination of her lengthy sentence structure punctuated and divided by abrupt semicolons that capture the emigrants panic and fear as they are hastily forced from one part of the processing center to another. No sooner have you read one horrible indignity before the next one is abruptly introduced with no other connection or logical explanation than a semicolon. By condensing the description of the experience into a laundry list of traumas, the reader becomes disoriented by the plain, matter-of-fact tone with which the indignities are presented, producing an aftershock of sorts for the reader.

In this way, Antin creates confusion to show how the “white-clad Germans” relied on such disorientation of the new immigrants to ensure compliance with the invasive procedures, in much the same way the sentence punctuation compels the reader forward. Antin’s description may be brief, especially in comparison with other moments in the text, but it efficiently captures the trauma of the experience without offending her reader’s sensibilities with too many details about the harsh realities they endured. For example, when describing the bath scene, Antin summarizes the charged moment with surgical precision: “ourselves driven into a little room where a great kettle was boiling on a little stove: our clothes taken off, our bodies rubbed with a slippery substance that might be any bad thing; a shower of warm water let down on us without warning” (42). Herded like cattle, the Antins are kept in ignorance and forced to endure the humiliation of being undressed, rubbed, and doused without their consent nor the assurance of their safety. In lieu of much detail, Antin provides key impressions to help the reader safely

imagine the experience as a series of bodily shocks: the burn of the scalding water, the sliminess of strange hands applying a “slippery substance,” most likely soap of some kind, all over her body, and then finally an unexpected blast of water. Antin explains that it was not that these items were necessarily traumatizing in themselves, but it was the way the nurses handled the immigrants, driving them from one room to the next with no effort to explain or gather their consent that made the experience traumatic. It is clear from the scene that Antin does not so much reject the need for sanitation, but rather rejects the needlessly cruel process that treats emigrants as if they were animals or worse—the cholera.

Once the bath is complete and they are allowed to dress, Antin exclaims: “Oh, so we really won’t be murdered! They are only making us ready for the continuing of our journey, cleaning us of all suspicions of dangerous germs. Thank God!” (43). Such an exclamation is not only an expression of Antin’s relief but also a bridge connecting the wider cultural context, the narratives about Jewish refugees, to their experience. Antin recasts her suffering as the direct result of the idea that she and her family have a metonymic relationship to the East and its diseases: they must be cleared from germs as well as cleared from “all suspicions of dangerous germs” (28). This latter phrase conjures the discursive effects of invasion fiction’s common representations of Jews as a type of contagion. As conveyed in early invasion fantasies like *The Great War of England 1897*, *Trilby* or later texts like *Dracula*, Jewishness is coded as a type of latent degeneracy and disease that threatens to undo the social fabric and poison the social body through its interactions and personal items. Whether it is Svengali’s photograph from the East or

Dracula's coffins of dirt, the threatening nature of the foreign invader is not limited to their bodies but rather their degeneracy finds its foothold and enduring power in their personal effects—multiplying their reach beyond the grave. By showing the rigors endured by immigrants, Antin attempts to quell fears about immigrant bodies and their things, while also pointing out the problems with such conflation.

Throughout this checkpoint, Antin repeatedly notes the parallel treatment of the emigrants' luggage and their bodies, as both were considered necessary objects of indiscriminate scrutiny and subjugation. The Germans remove items and inspect their suitcases in the same way they undress the immigrants and inspect their bodies. For this reason, Antin considers the "white-clad" Germans to be much worse than the gendarme from Keebart because of their mechanical approach to sanitizing the immigrants, herding them through the showers with cold indifference or irritation, signals a breakdown in their social interactions because the nurses no longer recognize the humanity of the immigrants. It is this display of unaccounted for resentment toward the immigrants that Antin is most fearful of throughout their journey—especially during their last checkpoint.

Upon arrival at their final checkpoint in Hamburg, Germany, the Antins have another encounter with the gendarmes that is startlingly different from their previous meetings. As expected, the tickets are looked over and directions are given, but the demeanor of one of the gendarme is different. Antin notes how "he kept a distance from those passengers who came from Russia, all for fear of the cholera" (45-6). A now familiar phrase, Antin deploys "all for fear of the cholera" throughout the text to signal and reconcile her family's harsh treatment by the gendarme, nurses, and doctors.

Unfortunately, as they near their destination, the Antins experience a growing apathy among the border agents and gendarme in charge of processing the immigrants. This interpersonal shift is paired with the help of more medical professionals and standardized procedures for separating immigrants by region. This is true of this final European checkpoint experience, as they are “conveyed” from the train depot to a separate quarantine location on the outskirts of Hamburg. Antin describes this journey similarly to the Berlin bath, as the immigrants are kept ignorant of their surroundings and the location of their next destination (46). Rather, they are “marched up to the strangest sort of vehicle...like an express wagon” and as they are driven through the streets Antin notices that “[t]he sight-seeing was not all on [their] side” (46). Conscious of on-lookers gazing back at them, Antin considers their “queer appearance all in a long row, up above people’s heads” and considers how they may look like a “flock of giant fowls roosting” before taking a second look at their “perch” (48). At this point, Antin become conscious that “something [about their conveyance] made her “think of a description of criminals being carried on long journeys in uncomfortable things—like this?” (48). The question mark attached at the end of this reflection could be read as rhetorical, but I hold it is directed towards the reader. The question is aimed at interrupting the flow of events and raising the reader’s consciousness with the prospect of the comparison. Antin will continue this theme with the description of their upcoming detainment at the “prison” or quarantine camp (52).

Upon arrival, the Antins are routinely questioned and told they must pay three marcs per person for their wagon transportation and their food and lodging until their

various ships should arrive to take them to America. Startled by this new and unexpected cost, the Antins scramble to pay the final bill. It is at this juncture that Antin turns again to the reader to plead their case:

Seeing how often services were forced upon us unasked and payment afterwards demanded, mother had begun to fear that we should need more money, and had sold some things to a woman for less than a third of their value. In spite of that, so heavy was the drain on the spare purse where it had not been expected, she found to her dismay that she had only twelve marcs left (instead of the fifteen owed) to meet the new bill.” (50)

Up until this moment, Antin’s discussion of their finances has been sparse, but she explains to her reader her frustration with what had become a common experience for immigrants to pay for their harsh treatment and even hints that such hidden fees are a form of extortion. Yet, what is crueler to Antin is that upon explaining their financial situation, “the man in the office wouldn’t believe it” and had them searched by “a woman in a dark gray dress and long white apron, with a red cross on her right arm” (50). It is this “nice treatment” by the nurse that pushes Antin to break her narration once more out of sheer frustration (51):

[Since their entrance to Germany] always a call for money, always suspicion of our presence and always rough orders and scowls of disapproval, even at the quickest obedience. And now this outrageous indignity! We had to bear it all because we were going to America from a land cursed by the dreadful epidemic. Others beside ourselves shared these trials, the last one included, if that were any comfort, which it was not. (51)

In past moments of conflict with gendarmes or doctors Antin had been shocked into silence or retreated into her imagination; yet, in this instance, Antin’s frustration boils over when they are treated as if they are dishonest criminals, despite having complied with all the demands of the German authorities. And while Antin chalks it up to their

point of origin and the curse of cholera, she also conveys that this was the most profoundly offensive “indignity” endured during their journey, which considering that the journey includes their seventeen-day voyage in the hull of a steamship and mandatory vaccinations, says quite a bit. For Antin, the immigration officer and nurses’ actions imply both a startling distrust of all immigrants, who in their estimate would lie to avoid paying their bill, and an unmasked resentment towards the immigrants as burdensome interlopers.

After the nurse confirms the Antins have nothing left to pay, they are examined by a doctor who then directs them to room “Number Five,” reserved for Jewish women and girls (52). Antin is confused by the ambiguous name for their new quarters and poses the question to the reader once more: “Now wasn’t that like in a prison?” (52). This second question to the reader carries forward her earlier comparisons between their treatment and that of criminals. She extends this further with a description of their “new quarters” as a hybrid between “something like a hospital, only less clean and comfortable” and “more like the soldiers’ barracks [she] had seen” in books (52). She notes that their treatment in quarantine was akin to a prison environment, as they were locked in at all hours and were given meagre rations of bread and hot water. More importantly, the building walls “had wires and nails on top, so that one couldn’t even climb to get a look at the sea” (54). Antin goes on to explain that many officers and doctors were suspicious of them and gave “rough orders and scowls of disapproval” at the mere presence of the immigrants, despite having done nothing but comply with their orders (51). Drawing attention to the ways that the immigrants are not only treated like

criminals but are made to feel like criminals, Antin engages the popular narrative that criminalize stateless persons as inherently dangerous to the nation. This is the most difficult and dangerous stereotype that Antin attempts to dismantle, in part, because she must rely on more direct appeals to her reader to destabilize these notions about immigrants. One way she does this is by using her family's experience to pose the ethical question to the reader: should immigrants, especially those who may be considered refugees, be treated like criminals?

Antin raises this implicit question with her comparisons and free indirect discourse and sets up their experience in quarantine as a final test case for the Jewish emigrant and refugee in Western Europe, a litmus test for the future. Antin is worried by the growing resentment towards those fleeing economic or religious persecution and sees that the efforts taken to separate the immigrants from the centers of each city corresponds to their previous experience with tightening border controls and offers an explanation why their special passports were no longer enough to cross at Verzbolovo. In each of these instances, the Antins and immigrants are treated as a threat that the border agents, doctors, and gendarme must contain and decontaminate. In this way, we see how the management of the health of the nation through these harsh policies illustrates the well-documented shift in the modern nation-state occurring at the end of the nineteenth century. In Michel Foucault's description of biopolitics in *Discipline and Punish*, the measures and policies by which the state could make some live and let others die to benefit the overall health of society, is useful for thinking about Antin's text as an example of how the stateless Jew was perceived by the state.

In particular, Antin shows that Jewish immigrants from Russia are conflated with the recent cholera epidemic and as a result processed and fumigated without regard for their health in order to protect the health of the nation. Throughout their detention at Hamburg, Antin provides glimpses into their subjugation to the state that asserts its own wellbeing by isolating and segregating foreign bodies. To draw on Giorgio Agamben's concept of "bare life" mapped out in his seminal *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, as the inclusion of biological life in a nation through its exclusion from political life and the protections of the nation's social contract with its citizens, aptly characterizes the way the Antins are treated throughout their journey to America. From the special passports and class of train ticket to the sanitation and fumigation taxes to the quarantine measures meant to kill the germs with which they are often conflated, the Antins are continually kept separate from the general population and forced to endure harsh treatment to emigrate. During one of their only encounters with a Russian citizen after being removed from the train at Keebart, the Antins are moved by the citizen's efforts to help them seek public redress for their mistreatment. It is no wonder that these encounters dwindle as the German state authorities are careful to keep the processing of immigrants outside the major cities and away from public view. And when they do happen to encounter villagers staring at them while transported, Antin is conscious of how they appear to as either animals—fowls—or criminals. Returning to their encounter with the quarantine clerk, Antin is right to flag this moment as "outrageous indignity" because the implications of this encounter betray a myriad of stereotypes about Jews not only as criminals but also the unspoken presumption that emigrants of their class are parasitic

and must be forced to pay for the burden they place on the nation. To offset this imposition, the immigrants have no recourse but to adhere to the search and seizure of the required payment at each checkpoint. In this way, the Antins and their fellow immigrants are reduced to bare life because they are only allowed to pass through the state by surrendering to its procedures and policies for managing and containing them. With this in view, the intervention of Antin's text becomes clearer: her story reveals what philosophers like Arendt, Agamben, Bauman,²⁴ among others, would later point to as the challenge of the refugee or stateless person to the modern nation state.

Agamben concludes his work on *homo sacer* with the notion that the refugee is “nothing less than a limit concept that radically calls into question the fundamental categories of the nation-state, from the birth-nation to the man-citizen link, and that thereby makes it impossible to clear the way for a renewal of categories in the service of a politics in which bare life is no longer separated or excepted” (Agamben 134). I argue that Antin is attempting to pose a similar question with her story, unaware of or perhaps despite the challenges posed by modernity. Her attempt to create a case for the humanity of stateless persons relies on the premise posed by Western Enlightenment thought: that of inalienable rights granted from birth not from sovereign or nation. While Antin does not explicitly refer to “rights” or the juridical nature of citizenship or subjecthood, she does hint at a consciousness of her own self-possessed nature that is both offended and strengthened by the obstacles endured on the journey. Furthermore, Antin suggests that

²⁴ See Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*; Bauman, Zygmunt. *Wasted Lives: Modernity and Its Outcasts*; Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

her experience of modern national borders points toward a shift in the relationship between western European states and immigrants, where the humanity of the latter is in doubt or no longer carries the same significance as the lives of citizens of the former.

With each checkpoint, Antin catalogs the ways border and customs agents reinforce boundaries between immigrants and citizens through harsh social interactions, revealing that all borders or national boundaries are not discrete geographical markers as much as they are discursive, or created and enacted through narratives that inform foreigners encounters with state institutions. From her “memorable bath” outside Berlin, multiple physical examinations, quarantine, and finally forced vaccinations while enroute to America, Antin shows that these procedures reduce the immigrant to “bare life” by asserting national borders and defining itself against the bodies excluded from it. Furthermore, Antin uses her experience in Germany, a rising empire battling economic depression brought on by global economic conditions (46), to stage a critique of such immigration policies and procedures and advocate against similar policies, that in 1899, were being considered by both England and the United States.

With each hostile encounter, Antin deconstructs the interaction to debunk one or two of these invasion fantasies, and inverts them to show the state and its institutions extort, search, sanitize their bodies and things with indifference for the immigrants’ humanity. Antin also tackles invasion fiction’s anxiety about modern technology and transportation systems making borders and boundaries perilously porous. Where in *Trilby* and then in *Dracula*, modern technology and imperial networks of communication make the British Empire vulnerable to encounters with foreign others: Trilby dies as a result of

a too true photograph of Svengali that was delivered by mail from the “poisonous East,” and Dracula studies the train schedules and relies on modern technology of the steam ships to make his plan and conquest possible. Antin, however, positions modern technology, specifically the train, as both a conduit of sympathy, one that either helps the citizen and immigrant realize their responsibility to one another, and fear, where the immigrant is a perpetual threat to be managed and contained. In the first section, I demonstrated how invasion narratives, historical and geopolitical contexts contributed to the wide circulation of similar anti-alien tropes and views in public discourse. I then argued that these contexts are crucial to understanding the structure and nuanced intervention *From Plotzk to Boston* makes in 1899, when anti-immigrant legislation is beginning to be drafted for the 1905 Aliens Act in England and during a time of growing anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States. Lastly, I provided three close readings of Antin’s text that illustrate the significance of reading it as a response to these tropes, countering them with her and her family’s experiences.

When taken together, the checkpoint scenes reveal that Antin’s narrative overlaps with many of the devices and tropes of invasion fiction contemporary with her journey and publication of her text. The plot similarities show the foreigner who, perceived as a threat, penetrates national borders with the help of modern transportation networks. However, by adjusting the vantage point of the reader to align with the “impecunious invader,” Antin is able to show how the proliferation of stereotypes about Jewish emigrants from Russia as disease-ridden criminals were the source of their suffering and inhumane treatment—the reason people were “afraid to come near [them]” (46). Invasion

fictions' stereotypical images of Jewish immigrants as parasitic, disloyal, infectious and maniacal Others promoted hostility toward a certain class of Russian and Eastern European Jews. Lastly, Antin's story is important because it gives a different perspective of these policies—their effectiveness and their connection to larger political discourses of xenophobia and nativism—especially the immigrant body as a site of conflict, as it is passed through various border checkpoints only after enduring some sort of violation. What each of these examples expose is Antin's identification of the issue at the heart anti-alien sentiment and rhetoric: the inability to perceive the humanity of those outside its national borders—and the way nationalism feeds this is by emphasizing that there is something inherently other and dangerous about immigrants. As I will show in the next section, Antin's solution to this issue is to turn to different but more established genres of the bildungsroman and autobiography to style her narrative between the checkpoints in ways that demonstrate her humanity for an audience conditioned to see her as a threatening Other.

Section II: “Human Documents” not “artefacts”: Building sympathetic bonds of citizenship

After a while I could sit quietly and gaze far away. Then I would imagine myself all alone on the ocean, and Robinson Crusoe was very real to me. I was alone sometimes...I was conscious only of sea and sky and something I did not understand. And as I listened to its solemn voice, I felt as if I had found a friend, and knew that I loved the ocean. It seemed as if it were within as well as without, a part of myself; and I wondered how I had lived without it, and if I could ever part with it. (71)

Standing on the upper deck, with a tight grip on a nearby rope, Antin finds herself no longer afraid of the sea nor confined by acute seasickness but filled with awe by her new

surroundings. As the epigraph above captures, Antin's transatlantic journey provides her with ample time, seventeen days to be exact, to reflect upon not only her journey to that point but also a greater awareness of her identity as a "self" made from the parts of her experience (71). Such a description of her emerging identity appears to the reader a natural outgrowth—a result of all the things she and her "dear ones" have endured (8). I argue, however, that this moment of Antin's "becoming," like others throughout her narrative, is crafted rhetorically to present Antin as the heroine of her story of development from Polotzk to her arrival in Boston. As I showed in the last section, Antin structured her narrative around the railway checkpoints in order to deconstruct and invert tropes about Jewish immigrants promulgated by invasion fiction. Yet, Antin's work does more to address the issue raised at each of these checkpoints, for example, the failure of the immigrant officers and agents to have sympathy for the immigrants, their failure to see the Antins' humanity. This next section focuses on how Antin used the moments between checkpoints, including the ocean scene above, to demonstrate to her readers the signs and proofs of her humanity. In order to do so, Antin turned toward the genre of the nineteenth-century novel, which critics like Nancy Armstrong, Franco Moretti, and Fredric Jameson have argued informed and even created both the notion and identity of the modern subject citizen (*How Novels* 1; Moretti; Jameson 21).

The nineteenth century novel, itself a mixture of bildungsroman and realism, privileged interiority, mobility, youth, and sympathy as marks of modern individuals and provided a template for Antin to map her own story of development. As Nancy Armstrong explains in *How Novels Think: The Limits of Individualism 1719-1900*, the

eighteenth-century notion of the modern subject provided the first templates of protagonists who “came into being” through encounters with the “outside world” and through those experiences composed ideas, judgements, and moral sensibilities that “gave it a self-enclosed and internally coherent identity” (Armstrong 1); yet, she goes on to show that by the mid-eighteenth century these protagonists, brought into being through their sensations, had to spend the plot of the novel learning how to convert these sensations into knowledge through reflection and self-restraint (8). One of Armstrong’s key examples of this first shift is Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), which, included in the opening epigraph, is the only novel Antin explicitly cites in *From Polotzk to Boston* (Antin 55).

Antin’s reference to Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* allows her to trade on specific themes of individualism from the popular epistolary novel without necessarily aligning herself with the protracted moral failings of the character of Robinson Crusoe. It is key that Antin does not state what about the character Robinson Crusoe was “very real to her” but given the location of her reference to the novel, when she sees the ocean for the first time and reflects on her journey, bears some similarities to when Crusoe takes his first journey on a ship and battles seasickness and fear of the ship sinking during a storm. The notable similarity between the texts is the way Crusoe and Antin use the sea as both a mirror to reflect on their experiences and as screen to project their interiority through fears, desires, and hopes for the future (Defoe 7-9; Antin 71-72). Thus, it is not only Antin’s explicit reference of Crusoe that we should mark. In this scene, Antin’s impressions of the ocean and the corresponding sensations that shape, as if “before our

eyes,” her identity in ways that correspond with popular novel conventions. This could be, in part, why this ocean scene, above all others, is referenced by many, if not most, of the contemporary reviews of the book as evidence of Antin’s exceptional abilities as a writer and why Zangwill understood her “impressionistic renderings of the sea and the phantasmagoria of travel” as “passages of true literature” (Antin 8).

Zangwill goes on to write that the account is a true “human document of considerable value, as well as a promissory note of future performance” filled with “the quick sense of the child, her keen powers of observation and introspection, her impressionability to sensations and complex emotions...the very things out of which literature is made; the raw stuff of art” (8). Zangwill’s assessment of the text’s two-fold function as both a record of a personal narrative—“observation and introspection”—and evidence of Antin’s authorial abilities to effectively render cultural, political, and social effects—impressions, “sensations and complex emotion”—provides an entry point into Antin’s work as occupying the spaces between history, literature, and memoir. But before I discuss why Antin’s work blended together these genres, I want to focus on Zangwill’s identification of the work’s literary merits that would go on to serve as the foundation for the work’s later credibility as a “human document”(8).

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the phrase “human document” was historically used to characterize a “document produced through human agency” or “a document which typifies (the best) human qualities” (OED). First used within Christian religious contexts, the human document was an interpretative or rhetorical device capable of diverting the reader’s attention away from the influence of a divine power. In later

permutations of the word, human documents described texts that increased the sympathetic bonds of humanity, provided “counsel and inspiration,” or offered the “plain tale” with no “literary garnishing” of an individual life (Jewish Quarterly Review; The Spectator, 1899). Conservative novelist William Hurrell (H.M.) Mallock’s 1892 own genre-blending novel *A Human Document* redefined the term as a “piece of life,” a record or evidence of an individual life that “seemed to be a visible witness of its reality” (Mallock 10). Mallock’s preface claims this status for the non-fiction novel he wrote as a real-life interpolated tale. These various definitions of “human document” as the “raw stuff of art” or “witness to...reality” or even as the “living tissue” of human experience raise similar questions about the power of genre to cultivate a sense of authenticity, audience, and purpose.

As scholars like Yudkoff, McGinity, Brown and Antler have already established, Antin’s texts are carefully crafted: they strategically deploy literary conventions that reveal and appeal to her intended audience. More recently, Sunny Yudkoff’s retranslation of Mary Antin’s original letter reveals that *From Plotzk to Boston* is no different. Yudkoff argues that close attention to Antin’s changes to the letter reveal her desire to show Boston’s Jewish community how worthy she was of the education the proceeds of the book would support (Yudkoff 15). Building on Yudkoff’s important work and premise, I contend that Antin’s decision to “fashion herself” through the examples of “all the tales she had heard,” including *Robinson Crusoe*, was part of her larger strategy to use the hegemony of the English literary tradition of the novel to forge a new identity as an individual and author for a transatlantic audience (15).

As *From Plotzk to Boston* notes, Antin had read *Robinson Crusoe* and other books in Yiddish prior to arriving in America in 1894 (14). Between 1894-1896, Antin began learning English at school. However, as her later autobiography (1912) would reveal, Antin credits reading English literature at the Boston Public Library as having a foundational role in shaping her consciousness as an American citizen. Evelyn Salz shows in her publication of Antin's correspondence that Antin harbored a special affinity for the novel (38-39). In particular, Antin was drawn toward Israel Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto* (*COG*), which was the closest example of a Jewish Bildungsroman that scholars know Antin read (6). Between 1895 and 1896, Zangwill and Antin corresponded about the plot of this novel, specifically the troubled ending for the characters of Hannah and David, and how much Antin thoroughly identified with the novel.

It is well documented that Zangwill's writing had a profound effect on Mary Antin and how she understood her immigrant experience. Antin's later correspondence with Zangwill in 1898-99, reveals that she turned to *COG* for help when it came to grappling with assimilation, both the pressures and feelings of loss. She writes:

You will never know with what delight I trod the streets of the Ghetto beside its inhabitants. A good many friends I met there—friends not only because you made me love them, but because I had known them in my old home, in Russia. I felt very much at home with them; and, having dropped all the manners and customs which they retain, I experienced much pleasure in reviewing them once more, often wondering how I could ever have kept them...How could you make Hannah so cruel to poor David [for breaking their engagement because of strict adherence to a technicality of Jewish Law]? It is all strange to me—that they who doubted so for a while should return to their old faith in the end. It is almost enough to make a poor little wavering thing like me see assurance at the same source. Do you think I will someday, like Hannah and Esther and Levi? I wish that I knew; this doubt is so distracting. (Central Zionist Archives, 1898 December; Salz 6)

In this excerpt, Antin's letter reveals both her delight and fear of the familiar reverse conversion plot of Zangwill's novel. Literary scholars Michael Ragussis and historian Todd Endelman have demonstrated the pervasiveness of the culture of "conversion" as it played out in political and literary works in nineteenth century England (Ragussis 15-41 ; Endelman 49-88). Sarah Gracombe's recent work on "Jewish return" novels show that such late-nineteenth century revisions to the conversion narrative "illuminate how understandings of Jewishness were influenced by two pivotal yet seemingly contradictory Victorian strains of thought about the self: an increasing emphasis on interiority, on the self as defined by subjectivity informed by education and free will, vs. an increasing emphasis on race, on the self as defined by biological inheritance" ("Jewish Return" 68). While Antin's narrative certainly fits into the culture of conversion's secular plot, where assimilation required a relinquishing of Jewishness rather than conversion to Protestantism, it is important to note that Antin's anxiety about the potential "return" as posed by Zangwill's characters stems from her operating premise that her old Jewishness would put her at odds with her new identity and its further cultivation.

Antin does not simply see herself in *COG* but also the portraits of her friends from "her old home, in Russia" (Antin 6). As she left her friends behind in Russia, Antin has also dropped "all the manners and customs" of her former life in order to assimilate and fears that, like Zangwill's characters, she may end up returning to the Jewish fold after working so hard to distance herself from it. To be clear, each of Zangwill's *COG* characters had a different path of assimilation into society: Hannah edges toward leaving Judaism for love but then ultimately chooses to remain in the Ghetto out of filial duty and

commitment to helping new immigrants settle in London; Levi, Hannah's brother, moves into the non-Jewish quarters of London and severed all ties with his Jewishness and his Jewish family; and Esther, through pursuit of education, moves from the Ghetto into the wealthy West End Jewish community only to find such existence leaving much to be desired. The novel ends with Esther returning to the East End and then leaving for America to reconnect with family and seek new opportunities. In each of these scenarios, the character's pursuit of individualism directs them toward an outcome that puts them at odds with either their Jewishness or their happiness.

As a novel primarily about Esther's development, *COG* shows that Esther's story is the most promising path to citizenship for Jews, as she not only assimilates but obtains an education that allows her a measure of social mobility toward the end the novel as a published author, an unmarried woman with prospective suitors, and with the promise of new opportunities to find her place in America. In *COG*, Zangwill critiques the Western Anglo-Jewish community's efforts to Anglicize, or uncritically adopt British culture and rid all traces of their Jewishness, as a damaging and impossible path to citizenship. Instead, he uses Esther's story to argue for a type of strategic assimilation through education that makes Jews legible as citizens but does not require them to internalize the dominant cultural attitudes toward Jews and Jewishness. Similarly, in his foreword to Antin's text, Zangwill recommends that Antin "continue her education" to learn how to navigate the higher spheres of Anglo-American culture so that her "development will add to those spiritual and intellectual forces that big-hearted American Judaism stands sorely in need" (Antin 9). Yet, as much as Antin sees herself in Zangwill's novel, Zangwill sees

Antin through the lens of his female colleagues, a type that due to cultural constraints is preconditioned to suffer for their art:

What will be her development no one can say precisely, and I would not presume either to predict or to direct it, for "the wind bloweth where it listeth." It will probably take lyrical shape. Like most modern Jewesses who have written, she is, I fear, destined to spiritual suffering: fortunately, her work evidences a genial talent for enjoyment and a warm humanity which may serve to counterbalance the curse of reflectiveness. That she is growing, is evident from her own Introduction, written only the other day, with its touches of humor and more complex manipulation of groups of facts. (8-9)

This passage from the foreword provides further support that Antin's journey is one of development and that the text itself, as I will discuss in the last section of this chapter, stands as evidence for this progress and, more importantly, her subjectivity. Thus, Antin's narrative is both the sign and effect of her interiority and individualism—a translation of her experience into "lyrical" or Wordsworthian felt thought (8). In this way, Antin's previous anxiety about how to go about making her identity legible as a Jewish immigrant but also a citizen is answered in the careful production of her "self" in *From Plotzk to Boston*. While Zangwill may have prescribed this course for Antin, I am more interested in her subsequent adoption of this strategic model with her manipulation of Zangwill's Jewish characters and their stories of development to craft her character in *From Plotzk to Boston*. I want to now turn to the specific features Antin reproduced in her narrative in order to participate in the same modern narratives that were foundational to British and American liberal cultures.

It is important to note that Antin was drawing upon established literary traditions of the British novel, specifically the bildungsroman and the realist novel, to achieve her aim of building bonds of sympathy between her and the reader. While the two genres

have distinct features and epistemologies, Frederic Jameson argues that they were often taken together as the dominant mode of the mid-late nineteenth century literature and viewed as “a symbiosis of this pure form of storytelling with impulses of scenic elaboration, description and [what he describes as] affective investment” (Jameson 12). Jameson elaborates on this premise by showing how parts of realism congeal around the narrative model of the bildungsroman, which goes on at one point in the nineteenth century to almost define early realism. While the genres themselves are less discrete categories and more of a reflection of the cultural and historical conditions of their production, they share core features when it comes to establishing the protagonist as a modern individual. In *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, Armstrong argues that the written representation of the self allowed the “modern individual to become an economic and psychological reality” (8). Furthermore, from the eighteenth century through the nineteenth century, the novel gave the public a “popular culture template for the modern individual whose identity and worth are thought to come from feelings and personal qualities rather than from his or her place in the social hierarchy” (Armstrong 9; quoted in Culler 113).

Furthermore, in Franco Moretti’s study of the European Bildungsroman he argues that the template offered by the genre focused on the value of youth finding their way through the world and into society through exploration, travel and adventure. When staged against the destabilizing forces of modernity, namely industrial wage labor, then the (typically) male youth is forced to take on a hitherto unknown mobility in order to make their way in the world (Moretti 4). As part of this character’s yearning for

exploration and worldly education the character would also experience growth and develop a fuller sense of their interiority or self that was also perennially dissatisfied and restless. These “twin and entwined processes of mobility and interiority” are critical, Moretti argues, to understanding how the Bildungsroman became the symbolic form of modernity well after the genre ceased to be relevant (5). In the instance of the novel of development when the protagonist is a woman, the impetus for social mobility and interiority was the more socially acceptable desire for education rather than adventure (Armstrong 215-216). Even so, Moretti’s argument still holds as both narratives, regardless of gender, carry forward one of the bildungsroman’s enduring legacies that privileges youth as a sign of modernity because it is a narrative where the character seeks their meaning in the future rather than in the past (Moretti 5). Yet, when considering how Antin adopts and adapts elements of the novel to style her protagonist, attention to the gender of the protagonist reveals that she uses both tropes of adventure and education to reinforce her modern subjectivity.

Antin’s savvy attention to those cultural biases helped her appropriate them to authenticate her status as author/heroine, and lend her story credibility as a true record of the Jewish immigrant experience. As Yudkoff notes, the “precocious booklover” is one of the ways that she styles herself differently in *From Plotzk to Boston* than in her original Yiddish letter. Building on Yudkoff’s work exposing the disparities between Antin’s text and her original letter, I contend that Yudkoff’s assumptions about Antin’s substitutions—books for food, books for candy, and naming herself instead of her sister as the love interest—take for granted the multiple ways Antin’s used novelistic tropes to

appeal to a broader mainstream audience, including a non-Jewish audience. Antin was first able to style herself as a heroine because she knew the literary fashions of her cultural moment well enough to reproduce them in her story. Circling back to my earlier claim that Antin's text is structured by her checkpoint experiences for a particular effect, I want to highlight how Antin utilizes the narrative space between checkpoints to integrate features of the bildungsroman and British novel-- youth, mobility, and interiority—in order to make her character's heroine status legible and sympathetic to her reader.

The first example of Antin's attention to these conventions requires that we consider again when and how she sets up her narrative with the prefatory essay. At the outset she establishes the movement west as one of a necessary exodus where their journey is initiated by dissatisfaction with their social station in Russia and driven by the promise of social mobility, much like the central plot of most bildungsroman. Antin's narrative relies on these notions of mobility to make her physical journey a sympathetic one and to reframe her story as one of progress and enlightenment—conveyed, as her family is—by the very transportation systems that changed the concepts of middle-class mobility in the nineteenth century. In Antin's narrative, however, mobility takes on a different role. Notably, as the central mechanism of her narrative, the railway becomes a tangible reminder and guide linking her past and present but, more importantly, stands in for the unknown but promised future. Antin's prefatory remarks make this clear as it ends with the scene of the Antins' departure, with no less than half the town of Plotzk standing on the platform and waving goodbye. She notes:

We were the heroes of the hour. I remember how the women crowded around mother, charging her to deliver messages to their relatives in America; how they made the air ring with their unintelligible chorus; how they showered down upon us scores of suggestions and admonitions; how they made us frantic with their sympathetic weeping and wringing of hands; how, finally, the ringing of the signal bell set them all talking faster and louder than ever...and, to their credit let it be said, to give the final, hearty, unfeigned good-bye kisses, hugs, and good wishes...and we, the wanderers, could scarcely see the rainbow wave of colored handkerchiefs, as, dissolved in tears, we were carried out of Plotzk, away from home, but nearer our longed-for haven of reunion; nearer, indeed, to everything that makes life beautiful and gives one an aim and an end—freedom, progress, knowledge, light and truth, with their glorious host of followers. But we did not know it then. (Antin 14-15)

The station or rather terminus, as the station is an outpost of the rail system, establishes her new beginning as an end of her past relationships, a break with older generations and an “old world” and reinvests the journey with a sense of assured, even if not actually secured, progress. We see this vividly in her earlier description of her father’s departure: Antin watches her father leave and notes his last words as ushering in a strange sense of temporal disjunction: “Goodbye, Plotzk, forever!” he said” (12). Antin explains in three brief sentences that the next three years passed in “hope and doubt” as well as “suffering and waiting and anxiety for all” that a “separate history” would be necessary to explain. Later after receiving the “long-coveted summons” their journey takes on the pace of “happenings” as opposed to the purgatory of “waiting” (13). The temporalities of the narrative happenings collide in the prefatory remarks because, as Yudkoff notes, the intended audience of Jewish Americans were to be reminded that parting from Plotzk was not the focal point (Yudkoff 14). Instead, Antin recasts her departure with free indirect discourse to tell but not show her connection to her hometown in a way that would jeopardize her place within her new American community. In contrast to her later letter to

Zangwill, Antin cannot candidly share a scene of departure in her narrative, and so it remains cordoned off in the prefatory essay between the departure of her father and Antin's justification of their journey as noble, as moving "nearer, indeed, to everything that makes life beautiful and gives one an aim and an end—freedom, progress, knowledge, light and truth" (15). The emotional charge of her departure is deferred to a later "separate history," and instead parades before the reader a promising future only accessible to her in hindsight, eliding past anxiety and sadness with commentary about her present home as her true home.

This scene, as represented in an abbreviated form, is an example of Antin's awareness that she needed to represent herself as socially mobile, as the heroine that finds her identity in the future rather than the past. She often demonstrates this as a breaking with old relations and traditions. Following this line of thought, it is no surprise, then, that Antin gravitates toward such hyperbolic rhetoric to represent her journey as on the scale of history. As Mikhail Bakhtin explains in his essay on the bildungsroman, the position of the hero relies on such a coordination of the emergence of the individual subject and the emergence of the "historical world" (Bakhtin 38). And indeed, it seems that Antin's development as an individuated subject "reflects the historical emergence of the world itself" as she understands her and others' migration as a mirror of previous grand movements of civilized nations, in this case the British and American empires (38). Bakhtin imagines the hero of the genre as someone "on the border between two epochs" or a least presented so by bildungsroman authors (38). In this way, Antin succeeds in establishing her narrative, from the beginning, as a story of "becoming" for her family

and the journey on the train as one that not only “carried” them away but also stands in for the knowledge and experience Antin lacks. With the mechanism for their dislocation and subsequent journey accounted for, Antin can now begin her narrative, in media res, with her experience on the train as the start of her worldly education and adventure.

Throughout the first five pages of *From Plotzk to Boston*, Antin explains the nature of her narrative’s aim not to document every stop on their journey but to “only speak of such things that made a distinct impression upon [her] mind, which it must be remembered, was not mature enough to be impressed by what older minds were, while on the contrary it was in just the state to take in many things which others heeded not” (Antin 19). Such framing of her vantage point strategically anchors readers’ expectations to see the world of the immigrant through the youthful eyes of ten-year-old Mary Antin and further establishes the plot of the narrative as not so much a documentary of the day-to-day details of how they traveled but how the travels imprint themselves upon her senses. In this way, Antin sets her character up as a reader of her environment, drawing knowledge from her impressions of the changing landscapes and people. Coincidentally, Antin’s text follows the literary trends of her moment: in the 1890s, novelists from Zangwill to Thomas Hardy were less and less inclined toward presenting moral arguments with their work and more interested in offering the reader a series of portraits or impressions that created the rhetorical force (Hardy 28). Similarly, Antin relies heavily upon the foundational premise of her journey and the implied mobility, socially and geographically, from the countryside of Russia to the city of Boston in America, to convey her progress and development. However, if mobility and interiority are linked in

the youth's journey toward development, as Moretti argues, what does it mean that Antin's mobility is continually threatened and arrested by state authorities (Moretti 5-6)? What effect does this have on the reader's understanding of her "becoming" (Bakhtin 23)?

For Antin, the issue of arrested or delayed mobility is critical to her larger rhetorical argument about the inhumane treatment of immigrants; however, she manipulates the details of the journey between checkpoints by appropriating features from the bildungsroman narrative elements to style the development of her journey in a way that would be palatable and relatable to her readers. By adopting the motif and logic of "the journey," so deeply embedded in nineteenth-century novels, Antin also exposes the limits of mobility for her family and other emigrants who were often categorized and classified as undesirable aliens. Thus, it becomes imperative that in the moments between the formal checkpoints and the imposition of these labels Antin succeeds at becoming "scenes of sympathy" to use Jaffe's term once more, a scene where the reader not so much relates to the characters but has some way of imagining themselves in their position (Jaffe 3). Antin, I argue, is masterful at styling the narrative to build multiple pathways of connection, not between the reader and the Antins, as immigrants, but between Antin and the reader as she "becomes" recognizable as an individual.

On the edge of the German-Russian border, the Antins are stopped in Verzbolovo. It is here that Antin sees two ways her mobility is disrupted. The first example is that she sees an unfamiliar modern Russia that she ultimately realizes she cannot inhabit:

Crowds of well-dressed people were everywhere—walking up and down the platform, passing through the many gates leading to the street, sitting around the

long, well-loaded tables, eating, drinking, talking or reading newspapers, waited upon by the liveliest, busiest waiters I have ever seen—and there was such activity and bustle about everything that I wished I could join in it, it seemed so hard to sit still. But I had to content myself with looking on with the others.
(Antin 22)

Antin's frustrated desire to join the throng of people leads her to a deep sense of her own displacement from that world and reinvests her journey with the hope of finding a home in America as she immediately calls the reader's attention to the horizon—the German-Russian border. These scenes juxtaposed by Antin reveal two visions of modern mobility as the freedom of movement and the opportunity for social mobility. In this scene both ideas of mobility are used to propel and contain Antin's desires, allowing her to endure her current state of exclusion in that social body (i.e. remaining in her seat, etc.) and continue her journey in search of a society she can join. This is not the only instance where Antin's journey coincides with greater awareness of the schism between her political status and her perspective or interpretation of herself. This doubling and increased social consciousness occurs throughout the text predominantly in moments where Antin's political identity threatens to arrest her literal journey.

After the conflict at the first checkpoint, when the Antins are detained and then removed by the gendarme from the train, Antin smooths over the insult with the creative styling of the scenes immediately following. For example, once the Antins are left at the train depot, Antin shifts the narrative focus toward her internal development to keep up the momentum of the journey even when outside forces prohibit the prospect of her future mobility and reunification with her father in America. While the Antins are left with nothing but the name of philanthropist Herr Schidorsky and no means to find him,

Antin turns the reader's attention toward her impressions of the environment, counting the people in line, reflecting on the brightness of the room and color of the chairs, all while trying to teach herself German from the Russian translations on the depot signage (28).

In this moment, when mobility is arrested and the hope of making it to America seems unlikely, Antin carries us into the fanciful realm of her inner thoughts, ideas, and idiosyncrasies. Although Antin names this “faulty conduct” of her inner musings—a product of her “youth and the fact that [she] was stunned with shock” after their encounter with the revolver-carrying gendarmes—she demonstrates that she possess the trait of individual resolve that when met with external opposition she is able to draw from an inner “*selfish[ness]*” to escape and focus on learning, thinking and puzzling over German notices until she thinks she was “very well acquainted with the German tongue” (29; my italics); such auto-didactic impulses emerge first as a coping mechanism but ultimately illustrate what makes her “unique and different from the other” travelers, including her siblings (Moretti 40). The final straw before Antin departs into a “queer mist” of “indifference” is when a “Jew or ‘Son of Mercy’” refuses to help them find the Jewish philanthropist Herr Schidorsky, she laments:

I then believed that the whole world must have united against us; and decided to show my defiant indifference by leaving the world to be as unkind as it pleased, while I took no interest in such trifles. So I let my mind lose itself in a queer sort of mist — a something I cannot describe except by saying it must have been made up of lazy inactivity. (Antin 29)

As Yudkoff's translation work has shown, the original sixty-page Yiddish letter emphasizes the help of a Christian woman who originally helped them find Schidorsky;

in contrast, the English publication of *From Plotzk* omits this detail entirely and the focus is placed on the Jewish “Son of Mercy” who did not help them and the philanthropist Herr Schidorsky who did help them (Yudkoff 16). Yudkoff argues that this substitution likely came about to encourage American Jews unwilling to help their coreligionists and to remind them that “it is up to Jews to help other Jews” (16). Such styling strategically maps back onto the model of the dissatisfied youth of the *bildungsroman*, who—in opposition to the breakdown of traditions that demand one be a “Son of Mercy”—is propelled forward by inner restlessness or a previously unknown mechanism of mobility, which appears to be the Antins’ persistence. This part of the narrative, ushered in by Antin’s mist-like haze, also reminds her readers that she is not offering a strict chronology of events but reflections on how these events affected her understanding of the world: “I remember seeing night come out of that mist, and bringing more trains and people and noise than the whole day (we still remained at the depot, waiting) till I felt sick and dizzy” (31). Antin gives vivid expression to her own paralysis and the nauseating effects of the waves of the passenger arrivals and departures that stun her senses and sensibilities—begging the question: why are they not able to move forward? In the absence of an answer, Antin provides a montage of scenes: flashes of life portraits that convey not only Antin’s impressions but her noble desire for family and a home, a place to rest her head:

I remember that somebody said we were obliged to remain in Keebart that night and that we set out to find lodgings: that the most important things I saw on the way were the two largest dolls I had ever seen, carried by two pretty little girls, and a big, handsome father.... I remember that we found a little room (we had to go up four steps first) that we could have for seventy-five copecks, with our tea paid for in that sum... I remember, through that mist, how I wondered what I was

sleeping on that night, as I wondered about the weather; [and] that we really woke up in the morning. (31)

Antin's description of the station while waiting for their train is punctuated by her mention of the "largest dolls" she had ever seen, and conveys a sense of familial completeness and domesticity that she desires, reinforcing that her journey is one of individual but also female development. In Susan Fraiman's work on the female bildungsroman, she reinforces Armstrong's seminal claims that, to start, domestic fiction and conduct books of the nineteenth century created "feminine" identity through establishing an "ethic based on inner moral worth as opposed to inherited status"; thus, giving birth to "the conception of subjectivity on which middle-class identity and hegemony would be based (Armstrong 14)," which is why Armstrong also argues that the modern subject is first and foremost female (Fraiman 15; Armstrong 1). The image of the two dolls and family of three contrast with representations of the Antins—a family of four who are missing their father and a fatherland. The vivid details about their displacement and poverty—wondering not only where but what they were sleeping on—renders the reader sympathetic through this alignment of values around the home and domesticity prevalent in literary works in England and the United States. By appealing to such values, Antin is able to transform—even translate—the foreignness of her family's experience into something familiar and relatable.

More importantly, Antin is able to show the heroic nature of her character's interiority and its ability to transform the bad into something good or educational in a way that is effective and endearing, thus, building up what Jameson calls the "affective investment" of the reader (Jameson 12). For example, Antin describes her overwhelming

sense of gratitude as waves of “deep emotions” when her family finds safety with a Jewish philanthropist, Herr Schidorsky, and his daughter (Antin 33). As with the basic plot lines of domestic fiction, the common form of female bildungsroman, it is the benevolent “benefactor” who comes to the aid of the Antins and makes it possible for the characters to move forward. As Armstrong notes in her work on domestic fiction, the female protagonist is typically propelled to greater social mobility through marriage or an outside benefactor. While benefactors aid male protagonists in other novels, for example, Dickens’ *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, or Eliot’s *Daniel Deronda*, etc., the female novel of development emphasizes this as not only a revision of the social contract in economic terms by giving wealth to one’s poorer neighbors, but also a revision of the sexual contract, a revision of the role of women in the public sphere albeit mediated by men. Notably, Antin carefully navigates her mother’s efforts to carry her “precious baggage” out of Plotzk, her ability to appeal to the gendarme, her ability to navigate the streets and depots to find Herr Schidorsky’s home, and, ultimately, to secure help and safe passage for her children to Germany and then America (2-30). Antin is careful to maintain the propriety of her mother’s actions by strategically introducing another immigrant family that includes a father as also being helped, and mentioning Herr Schidorsky’s daughter attending to their needs when they do stay in his home. Antin also notes that her mother repeats Schidorsky’s answer “word for word” to the children, convincing Antin that he is the “only good man on earth” who has come to their aid and allowed them to resume their journey (30). For Yudkoff, the benefactor stands in as a lesson for American Jews as the exemplary Jew who unlike the previous “Son of Mercy”

refuses to help them. However, it is never explicitly named in *From Plotzk to Boston* that Herr Schidorsky is Jewish, and when considering the arc of the narrative depends on this solution, a wider audience would still find a lesson in this kind benefactor who uses his personal capital to assist not only the poor of his own country but the indigent immigrant fleeing persecution.

Importantly, Herr Schidorsky gives the Antins back their dignity not afforded to them by the state by helping them cross “the forbidden boundary” into Germany. Once they are back on the train, the Antins are questioned again by the gendarmes, but this time they say they are going to see Herr Schidorsky of Eidtkunen, “as she had been told to say,” and the guards, recognizing the code, allow them to cross into Germany (34). During this next segment of her journey before the Berlin checkpoint, Antin infuses the journey with intrigue by introducing another element of the bildungsroman genre, a love interest, albeit a brief one.

Yudkoff’s translation of the original Yiddish letter shows that Antin fashioned the anecdote about meeting a new family, the Gittlemans, to situate herself as the unique, individuated subject who is also capable of fitting into social expectations (Yudkoff 11). The story of the Gittlemans bridges two unromantic moments of Antin’s class-consciousness. Immediately before the story of “Young Gittleman,” Antin explains that they were waiting at the depot in Eidtkunen, Germany and their belongings and luggage were taken to be “smoked and steamed” because of fear of contamination by “germs of the dreaded cholera” (Antin 37). Furthermore, we know, thanks to Yudkoff, that Antin “refashioned” this scene to present herself as more focused on her inner development

rather than her physical needs, like food. In her letter to her family, Antin describes being so hungry but unable to buy any food from the markets because they could not afford it (Yudkoff 12). In *From Plotzk to Boston*, this scene is restyled as her longingly looking at books and signs that she cannot read because they are only in German, so she counts them instead. The family is further alarmed when they are presented with a bill for these “unasked-for services” that they must pay before moving on (Antin 37). Antin withholds the details about how the family makes the payment, perhaps out of fear that her audience will not approve, and moves on to discussing the Gittleman family.

While enroute to Berlin, the Antins are forced into a separate car for fourth-class passengers even though they had paid the hefty price for third-class tickets. The conductor continues to load the fourth-class car over capacity with immigrants of a particular class, requiring them to stand for hours smashed together with their fellow travelers. With this unflattering set of circumstances, Antin infuses the train ride with a tease of intrigue among her traveling companions that both establishes Antin apart from her siblings and humanizes them during the unceremonious train ride to Berlin.

According to the Yiddish letter, Yudkoff shows that it was Antin’s older sister, Feny (or Fanny) and not Antin, whom the seventeen-year-old boy, referred to only as “Young Gittleman,” found interesting. Yet, through coy shifts in narration, Antin insinuates herself as the presumed recipient of the kind gestures and special notice. Up until this moment Antin is direct in her distinction of herself in the first person; however, at this point in the narrative, Antin shifts pronouns and refers to herself as “she” and “one of them”:

When I had almost finished counting books, I noticed that mamma and the others had made friends with a family of travellers like ourselves. Frau Gittleman and her five children made very interesting companions for the rest of the day, and they seemed to think that Frau Antin and the four younger Antins were just as interesting; perhaps excepting, in their minds, one of them who must have appeared rather uninteresting from a habit she had of looking about as if always expecting to make discoveries. But she was interested, if not interesting, enough when the oldest of the young Gittlemans, who was a young gentleman of seventeen produced some books which she could read. (36)

This continues for a few paragraphs to insinuate herself as the intended recipient of the “gallant” young Gittleman’s attention. At first glance, Antin only appears modest and sharing appropriate details for a girl of her age at that time. This mention of an attraction between herself and an older boy seems to coincide with Antin’s acknowledgment that the story bears some narrative and plot expectations that figure her as a desirable, if not beautiful, heroine.

I also hold that Antin is not simply presenting herself as the focal point to protect her sister—as hinted at in Yudkoff’s reading. Instead, by looking at the formal features of this part of narrative, specifically the shift in point-of-view, the scene reads like a novel. She recounts:

[Gittleman] told stories, laughed and made us unwilling to be outdone. During one of his narratives he produced a pretty memoranda book that pleased one of us very much, and that pleasing gentleman at once presented it to her. She has kept it in memory of the giver, and, in the right place, I could tell more about the matter—very interesting. (38)

This scene stands out because of Antin’s attempt to solicit her readers’ interest in “the matter” (38). This not-quite direct address to the reader to imagine what is “very

interesting” about “the matter” happens only one other time²⁵. What does Antin’s retelling of this story show the reader? First, Yudkoff’s article offers further insight with the mention of another key disparity in the *From Plotzk to Boston* scene: in the original letter, the Gittleman boy gave all the Antin children chocolates and then a small book to Antin’s sister Fenye as a souvenir. Yudkoff speculates that the omission of the chocolates and substitution for “books which she could read” matches up with other food-for-books substitutions to present herself as eager to learn for the purpose of soliciting her readers to donate funds to her education through the purchase of the book, as outlined in Zangwill’s foreword. While I agree with Yudkoff’s assessment that these substitutions are telling, as they codify Antin’s emphasis on education as critical to her self-fashioning, I also see this as one of Antin’s most compelling uses of novel conventions to expand the sympathetic bonds with her reader through familiar tropes.

In the paragraph following the introduction of the Gittlemans, however, the Antins face a new assault on their dignity as they are “obliged” to leave their seats and move into the cramped fourth-class car (37). She does not explain the reason the German gendarme moved them, nor does she express indignation. Antin gives only a few other details, such as the warm temperature due to the lack of fresh air. These comments, while brief, are signposts for the poor immigrant experience that her middle-class readers may

²⁵ At the end of the narrative, Antin—frustrated that she must go through a series of interviews and examinations before exiting the boat—explains rather emphatically that these procedures are necessary but so difficult for her to endure. She writes: Can you imagine...” See previous section on invasion fiction for full analysis about direct address in this scene.

have found unsavory. Not wanting to dwell on these portions, Antin sanitizes the two-day train ride in a standing-room only car by focusing on the story of Young Gittleman. Once the train is half emptied outside Berlin and they are separated from the Gittlemans during their sanitation bath, Antin returns to first person narration to describe what appears to be the dizzying mania of a modern city. During this time, they lose sight of the Gittlemans and are unable to say goodbye.

The Gittlemans, for Antin, become a way to infuse her narrative with a sense of humanity at the moments when theirs is most contested. The inclusion of this seemingly trivial story about a flirtation reminds the reader that although the immigrant families are herded like cattle they are not animals. Following this line of thought, I want to briefly return to the instance of Young Gittleman's gift to "one of them" (38). I think it is important to read this scene as more than a "manipulation" of the actual event and as doing more than boosting Antin's ego or image of herself. Rather, the scene is crucial in demonstrating Antin's attention to the dual impulses of *bildung*—the drive toward individuation and socialization. And, while novels of female character's development typically end in marriage, Antin's substitutions of books for chocolates point toward another mechanism of socialization or merging into society not by marriage but through education. As Antin shapes her tale to reflect the popular forms of her time, she also recognizes the need to create her character as a recognizable individual distinct from her family and capable of maturity.

As Stella Bolaki notes in her study of the female novel of development, women in traditional male *bildungsroman* are presented as "milestones or vehicles for measuring

male progress” in ways that conflate women with their “traditional association...with space, immobility, and passivity” (Bolaki 41). Similarly, the story of Young Gittleman is presented as one such milestone in Antin’s development, as their exchanges indicate her ability to conform to the social expectations and respond in a way that vouches for her precocious mind and mature emotional being. Indeed, Antin’s flirtation rehearses the narrative of sympathetic companionate marriage plot, where the source of attraction—a sympathy of minds—is a sympathy that is integral to the identity formation of modern subjects within the parameters of the Victorian novel (Ablow 2). Antin seems to style her narrative similarly as Young Gittleman and Antin share a meeting of minds and imagination: they love and exchange stories of their travel experiences. Antin collects the stories of Young Gittleman as a sign of favor and of her intellectual competency or equivalency with her male companion: she does not want to be “outdone” when they were exchanging stories on the train (Antin 38). In their final moments together, Young Gittleman gives her his memoranda book, presumably a personal notebook, which marks another milestone for her development, a socializing experience between someone of the opposite sex during which Gittleman passes on his knowledge or experience to Antin in a way that rewrites the sexual contract prevalent in novels of development. Striking a balance between individualization and socialization, Antin agrees to elaborate on “the matter” when given the “right place” and time (38). The omission has the effect of making this passing gesture of the memoranda book a grand one worthy of a heroine in a novel. Even so, Antin’s restraint over her emotions is what is required to be taken seriously as a thoughtful modern individual. In sum, Antin uses the Gittleman story to

interrupt the realities of her journey with a flirtation of romance that imbues her character and journey with the staples of fiction most familiar to her audience. By doing so, she appeals to her reader's sympathies with her show of individualism. But it may be just as accurate to say that in rewriting the story with herself at the center, she humanized the immigrant experience by framing each harsh reality or indignity with moments where the Antins experienced laughter, friendship, and wonder at the world around them.

In closing, I want to return to the opening epigraph to elaborate on the final segment of her journey before arriving in Boston and reuniting with her father. The ocean scenes offer the best examples of how she utilizes the forms of individualism pervasive in English literature to convey her own identity. After enduring an eight-day quarantine in Hamburg, Antin explains that she and her family found passage on the steamship "Polynesia" that would take them to Boston. The first eight days of the journey proved to be most challenging, as seasickness kept most of the passengers below deck. When Antin finally recovers, she recounts her experience of the ocean as an almost religious experience, as she is filled with "solemn thoughts" (70):

How deeply I felt the greatness, the power of the scene!...The grey sky, with its mountains of gloomy clouds, flying, moving with the waves, as it seemed, very near them...and the deep solemn groans of the sea, sounding as if all the voices in the world had been turned to sighs and then gathered in one mournful sound—so deeply did I feel the presence of these things that the feeling became one of awe, both painful and sweet, and stirring and warming, and deep and calm and grand...I thought of the tempests and shipwrecks, of lives lost...and all the tales I had heard of the misfortunes at sea...I tried to realize that I saw only a part of an immense whole, and then my feelings were terrible in their force. I was afraid of thinking then, but could not stop. My mind would go on working till I was overcome by the strength and the power that was greater than myself. What I did at such times I do not know. I must have been dazed (71). ...After a while I could sit quietly and gaze far away. Then I would imagine myself all alone on the ocean, and Robinson Crusoe was very real to me. I was alone sometimes. I was

aware of no human presence; I was conscious only of sea and sky and something I did not understand... what was real and what was imagined blended into one... I did not want to be near any person. Alone with the ocean forever—that was my wish. (71)

This passage offers the reader the experience of witnessing Antin's mental development "as if with their own eyes" (Antin 8). She is thinking "solemn thoughts" and considering her place in the world and is most affected by the idea of the world as greater than herself and only partially known to her, which Moretti argues is the development of an interiority integral to the culmination of the bildungsroman narrative arc. Interestingly, it is through Antin's own reading of *Robison Crusoe* and other novels that she is able to apprehend and assimilate the environment around her and, in so doing, authenticates her experience as "very real" (71). In the moments leading up to the *Crusoe* reference, Antin considers her experience as one unique to her own development, during which her mind flourishes along with the movement of the ocean and meditates on her past and present through an encounter with nature as both awe-inspiring and terrifying. With Mary Antin, the focus of the narrative comes into being through introspection, and Mary Antin as author appears to find a second life as a witness to the moment of self-authorship. Writing herself into existence, Antin becomes the fulfillment of the narrative's development, not least because she does not remain on the ship "forever with the ocean" but because her narrative of development is given new aim of merging with a new society.

As a modern, thinking individual capable of governing her emotions, Antin is quick to point out how she is also not Robinson Crusoe. When Antin appropriates specific notions of liberal individuality, self as author-artist, she notably does not sever

her relationship to the other people on the boat. Despite her hyperbolic claim, “I was aware of no human presence...I did not want to be near any person,” Antin explains the need to go back to her family in the next sentence, offering up scenes of familial laughter and their sheer happiness at the idea that they are almost reunited with their father in a new home (71). In the final move of her bildung narrative, Antin shifts from focusing on her individual development to her socialization on the ship to prepare her for her new-found home. In this way, her immigrant narrative becomes a self-authenticating document in that it bears witness to the creation of the figure Mary Antin and of the future citizen, Mary Antin, as author and immigrant. She achieves this by appropriating certain aspects the bildungsroman narrative of a youth “becoming” a legible individual as a rational, thinking subject. Her story is one of development and experience that culminates in her reaching her father and a new father-land. By setting up her story along these familiar lines, she uses the discourse of liberal individualism, its signs and proofs, to bend the frames of her story and the popular narratives about Jewish immigration to establish her humanity at a moment when her political, social, and economic circumstances suggested otherwise. As a result, Antin’s *From Plotzk to Boston* is different from other immigrant narratives in that it does not privilege America as the primary condition for self-realization. Antin instead models her self-realization as a bildung narrative, substituting her journey for the education that leads to the development of liberal subjectivity.

Human Documents, Not Artifacts: Mary Antin’s Autobiography as Counterhistory

In a letter to Mary Antin, Jessie Sampter, a leading member of Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization, wrote that her taste for German history or histories about “wars” and “kings” had waned because “history [did] not tell the real things”²⁶.

Sampter’s opinion reflects a tension of the period over the function of history as the story of the nation-state or the story of a national people and often leaving out information about those living on the margins of that particular moment.

Laura Marcus has made a similar critique of the genre of autobiography in the nineteenth century, which was entrenched in androcentric British imperial culture. Autobiographies of the nineteenth century were predominantly the narratives of “great men” and these stories “became the authentic data which shore[d] up cultural certainties and provide[d] the points between which the map of western civilization [was] drawn. [These autobiographical narratives] embod[ied] the cultural value with which the ‘primitive’ artefacts of ‘savages’ [were] contrasted” (Marcus 58). According to Marcus, the genre of autobiography flourished as evidence of the superior humanity and intellect of British citizens who produced documents and not “artefacts” (58). Authorship is but one criterion for human documents—it is the ability to authorize one’s self through the written word. But for Antin, as a non-British or American subject, her testimony is carried forth as a passport into the Western imaginary, verifying her self-possession and

²⁶ Quoted in Joyce Antler’s *Journey Home* from *Speaking Heart*, Sampter’s unpublished autobiography, Central Zionist Archives.

therefore worthiness to be recognized as citizen of humanity rather than primitive or savage bound to the dregs of the imperial hierarchy.

Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson argue in their seminal work *Reading Autobiography* that the differences between the autobiographer and historian come down to archive, intention, and temporal and spatial vantage points (Smith & Watson 10). Especially during the late-nineteenth century, these differences were evident in the privileging of history as the medium of facts of the past, with many historians aligning themselves with the vantage point of the state. Autobiography, on the other hand, is distinguished by its explicit focus on the subjective experiences that are part of history but also function in a rhetorical capacity for the intended audience (10). Yet, as Smith and Watson insist, these characterizations of life writing and history are not discrete genres. The seepage between these forms, especially at the turn of the twentieth century, became increasingly evident as marginal/minor/Other writers, simply by deploying the conventions of specific Western genres exposed the assumptions, preconceptions, and limitations of that mode of writing to convey or contain their experiences. Antin's text was not the first to illustrate that using narrative devices from literary genres like bildung and autobiography could be a vehicle for immigrant authors to leverage another position in society.

One could point to contemporaneous reviews of T.N. Mukharji's *A Visit to Europe* (1889). *The Spectator* review from October 19, 1889 did not read the narrative as a serious commentary on the British Empire or British imperial life but more as an artifact of "a very favorable specimen of the Hindoo" (Newman 528). In 1892, Israel

Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto: A Portrait of a Peculiar People*, attempted to do a similar thing for Anglo Jewry—to provide portraits of the plethora of Jewish life in England and to critique the structures that presented Jews with limited options in society—using a blend of realism, romance and the bildungsroman to color the humanity of the based-on-real-life characters he used to explain the complexities of Jewish life. Some reviewers commended the work as a specimen of ethnography in its vivid description of the Jewish street and in the next breath expressed utter disdain for the “Grandchildren of the Ghetto” (Part II of the book) as it dealt ideologically with the place of Jews in England.

Across the Atlantic, another example of a genre-blending work is the now seminal critical monograph by W.E.B DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*. DuBois's work combined a sociological study, history, autobiography and biographies to make visible his critique of Jim Crow laws. In April 1903, a *New York Times* reviewer explained that the work by a “Northern” Harvard-educated man, had its merits but that the general readership will find “many passages of the book [to] be very interesting to the student of the negro character who regards race ethnologically and not politically, not as a dark cloud threatening the future of the United States, but as a peculiar people, and one, after all, but little understood by the best of its friends or the worst of its enemies outside of what the author...is fond of calling the ‘Awful Veil’” (*New York Times*, April 25, 1903). My point in including these three examples is that each of these non-white male writers made a way for themselves in mainstream platforms through their adherence to and manipulation of the generic standards of the popular cultural forms of their moment. Where these

writers pushed the boundaries of literary content, or entered into the realm of politics, they experienced, as demonstrated by harsh reviews, others' attempts to remind them of their precarious position as a second-class citizen. This is achieved through the objectification of their work as an artifact and of their person as specimen or spectacle. Despite the ways these three texts use elements of fiction, specifically realism, to make their work legible, they themselves are unable to prevent readers from interpreting their bodies as specific "types" of subjected Others.

Throughout this chapter, I have argued that Antin, like other marginalized writers of her time, used specific literary conventions to legitimize her status as an individual so that her work could be read as "human document" rather than an artifact. In the final pages of this chapter, I want to highlight how the force of the chapter's analysis culminate with a new view of the high stakes of *From Plotzk to Boston's* critical reception as an authentic memoir and history of Jewish immigration.

Overwhelmingly, literary reviews revealed the concerns about the authenticity of Antin's text as first and foremost an accurate representation of her abilities as an author, which was another way of enforcing imperial hierarchies and national boundaries. Of course, these biases were systemic and appear, among other places, in reviewers and critics concerns about Antin's youth, immigrant status, proper gender expression and proficiency with English. Antin's age and proficiency with English were of particular focus for a couple reasons.

First, Antin's celebrity status as immigrant poster child was dependent on the idea that she went from illiterate immigrant to a published author in just three short years.

Even AAJWW Nina Davis and Ray Frank corresponded over this aspect of Antin's work:

Zangwill has also taken interest in a little girl in Boston, a Russian refugee, who at eleven years old wrote a wonderful account in Yiddish of her journey from Plotz to Boston, and translated it into English when she was fourteen. Now she is fifteen. I have seen the English version, which is published with a foreword by Zangwill. Her name [end page 2]...is Mary Antin. I should think that she will do something great one day. (Nina Davis Salaman to Ray Frank, 30 May 1899 American Jewish Historical Society)

The focus on Antin's youth, while important to her narrative, becomes a way of identifying her future value as an individual and member of society. This fantasy of immigrant success has a darker side that parallels British imperial narratives where presumed savages, often compared to children, are brought into the fold of civilization through their exposure to Western culture. While Antin may not have been consciously interrogating this narrative, she was conscious enough of the trope to manipulate it for her benefit. For example, Antin insisted she was a mere ten years old in her stories to emphasize her unique abilities, keeping her real age a secret from the public until she married.

One favorable review of *From Plotzk To Boston* would summarize that Antin was worthy of the public's financial support because of her demonstrated "artless" talent "at such a young age" made her a promising investment (Lazarus 317-8). On the other hand, Antin's youth seemed to be the source of other reviewers' skepticism; some even hinted Zangwill had helped Antin with translating the text into polished English prose (*The Independent* 1505). Anticipating this concern, Zangwill explicitly states in his foreword

that he “neither added nor subtracted, even a comma” to the text (9). Again, Zangwill’s note guaranteeing the authenticity of the text and Antin as its sole author was necessary, in part, because of the cultural biases against writing by non-male and non-Anglo-Americans, insisting, instead, as I have already mentioned, the work as “true literature” and a “human document” (8)

Published Jewish press reviews of Antin’s text also reveal another schism, but this time one within Jewish collective identity discourses. In particular, Antin’s popular work points out the ineffective efforts of Zionism to respond to the refugee crisis well before the Kiev pogroms 1903-1906. Until this point, political Zionism’s response to the Jewish refugee problems had been insufficient. In fact, as part of the second and third Zionist congresses, Jewish women were tasked with supporting the philanthropic efforts, while also being careful not to divert resources from the settlement of Eretz Israel. Many of the women discussed in the dissertation, including Mary Antin, would go on to devote much of their personal and public efforts to providing immediate relief—temporary shelter, resettlement, and employment—for new Jewish immigrants. What the political Zionists did not anticipate was that these women, through their labor and writing, would end up creating new visions of a Jewish national future and culture. In the coda to the dissertation, I consider one such vision of an Anglo-Jewish writer named Hannah Trager, who, along with her family, was one of the first settlers of Palestine.

Coda:
On the Edge of Empire: Hannah Barnett Trager & Citizenship in Pre-Mandatory Palestine

I first came across Hannah Barnett-Trager's name four years ago, while visiting the Parkes Library Archives at Southampton University in England. I was looking through Anglo-Jewish author Israel Zangwill's letters and works and left with many questions about the various Anglo and American Jewish women writers he had worked with professionally, as well as the generous forewords he wrote endorsing their work. Hannah Barnett Trager was one of them. At the time, I did not realize that this first connection would be the one I would continue coming back to, but more on that later.

I was interested in Zangwill's foreword because he describes Trager's memoir *Pioneers in Palestine: Stories of One of the First Settlers in Petach Tikvah*, first published in 1923, as "tracking the source of [the] great river of . . . modern Zionism, before such colonization efforts were pursued with vigor by any other Jewish organization" (Trager xii). Trager, in his view, "recaptured for history [the] rich details of the life, at once idyllic, industrious and dangerous," of early settlers in Palestine (xii). Israeli scholar Yaffa Berlovitz has argued, that Trager's sketches do this and much more: they were "part memoir, part documentation, part literary adaption" and, in their aggregate, a "rare record" of what life was like not only for Jewish settlers, but for women, in the Jewish colonies of pre-mandate Palestine (Berlovitz np).

Hannah Barnett was born in 1870, and spent most of her adolescence alternately living in England or Palestine, until she married in 1888. Her father, Zorach Barnett—often credited with spurring on one the first colonizing efforts in Palestine—was an

orthodox Jewish businessman, who devoted his and his family's lives to settling and building up a Jewish homeland. Over the course of ten years, the Barnetts made fifteen trips between England and Palestine: during these cycles, Zorach Barnett would begin a business, methodically save up enough money to return to Palestine with his family, and then, when out of funding or confronted with a health scare in the colony, the family would return to England and then start all over. And until the publication of Trager's *Pioneers in Palestine* almost forty-five years after the founding the orthodox colony of Petach Tikvah, the Barnett story was not well known and nor understood by those outside of the early settler communities. Thus, it was important for Trager to write her memoir in two parts, one showing the early history of the 1880s, and the second part focused on more literary impressions of the growing and modernizing settlements in and around Petach Tikvah for her contemporary Jewish readers.

The first part of the memoir begins with the Tragers in Jerusalem, waiting and hoping for the chance to build their own colony. With the help of several other Jewish settler families from all over Europe, Petach Tikvah was founded near Jaffa. During the early chapters of her memoir, Trager vividly describes their failures and hard lessons learned, but tempers them with a reverent nostalgia for the camaraderie across families and gender. She emphasizes a strong sense of community and care for all, where no one had very much but together they had enough. Through bouts of sickness and starvation, the colony continued to grow and, in Trager's words, "ma[k]e progress," despite its squalor and poverty (9). As Trager continues to depict scenes from their everyday life, one theme emerges: the importance of not appearing "backward" or "uncivilized" to her

readers (153, 58). For example, after a trip to an affluent and secular Jewish colony, the young men and women of Petach Tikvah “aspire to” modernize their colony along similar lines: build a school for children, a reading room with European newspapers, a bath house and an orchestra. For the young settlers, these amenities are synonymous with the level of sophistication and “civilization” that would be found in Europe. On their way back from the secular Jewish colony, the group passes an “Arab” village made up of mud-brick homes and is “struck by the contrast...how different even from the plainer and...rather shabby-looking colony that was our home, but which was the abode of cleanliness and comfort” (51-52). Trager invokes the domestic virtue of cleanliness to show her reader that they are better than their less civilized Arab neighbors.

In other, similar instances, Trager uses the language of progress and civilization to separate her group from the other non-Europeans, which Sheila H. Katz argues is typical of settler writing of the time as a way of boundary marking (Katz 8). According to Katz, however, this boundary marking is far more complicated because women, in particular, become both the mechanism and measure of “civilization” in these colonizing narratives. The practice of measuring a group’s “backwardness” based on how they treat their women is too often an ill-fitting litmus test imposed by the colonizing gaze of the West—even today. And yet, Trager’s usage of these civilizing measures does this and more. There are several moments when Arab women and men’s labor is cast as exemplary and noble. One such instance is when the colony is starving and Trager, then only a child, asks an Arab woman to teach her to make bread (Trager 17). Additionally, Arab women and men are often laboring in the fields along with the settlers and take care of Trager’s

father when he contracts malaria (13). During one particularly grueling session, Trager insists that whosoever works the land should possess it, and she does not make any exceptions (47). Instead, she concedes that

[T]rue, not all those people, men and women, working out [in the vineyards] were Jews, many of them were Arabs, . . . But we need not grudge these simple folk their pay—why should they not share in the revival of Palestine, after tilling it, according to their lights, for hundreds of years? (47)

Immediately following this rhetorical question, Trager explains that she while she had not fully explored these ideas at “that moment” in time, she did understand the “virtue of labor” to extend, as if with alchemic precision, possession of the land and therefore subjectivity (48). Thus, the work bestows to all workers regardless of position, Jew or Arab, the grounds for equal citizenship.

Similarly, Trager’s view of personhood as property-based and endowed by one’s labor is critical to understanding how she was able to use the language of “civilization” and “progress” to improve the treatment of women in Petach Tikvah (44, 58). For example, in her chapter entitled “Votes for Women,” the “young people” discuss the “emancipation of women” and unanimously decide that “in principle it was all very well, indeed quite right, that women should have their say in communal matters, but that they would have to be prepared to have a vote” (69); in other words, they had to show they were educated enough to vote. At that moment, one of the young men pulled a newspaper out of his pocket and read aloud an article on the women of America, explaining how they were not only insisting on their “rights” but were, in a fair way, to obtain them sooner or later. The women’s response is worth quoting at length:

‘Then why is it,’ exclaimed one girl..., ‘that American women go forward and we Jewish women stick in one place? ... Look at Deborah, without whom the Israelites refused to go to battle. Look at Judith, look at the many Jewish women of Biblical times who had as much wisdom and courage as the men.... Here we are, helping to build up a new commonwealth in a country where we are all really free to do as we like. Are we going to build on the basis of equality or not? Have not we women taken our part in the founding of this colony as fully as the men have? Did not our mothers suffer and struggle as well as our fathers? ...Have we not weeded the vineyards in the burning sun, and made the hay, and milked the cows?... Let us [instead] go forward together. (69)

The rousing speech ends with a call for the male colony elders to reconsider the issue of votes for women. After many hours of debate, the young members of the community demand the elders to take a vote, and they do end up voting in the women’s favor. While this passage seems a bit saccharine, it illustrates how these women understood themselves as participating in a broader transatlantic conversation of the role of women within a democratic and distinctly Jewish orthodox tradition.

Trager admits it is not until the colony women hear that American women are demanding the right to vote that they become adamant about their own rights. In fact, they are surprisingly incensed that their American, middle-class counterparts, who are not laboring in the burning sun, will be given rights that the colony women feel they have earned. The chapter as a whole illustrates how modern and democratic Petach Tikvah was for its time, even going so far as to claim that Jewish women in Palestine were enfranchised before women in America and England. By suggesting this, Trager turns the measure of “civilization”—a society’s treatment of women—against the presumed centers of civilization themselves. However, while comparisons between American women framed the conversation, Trager emphasizes that it was through comparison with biblical women that they made their case compelling for their audience.

Furthermore, Trager offers an ideal at the heart of this debate over gender equality that would, in her view, become critical to the future success of the Jewish colonies. In this last section, I want to use the question posed by this Jewish/feminist manifesto, “are we going to build upon equality or not?” (69), as a lens to briefly consider the less conventional literary, and I would argue allegorical, parts of this text: the stories of two different couples that punctuate Part I and pervade—even haunt—Part II of *Pioneers in Palestine*.

In the final three chapters of Part I, Trager tells the story of two lovers, Joseph and Bathsheba. First introduced in the chapter “A Harvest Love Story,” Joseph and Bathsheba’s romance represents all the forward potential of the colony to address old-world ills, specifically class and gender hierarchies. As readers, we are supposed to understand that Joseph and Bathsheba were two of the most eligible youth in the colony. She was the picture of the colony new woman made beautiful and virtuous through her hard work as a field maiden with sun-browned hands, ones she proudly displays as “hard” from labor (93). In this way, her virtue is not without real action and her labor makes her a worthy partner, instead of an object or “jewel” to be attained or protected (92). Joseph, a newer colonist, is an educated man from Europe, a poet and musician, who happened to be from a poor family of tailors. Joseph, weakened by the restrictions on Jews in Europe, is just learning to work with his hands and is on his way to becoming “free” from his low-class standing through his cultivation of the land. However, the lovers are separated when Bathsheba’s father denies the match because Joseph is from a poor family. Like the biblical Jacob, Joseph promises to work until he has enough to be

worthy of marrying Bathsheba. He explains: “I shall be strong enough for any work in time, if I have you to work for, Bathsheba” (93).

This claim is tested two chapters later when Bathsheba and Joseph find themselves in an attack by the neighboring Arab village. Bathsheba and Joseph must work together to save the village—she gathers all the women and children and fends off the attackers with one pistol until Joseph returns with help. In the aftermath, the entire town praises Joseph and he, in turn, redirects the credit to Bathsheba, who alerted him to the danger in the first place and helped protect the entire group until reinforcements arrived. Not surprisingly, Bathsheba’s father is won over and the two marry. In the closing scene of Part I, the two are gazing out a window over Palestine and dreaming together about the people they want to be and the country they want to help start. Bathsheba prays aloud that they “have been blessed...and should live not only for our own happiness, not even only for each other, but for others, too. Let us make our home a place where other shall find pleasure and comfort...so may a new day rise for our people, and God grant that you and I may see it together. And Joseph...said in low tones: Amen!” (115).

When read as a love story of the colonies, their love and labor cover over a multitude of differences that would have kept them apart in Europe. Their relationship is presented as a partnership, and the enduring lesson is that Joseph and Bathsheba were united in their shared vision of life and understood that their partnership would be the basis of equality that they built upon to the benefit of others. Over and again it is clear that Joseph and Bathsheba, according to Trager, set a strong example of a future Jewish

homeland, where more equal domestic relationships have the potential to help the colonists build more equitable social relationships with each other.

In contrast, Part II begins some decades later when Trager has just arrived from England after a long absence. She visits her former neighbors, family, and friends and catches up on all that has happened. It is unclear why Trager left or has stayed away, and she doesn't provide any details about her personal life. Instead, she offers a series of sketches about the new and improved Petach Tikvah colony—ones that she is both proud of and disturbed by. For example, the houses are modernized with whitewashed walls, tile, and glass windows. The trees, orchards, schools, reading rooms are in excellent condition; yet, the place seems almost unrecognizable and she repeatedly notes that she feels a “stranger” and “lost” in this familiar place. She sees that not only has the environment changed, the people are different, too. Colonists from Russia and Europe brought their old lives with them, and it no longer seemed as if the people of Petach Tikvah were striving to be one community. Women were not involved in the field as much as they were tending to domestic and care-taking responsibilities. As Trager considers these changes, she offers a story about another couple in a chapter entitled “A Judean Romance,” about another couple named David and Judith.

David and Judith fall in love at a young age. David is a settler and has visions of building his own home, owning a vineyard, and marrying Judith. Judith, on the other hand, is an intelligent woman who wins a scholarship to France so that she can study to be a teacher. David encourages her to go, and Judith promises they will marry upon her return to Palestine. When she returns, David does not recognize her—quite literally—as

she is changed in appearance. She has a healthy glow and appears “dainty” (182). Worried that he is no longer refined enough for her, David offers her a way out of their engagement. She dismisses that idea, and promises him that she wants a life in the colonies. But years later, after the birth of their child, Judith is underwhelmed with domestic duties and motherhood. Finding no new opportunities to apply herself, she falls into depression. That is, until a new house guest arrives from Europe. Misha, a former professor, reawakens Judith’s intellectual senses and the two quickly establish a connection while discussing books and social issues. David worries that Judith prefers Misha and so eavesdrops on their conversation. It comes out that Judith is petitioning Misha to encourage David to build a school and put an emphasis on education for the sake of their son. She says that perhaps David will hear it better from Misha than from her because she is a woman. Misha assures Judith that her husband is better than the idealists and thinkers in Europe because he is building up the Jewish homeland. This provides Judith no comfort and she bursts into tears. Afterward, David and Judith discuss what they can do better to build a new vision together—but we do not see the promise fulfilled. Nor does Trager give us reason to hope that things will be different, as the chapter ends with Judith resigning herself to joining David’s vision of pursuing what is best for the future of the colony.

This story is markedly different from the story of Joseph and Bathsheba, but I want to emphasize two key differences: 1) the differences between David and Judith only become a problem because they do not fit David’s vision of settler life. There is no room in his vision nor in the communal structure for Judith to contribute to the colony with her

own skills and passions. And 2) the lack of attention to other aspects of what makes a marriage or what Trager describes as “intellectual intercourse” is compared to the colony’s emphasis on physical labor without equal attention to the things that strengthen the mind (191). In the story, Judith fears that the colony will suffer from the lack of education in music, the arts, and knowledge of social issues in Europe. Her unheeded warnings seem to be an opportunity missed because of the inequality between David and Judith. It is his vision, and she needs a male intercessor, Misha, to suggest an alternative.

Trager shows that this domestic inequality has larger consequences for the rest of the community, as the reinstatement of traditional gender hierarchies seems to be reproducing old-world ills in their new land—ones that are equal to marital infidelity. This story is similar to what Mikel Dekel describes as the typical *bildungsroman* for the Jewish nationalist, where the Jewish or gentile woman fails the Jewish hero, and so he turns his efforts to the land as the only thing worth his love (Dekel 34). Trager ends her memoir with deep ambivalence about this model and the Jewish nation’s ability to live up to the ideals of the first settlers of Petach Tikvah. She is unsure whether they will be able to build a nation on an equitable foundation. In closing her memoir she writes, “it is difficult for me to convey the meaning of all [that the new settlers] meant. But I have done my best” (Trager 208). Such resignation calls attention to the most significant mystery of the text, the author herself. Although scholars have reduced Trager’s work to her prejudiced remarks about “Arabs” as “savages,” I have shown that she has a far more complex understanding of the civilizing rhetoric used to make her story legible to an Anglo-American audience. Trager’s history of the original settlers of Petach Tikvah

provides an important counter-history for her contemporary Jewish readers, a different starting point that may still have influence on the direction of the eventual Jewish state. Trager's text is not a blanket endorsement of Zionism. Rather, I read her work as a form of activism that complicates these often-competing visions of Jewish national or diasporic identity. I also hope to show that Trager's allegorical narratives about Joseph and Bathsheba and David and Judith reveal what she believes to be the structural flaws with the newer Zionists' vision for a Jewish homeland.

This brings me back to my moments in the archive and my original question about the relationship between Trager and Zangwill. By 1923, Zangwill had denounced and left the Zionist movement and began the Jewish Territorialist Organization. This organization was created in 1904, following Theodore Herzl's death, when Political Zionists refused to use their efforts to resettle Jewish refugees in any other parts of the world, despite growing anti-semitism and pogroms in Russia. Once an avid supporter, Zangwill became increasingly outspoken against political Zionism. Thus, Zangwill's endorsement of Trager's memoir casts a particular shadow over the work, which is never truly addressed in the text. Zangwill highlights Trager's ambivalence in his foreword by pointing out that despite Trager's fond memories of Petach Tikvah she had not yet returned to live in Palestine.

Trager offers few clarifying details throughout the text about her personal position, but in place of those clues she offers a critique instead. Specifically, she returns to the question about building a nation on the basis of equality and the need for an ethical vision to guide collective action. The question posed by the group of disenfranchised

women—“Are we going to build on the basis of equality or not?”—remains before the reader as a question posed to global Jewry. Trager reiterates throughout her memoir that the ethical and moral foundation of the future colony is determined by local social relationships, and she insists that old social relations and hierarchies left unchecked will produce the same “old world” problems. Trager understands this reforming of the social and political structures to be the real pioneer’s purpose and the Petach Tikvah, “the gate of hope,” for a burgeoning Jewish nation. In 1926, Trager returned to Palestine after the tragic deaths of her two daughters and worked as a midwife until her death in 1943. In this final occupation, I read Trager’s desire to usher in new lives as her way of bringing about the creation of a Jewish national body, even while maintaining a critical stance toward Zionism. Through a counter-history of pre-Mandate Palestine, Trager intervenes in debates about what it means to “build on the basis of equality” in twentieth-century Palestine.

Over the course of the dissertation I have shown how AAJWW, as complex individuals, have used historiography to pose pivotal, socially-redefining questions that do not have simple answers. In particular, I demonstrated how AAJWW achieved these critiques through the hermeneutic of counter-history, a Jewish historiographical method for interpreting the past against the grain in order to transvalue the historical record and expose the ethical structures of their contemporary moment. By highlighting these networks and collaborations, I demonstrated how these women were not only intervening in the discourse of Jewish identity, but they were also exposing what was being left out of the discourse.

Furthermore, the questions raised by AAJWW in this dissertation have much to contribute to the fields of Jewish, Victorian, and American studies. I have done my best to weave these discourses and fields together in ways that generate more productive analysis of the cultural moments and phenomena of the late nineteenth century. For scholars and students interested in the history of Zionism, I hope you will be convinced that these AAJWW were interlocutors of their male political and cultural Zionist contemporaries and that their intellectual and social contributions to that dialogue should be reflected in future scholarship. For those interested in immigration studies, I offer my chapter on Mary Antin's memoir as a useful example of immigrant narratives that do not privilege citizenship as the site of their identity formation, unlike Antin's later immigrant autobiography *The Promised Land*.

While I have investigated how the lens of counter-history allows us to see new connections among AAJWW and their more well-known contemporaries, with a special attention to emerging leaders of Jewish nationalism, I have not offered a comprehensive outline of AAJWW's literary or political works and social contributions, which take up many other issues besides Jewish nationalism and history. Yet, AAJWW theories about the nature and function of history, citizenship and nationalism also deserve further study because they offer useful insight into the way gender, race, and class have worked historically to both enable and constrain immigrant or minority communities' full enfranchisement and development of collective identity within liberal democracies. AAJWW have asked, in a range of forms and genres, what narratives about women, Jews, and other marginalized subjectivities need to be challenged and removed in order to

build a nation on the basis of equality. And through their stories, poems, and histories, AAJWW encourage their readers to relentlessly consider the ethical structures of their own society and the effect of those structures on people left “upon the threshold” of the *polis*, the edges of empire.

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