SPECIAL ARTICLES
JEHUDA HALEVI

By SAMUEL S. COHON

The eighth centenary of the death of Rabbi Jehuda Halevi focuses our minds upon a star of first magnitude and brilliance in the Jewish firmament of fame. Acclaimed through the rolling centuries as the foremost Hebrew poet since the Psalmists and as one of the most original interpreters of Judaism, he is not only the symbol of his age but also the voice of the inmost yearnings and deepest thoughts of the Jewish people of all times. The name of this master singer became magic, and his life story a glorified legend.

THE AGE OF HALEVI

The age of Jehuda Halevi belongs to those eruptive periods of human history in which the established order crashes and the shape of the new one bears a frightening appearance. The age-old struggle for military supremacy between the Church and the Mosque, which reached its climax in the First Crusade in 1096, broke out, with renewed fury, in Spain. The entire eleventh century was marked by the waning of Arab power and culture and by the waxing power of Christendom. The effect was mounting misery for the Jewish people. The ‘paradise of peace and prosperity,’ which was Andalusia during the reign of the Omayyads, had fallen prey — after the death of Almanzur, the prime minister and successor of Abd-ar-Rahman III — to the rivalries and jealousies of petty tyrants and adventurers, — Moors, Arabs, Slavs, and Spaniards. For eighty years (1002–1082) the land was torn to pieces by the contending regents. In place of a united country, with its seat of government at Cordova, some twenty dynasties set themselves up to rule in as many cities or provinces. Some of the rulers exercised wisdom in government, but despite their external elegance and love of art, poetry and music, most of them were bloody tyrants.
The intolerable disorder and chaos, resulting from the incessant conflicts between these contenders, gave the Christians of the North their long-awaited chance. The energetic Alfonso VI (1075–1109), who had united under his sway the kingdoms of the Asturias, Leon and Castile, craftily brought the short-sighted and self-seeking princes to his feet. In their blindness, they provided him with the sinews of war with which he was to destroy them. Resorting to the well-tried policy of divide and rule, and staging military raids throughout the land as far as Cadiz, he made all the Moslem states tributary. Only when he reached the Pillars of Hercules and conquered Toledo in 1085 were the eyes of the blind rivals opened to his design of dominating all Spain and of exterminating all Moslems. Awake at last to the danger and too feeble to resist the Christian conqueror, they called in the Almoravides, who had just subjugated the whole of North Africa, from Algiers to Senegal, to help them check the rising power of Alfonso.

The Almoravides descended upon Andalusia “like a cloud of locusts to devour the country thus offered to their appetite.” After appropriating Algeciras as a base of operations, their king, Yusuf Ibn Tashufin marched to battle against Alfonso at Zallaka, near Badajoz (October 23, 1086) and utterly routed his forces. His mission completed, the victorious Yusuf returned to Africa, leaving three thousand of his Berber warriors to aid the Andalusians. Great was the rejoicing of the people over his power and simple piety. The upper classes, while ridiculing his lack of culture and inability to appreciate the art of the poets, highly regarded the sword of the mighty barbarian. In 1090 his help was solicited again, this time by the king of Seville against the Christians, who renewed their guerilla warfare from their stronghold of Aledo. He consented with an assumed air of reluctance. Soon, however, he showed his true intentions by attacking the princes of Andalusia as well as the Christians of Castile. Before the end of 1090 he began the subjugation of Spain. He took Granada in November, Tarifa in December, and Seville as well as many leading cities of Andalusia, the following year. An army of Alfonso was routed. Valencia held out as long as the Cid lived and directed its defences. After his death in 1102, Valencia,
too, fell, and the whole of Moslem Spain, with the exception of Toledo, became a province of the African empire of the Almoravides.

The rule of the savage Almoravides spelled the doom of cultural pursuits and refinements. Art and philosophy languished. Freedom of thought was ruthlessly suppressed by these Moslem fanatics; Jews and Christians shared the same fate of persecution, massacre and exile. The remnants of the princes and nobles were in despair at the sight of the foreigners, who came to liberate the country and remained to enslave it. The masses were glad to have the usurpers stay, for thus their lives and possessions were protected against raids by brigands, and against attacks by the Christians who were driven back to the North. But there was to be no tranquility and no prosperity for the subjects of the Almoravides. The rough warriors and fierce religious zealots soon succumbed to the luxuries which the fruit of their victories had brought. Their martial habits, their love of daring, their delight in enduring hardship soon passed. Demoralized and enfeebled, they lost their stranglehold upon the country. A revolution was sapping their strength in Africa, and the Castilians, under Alfonso VII, resumed their raids into Andalusia. In 1125 they harried the south. In 1133 they burned the suburbs of Cordova, Seville, and Xeres. Their forays extended from Leon to the Straits of Gibraltar. Because the government did nothing to stop the peril, the people rose in revolt and drove the rulers from the land. Anarchy reigned again, until the Almohades, the "Unitarian" zealots, displaced the Almoravides in Africa and in Spain.¹

The Life Story of Halevi

It was during these stormy days that Jehuda Halevi lived. The details of his life are cloaked in obscurity. Nothing is known of his parentage save that his father was named Samuel. The attempt to identify him with an unknown poet, Samuel, lacks corroboration. Neither is the date of Jehuda's birth definitely established. In place of

¹ S. Lane-Poole, Moors in Spain, pp. 166 ff.
the generally cited 1080, H. Schirmann has argued recently for an earlier date, 1075. On the basis of a contemporary record, it has been accepted that, like his younger contemporary and supposed kinsman Abraham Ibn Ezra, he was born in Toledo. This city, which, according to legend, was founded by Jews who were exiled by Nebuchadnezzar, figured as an ecclesiastical center from the very introduction of Christianity into Spain. After its conquest by the Moors, Tolaitola, as it was now known, flourished, first, as the capital of the province of Cordova (712–1035), and then as an independent state (1035–1085). Its numerous Jewish community enjoyed the protection of the Moorish conquerors and cooperated with them in developing extensive silk and woolen industries and in making the city a center of culture. The Jews adopted Arabic as their vernacular, and assiduously cultivated the arts and sciences of their neighbors.

After three hundred seventy-three years of Moslem rule, the city was subjugated by the Christian King Alfonso VI who made it his capital. The change proved disastrous to the Jewish people. While at first the Castilians emulated the tolerance of the Moors, the spirit of bigotry steadily mounted, reaching its climax four centuries later in the expulsion of the Jews from the Iberian peninsula. Persecutions in Toledo are reported in 1090, soon after its conquest. The Jews of the city were massacred in 1109. The advent of Christian rule spelled the decline of culture as well as of tolerance. Unlike the highly cultured Moors, their Christian rivals were rough warriors. Not even their princes were educated, and they were too poor to indulge in the refinements of the Moors. As mercenaries, they hired them-

2 Hayye Jehuda Halevi, Tarbiz, IX, pp. 36 ff., note 3.
3 Moses Ibn Ezra, Shirat Yisrael, tr. Halper, p. 75. Schirmann has cast doubt upon the Toledan origin of Halevi on the ground that the name of the city in the Arabic text of Moses Ibn Ezra is indistinct, and suggests that the correct reading may be Tudela in Navarre. However, he himself recognizes difficulties in the way of this theory. (Tarbiz, X, 237–239). He seems to overlook the definite reference of Solomon Ibn Al Mualim to Halevi’s Castilian origin: אֲרוֹן בָּק שֶׁמֶנָּא רְאֶשׁ (Castile = ) ההָסַי. See Brody and Albrecht, Shaar Hashir, p. 130, line 16.
5 Responsa, No. 217.
selves to Moorish as well as to Christian princes. Even their most celebrated hero, Rodrigo Diaz of Bivar, known as the Cid, “was no very orthodox champion of the faith, for he fought as well for the Moors as for the Christians, and would as dispassionately rob a church as a mosque.”

When Toledo fell to the Castilians, Jehuda Halevi was probably about ten years old. How long he remained under the new rule is not known. We note, however, that he was spoken of as the “Castilian” and that he referred to himself as “coming out of Seir” or “from Edom,” i.e., from Christian Spain. Even after the conquest, Toledo retained for some time the Arab character of its culture. In addition to Arabic, which was his mother tongue, the young Jehuda acquired the knowledge of the popular dialect of Andalusia, representing a combination of Arabic and Castilian. His early education consisted of the mastery of the Hebrew Bible and rabbinic literature. In addition he perfected himself early in the art of Arab poetry and, in course of time, in the science of Hebrew grammar and philology, in Greek philosophy and medicine.

Either in consequence of the upset political conditions in Toledo or because of his desire to pursue his studies under distinguished masters, the young lad turned to the cultural centers of Andalusia. While it is not certain that he studied under Rabbi Isaac Alfasi, the famous author of the digest of the Babylonian Talmud, at Lucena, he undoubtedly came under the spiritual influence of the great master, as is shown by the striking tribute which he penned on the occasion of Alfasi’s death in 1103, and by his friendship with the outstanding disciples of Alfasi, R. Joseph Ibn Migash and R. Baruch Albalia. Two of his earliest poems were devoted to R. Baruch and to his father, R. Isaac ben Baruch.

His early exercises in the poetic art attracted the atten-

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7 I. Davidson, Ginze Schechter, III, p. 319; Bialik-Rabnitzki, Shire Moshe Ibn Ezra I, 45; Schirmann, op. cit., p. 37, n. 4.
10 Diwan I, nos. 84 and 129.
tion of Moses Ibn Ezra, the outstanding poet, philosopher
and critic of the day. In a rhymed and florid letter to “the
Light of the West (i.e., Andalusia) . . . a ready help (play
on the name Ezra) in distress, enwrapped by the spirit of
God and sustained by a generous soul,” Jehuda introduced
himself as “of little esteem and young . . . coming up out
of Seir to bask in the light of the men of great achievement,
the luminaries of Western Spain.” He alluded to the hard-
ships which he endured, to his wanderings and to the dif-
ficulties of establishing contact with the scholars. And he
submitted to Ibn Ezra’s judgment a number of wine songs
composed in contest by a circle of poets, in which he par-
ticipated.11 The older poet recognized in the first fruits of
the novice marks of genius, and replied with an enthusiastic
expression of admiration and friendship. In the hyperbolic
style of the Arab poets, Moses Ibn Ezra likened Jehuda’s
letter to “the face of the dawn,” and extolled his verses as
more precious than gold, each excelling myriads of others:

Silk woven of speech,
Understanding its warp, perfection its woof.
In comparison, all the precious songs are the body,
But it is the spirit within.
Had it not added its beauty,
the rest would be a worthless vessel.
How does a son so lovely and young in years
Bear mountains of understanding on his back!
Or a suckling of days excell the high,
Being but a stripling and still in the bud!
Behold, out of Seir he shone forth
To light up the length of the world and its breadth!

He concluded the poem with an invitation to the young
genius to visit him in Granada, assuring him of his friend-
ship and offering him hospitality.12

At the time of this correspondence, Moses Ibn Ezra was
at the height of his prosperity and influence, and was well
able to aid Jehuda Halevi. Ibn Ezra’s three brothers—
Isaac, Jehuda and Joseph—all of whom played important
roles in the affairs of Andalusia and in Jewish cultural life,
likewise extended their friendship to Jehuda Halevi. His

11 I. Davidson, Ginze Schechter, p. 319.
12 Bialik-Rabnitzki, op. cit., no. 29.
stay at Granada could not have been long for, in 1090, the city fell to Yusuf Ibn Tashufin and his barbarous warriors. The Jews, who enjoyed a privileged position under the Zirite dynasty, were overtaken by disaster. Hard times came upon the Ibn Ezra brothers. All but Jehuda were exposed to grave hardship. Moses was compelled to flee for safety to Christian Spain and appears to have lived in dire need.\textsuperscript{13} During this trying period, Jehuda Halevi probably returned to Castile. His friendship with Moses Ibn Ezra continued through life and proved to be of greatest value in his spiritual development. He wrote:

\begin{quote}
Friendship has bound my soul with his soul  
Ere the chariots of wandering were hitched,  
Before my soul ventured separation,  
And we shared perfect days together.  
Daughters of time bore us singly,  
But the daughters of love delivered us twins,  
Brought us up on a bed of spices,  
Nursed by the muse of the vineyard.
\end{quote}

I remember you and recall the days  
We have passed, and they were like dreams.  
Time the deceiver has exchanged you for men,  
Whose heart is war and in whose mouth is peace.\textsuperscript{14}

In his poems, Halevi sought to buoy up his despondent friend, and repeatedly acknowledged indebtedness to him:

\begin{quote}
I have served you in days of youth  
and at the dawn of manhood,  
And am still your servant in advancing years.  
You have attired my muse with garments of delight.\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

It is hard to trace the wanderings of Jehuda Halevi. His poems of friendship indicate that he spent some time in the virtually Jewish city of Lucena, where he sang the praises of Joseph Ibn Migash on his succeeding of Alfasi as head of the Jewish community.וננה ר\textsuperscript{13} Brody, Moses Ibn Ezra, Incidents in his Life, \textit{Jewish Quarterly Review}, XXIV (1934), p. 314.  
\textsuperscript{14} Diwan I, no. 101, lines 31 ff.  
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., no. 58, lines 55-56, 59; cf. 2 Sam. 1.24. See also nos. 37, lines 49-53; 43; 52; 66; 86; 93; 101; 111; Diwan II, pp. 273-275; eulogy, p. 105 f.
of the Academy and of Baruch Albalia, distinguished as scholar, philanthropist and champion of Jewish interests.

At Seville, famed as a "city of song" and a seat of culture, the poet met with disappointment. He complained that its people were afraid of knowledge and indifferent to religion. Possibly the material aid, which he needed, was not forthcoming in this affluent Jewish community. The general apathy served to emphasize the generosity of Meir Ibn Kamaniel, who, judging by his Arab title "exalted vizier," held high public office. Another "vizier" and admirer of Halevi at Seville was Solomon Ibn Al-Mualim.

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He also wrote poems in honor of the "vizier" Nahman Ibn Azhar and to Abu Ibrahim Ibn Muhaghar, a scion of a distinguished family. On the occasion of the marriage of the latter's daughter to his friend Abraham Ibn Al-Rabib, Jehuda Halevi composed at least three poems.

He also exchanged verses with the aged Jehuda Ibn Mar Abun.

From Andalusia the poet returned more than once to his native Castile. Among his friends and the men of eminence whom he celebrated in his verse in Christian Spain was the statesman Joseph Ibn Ferruziel (or Farissol), surnamed Cidellus, who served Alfonso VI as physician and counsellor. On the occasion of the statesman's visit to Guadalaxara, Halevi honored him with a poem, extolling his influence with the government and his being "a mighty fortress in distress" for his people.

A nephew of Cidellus, Solomon Ibn Ferruziel, similarly held a prominent post in the court of Alfonso VI. Halevi prepared a poem of welcome on his awaited return to Toledo from a state mission to Aragon. But before receiving the tribute, the young statesman was

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16 Ibid., I, nos. 62, 95, 114; also letter written on his behalf to Narbonne, pp. 217–218.
17 Ibid., I, nos. 4 and 84 (to R. Isaac), 129.
18 Ibid., I, no. 88; 16, lines 17–18; cf. 49, lines 19–20. See also 118; 42 and 126.
19 Brody and Albrecht, op. cit. p. 130; Diwan I, nos. 33; 51; 75.
20 Ibid., I, no. 113; II, p. 309.
21 Ibid., I, no. 98.
22 Ibid., I, no. 120; II, pp. 29–30, 276–78.
24 Diwan I, no. 102.
murdered by jealous Christian Spaniards (20th of Iyar, 1108). The poet’s song turned into a bitter lament. This elegy, ranking with the greatest in Hebrew literature, bewails not only the personal tragedy that befell the brilliant young statesman but also the calamity that befell the Jewish people through his foul murder.25

From Castile, Jehuda Halevi exchanged poems with his friend Juda Ibn Gayyat who, like the Ibn Ezras, had fled from Granada after its conquest by the Almoravides, and after much wandering, returned to it to resume his work of teaching. “My soul,” Halevi wrote, “was exiled with him.”26 Finally, the poet appears to have settled in Cordova.27 Though this “pearl of Andalusia” suffered greatly during the reign of the Almoravides, economically and politically, yet it remained a leading center of Jewish learning and culture. Among its celebrities was the philosopher and poet Joseph Ibn Zaddik, who acted as Dayyan (judge) from 1138 to his death in 1149. He hailed Halevi as “the father of song” and was honored with a number of poems from Halevi’s pen.28

The circle of Halevi’s friends both in Andalusia and in Castile, who were at once the objects and the patrons of his poetic activity, was wide. It included the poet and grammarian Levi Al-Tabban of Saragossa and his influential pupil Isaac Ibn Barun, Nahman Ibn Asher, whom Halevi names “the prince of the West” (Andalusia), the three Krispins (Isaac, Moses and Solomon), and many others too numerous to name in this essay. While some of his creations in their honor were inspired by personal friendship, others were prompted by the need of gaining a livelihood. His poems indicate that there were times when he was exposed to actual hunger, wandering “alone without friend as one bereaved.”29 In course of time, his economic

26 Brody and Albrecht, op. cit., pp. 123–25; Diwan I, no. 100; see also nos. 34, 40, 45, 115.
27 Moses Ibn Ezra, Shirat Yisrael, tr. Halper, p. 75.
29 See poem to Abraham Ibn Gabbai, Diwan I, no. 50.
condition improved. His busy practice of medicine afforded him a comfortable living and even enabled him to accumulate some wealth.\(^1\) In a letter to David of Narbonne, he complained that "he was occupied even at hours that are neither day nor night with the vanities of medicine, though he cannot heal. And the city is large and its inhabitants giants; and they are hard masters. And wherewith can a servant gain their favor save by spending his days in satisfying their desires and consuming his years in healing their diseases?"\(^2\) The further complaint of "enslavement to kings" may indicate that he was employed as physician to some kings or princes. He compared himself to "a bird kept as a plaything by youngsters,"

weary and toiling, oppressed and dejected.\(^3\)

Though well provided during this period, he was robbed of the most precious possession — his liberty.

In addition to writing poetry and practicing medicine, Halevi seems to have conducted an academy. He names affectionately his disciples Jehuda and Azriel and a certain Isaac whom he regarded as a son.\(^4\) We may infer that it was to the intimate circle of his disciples that he unfolded his conceptions of Judaism to which he gave literary expression in his masterpiece "Kitab Al Khazari," a work written in Arabic, on which he labored during his last years in Spain.

About his family he offers little information. In connection with his departure for Palestine he refers to his household and brethren. His silence regarding his wife suggests that she died before he left Spain. He speaks with deep emotion of his daughter as "the sister of my soul" and of his pain of parting with her only son Jehuda.\(^5\) Whether or not he had other children cannot be determined

\(^2\) Ibid., I, pp. 324–25.
\(^3\) Ibid., II, p. 185, lines 25 ff.
\(^4\) The famous lexicographer Solomon Parhon refers to Halevi as one of his teachers. But this does not necessarily imply personal discipleship. See Mahberet, ed. Stern, p. 5b.
on the basis of his poems. The elegies in which he mourns the loss of sons may have been composed to express the grief of others.\textsuperscript{35} The traditions that the famous exegete, poet and philosopher, Abraham Ibn Ezra, was his cousin and son-in-law are pure legend.\textsuperscript{36}

THE CUP OF SORROW

The poet who sang of wine, of love and of friendship, also wept over personal and communal grief. His cup of sorrow was filled as the friends of his youth, who stimulated his poetic genius, departed one after another. Of the four Ibn Ezra brothers, Jehuda passed away first. In 1120 or 1121 Isaac died, and Joseph in 1128. Moses lived on in a state of despondency and misery until after 1138.\textsuperscript{37} The passing of his venerable friend, "the crown of the majesty of Spain" brought to an end a most important chapter in Halevi's life.\textsuperscript{38} A great void was created in his soul as well as in the life of Spanish Jewry by the death of R. Baruch Ibn Albaila, around 1126. Halevi eulogized him in four long elegies.\textsuperscript{39}

But it was the tragic plight of his people that made him exclaim:

O cup of sorrow! gently! desist a while! for already filled are my loins and my soul with thy bitterness.\textsuperscript{40}

He refers again and again to their spiritual as well as political oppression. Pressure increased upon their religious life with the renewed zeal of the papacy to introduce the reforms of Gregory VII into Spain. The kings drew monks from the famous French monastery of Cluny and turned over to them, for Christian use, Moslem mosques

\textsuperscript{35} Diwan II, pp. 131, lines 11-12; 136-38; 142-44; 145-46; 149-50.
\textsuperscript{36} Juhasin, ed. Filipowski, p. 217; Shalshelet Hakabbala, ed. Amsterdam, 1697, p. 31a.
\textsuperscript{37} Schirmann, Tarbiz, IX, 231 ff.; Brody in Selected Poems of Moses Ibn Ezra, p. XXV.
\textsuperscript{38} Diwan II, p. 105, line 15.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., pp. 80-87; 107-109; 116-17; 127-28. For a translation of one of these great eulogies see Salaman and Brody, op. cit., pp. 82-85. For other elegies see Diwan II, pp. 69 ff.
\textsuperscript{40} Ode to Zion in Salaman and Brody, op. cit., p. 5.
and some synagogues. The monks brought with them polemical writings being currently produced in France. Among them was the attack on Jewish and Mohammedan doctrines by Petrus Alfonsi, the former Moses Sephardi, physician to Alfonso VI. These anti-Jewish polemics were countered by men like Abraham bar Hiyya, Jehuda ben Barsilai Albergeloni and, in part, by Jehuda Halevi in his Al Khazari.

The religious bigotry was coupled with physical persecution. Because of political considerations, the Christian kings restrained for a time the brutality of their knights. But with the weakening of the kings and the rising power of the knights, the Jewish situation grew alarming. Standing under royal protection, they were the first victims of the conflict between the knights and the crown. The murder of Solomon Ferruziel in 1108 was the forerunner of general attacks on the Jews. Sensing its portentous nature Jehuda Halevi voiced in his elegy of the statesman, the embittered feelings of his people against the hostility of Christendom. Nowhere did he write with such bitterness against Christian Spain as in this poem.

May God pour down the rain of indignation
upon the daughter of Edom,
Crush her roots and hew down her topmost branches,
Requite her with bereavement and widowhood,
And bring down her multitude dead
like the images of her idols.
May He put forth a sickle and reap her harvest,
And tread the winepress of her people
until her entire vintage be completed.41

The mounting fury against the Jews broke loose after the death of Alfonso VI in 1109 in a series of pogroms, in Toledo, in northern Castile, and in Leon. His successor, Alfonso VII suppressed the investigation of the anti-Jewish excesses. Among the privileges which he extended to the Christians of Toledo, upon his entrance into the city (Nov. 11, 1118), was the prohibition of every Jew and every Jewish convert to hold an office of authority over Christians. In Leon he did not restore public order until

The insecurity of the Jews naturally bred within them resentment and bitterness. They were caught not only between the contending forces of kings and knights but also between the fires of Christian and Moslem hatreds. Some Jews were drawn into the ranks of the fighters. Others figured as go-betweens. Like the Moslem, the Christian rulers, despite the antagonism of their nobles, needed Jews as interpreters, administrators, financiers and officials, in establishing their “new order” and in dealing with the Moslems.42

Under Moslem rule, too, the Jews were victims of bigotry and cupidity. On conquering Northern Africa, the Almoravides persecuted their Jewish subjects and instituted forced conversions among them. After their taking of Spain, an orthodox Moslem leader came forward with the alleged discovery that the Jews had promised Mohammed that in case the anticipated Messiah failed to appear at the end of five centuries following the hegira, they would all embrace Islam. Thereupon, Yusuf Ibn Tashufin proceeded to Lucena with the demand that the Jews make good their promise. Only an enormous ransom appeased the money-hungry zealot.43

The pitiful condition of his people formed the theme of many of Halevi’s poems.

Between the hosts of Seir [Christians] and Kedar [Arabs]  
My host perished, and warriors ceased in Israel.  
When they fight their wars, we are the victims of their defeats,  
As is the way from of yore in Israel.

On every side snares are spread and traps,  
But no one arises to seek the welfare of Israel.  
When they rush to battle,  
For slaughter and destruction are picked the sons of Israel.

He bemoans the massacre of a large Jewish city, famed for its scholars and leaders, for its high government officials and for its merchant princes.

42 Isaac Beer, Hamazab Hapoliti shel Yehude Sefarad B’doro shel R. Yehuda Halevi, Zion (new series), I, pp. 6–23.
43 Margolis and Marx, History of the Jewish People, p. 324.
On the day when the city was breached,
The rage of Seir's sons went forth as of old unto Israel.
The streets were filled with the slain,
And the demons raised their voices over the virgin of Israel.
And after the sword of vengeance,
Captivity, famine and thirst
Overtook the sons of Israel.\textsuperscript{44}

In another poem he speaks of the wars between the Almoravides and the Castilians:

The Philistines are gathered,
And the Edomites plunder.

Foes fight like wild beasts,
Princes of Elifaz \textsuperscript{son of Esau, i.e., Christians}
With the leaders of Nebayot \textsuperscript{i.e., sons of Ishmael or Arabs].
And dismayed among them are the tender sheep \textsuperscript{i.e., Israel].
How shall the flock fare when shepherded by lions?\textsuperscript{45}

In 1126, Alfonso VII took for himself the title "totius Hispaniae imperator." Christian political power was steadily ascending, while that of Islam was declining. Its awaited total eclipse appeared to some visionaries as another sign of Israel's approaching redemption. The stormy age was filled with Messianic hopes and speculations. There was the belief that the deliverance would come a thousand years after the fall of Jerusalem, i.e., about 1068.\textsuperscript{46} When this calculation proved illusory, the date was moved to the year 1096, the very year of the First Crusade. The horrors which it brought upon the Jewish communities between the Rhine and the Moselle were interpreted as "the birth-throes of the Messiah," preceding the deliverance. Without despairing the people hoped on. The millenarian hope, agitating Christendom and contributing to the motive power of the Crusades, indirectly fed Jewish hopes. In his plea for a Crusade, Pope Urban II argued that Christians must rule Palestine, against whom the Antichrist will fight as a prelude to the second coming of Christ. On different grounds Saadia and

\textsuperscript{44} Diwan IV, no. 58, lines 7–14, 41–46.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., no. 59.
\textsuperscript{46} See A. H. Silver, Messianic Speculation in Israel, 67, note 30.
Hai Gaon believed that Christian rule over Palestine would precede the Messianic advent. Several Messianic claimants presented themselves during the age of Halevi, in Byzantium, Khazaria and Mesopotamia in 1096, in Palestine about 1121, in Spain in 1117, in Fez (Morocco) in 1127, and soon after Halevi’s death, during the Second Crusade, the most spectacular of them all, David Alroy, in Babylonia in 1147.

The Messianic hope deeply engaged Halevi’s thought as well. He reverts to it in several of his poems.

The dove [Israel] has flown far into the forest.
She has stumbled and cannot shake herself free.
She flies, raises herself, flutters,
Round about her Lover she swirls, storm-tossed.
She reckoned a thousand years for her appointed end,
But she is ashamed of all that she estimated.

Recognizing the hazard in all such speculations, he declares:

If I seek to know when will come the end of wonders,
The prophecies reply: Thou askest perplexing questions.

He exhorts his people:

Let thy heart be strong,
And bide thy time!
Wherefore reckonest thou the exile’s end, and art dismayed?
Strengthen thyself, speak forth, and utter song!
For Oholiba is thy name, and within thee is My tent.
(See Ezekiel 23.4)

Brooding on the impending collapse of Islamic might, Halevi dreamt that the event will occur in the year 1130. He preserved his dream in the following poem:

Thou didst fall asleep, and thou awokest trembling.
What is this dream which thou hast dreamt?
Perchance, thy dream has shown thee thine enemy,
That he is poor and lowly, and thou art exalted.

47 Emunot, VIII, 5; Taam Zekenim, 1854, p. 59a.
49 Salaman and Brody, op. cit., p. 118.
50 S. Luzzatto, Diwan, no. 74.
51 Ibid., no. 27.
Say ye unto the son of Hagar [Ishmael, i.e., the Moslems] Withdraw thy hand of pride From the son of thy mistress [Sarah], the object of thy rage. I have beheld thee low and desolate in the dream. Perchance, in waking thou art already desolated. And in the year TeTaZ [i.e., 1130] shall all thy pride be shattered [TuTaZ]. Thou shalt be abashed and ashamed of all thy devices. Art thou he who was surnamed 'Wild Man'? (Genesis 16.12) How heavy is thy hand, and how strong thou hast grown! Art thou called 'The mouth that speaketh great things And warreth against the holy ones of heaven'? (Daniel 7.8) Art thou 'The miry clay in the feet of iron,' (Daniel 2.40 f.) Appearing last [in Daniel’s vision] and art exalted? Perchance, God has smitten thee with the stone which destroyed the Image, (Daniel 2.34) and has requited thee for all thy past deeds.52

The year 1130 may reflect the current belief that the Messiah would come five hundred years after Mohammed. The failure of realization of this dream as well as of the sundry Messianic calculations may have sobered Halevi, and accounts for the complete silence on the subject in his Al Khazari.

The tragic plight of Jewry, trapped between the contending forces of the Cross and Crescent, endowed Halevi’s Messianic longings with grim realism. In the face of the general insecurity of the Jewish people, only the hope of a miraculous deliverance was left. The hope of Israel’s restoration to Zion, stressed in the prayers of the synagogue and voiced with great beauty and power by Solomon Ibn Gabirol and Samuel Hanagid, was charged with practical significance by Jehuda Halevi. The expectations of some leaders of Jewish adjustment to the new political order in Spain, failed to satisfy him. He asks:

Is there for us in the East or West A place of hope in which we may trust?53

And he calls impassionately to his people:

Doves, abandoned in a land of deserts and pits, Arise! This is not your dwelling place!

52 Diwan II, p. 302.
53 Salaman and Brody, op. cit., p. 15, lines 29-30.
Your habitation is abandoned!
Return to your delight, to the border of Hamat and
Yanoah. 54
God grant that you find there rest.
Behold, since we have wandered away from Salem
and its environs,
And parted from Zion,
And all her pastures were wasted,
We have gone down appallingly,
And she has expiated her [desecrated] Sabbaths.
But we have held fast the hope,
And have not diminished prayer.

And, oh, for the wings of a dove,
That I might take flight,
Forsake south and north, and snuff up the wind
Zionward!
As of old may He raise up the seven [shepherds]
and the eight [princes], 55
And upon those who war on the dove
May He draw the destroying sword.

O thou who treadest the heights of hope!
Thy trust has not been belied.
Though human love may be annulled,
My love is not abandoned.

To My house the beauteous daughter
Will return as in her youth.
And on the wings of salvation I shall ride
To seek out for you a place of rest. 56

He pleads with the people:

Implore ye God, spread the hands,
Bow with face down to the ground.
And like doves to their cotes turn
To the window opening toward Jerusalem.
It is the place of your rest and your life,
All the desire of heart and eye.
The Lord loveth greatly Zion's gates,
And holds them with the gates of heaven. 57

54 According to Rosh Hashana 31b the redemption will begin from
Tiberias (= Hamat), and according to the Lekah Tob to Numbers 24.17
from Upper Galilee, where Yanoah is situated. See Dinaburg, op. cit.,
p. 264, note 2.
55 Cf. Micah 5.4, i.e., aids and companions of the Messiah. See
Max L. Margolis, Micah, p. 52; Rab Hai Gaon, Taam Zekenim, p. 60a.
56 Diwan IV, p. 7.
57 Ibid., p. 274.
While rousing his brethren to look to Zion, he prays to God:

Draw up the people that have descended to Sheol,
Whose lips weary asking whether the day of redemption has come.

Raise up Thy salvation like a banner,
And round it gather Thy people.
Work a miracle as aforetime in Egypt;
Blind the eyes of the enemy,
And bring Thy people to Thy holy mount.58

The Pilgrim

The intense Judenschmerz coupled with the hope of Messianic redemption as well as deep personal piety colored Halevi's songs of Zion. He sang:

My heart is in the east, and I in the uttermost west —
How can I find savour in food? How shall it be sweet to me?
How shall I render my vows and my bonds, while yet
Zion lieth beneath the fetter of Edom, and I in Arab chains?
A light thing would it seem to me to leave all the good things of Spain —
Seeing how precious in mine eyes to behold the dust of the desolate sanctuary (Tr. Nina Salaman).59

This is not the mere love of country, which we find in Robert Burns'

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer.

Halevi's heart pines for Zion the perfection of beauty, God's own dwelling place.

There the Shechina abode in thee; and thy Creator
Opened thy gates facing the gates of heaven.
And the glory of the Lord alone was thy light,
And not the sun, moon or stars lighted thee.
Would that my soul could pour itself out in the place
Where God's spirit was outpoured upon thy chosen!

58 Diwan III, p. 64.
59 Salaman and Brody, op. cit., p. 2.
Thou art the royal house; thou art the throne of the Lord, Though slaves sit now upon the thrones of thy princes. Oh, that I might wander in the places where God revealed Himself to thy seers and messengers.  

Halevi's songs of Zion and liturgic compositions faithfully voiced the craving of all Jewry for deliverance and the ardent longing for the Messianic advent. With advancing years, he resolved to translate his yearnings into action. Ben Zion Dinaburg has suggested that his decision to journey to Palestine was prompted not merely by the motive of personal piety — something not uncommon in an age when pilgrimages to holy places were prized as meritorious by Christians, Moslems and Jews — but particularly by the desire to win over his contemporaries for the effort of redemption by first restoring Jews to Palestine. His pilgrimage thus appeared as a kind of demonstration of his new Messianic conception. It is noteworthy that in his Al Khazari he stresses personal effort in achieving Jewish restoration to Zion. He accounts for the non-fulfillment of the divine promise of complete restoration during the Second Temple by the unwillingness of all the Jews of Babylonia to return to Palestine. "Only a part was ready to do so, whilst the majority and the aristocracy remained in Babylon, preferring dependence and slavery, and unwilling to leave their houses and their affairs. . . Divine providence only gives man as much as he is prepared to receive; if his receptive capacity be small, he obtains little, and much if it be great. Were we prepared to meet the God of our forefathers with a pure mind, we should find the same salvation as our fathers did in Egypt." He writes further: "Jerusalem can only be rebuilt when Israel yearns for it to such an extent that they embrace her stones and dust." Once he complains that all nations make pilgrimages to Palestine, "excepting ourselves, because we are punished and in disgrace."  

The Messianic significance of his pilgrimage rendered it an event of great public significance. Some of his friends  

60 Ibid., pp. 3–7.  
endeavored to dissuade him from undertaking it on the grounds that the Schechina no longer dwells in Palestine, that God may be approached by the pure mind and heart in every place, and, above all, that the perilous conditions of travel by sea and land, during those troublous times, amounted to courting danger and came under the prohibition "you shall not tempt the Lord" (Deut. 6.16). Halevi's mind was made up. Though the visible glory of God has departed from Palestine and though God can be worshipped everywhere, still Palestine remains especially favored by God, and no religious functions can be truly perfect save there. Only in Zion can heart and soul achieve genuine purity and secure atonement for past transgressions. As to the peril involved, the argument would hold if the journey were undertaken for business reasons, but not when prompted by religious motives. No reproach can be attached to one who "has closed the balance of his life, expressed his gratitude for his past life, and is satisfied to spend the rest of his days in seeking the favor of the Lord. He braves danger, and if he escapes he praises God gratefully. But should he perish through his sins, he has obtained the divine favor, and may be confident that he has atoned for most of his sins by his death. In my opinion this is better than to seek the dangers of war in order to gain fame and spoil by courage and bravery." 

The date of Halevi's departure from Spain, like the dates of other important events in his life, remains unknown. From the tenor of his elegy of Moses Ibn Ezra, we may infer that it was sometime after the death of his friend, around 1138. And if the date given in Al Khazari I, 47 be the date of the composition of the book, which preceded the journey, he left Spain after 1140. With a number of companions he set out for his goal by way of Egypt. Such trips ran, in the Middle Ages, from Tarifa in southern Spain to Ceuta and from there, coasting the North African shore, to Alexandria, and they lasted at least a month. Beside braving storms and gales in frail boats, the traveler was at the mercy of the coarse and often cruel crews as well as

63 Ibid., V, 23; Salaman and Brody, op. cit., pp. 14-17.
64 Schirmann, op. cit., pp. 284 ff.
in peril of sea raiders and other mortal terrors. Halevi describes some of these experiences in his matchless songs of the sea.\textsuperscript{65}

Halevi's first stop was at Alexandria. This large Mediterranean port contained a fairly numerous and affluent Jewish community. Though he planned to move right on, he was prevailed upon by the venerable R. Aaron ben Joshua Ibn Al'amani to stay awhile. Himself a poet, physician and scholar, and the head of the local rabbinic court, who may have been a refugee from Palestine after it fell into the hands of the Crusaders, he won the affection of Halevi. In addition, being a man of means and of generous disposition, he extended royal hospitality to the famous pilgrim and his friends. Halevi writes in glowing terms of his delightful visit with R. Aaron, and honored his princely host and his sons with poems of friendship.\textsuperscript{66} While at Alexandria, he fell victim to eye trouble, which rages in the city especially in the hot months of June and July.\textsuperscript{67}

From Alexandria, Halevi made short trips to historic places, which figured in Bible history. After several months, he overcame the urging of his Alexandrian friends to prolong his stay, and moved on. His next stop was Damietta, in the eastern end of the Delta, a city containing a much smaller Jewish population and of inferior cultural standing than Alexandria. Here, too, he was hailed by an ardent admirer, R. Halfon Halevi, a leader of the community and a high government official, and a man of considerable learning. Beside single poems, Jehuda Halevi addressed to Halfon a cycle of twelve epigrams, composed in unusual meters.\textsuperscript{68} There he gained the friendship also of the treasurer of the congregation, Abu Ali Ezekiel ben Jacob, whom he praised in a poem.\textsuperscript{69} Though eager to continue his journey, he yielded to Halfon's entreaties and remained at Damietta for two years. He alludes to some business enter-

\textsuperscript{65} Salaman and Brody, op. cit., pp. 10-13; 20-31.
\textsuperscript{66} Diwan I, Letter II, 23; nos. 8; 67; II, p. 258, lines 1-16.
\textsuperscript{67} Diwan I, 31.
\textsuperscript{68} Ibid. I, nos. 17; 55; II, p. 295; H. Brody, Jehuda Halevi, Die schoenen Vesmasse, Berlin, 1930.
\textsuperscript{69} Diwan I, no. 30.
prise in which he engaged while there. After this long delay, instead of directing his way to Palestine, he went on a visit to Cairo, the Egyptian capital.

These delays seem to have been caused by the difficulties which Jews experienced in traveling to Palestine and in entering Jerusalem during the rule of the Crusaders. The city, it will be recalled, was wrested on July 15, 1099, from the Fatimid caliph of Egypt, who had won it from the Turks a year before. The conquest was marked by a frightful slaughter of the vanquished and by the complete annihilation of the Jewish community. The Latin Kingdom set up in Jerusalem by the Crusaders was "judenrein." Virtually all Jews were eliminated also from Haifa, Jaffa, Ramlah and Hebron. Despite the victory of the Crusaders, the Egyptian caliphs did not abandon hope of regaining Jerusalem. Annually they attacked the Latin Kingdom all through the reign of Baldwin I, until his death in 1118, when his forces dealt a severe blow to the Egyptians, penetrating along the north coast of Egypt as far as Farama (Pelusium).

Halevi's trip to Cairo may have been intended to secure aid from the Egyptian court in the pursuit of his goal. R. Halfon arranged with Samuel ben Hanania, the head of the Cairo community, and with the secretary of its academy to invite the poet. Samuel ben Hanania served the tyrannical caliph Alhapt (1131–1149) as physician and counsellor. By virtue of his office, he played a leading role in Egyptian Jewry and was elected as its Nagid. Halevi hailed him in superlatives as one whose fame had spread to all parts of Jewry, and looked to his leadership in a possible restoration of the Jews to Palestine. Another celebrity, Joshua ben Dosa Ibn Karaka, a high government official whom Halevi hoped to meet, was thrown into prison by the caliph. Halevi sent him a rhymed letter and a poem, expressing deep devotion and admiration as well as the

70 Ibid., Letter II, lines 38 ff.
71 Ben Zion Dinaburg, L'toldot Hayehudim B'reez Yisrael Biyme Mas'e Hazlab Harishon, Zion (1927), pp. 38–64.
73 Diwan I, no. 97, lines 87–96; also no. 59. Cf. Brody's notes.
hope of speedy liberation.\(^74\) He also addressed a poem with typical Arab nuances to the Hazzan Moses ben Harosh, and sang the praises of Moses Hibba Allah Ibn Alsheshi, a prominent scholar in the employ of the government in Cairo.\(^75\)

In a scintillating poem to Nathan ben Samuel, Halevi gave voice to his reawakened spirit of song, and extolled the beauties of Egypt.\(^76\) While charmed with the land which had played so important a role in the early hours of Jewish history, he could not entertain the thought of tarrying there much longer. His heart was in Zion. Standing in the Egyptian desert, his mind wandered to the desert of Judah. On the Nile, his thoughts took him to the Red Sea, to Horeb, to Shiloh and other places in the journeyings of the Ark of the Covenant.\(^77\) With a feeling of foreboding, he wrote to Samuel ben Hanania:

> If it be your pleasure to satisfy my desire,  
> Send me away that I may go unto my Lord;  
> For I shall find no more rest for my foot  
> Until I establish in His dwelling place my abode.  
> Do not delay my footsteps from journeying,  
> For I fear lest a mishap overtake me.  
> My request is to find refuge under the wings of God's glory,  
> And that I camp in the camping place of my fathers.\(^78\)

His apprehension was well grounded. Like another and still greater Levite, who surveyed the Promised Land from a distant height but never set his foot upon it, so Jehuda Halevi probably never reached the land of his dreams and his longings. What befell him after leaving Cairo — if he ever left it\(^79\) — is covered with legend. But what the record withholds popular fancy supplies. A chronicle reports that on reaching the gates of Jerusalem, the pious pilgrim

\(^{74}\) Ibid., no. 71; II, p. 328.  
\(^{75}\) Ibid. I, nos. 38; 72.  
\(^{76}\) Ibid., no. 78; Letter III, line 53.  
\(^{77}\) Ibid., II, pp. 182-184.  
\(^{78}\) Ibid., I, p. 211.  
\(^{79}\) The reference to Tyre in Diwan I, no. 68 does not imply that Halevi visited the city. Neither can the hymn in Diwan III, p. 144 be taken as evidence that he reached Jerusalem, as Zeeb Yabez suggests, Toledot Yisrael, Vol. 11, p. 115.
rent his garments and moved barefoot, reciting his great Ode to Zion. An Arab rider, envious of his remarkable devotion, rode over him, trampling him down. He breathed his last, singing of his sweetheart, Zion.

THE POET

In the creations of Jehuda Halevi Jewish poetry of the Middle Ages found its richest expression. His technique he adopted from his predecessors. From the days of Dunash ben Labrat (tenth century) Arabic rules of the poetic art were imposed upon Hebrew creations. The freedom and naturalness of biblical poetry, with its simple parallelism or balance of thought, was replaced by the heavy and laborious forms of the Arabs. Emphasis was laid on syllabic meters and flawless rhymes as the essential elements of poetry. The Hebrew Pegasus found himself heavily saddled and bridled. The free movement of thought and of imagination was seriously impeded. But Halevi obtained full mastery of the difficult medium. With consummate skill he turned the burdens into ornaments, dexterously fitting the cumbersome forms to express the tenderest emotions and gentlest sentiments and adjusting the complex patterns to diverse types, to epigrams, lyrics, odes, elegies, hymns, etc. He made frequent use of the acrostic, to work his name into the composition, to arrange his thoughts in alphabetical order, and, in the instance of the elegy on the death of Solomon Ferruziel, to initial a complete stanza embodying the central idea of the poem. While the acrostic, whether in biblical or in later usage, generally represents an unpromising form of poetic expression, Halevi often employed it with marked success.

Halevi is one of the superb masters of the Hebrew language. He penetrated into its spirit and turned it into an astonishingly flexible medium for the conveyance of his thought. He regarded it, in the light of rabbinic tradition, as the language in which God spoke to Adam and Eve,
and in which the first men originally conversed. Following
the Confusion of Tongues, Eber alone retained it. Hence
it is called after him — the Language of Eber, or "Hebrew."
It continued as the medium of the prophets and psalmists,
rich in subtle elements, such as the accents with which
the Holy Scriptures are read, etc. As to the practice of
forcing it into the metrical schemes of the Arabs — in
which he shared so successfully — he came to regard it as
a sign of perversity. Instead of being satisfied with the
natural excellences of Hebrew, "we corrupted the structure
of our language, which is built on harmony, and created
discord." He sees a way out of the corrupting influence
in the Piyyut, which is free from the strict Arabic forms,
and uses rhymed verses of approximately equal numbers
of syllables. 81

Halevi's poetry may be divided into secular and sacred.
However, the line of demarcation is tenuous, for a deep
religious spirit pervades all of them. Of the four hundred
sixteen numbers included among Shire Hol (secular poems)
in Hayyim Brody's edition of Halevi's Diwan, his songs of
friendship are most numerous. We have noted that he
honored with his songs the leading personalities of Spanish
and Egyptian Jewry as well as a number of Jewish leaders
of other countries. While many of these creations bear the
mark of having been made to order, a considerable number
of them rise to great poetic heights. Love formed another
mainspring of Halevi's inspiration. He sang of love itself
and of pretty maidens, and celebrated betrothals and
nuptials of patrons and friends. In these he follows closely
his Arab models, often beginning with a lament at parting
from his beloved, and proceeding with dreams of the dear
one, her beauty and excellence. The love of which he
sings is of the pure Platonic type, restrained and refined
by religious feeling. The atmosphere of Psalm forty-five,
of the Hallel, and particularly of the Song of Songs is felt
in his love poems. As in all his numbers, he wove also in
these rich fabrics of ornamented speech, culled from the
Bible, and he decked them with luxuriant imagery. His

81 Al Khazari II, 78. See Hirschfeld's note 47, p. 286. This is prob-
ably the basis of the tradition, reported by Solomon Parhon, that in
his old age Halevi vowed to abandon composing in Arabic meters.
genius breaks through the artifices of form and stylistic rigidity and expresses genuine feeling. In consequence of their intricacy, his poems defy translation into another language.

The all-absorbing love of his life was for Israel, Zion and God, and formed the well-spring of his greatest creations. As few other Hebrew poets he voiced the griefs and joys of his people, and he is peerless as the laureate of Zion. He said of himself:

To bewail thy woe, I am like a jackal;
And when dreaming of thy restoration,
I am a harp for thy songs.\(^{82}\)

His immortal Ode to Zion is one of the greatest achievements of universal literature. This priceless gem, reflecting his deepest religious convictions and strivings, has brought courage and hope to all Jewry. His Songs of the Sea, describing his journey to Palestine, are unique in Jewish literature. They reveal the genius of the master at its noblest. Yet his most far-reaching influence has been exerted through his liturgical compositions, three hundred sixteen of which Brody reproduces in his Diwan. These were written for all the Sabbaths, holy days, and fasts of the Jewish year, and they found their way into practically all Mahzorim. Even the Karaites adopted some of his sacred songs.\(^{83}\) A fair idea of their depth and beauty the English reader may gather from the numbers which Nina Salaman presented in literal translation in her "Selected Poems of Jehudah Halevi" (1924).

The keen critic and poet Jehuda Al Harizi (1170–1235) characterized Halevi the poet in these words: "The songs of R. Jehuda are a chaplet of grace for the Torah and a necklace of carnelian and topaz. He is the right pillar of the temple of song, chief among the sages, a challenger of giants, vanquishing all rivals. His songs overawe the heart of the wise. In his presence Asaph is well nigh lost, and Jeduthun's power is gone, and the Korahite Psalms

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\(^{82}\) Salaman and Brody, op. cit., p. 3, lines 7–8.

\(^{83}\) Zunz, Synagogale Poesie, pp. 231 ff.; Landshut, Amude Haaboda, p. 70 ff. I. Davidson, Thesaurus of Mediaeval Hebrew Poetry, IV, pp. 393–95.
seem wearisome. He entered the treasure of song, despoiled its riches, and carried off all its wealth; and going out, he locked the gate behind him. All who follow his footsteps to master the art of his compositions have been unable to touch the very dust of his chariot. All poets copy his expressions and kiss the places which his feet touched. For in poetic skill his tongue is like a clear, polished arrow. In his songs of praise there is none to rival him. With his sacred hymns he charms every heart and subdues it. The words of his love songs drop like dew, yet coals are kindled from them. By means of his lamentations he rends the cloud of tears, and brings them down. When he composes a letter or scroll, it abounds in every beautiful utterance, as if it were derived from the stars on high, or drawn from the holy spirit. In the tabernacle of poetry, the gates of heaven were opened unto him; yea, God Himself was revealed to him." And Heinrich Heine, who knew Halevi through Michael Sachs's translations, acclaimed this poet "by the grace of God" as

Fiery pillar of sweet song,
Moving on in front of Israel's
Caravans of woe and mourning
In the wilderness of exile.

True and pure and without blemish
Was his singing, like his soul —
The creator having made it,
With His handiwork contented,

Kissed the lovely soul, and echoes
Of that kiss forever after
Thrilled through all the poet's numbers,
By that gracious deed inspired.

(Tr. Margaret Armour)

Jehuda Halevi's preeminence as a poet has overshadowed his signal distinction as a religious philosopher. Yet he stands in the forefront of creative Jewish thinkers. His achievement in this field is limited to his Arabic "Kitab Al Khazari," or the "Sefer Hakuzari" as it is popularly

known from Jehuda Ibn Tibbon’s Hebrew translation. (An excellent version of the original Arabic by Hartwig Hirschfeld is available to English readers. We cite from it in this essay.) If his sacred poetry voices his philosophic ideas, his philosophic work exhibits his fertile poetic mind. It is rich in the imaginative qualities, which abound in his poems, in exquisite figures and fascinating parables and illustrations. Like his distinguished predecessor Solomon Ibn Gabirol and his older Arab contemporary Al Ghazali, he modelled his work after Plato’s Dialogues. It is arranged around the conversion of the Khazar king, Bulan II (c. 740) to Judaism, after probing the claims and merits of other creeds. This romantic incident raised the spirits of the Jews, depressed by the incessant persecution of both Church and Mosque. It, therefore, served Halevi as an effective vehicle for his masterly apologetic of Judaism, which originally bore the title: “Book of Argument and Demonstration in Aid of the Despised Faith.”

In it, Halevi set out to defend Judaism not only against the attacks of the rival religions but especially of the intelligentsia of his time that were carried away by Greek philosophy. The Kalam or speculative Moslem theology attracted many earnest Jewish thinkers and captivated the Karaites, who adopted reason as the basis of religious interpretation and rejected rabbinic tradition, thus creating endless confusion.

In its leading ideas as well as in its literary form the Al Khazari exhibits the influence of Al Ghazali. Hirschfeld observes that if we were to sum up Halevi’s doctrines in one sentence, “we should find them almost identical with Al Ghazali’s, viz. a philosophic skepticism in favor of a priori belief. It is more than probable that he received his first impetus to write his book from the famous Moslem theologian.” Its central idea is traced in the closing stanzas of his poetic reply to his friend who tried to dissuade him from undertaking the pilgrimage to Palestine:

See, I pray thee; yea, see and understand,
And turn away from pitfalls, thorns and snares.
Let not Greek wisdom entice thee,
Which bears no fruit but only blossoms.

86 Hirschfeld, op. cit., p. 31.
87 Ibid., p. 5.
Its upshot is that the earth was never stretched forth,
That the tents of heaven were not extended,
That there is no beginning to creation,
And no end for the renewal of the moons.
Hear the words of her confused sages,
Built on shallow and hollow foundation,
And you will turn away with a heart empty and shaken,
But with a mouth full of trifling phrases.
Wherefore, then, shall I seek crooked paths,
And forsake the open highway? 88

The book opens with the king’s concern over a dream which he had. In it he was told that his intentions are pleasing to God, but not his deeds, and that he must find a way of action or worship that will be likewise acceptable to God. He, therefore, turned to a philosopher for his ideas of the matter. Predicating his views upon the impersonal nature of God, the philosopher ruled out the possibility of pleasing Him through human acts of any kind. He is too transcendant to take cognizance of man’s changing ways and thoughts; nor does He have regard for man’s prayers and movements. He is spoken of as Creator only in a metaphorical way, suggesting that He is the ultimate cause of all, not that He wills to create each being. The whole world is without beginning, and is held together by an eternal chain of causation. Each individual has his completing causes. If they are perfect, he becomes perfected, and if not he remains imperfect. Thus the philosopher is endowed with the highest moral and mental capacities. These require cultivation. “In the perfect person a light of divine nature, called Active Intellect, is with him, and its Passive Intellect is so closely connected therewith that both are but one.” He so identifies himself with it that the very organs of his body turn into instruments of the Active Intellect. On attaining this goal it does not matter what religion or forms of worship one follows or whether he simply pursues the way of reason. Union with the Active Intellect may bring hidden knowledge through dreams and visions.

Though attractive, the philosopher’s arguments fail to satisfy the devout king. He was troubled not regarding the state of his mind but of his actions. To dismiss these

88 Salaman and Brody, op. cit., pp. 16-17.
as inconsequential runs counter to the universal assent of all the religions, which lay great stress on forms of worship. With a side thrust at the dominant religions, which engaged in bloody wars, the king points to their readiness to commit murder in their belief that their respective forms of worship bring man nearer to God. To the philosopher's observation that his creed "knows no manslaughter" and only calls for the cultivation of the intellect, the king replies that despite the seeming superiority of the rationalist's way, prophetic revelations are vouchsafed to unlearned. "This proves that the divine influence as well as the souls have a secret which is not identical with what thou sayest, O Philosopher." 89

Thereupon the king invited representatives of Christianity and Islam, to learn from them which one of the two religions possesses the way that is pleasing to God. The Jews he did not consider necessary to consult, inasmuch as they were few in number and generally despised. The Christian scholastic endeavored to combine philosophic opinion with the creed and practice of the Church. All things are created, whilst God is eternal. The story of creation, revelation, etc., follows the accounts of Israel's Torah, "which are undisputed, because they are generally known as lasting, and have been revealed before a vast multitude." Then came the divine incarnation in an embryo in the womb of a virgin of noble Jewish lineage. Though born as a human child, he was in reality a God. "He is the Messiah, whom we call the Son of God, and He is the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit." When the Jews rejected Him, divine wrath burdened them eternally, while divine favor attached itself to those who followed the Christ. Thus the Christians replaced Israel. To them victory was given. All nations are urged to join them and to share in the adoration of the Christ and of the Cross.

Finding these doctrines a strain upon his reason, the king invited the representative of Islam to state his beliefs. From him the king learned that Islam affirms the Unity and Eternity of God, and the descent of all men from Adam-
Noah. The Christian doctrine of the incarnation is totally rejected. The Koran is held to be the word of God, miraculous in character; and Mohammed is the "Seal of the Prophets, who abrogated every previous law, and invited all nations to embrace Islam." Reward in the form of sensuous delights await the pious in Paradise, and dire punishments are in store for the impious in Hell. As much in this creed rests upon the miraculous, the king asks for proofs that are beyond suspicion. In reply, the Moslem appealed to the events in the history of Israel as unfolded in the Bible, which are universally accepted. Since the spokesmen of both Christianity and Islam ultimately fall back upon the testimony of Israel, the King found himself compelled to consult Jews. "For I see that they constitute in themselves the evidence for the divine law on earth." 90

Instead of beginning with the philosophical doctrines concerning God as Creator of the world, its Governor and Guide, and as Providence, the rabbi opens with the historical foundation of Judaism. "I believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, who led the children of Israel out of Egypt with signs and wonders, who fed them in the desert and gave them the land, after having made them traverse the sea and the Jordan in a miraculous way, who sent Moses with His law, and subsequently thousands of prophets who confirmed His law by promises to the observant, and threats to the disobedient. Our belief is comprised in the Torah — a very large domain." 91

In the skillful contrast between Judaism and philosophy, on the one hand, and of Judaism and its two rival religions, on the other, Halevi brought into focus the principal elements in his teaching. His stricture of Greek wisdom, his demarcation between the sources of philosophic and religious knowledge, and his distinction between the impersonal God of Aristotle and the personal God of the Patriarchs must not mislead us to the conclusion that Halevi opposed all philosophy. On the contrary, he brought deep philosophic knowledge and acumen to the analysis of Judaism. He differs, however, from men like Maimonides in that he

91 Ibid., I, 11 ff.
does not deduce his religious beliefs from speculative reason, but from their own unique source of divine revelation to Israel. Neither does he reduce Judaism to a mere body of religious concepts and rational observances. By its very nature speculative reason is open to doubt, so that the arguments of one philosopher are controverted by the other. Religion, in the view of Halevi, has a more secure foundation in the experience of the Jewish people in the course of their history, in revelation and in tradition, "which is equal to the former." Religion is primary. Philosophy is serviceable only for those whose faith is not strong enough to escape doubt. In the words of the King: "Since I have not been granted a perfect faith free from doubts, and I was formerly sceptical, had my own opinions, and exchanged ideas with philosophers and followers of other religions, I consider it most advantageous to learn and to instruct myself how to refute dangerous and foolish views. Tradition in itself is a good thing if it satisfies the soul, but a perturbed soul prefers research, especially if examination leads to the verification of tradition. Then knowledge and tradition become united." 92

As few other thinkers, Halevi recognized the indissoluble union between Judaism and the Jewish people. Looking upon history through the Bible, he considers Israel the people of revelation. The aptitude to receive the divine illumination, which distinguished Adam, who as the direct creation of God was perfect, descended to Abel, then to Seth, then to Enoch, Noah and Abraham. These chosen individuals formed the essence and heart of humanity, while the others were like husks. The essence of Abraham passed on to Isaac, to the exclusion of the other sons, who were removed from the land, then to Jacob and to his sons, all of whom were worthy of the divine afflatus as well as of the country, which is distinguished by the holy spirit. "This is the first instance of the divine influence descending on a number of people, whereas it had previously only been vouchsafed to isolated individuals." In

92 Ibid., V, 1; also I, 63-67; II, 26. See H. Wolfson, Maimonides and Halevi — A Study in Typical Jewish Attitudes on Greek Philosophy in the Middle Ages, Jewish Quarterly Review, I (1911-12) pp. 297-337.
Egypt they produced Moses, Aaron and Miriam and others endowed with the divine spirit. Not even the sin of the Golden Calf removed the holy spirit from them, for only a small number succumbed to it, the vast majority remaining faithful. Consequently they were forgiven and prophecy continued among them. The particularism inherent in this view Halevi justified as part of the divine wisdom which governs all things. There is a natural gradation of all existing things into mineral, plant, animal and man. As the intellect, which is man's birthright, sets him above all other things, so a still higher endowment distinguishes some individuals from the rest of men by being receptive to the divine influence. This is the prophetic gift, whereby God makes Himself known.3

If Israel is the people of revelation, Palestine is the land of revelation. Why that country should have been so favored is no more puzzling than the fact that some country is better suited than others for particular plants, minerals or animals, or for the cultivation of special characteristics in its inhabitants. Like the vine, which will produce grapes if planted on the right hill and properly nurtured, so Israel, the essence and heart of the nations, produced prophecy only in Palestine and the countries connected with it, Sinai, Paran, Seir and Egypt. "Whosoever prophesied did so either in the Holy Land, or concerning it. Abraham in order to reach it, Ezekiel and Daniel on account of it." As we noted above, Palestine appeared to Halevi as the home of the Shechina. When Abraham was singled out by God as the recipient of His inspiration, he was moved to the place in which he would attain perfection. "Thus the agriculturist finds the root of a good tree in a desert place. He transplants it into properly tilled ground, to improve it and make it grow; to change it from a wild root into a cultivated one, from one which bore fruit by chance only to one which produced a luxuriant crop. In the same way the gift of prophecy was retained among Abraham's descendants in Palestine, the property of many as long as they remained in the land, and fulfilled the required conditions, viz., purity, worship,

3 Ibid., I, 95, 28-43.
and sacrifices, and above all the reverence for the Shechina. For the divine influence, one might say, singles out him who appears worthy of being connected with it, such as *prophets and pious men, and is their God."

This is not essentially different from the way in which "reason chooses those whose natural gifts are perfect, viz., Philosophers and those whose souls and character are so harmonious that it can find its dwelling among them." Palestine was "appointed to guide the world, and apportioned to the tribes of Israel." In the words of the prophet: "out of Zion shall go forth the law" (Micah 4.2). The holy seasons, the laws of purity, the sacrificial ritual, etc., are all bound up with the land, which is known as the "inheritance of the Lord" and His "holy mountain." Not the Jews only but also other nations, Persians, Indians, Greeks, etc., asked to be permitted to offer sacrifices and to be prayed for at the Holy Temple. The nations honor it to this day, though the Shechina no longer appears there. Because of the peculiar qualities of Palestine, the "God of Abraham" has been called also "the God of the Land" and "He who dwells in Zion."94

If we inquire: How is revelation possible, seeing that the Creator is so transcendent above human creatures? The answer is that the very concept of Creator includes intelligence, which is absent from nature. It is not improbable, Halevi thinks, "that exalted divine traces should be visible in this material world, when this matter is prepared to receive them." The conditions which render man fit to receive the influence do not lie with him. It is impossible for him to gauge their quantity or quality; or even if their essence were known, yet neither their time, place and connection nor their suitability could be discovered. To this end, inspired instruction is needed. Judaism is the product of such divine instruction. Unlike "rational religions of human origin," which grow and develop, "a religion of divine origin arises suddenly. It is bidden to arise, and it is there, like the creation of the world."95 Revelation thus appears as a form of creation. The theo-

94 Ibid., II, 10-24, 50; IV, 3.
95 Ibid., I, 77-81.
The revealed nature of the commands of the Torah recommends them to the King as the means whereby man may gain divine favor. "The approach to God is only possible through the medium of God's command, and there is no road to the knowledge of the commands of God except by way of prophecy, but not by means of speculation and reasoning." And with his mind on the Karaites, Halevi adds: "There is, however, no other connection between us and these commands except truthful tradition. Those who have handed down these laws to us were not a few sporadic individuals, but a multitude of learned and lofty men nearly approaching the prophets." 97 Without the safeguard and aid of tradition, the Torah and its commands could not be preserved. Where private judgment is the supreme guide, ten persons in one house would have as many opinions. "In the service of God there is no arguing, reasoning, and debating. Had this been possible, philosophers with their wisdom and acumen would have achieved even more than Israel." The reasons which men discover in the laws of the Torah are not their sole merit. The observances which human reason fails to understand are of supreme value. The divine commands are like the formations of nature. Composed of minute and almost imperceptible elements, they must be left undisturbed. The least change in their relation deprives them

96 Ibid., I, 87-91.
97 Ibid., III, 53.
of their efficacy. Thus the Torah prescribes the minutest details in the sacrificial cult, in personal purity, etc. Only to the degree to which they are scrupulously observed can the divine effect be achieved through them.\(^8\)

The suggestion that it would have been more in accord with divine wisdom if all mankind rather than Israel alone had been guided in the Torah is dismissed as contrary to the arrangement of nature to which we referred above. The sons of Jacob were “distinguished from other people by godly qualities, which made them, so to speak, an angelic caste. Each of them, being permeated by the divine essence, endeavoring to attain the degree of prophecy, and most of them succeeding in so doing. Those who were not successful strove to approach it by means of pious acts, sanctity, purity and intercourse with prophets.”\(^9\)

This connection of Judaism with the Jewish people gives it its distinguishing characteristic. In contrast to Christianity and Islam, which variously center in the persons of their founders, Judaism is the religious expression of the Jewish people. “If there were no Israelites there would be no Torah. They did not derive their high position from Moses, but Moses received his for their sake. The divine love dwelt among the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The choice of Moses, however, was made in order that the good fortune might come to them through his instrumentality. We are not called the people of Moses, but the people of God.”\(^10\)

The relation of God to Israel and to Palestine and His revelation at Sinai do not justify the charge of anthropomorphism, which the Moslems levelled against Judaism. The Rabbi exclaims: “Heaven forbid that I should assume what is against sense and reason.” The Decalogue itself leaves no room for misunderstanding on this point. The first commandment, enjoining the belief in divine Providence, is followed by the prohibition not merely of the worship of other gods or of the association of any being with Him, but also of presenting Him in any form whatso-

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\(^8\) Ibid., I, 99.
\(^9\) Ibid., I, 102–3.
\(^10\) Ibid., II, 56.
ever. Indeed, how should we not regard Him as transcending human likeness, when we do so even with His creation, the human soul? For example, in referring to Moses as speaking, teaching and guiding us, we do not think of his tongue, heart or brain, but of the "intellectual, discriminating, incorporeal soul," limited to no space or size. "If we ascribe spiritual elements to it, how much more must we do so to the Creator of all?" 1

With extreme care Halevi examines the nature of the attributes and names applied to God in the Bible. Here he moves on the high road of Jewish philosophy, initiated by Saadia, and subsequently followed by Maimonides. Rejecting the opinions of the Mutakallims and of the Karaites that the attributes of God are predicates possessing independent existence and extending the concept of His being, Halevi regards them merely as man's conception of God. "All the names of God, save the Tetragrammaton [YHVH], are predicates and attributive descriptions, derived from the way His creatures are affected by His decrees and measures." We speak of Him as merciful or vengeful in accordance with our experience of His ways, though His nature remains unaffected. All attributes (excepting the Tetragrammaton) fall into three classes: active, relative and negative. The creative are expressive of acts issuing from Him through some natural medium, e.g., making poor or rich, exalting or casting down, merciful and compassionate, jealous and revengeful, strong and almighty, etc. The relative attributes consist of man's evaluations or expressions of reverence of God, e.g., blessed, praised, glorified, holy, exalted, and extolled. Despite their abundance, they convey no idea of plurality with regard to God, and in no way affect His unity. The negative attributes aim to negate their opposites. When we affirm that God is living, only, first and last we express our belief not that He shares in sentient life as men do, but that He is not dead, that there is no other God beside Him, and that He is beyond temporal beginning or end.

In contrast to the above, the attributes connected with the Tetragrammaton describe His acts without any natural

101 Ibid., I, 89.
intermediaries, e.g. Creator, Producer, Maker, “He who alone doeth great wonders” (Ps. 136.4), i.e., “He creates by His bare intention and will, to the exclusion of any assisting cause.” Will as applied to God expresses that “which fashioned the order of the universe in quantity, quality, and the forms which we perceive. Thou canst not help admitting this, for things neither create themselves nor each other.” Similarly, wisdom represents an essential attribute of God, for “He is the essence of intelligence, and intelligence itself.” His intelligence reveals itself in the differentiation of elements and in the forms with which they are vested. Hence philosophers speak of divine intelligence as “form-giving intelligence.”

This statement does not justify the claim that Halevi accepted the doctrine of the eternity of matter, which God moulds into forms; for in the preceding statement regarding the attribute of will Halevi definitely upholds the traditional Jewish doctrine of creatio ex nihilo. Because of His wisdom, nothing in God’s creation is without plan and purpose. All existence represents a providential order, linked to God as the First Cause, either as a direct expression of His will or as the product of the chain of intermediary causes. Natural and accidental effects stem from the latter class. Arbitrary actions are rooted in man’s free will, which belongs likewise to the intermediary causes.

And here we come to the core of Halevi’s conception of God. As we reflect on the various attributes of God, whether they be taken in real or metaphorical sense, “we find nothing resembling God more closely than shall the rational soul — in other words, the perfect human being.” But the stress must be laid on man’s personality, which is something purely spiritual, and not on his corporeality, which he shares with the animals. God is the spirit or soul, intelligence and life of the world. The plurality of His attributes, as we have remarked, does not disturb the unity of His being. Thus the rays of the sun are many,

102 Ibid., II, 2–6; V, 4.
104 Al Khazari, V, 20.
105 Ibid., IV, 3.
but the sun is everywhere the same. Nor are the sensuous attributes without spiritual value. They render the idea of God clear, and implant reverence in the mind.

Halevi attaches most far-reaching significance to the distinction between the Tetragrammaton and the other designations of God. The biblical term for deity, *Elohim*, he interprets to mean "proprietor or governor of the world, whether in whole or in part. Its plural form derives from its usage by idolators," who believed that every deity was invested with astral or other powers. Each of them was called *Eloah*; collectively they were designated *Elohim*. Each force was treated by itself, without taking into account the prime power from which all forces emanate. The Tetragrammaton, on the other hand, is a proper name, indicating the divine personality or individuality. While the general idea of deity, as expressed by *Elohim*, may be grasped by speculation, "because a Guide and Manager of the world is a postulate of reason," the particular idea of the Tetragrammaton, i.e. the personal God of religion cannot be discovered through reason but only through prophetic intuition. He can be visioned only by the "inner eye," with which the chosen few have been endowed. The souls of the prophets "are refined and susceptible to His light, which penetrates them, just as the sunlight penetrates the crystal and the ruby."

Once the full idea of God dawns in the mind, all scepticism passes away, and man deprecates the speculation whereby he sought to obtain the knowledge of God's dominion and Unity. "It is thus that man becomes a servant, loving the object of his worship, and ready to perish for His sake, because he finds the sweetness of his attachments as great as the distress in the absence thereof. This forms a contrast to the philosophers who see in the worship of God nothing but extreme refinement, extolling Him in truth above all other beings, (just as the sun is placed on a higher level than the other visible things), and that the denial of God's existence is the mark of a low standard of the soul which delights in untruth."106

106 Ibid., IV, 1-5; 15-16.
The spiritual effect of prophetic teaching is both a foretaste and a convincing proof of reward hereafter. "For the only result to be expected from this is that the human soul becomes divine, being detached from the material senses, joining the highest world, and enjoying the vision of the divine light, and hearing the divine speech. Such a soul is free from death, even after its physical organs have perished." The anticipations of the other religions are postponed beyond death — a state which their adherents put off as long as possible — whereas the promises of Judaism of the nearness of God and of coming under the divine influence are realizable in life. The Bible does not say: "If you keep this law, I will bring you after death into beautiful gardens and great pleasures." Instead it teaches in God's name: "You shall be My chosen people, and I will be a God unto you, who will guide you," etc. It calls: Obey God in life, and you will enjoy communion with Him also after death; otherwise He will turn away from you and punish you. While stressing the this-worldly nature of the divine promises to Israel, Judaism does not neglect the other world. The prophets, indeed, pass over the subject with but scanty comment, but the Rabbis developed with great detail the nature of heaven and hell, etc. Neither does Judaism take a narrow view of the hereafter. "We do not deny that the good actions of any man, to whichever people he may belong, will be rewarded by God. But the priority belongs to people who are near God during their life, and we estimate the rank they occupy near God after death accordingly."\(^\text{107}\)

How to reconcile the belief that God rewards faithful worship of Him with the continuous suffering of the Jewish people proved to be a vexing problem for the spokesmen of Judaism. Its opponents seized upon Jewish suffering as sure proof that God had rejected the Jews. Halevi counters their arguments by pointing out that suffering is the badge of both Christian and Moslem saints. "The nations boast of these, but not of these kings whose power and might are great, whose walls are strong, and whose chariots are terrible." That our suffering is not voluntary, Halevi ad-

\(^{107}\) Ibid., I, 102–111.
mits, is "our weak spot." Nevertheless, to a certain degree, it may be considered voluntary. For any Jew may at will embrace the faith of the oppressors and become their equal. "Such conduct does not escape the just Judge. If we bear our exile and degradation for God's sake, as is meet, we shall be the pride of the generation which will come with the Messiah, and accelerate the day of the deliverance we hope for." Furthermore, Jewish suffering is not without purpose. "Israel amidst the nations is like the heart amidst the organs of the body; it is at one and the same time the most sick and the most healthy of them." The sensibility of the heart exposes it to all the ills and pains that afflict the body, and at the same time helps to remove them and to restore health. "Do not consider it strange" Halevi cautions, if it is said of Israel: "Surely, he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53.4). Now we are burdened by them, while the rest of the world enjoys prosperity. However, "the trials which meet us are meant to prove our faith, to cleanse us completely, and to remove all taint from us."

"I have often reflected about you," the Khazar King remarks, "and come to the conclusion that God has some secret design in preserving you."\(^{108}\)

Halevi's faith in his people's future is part of his faith in God's eternal order.

\begin{verse}
The sun and moon, these minister forever;  
The laws of day and night come never to an end.  
Given as signs are they to Jacob's seed,  
That they shall ever be a nation, that  
they shall not be cut off.  
If with the left hand He should thrust them  
off, with the right hand doth He draw them nigh.  
Let them not say, 'Tis desperate,' at the time  
of their ruin;  
Let them only believe they are eternal, and that  
They shall not cease until day and night shall cease.\(^{109}\)
\end{verse}

(Tr. Nina Salaman)

The dialogue form of "The Book of Argument and Demonstration in Aid of the Despised Faith" enabled

\(^{108}\) Ibid., I, 113–115; II, 36–44; III, 10.  
\(^{109}\) Salaman and Brody, op. cit., p. 126.
Halevi to touch on a multiplicity of philosophical and religious problems which are but loosely connected with the main purpose of the work, e.g., on the Sefer Yezira and other sources of Kabbala, on calendation, on the meaning of certain customs, on the principles of the Kalam, the freedom of the will, etc. Though many of Halevi's views have become obsolete, his treatment of them still retains its charm. Whatever value moderns may attach to them, they bear the marks of genius as well as of religious fervor, of unfailing attraction and inspiration. A critic of Halevi has recognized his Al Khazari as the Songs of Songs of Judaism. And an old admirer and translator of the book, Jehuda ben Isaac Cardinal, praised it in words which have not lost their meaning for us: "The book is full of divine blessing, containing true ideas which every faithful Jew should teach himself and strive to inscribe on the hearts of every one of his sons and disciples, and to admonish them in the words of the Torah: 'Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite'" (Deut. 12.19).

Out of the stormy age, in which the clash of the Cross and Crescent well-nigh brought our people to the abyss, the figure of Jehuda Halevi rises as the symbol of reassurance to us in the present tempest, in which the Swastika threatens to destroy the civilization of the west and to annihilate Israel. The undying song of this master poet and passionate lover of Zion rouses us to renewed hope. And his striking philosophy, freeing Judaism from the shackles of an alien rationalism and restoring it to its native springs of religious inspiration and tradition, mark a significant way also for us to renewed creative Jewish living.

110 S. I. Ish Hurwitz, Heatid, I, p. 70.
111 Cited by Azariah di Rossi, Meor Enayyim, Ch. XXXVI, ed. Ben Jacob, p. 35.
HEINRICH GRAETZ,
THE HISTORIAN OF THE JEWS*

By ISMAR ELBOGEN

The present writer still remembers the terrible shock the Jews of Breslau, Germany, felt when, on the evening of September 8, 1891, they opened their newspapers and read that, on the previous day, Heinrich Graetz had suddenly died in Munich. As was his custom, in the month of August, he had used the famous Carlsbad Spas; against the will of his physician he had paid a visit to his eldest son Leo, at that time already a well known physicist of the Munich University. It was during this visit that he passed away after a short illness. Because Breslau was at that time a relatively small city, its conspicuous men were well known to the entire population. This was especially true of a scholar of world-wide reputation like Heinrich Graetz. His "Geschichte der Juden" had spread to all continents and been translated into many languages. It was both highly praised and adversely criticized by Jews and Christians alike, but it was, nevertheless, the standard work to which anyone looking for thorough information in that field had to refer.

Like many prominent German Jews of his period, Heinrich (Hirsch) Graetz hailed from a small town in

* A full biography of Heinrich Graetz is to be found in the Memoir written by Philipp Bloch and printed in the Index Volume of the English edition of Graetz, "History of the Jews," Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia.

Further facts are given in Israel Abrahams' eulogy published in the Jewish Quarterly Review IV, 1892, pp. 165-194. Likewise in Josef Meisl's "Heinrich Graetz. Eine Würdigung des Historikers und Juden," Berlin 1917. Both of these publications contain a bibliography of Graetz's writings. The fullest bibliography, especially as far as the History and its different translations are concerned, was published by M. Brann in his Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums, LXI, 1917, pp. 443-491, and LXII, 1918, pp. 266 ff.
former Polish Prussia. He was born on October 31, 1817 in Xions near Posen, a hamlet of not quite eight hundred inhabitants. His father was a butcher who sought his fortune in several places of the same size but did not succeed in any of them. Realizing that these small Polish places offered no opportunity for the higher education of the talented boy, his parents sent him to Wollstein, his mother's birthplace. With his arrival at Wollstein at the age of fourteen, a quarter of a century of wandering and learning, of struggling and yearning began for Graetz.

Wollstein had 2,500 people, among them 800 Jews, and was much more under the influence of German culture than the places of his former sojourn. Later on, the town won fame through the paramount bacteriological experiments which the immortal Robert Koch started while serving there as district physician. The local rabbi conducted a Yeshiva on traditional lines, but tolerated secular studies. Graetz, who had taught himself German and French and some Latin, read ravenously whatever books came into his hands, without wholly digesting them. Like many *bahurim*, he became confused and was in danger of losing his equilibrium. "By the various contradictory ideas," he noted in his Diary, "that perplexed my brain — heathen, Jewish, and Christian, Epicurean, Cabbalistic, Maimonidean, and Platonic — my faith was made so insecure that, when a notion concerning God, eternity, time or the like, assailed me, I wished myself in the abyss of the nether world."

While in his tribulations, he became acquainted with the recently published "Nineteen Letters on Judaism, published by Ben Usiel" (i.e. Samson Raphael Hirsch, then rabbi at Oldenburg). Here Graetz remarks "Judaism was represented as the best religion and as indispensable to the salvation of mankind. With avidity I devoured every word. Disloyal though I had been to the Talmud, this book reconciled me with it." He returned to positive Judaism and was determined to become a learned exponent of it. Of course he needed new inspiration, and he had to wander far away in order to find it. He was fortunate enough to sit at the feet of the prophet he worshipped, Samson Raphael Hirsch, who opened to him his
house (1837) and granted him his instruction. The three years at Oldenburg were filled with penetrating and stimulating studies; the youngster was introduced to the spirit and the literature of Judaism. The enthusiasm and the concentrated efforts of these years were decisive for Graetz' career.

Time and daily association could not fail to disclose to the talented student the limitations of his hero. He left Oldenburg (1840) and turned home with the intention to enter a University. However, before the doors of the sanctuary could open to him, he had to accept a position as tutor in a private family and to save some money and, not being a high school graduate, to obtain a special permit. At last, in October, 1842, at the age of twenty-five, he was admitted to the University of Breslau. He chose philosophy and Semitic philology as his majors, dedicating no little time to other subjects. He worked with his usual zeal, he had added Greek to his linguistic masteries and studied the Church Fathers. The result was his work on the traces left in rabbinical Judaism by the gnostic theories of the second century. This thesis won him the Ph.D. degree in April, 1845 and, when published in German under the title "Gnosticismus und Judentum," was considered as a highly valuable contribution.

During Graetz's residence in Breslau, the conflict between the proponents of the modernist movement in the Jewish community and the adherents of tradition came to the fore. Although a bitter critic of "Shulhanarismus" (rigid adherence to the Shulhan Arukh) and ritual rigor, Graetz was hostile to Reform and felt an antipathy against Abraham Geiger its protagonist. He subscribed to the views of Zacharias Frankel, the pioneer of a positive conservative party which did not deny the actual acute crisis in Judaism but hoped to overcome it by other measures than reform, e. g. by scientific study of Judaism, which rejected Reform in theory, but tolerated some reforms in practice.

It was at this time that Graetz tried to find a rabbinic position. His first attempt at preaching was a complete failure. It was the good luck of Judaism that his genius
was spared communal routine work and could be dedicated to study and writing. To Graetz himself it meant nearly a decade more of sorrows and privations. He still enjoyed Rabbi Hirsch's full confidence, and when in his capacity as Chief Rabbi of Moravia, the latter announced his intention to substitute a modern rabbinical seminary for the decaying Yeshibot he secured Graetz's cooperation. But nothing happened except that he became more and more estranged from Hirsch and passed a few more unhappy years in Moravia until he decided to go back to Germany and settle in Berlin, then the most progressive center of Jewish research. The time spent in Moravia was, however, not lost because Graetz continued with greatest intensity his historical studies.

When he arrived in Berlin he had accomplished something to be proud of. Here he was invited to lecture on Jewish history before rabbinical students. "His lectures bristled with new data and results" and aroused the enthusiasm of his students.

The success of these lectures were decisive for Graetz's future. In the following year Zacharias Frankel was nominated president of the Jewish Theological Seminary to be founded in Breslau and appointed Graetz as a member of his staff. He could hardly have made a better choice, for Graetz soon became the star of that outstanding faculty. With the opening of the Seminary in August, 1854, Graetz and his family (during his stay in Moravia he had married Marie Monasch,* the daughter of his publisher and printer) were at last able to settle down. For thirty-seven years following he developed a most potent activity as teacher and writer. To the opportunity and challenge of his position at the Seminary were added those of a professorship at the University of Breslau to which he was appointed in 1870. In his students he instilled that enthusiasm which animated himself, the impress of his strong and gracious personality was felt by them for the whole of their life. He lectured on Jewish History and on Exegesis of the Prophets and Hagiographa.

* Sir John Monash, Australian General in the World War, was a descendant of the same family.
He was a prolific writer and published innumerable articles in the periodical *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* of which, for a long time, he was the editor. He wrote commentaries on the Psalms, on Canticles, on Ecclesiastes, and he prepared a volume of critical emendations to the Biblical text—all of them finding more or less applause.

The work which gave him immortality, is his “History of the Jews.” As early as 1846 he had published a preliminary sketch on “The Construction of the Jewish History” in which he endeavored to outline the ruling principle of Jewish history. It was characteristic of this first “Philosophy of Jewish History” (Krochmal’s book was not published before 1851) that it did not consider Jewish history as a chain of more or less unhappy events but as a meaningful evolution of an idea. Of course, this had been done by Christian philosophers too. However, to them Jewish history was superseded by Christianity, and had found its end with the destruction of the Second Temple. Even Jewish scholars indulged in that view and split with a wedge the later Jews from the earlier Israelites. To young Graetz there was no doubt whatsoever that one and the same idea fused the various periods in a unit.

From the philosophy he proceeded to the presentation of the history; in 1853 he published a complete volume dealing with the period from the downfall of the Jewish State to the completion of the Talmud. He called it volume four of the “History of the Jews from the Earliest Times until the Present Day.” Thus he indicated his program and pledged himself to write the whole of Jewish History. Evidently he had already outlined in his mind at least the first four volumes. The impression his publication made was sensational. This was really history like the history of all other nations. The book presented human beings who lived, moved, talked, acted, were dominated by ideals and passions, like other people. It was neither annalistic nor anecdotic. It was a continuous narrative of political and spiritual movements, of imperialistic and religious combats,—all of them centered in a doomed small nation which struggled for its survival. All the sources available were scrutinized, and whatever was
elucidating, was utilized,—historians and codifiers, the Gospels and the Apocrypha, the Talmud and the Church Fathers. The reader was not asked to rely on the authority of the author; he gave full account of his sources and discussed special problems in lengthy excurses. The expert critics found much about which to grumble, for one or another reason. S. R. Hirsch who was shocked by the keen criticism of the Talmud, declared the work of his former pupil “a product of abominable frivolity and trifling shallowness.” But the general readers were fascinated by the splendor of the style, and captivated by the warmth of the feeling.

The hearty welcome granted to his publication encouraged the author to pursue his program. He turned back to the third volume “from the death of Judas Maccabaeus to the downfall of the Jewish State,” in which he wished to show the ground in which the basic idea of Jewish Diaspora life was rooted. Very soon the fifth volume followed which treated the period “from the completion of the Talmud to the beginning of Jewish Spanish culture (1027).” Now he “got back on the right track,” and in small intervals up to 1870, volume after volume appeared, and with volume eleven the narrative was brought down to the present time.

The remaining desideratum were the first volumes covering the earliest period up to the Maccabees. Graetz was quite familiar with the Biblical sources and the modern commentaries on them, but still he did not feel fully prepared for this paramount task. His reverence for the Biblical past was so deep that he hesitated to describe it before having seen with his own eyes the scene of action. “He hoped to derive local colour and inspiration for the description of hoary events from the sight of consecrated places, which had been their scenes and their witnesses.” As early as 1865 he had planned a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, but not before the spring of 1872 was he blessed to enter it and to draw from his visit impressions, enthusiasm, inspiration. In 1874 he began publishing the results of his studies, completing the work in 1876. The Jews had found their historian, one who took rank among the greatest in that classical age of historiography.
What gave to this work the supremacy over those which had preceded it? Of the work of Isaac Marcus Jost (1793–1860) who had published the first volume of its history in 1820, and whose earnest efforts and high merits he by no means denied, Graetz writes that he "gave to Jewish History, undeniably heroic, a dry Philistine character, despoiling it of the brightness with which it was endowed even in the eyes of unprejudiced Christian observers. He tore to shreds the heroic drama of thousands of years. Between the old Israelites, the ancestors and contemporaries of the Prophets and Psalmists, and the Jews, the disciples of the Rabbis, Jost hollowed out a deep chasm, making a sharp distinction between them, as if the latter were not the descendants of the former, but of entirely different stock. And why? Because Jost denied all miracles, not only those involving changes in the laws of nature, but also such as are brought about through inspiration and steady endurance, the miracles of history, arising out of the peculiar combination of circumstances, blow following on blow, reaction on action. He saw in history only an accumulation of contingencies subject to no law. Therefore, the Jews were not to be considered the sons of the Israelites, nor the rabbis the successors of the Prophets, nor the Talmud the outcome of the Bible, otherwise the intervention of miracles had to be conceded" (Graetz, History Vol. V, p. 595).

In Graetz's conception Jewish History became a unit and assumed a heroic aspect. He portrayed the Wandering Jew as "wandering Judaism that stands on a lofty turret, and from this position surveys the rising and falling billows of the world's history. It speaks all tongues, for it has been in all lands. It escapes in a manner that must be regarded as a miracle, all dangers and terrors. It is the youngest brother of Time. It has a mighty memory of all the events of the thousands of years which have passed before it. . . It has seen the lofty forms of antiquity rise and pass away. It has lived through the wild chaos of the Middle Ages, which pressed on it like a mountain, and it has helped to cause this chaos to vanish like the visions of a dream. It has seen the dawn of Modern Times arise, and this same people, almost unchanged, has
a hold upon the present, bound into a community by holy memories and religious institutions, even though without a common land . . . The history of Israel is a miniature history of the world. They bear the same relation to one another as the microcosm to the macrocosm” (Graetz, Historic Parallels in “Papers read at the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition,’ London 1888, p. 3 f.).

And what adds to the fascination of his history is the fact that the writer was not a cool observer from the outside but an ardent fighter within. One of the dramatis personae who had accompanied his heroes throughout the ages, who had won their victories, shared their triumphs, rejoiced in their gladness, resented their defeats, wept their tears, suffered their pains, died their deaths. When Graetz in Berlin first met Leopold Zunz, the pioneer Jewish scholar, and was introduced to him as the prospective author of a Jewish History, Zunz who had all the pre-requisites of learning but lacked the constructive imagination needed for the composition of a history, resentfully murmured: “Once more a Jewish History?” and young Graetz quickly replied: “But this time a Jewish one!” This was more than a bon mot, it expressed his conviction, that his writing was not that of an antiquarian but that of a living member of the Jewish nation who felt the blood of heroes running in his veins, who had part in their joys and sorrows as one of them.

This accounts for many a one-sided criticism, a strange distribution of light and shadow, subjective characteristics, unbalanced wavering between one extreme and the other. More than anything else Graetz’s philosophy of Judaism was enthusiastic and emotional. When, in his youth, he was presented with a copy of Jehuda Halevy’s “Kuzari,” he noted in his diary that the author is the only Jewish poet who wrote with sentiment and nothing but sentiment. Throughout his career Graetz clung to Jehuda Halevy’s idea that Judaism was rooted in the unity of the Holy Land, the Holy Tongue and the Holy People. That fundamental view did not exclude judgments of quite a different outlook. One should not press too hard certain of his statements and terms. Graetz was anything but a sophisticated book, his mind was as quick as life itself.
His standing was a passionate one, "Affection for his people" so his widow and collaborator inscribed his tombstone, "guided his immortal style."

Graetz's history encountered sharp criticism. Heinrich v. Treitschke, a great historian himself, used some of Graetz's verdicts as an excuse for his anti-Semitic attacks, and a school of Jewish intellectuals in Germany boycotted Graetz. Organized orthodoxy endorsed S. R. Hirsch's judgment, and for a long time was heard the slogan "We need a counter-Graetz!" Specialists charged that the book was replete with errors and heaped upon the author all kinds of abuse.

But the general readers rewarded his labors with their faithfulness. Graetz's history became one of the most efficient inculcators of loyalty to Judaism. The original text was several times republished in revised and enlarged editions. An abridged popular edition as well as French and English translations followed. Even the masses of Eastern Jewry passed over the fact that Graetz had shown so little understanding of, and expressed so much contempt for, them. They realized his Jewish loyalty and cherished his work as a textbook; translations into Hebrew, Yiddish, Russian, Polish and Hungarian followed. It became the standard Jewish history.

How about our attitude today? It has become a commonplace even among the freshmen of all Jewish institutions of higher learning that Graetz's History is antiquated. How could it be otherwise? The ninety years which have elapsed since Graetz started his work were, not to a small extent owing to his stimulation, a period of intensive historical research, of far-reaching discoveries, of the production of elucidating monographs on smaller or larger areas. We know much more than he did, we have more and, alas, very much sadder, experience. We have a different outlook, our emphases have undergone changes. We sorely need a new Jewish History. However, where is the universal genius like Graetz to write it? Where is the inspired seer who masters the details and embraces the whole?

Graetz himself told the following story. During a visit to Paris, a famous French scholar on whom he called,
called Graetz's attention to a mistake in his great work. "What does it matter?" he replied smilingly. "A hundred or maybe even a thousand more mistakes may be found. I shall die. My book will live." This prophecy was fulfilled. His work lives and will live for many years to come!
JEWISH FICTION IN ENGLISH
1900–1940
A List of Selected Titles

By FANNY GOLDSSTEIN

The first four decades of the twentieth century constitute an epoch in modern Jewish history. Whether the attempt of Nazi Germany to gain the hegemony of Western Europe succeeds or not, it is very probable that Jewish life not only in that region but also in the rest of the world, will not be quite the same as it has been during these four decades.

These forty years saw the mass shifting of Jews from Central and Eastern Europe to western lands, especially to the United States; the profound changes in the life of Jews resulting from the World War, particularly the break-up of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires; and the series of events, which may now be approaching a new phase, which constitute what has aptly been termed the "revolution of nihilism,"— with its devastating effects on the life of Jews in the countries directly in the line of the Nazi plague and its fateful repercussions on the life of Jews in many other lands, notably the United States.

It was inevitable that these striking changes in the life of Jews should provide subject matter for the printing press, and the mass of publications dealing with Jews or other topics of interest to Jews, during these four decades, has been noteworthy. As a librarian who has for many years maintained a profound interest in books on Jewish subjects, the present writer has been an eye-witness of the rapid increase in the output of such works,— an increase over and above what might have been expected during a period in which the production of books in general, especially in the English language, has increased phenomenally.

Insofar as the increase of books of Jewish interest is concerned, it should be remembered that this was due not only to the growth of the Jewish population and to the dramatic impact of world events upon Jews, but also to the entrance of Jewish authors, offspring of immigrants, into the writing field, and the natural tendency of these authors to seek their material in the life of which they are a part.

As is generally known, works of fiction constitute by far the largest single class of books produced each year, and it is entirely safe to assume that what is true of the general field of book publishing holds good also with regard to books dealing with Jews, their life, and their problems. Indeed, the large number of such works has made the task of
selection of the present bibliography one of great difficulty, and has
made it necessary for the compiler to set up rather exclusive standards
in deciding which of the numerous titles should be included. These
bases of selection will be explained following a brief tracing of the trend
of the subject matter of what we may, for the sake of brevity, refer to
as "Jewish fiction."

Especially in the earlier years of the present century, biblical themes
were the inspiration of many writers of Jewish fiction. This was true
especially of Christian authors, chiefly because they came into little,
if any, contact with contemporary Jewish life. But the Bible has been
a source of both inspiration and subject throughout the entire period,
as has post-biblical Jewish history.

In the earlier years of the century, the coming of Jewish immigrants
and the tragedies and comedies growing out of their struggle for adjust-
ment to their new milieus engaged the attention of many authors. The
writings of Israel Zangwill gave great impetus to the production of
fiction portraying this struggle. Later years are notable for the appear-
ance of books which treat, in the main, of Jewish life in the Old World
homes of the ancestors of the immigrants. At the same time, we have
works which are concerned with their children, who in making their
adjustment to the life about them are confronted with problems dif-
ferent from those which had faced their parents. For one thing, economic
changes, which occurred in the meantime, made economic adjustment
an entirely different problem for the new generations. The trend toward
secularization has complicated the problem of spiritual adjustment for
them. The barriers to attempted assimilation are frequent topics of
portrayal, and intermarriage, anti-Semitism, and Zionism are given
much attention.

In the last dozen years or so of the four-decade period, the impact of
world events on Jews provided much of the subject matter of Jewish
fiction. Books dealing with Jewish life in Soviet Russia are compara-
tively few; and though Palestine has been the subject of innumerable
books of a controversial character, it has not inspired many works of
fiction. But the tragic situation created by the Nazi anti-Jewish drive
has captured the imagination of many writers, and a large proportion
of books of Jewish fiction deal with its many phases. All these genres
of Jewish fiction are represented in the present bibliography.

The need, therefore, for selecting comparatively few of the numerous
books of Jewish fiction has forced the compiler to restrict admission
rigorously. In general, her rule has been to include books of real fiction
dealing with Jewish life, appearing since 1900, that she can conscien-
tiously recommend to the general reader. She has, therefore, excluded
all quasi-fictitious works, and fiction which, though it may have one
or more Jewish characters, does not portray any phase of Jewish life.
Books which, in the compiler's judgment, are unwholesome in content
or treatment, or present Jewish life in a distorted way, or Jewish carica-
tures rather than characters have been omitted.

In the case of authors such as Sholem Asch, Ludwig Lewisohn, and
Louis Golding, who have been notably prolific, a careful selection of
their works was made for such titles as would be indicative of the author’s special style, or the topic that would most likely outweigh and outlive his other books, owing to emphasis of Jewish appeal and permanent value.

Certain books which by the very nature of their subject matter might dedicate or address themselves to a particular time with a didactic purpose, but carry no particular message or inspiration to the reader of today, have been excluded. On the other hand, a few such books have been carefully weighed and included because they indicate certain transitional values. That is to say, these books may not be great per se, yet merit inclusion because they pioneered in the field of Jewish fiction, or depict an important epoch of Jewish history.

In presenting this list, we therefore repeat that it is a highly selective and selected bibliography of books with Jewish content, by Jew and Christian. The books cited are not always pro-Jewish, for that would be a distortion of literary history, but rather open and suggestive with a sufficient leeway for the individual to develop further, according to the taste and inspiration of the reader.

On the whole, only such works have been included as, when shorn by rigid rule, present themselves as good, wholesome, well-written, and with more or less permanent value; in other words, the type of book which a librarian, if free to select, would feel justified in purchasing with the taxpayer’s money for the open shelves of the public library, or such books as a parent could with confidence feel free to leave exposed in the home, for the child’s enjoyment and benefit.

**Abramowitz, Shalom Jacob** (Mendele Mocher Seforim, pseud.)


The author has been called the “grandfather of Yiddish literature.” This work, brilliant in the simplicity and beauty of its construction, depicts in convincing and amazing detail the peregrinations of Jewish schnorrers in Russia. Abramowitz based this book on his own actual experiences as a boy among Jewish beggars.

**Agnon, Samuel Joseph Czaczkes**


A simple story of a simple people, naive and refreshing, steeped in folklore of community Jewish life, rich in figurative speech and pilpulistic phrase. It deals with Hassidic Jewish life and the problems of a poor father to find bridegrooms for his dowerless daughters. Agnon, one of the foremost contemporary Hebrew writers, possesses the unique gift of being able to adapt to modern requirements the age-old Talmudic vocabulary, with all of its whimsicalities and charm.

**Aleichem, Shalom, pseud.** *See Rabinowitz, Shalom*

**Anthony, Joseph**

*The gang.* Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1921. 276 p.

Boy life on the upper East side in New York City, centering interest in the home and school life of a Jewish boy; told with humor and understanding.
ASCH, SHALOM


A story of traditional Jewish life and its persecutions, dominated throughout by a mystic figure and pervaded by a deep spiritual note — tragic, pathetic, but never futile.


A Yiddish classic of the Jewish immigrant in America. Its universal theme, motherhood, is typified by a mother and daughter whose quiet courage give magnificence to their family life in squalid Ghetto surroundings. The action shifts from a Russian town to the East Side of New York. Selected as the first novel of the Jewish Book of the Month Club.


A tale of a Jewish vagabond in Poland.


A dramatic presentation of Jewish life in St. Petersburg, Warsaw, and Moscow before and during the Russian Revolution, portraying the contrast between the wealthier, Russified group and the working class.


All are concerned with the adjustment of immigrant Jews to American life.

BABEL, ISAAC


The author, the first Jew to serve in a Cossack regiment, and later a Soviet enthusiast, presents short realistic sketches picturing the horrors, tortures, and sufferings of Jews, Poles and Cossacks in the Polish campaign of 1920.

BARON, JOSEPH LOUIS, editor and compiler.

Candles in the night; Jewish tales by Gentile authors. Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1940. 391 p.

Twenty-three non-Jewish authors are represented in these stories culled from fourteen national literatures. Included are such authors as Boccaccio, Chekhov, Gorky, Anatole France, Strindberg, Stephen Vincent Benét, and Sinclair Lewis.
Barrett, Richmond Brooks
The author, a Christian, has attempted to solve the ever debatable question of intermarriage from a negative point of view.

Begbie, Harold (Gentleman with a duster, pseud.)
The dramatic story of an intelligent young Jew, of his family and friends, and his efforts to make a place for himself in the complicated structure of modern English society. The theme is intermarriage and assimilation.

Beilin, O.
The title story deals with the apostasy of a young London Jew. The collection as a whole gives a kaleidoscopic view of customs and attitudes of the varied types of Jews on the Continent.

Benoit, Pierre
A love story of a Zionist organizer and a Jewish dancer of the Ghetto of Constantinople. With an appeal to Zionism and Halutzim.

Bercovici, Konrad
A dramatic, fast-moving chronicle of Jewish family life in America. The tragic effect of sudden wealth on the family is heightened by the personal tragedy of the most likeable of all the characters.

Berges, Max L.
A tale of the suffering endured by a middle-class Jewish family whose history on German soil dates back several hundred years.

Berman, Hannah
A sincere and picturesquely-told story of orthodox Jews in Lithuania and Russia during the reign of Czar Nicholas I.

Berman, Henry
Realistic treatment of “intellectual” types of Russian Jewry in America. The author delineates the Bohemian existence led by people who are constantly confronting the larger problems of life in an idealistic manner.

Bernstein, Aline Frankau
Nine episodes reveal the relationship between a sensitive Jewish woman and a young writer, beginning with their meeting on shipboard and ending with the thoughts of the woman as she lies ill and abandoned.
BERNSTEIN, HERMAN


Story of Israel Lampert and his family in Russia and after their arrival in America.

BETTAUER, HUGO


The plot involves a young Jewish artist and an aristocratic Austrian nobleman in a day, then in the future, when the authorities of a cosmopolitan city, supposedly Vienna, expel all Jews. The author was assassinated shortly after the publication of the work due to national resentment of the theme portrayed.

BIALIK, HAYYIM NAHMAN


Contains a valuable biographical introduction by the translator and three stories: "Aftergrowth," "The shamed trumpet," and "The short Friday."

BISNO, BEATRICE


This novel treats largely of labor problems and especially of the growth and development of the needle trades in Chicago. Received the Edwin Wolf award for the best novel of Jewish interest in 1937.

BLOCH, JEAN-RICHARD


Excellent characterization of the Simlers, a Jewish family of weavers, uprooted from Alsace by the Franco-Prussian war. Forced to begin life anew in the small manufacturing town of Vendeuvre in western France, they meet with hostility, partly the effect of a strong conflict between individualism and industrialism.

BLOCK, RUDOLPH. See LESSING, BRUNO

BOTTOME, PHYLLIS


A tragedy of the intermarriage of a cultured German Jew and a Christian with liberal international attitudes towards life, and of a household divided against itself because of Nazi machinations.

BRINIG, MYRON


History of the family of an ignorant Jewish immigrant who comes to America from Rumania and finally settles in Montana. Here, in the crude environment of a mining town, the seven children grow up and make their adjustments with life as a successful business house, little more. The book is especially notable for its close study of conflict between individuality and intense parental feeling.
Brod, Max

Reubeni, the prince of the Jews; a tale of the Renaissance. Trans. from the German by Hannah Waller. New York, Knopf, 1928. 340 p.

An historical novel of the 16th century, woven about the Jew, Reubeni, a mysterious character who claimed to be the Messiah, but later ended his days in prison. (The manuscript of Reubeni's diary, in Hebrew, is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford.)

Brudno, Ezra S.

The fugitive; being the memoirs of a wanderer in search of a home. New York, Doubleday, Page, 1904. 392 p.

Not so much a novel as an attempt to show the effects of modern culture and free thought upon Judaism. Some of the descriptions, notably that of the terrible riot in the Jewish quarter, are particularly striking and forceful.

The little conscript; a tale of the reign of Nicholas I. New York, Doubleday, Page, 1905. 325 p.

Deals with the horrors of Russian military conscription a century ago.

Bullard, Arthur


Story of a Jewish girl's evolution from a worker in a sweatshop to a leader in the unions and, later, a writer on industrial and political topics. Drama of a big city's under-privileged.

Cahan, Abraham


Story of a Russian Jew who, despite his conservative background and training in a Talmudic seminary in the Old World, succumbs to the worst influences of his new environment in America. The book is considered one of the most important of the many novels dealing with the adjustment of immigrant Jews to American life.

The white terror and the red; a novel of revolutionary Russia. New York, Barnes, 1905. 430 p.

Cannan, Gilbert


An absorbing novel embodying the study of a certain type of Jewish temperament with its keen intellectualism and smouldering passion.


A further penetrating study of Jewish life in England, reminiscent of "Mendel," and in which the characters of "Sembal" reappear.

Carb, David


A story of four generations of a German-Jewish family living in New Orleans between 1847 and 1919, and their absorption into American life.

Caspar, Vera


The book covers the life of three generations of Portuguese Jews in Chicago, from 1885 to 1931. A truthful rendering of Jewish customs, warm, intimate and human. Gives also an insight into conflict between Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews, but shows how the democratic process of Americanization soon levels caste barriers.
COHEN, ALBERT


A first novel which, in form and style, breaks many literary conventions. "A Jewish novel by a Jew who is neither a wailer nor a renegade." The hero is a Jew born on the island of Cephalonia, who makes his way to Geneva and Paris, where he rises rapidly to power in finance and politics, only to fall into poverty and defeat at the end.

COHEN, HYMAN


A novel depicting in detail the religious rituals which dominate the life of orthodox Jews in a small Russian town. Religious minutiae are rendered with sympathy, and it is suggested that the spiritual unity and moral strength engendered by these observances are never replaced in a country in which Jews fall away from them.

COHEN, HYMAN and LESTER


A moving, realistic story of the soul of a Jewish boy brought by a wave of immigration, from the Old World to the golden-paved streets of America; of his disillusionment, and the final triumph of his ideals when he finds his métier as a sculptor. The joint work of father and son.

COURNOS, JOHN


An immigrant Jewish boy of intellectual parents struggles for expression against Ghetto odds.

EDWARDS, ALBERT, pseud. See BULLARD, ARTHUR

EMANUEL, VICTOR ROUSSEAU


The chronicle of a Jewish family in London; reportorial in style and kaleidoscopic in approach. The Selmans, Salmons, and Solomons are the offspring of Schmool Solomon, dealer in uniforms and old clothes who died in 1835.

FARJEON, BENJAMIN L.


Melodramatic story of an illiterate who becomes a millionaire and marries his son into the English nobility.

FERBER, EDNA


Interesting study of the rise of Fanny Brandeis, a Jewish-American girl of energy and spirit, who is caught by the glamor of big business, and who works out her destiny along original lines.

FERBER, NAT


A novel of a Jewish family from 1870 to 1934; the scene is laid in the ghettos of an Austrian village, in Vienna, Paris and later in America, where Mayer Marmelstein emigrates with his five motherless sons, four of whom become social climbers and forswear their heritage and faith.
FEUCHTWANGER, LION


Sequel to "Josephus." Carries on the narrative of the Jewish historian under the reigns of Nero, Vespasian, and Titus. The scene is laid in Rome, Galilee, Alexandria, and Jerusalem.


Long and crowded account of the career of the Jewish historian from his first visit to Rome in A.D. 64 to the fall of Jerusalem, when he returned to Rome to write his history of the Jewish wars. Illuminating, important and filled with color and personalities.


The tragic story of a German-Jewish family in Germany during the period of 1932-33. Analyzes the Nazi movement and its protagonists with cool, sometimes cruel, dispassion.


A brilliant and dramatic novel of eighteenth-century ghetto life centered upon Joseph Süss Oppenheimer, a historical character who rose to power at the court of Karl Alexander, Duke of Württemberg. Rated as one of the best foreign books of the decade. Dramatized by Ashley Dukes in 1930 as "Jew Süss" and produced in New York with the famous Jewish actor Moscovitch in the leading role. Published in London under the title "Jew Süss."

FINEMAN, IRVING


A story of a Jewish family in America, in the guise of the recollections of a successful New York lawyer, who had come to the United States in his youth. Less the life of individuals than that of a community, orthodox, devout, observing the very letter of their ancient rites and customs.

FÖLDES, JOLÁN


The story of a group of exiles transplanted to an alien land; remarkable for its odd characters, its rich Parisian atmosphere, its tragic moments, and its several romances, idyllic or sordid. This novel was the winner of the 1935 International Prize, amounting to about $19,000.

FRANK, BRUNO


The hero, a young German prince in love with a Jewish girl, reluctantly becomes head of a royalist plot. Much of the story deals with the fate of Jews in concentration camps. A vivid romance of pre-war Hitler days.

FRANK, HELENA, compiler and translator.


A collection of forty-eight tales by twenty different authors; a brief biographical sketch of each writer precedes his stories.

FRANKAU, PAMELA

The devil we know. New York, Dutton, 1939. 495 p.

Philip Meyer, the chief character, is a self-conscious Jew, constantly aware of the race problem with which life confronts him.
Freedman, David
Novel of Jewish life in New York; character study of a well-meaning, lazy, witty philosophic man who overcomes work with quips.

Gaer, Joseph
A simple tale of orthodox Jewish life in a small Russian village, where modernism and a youth movement threaten to penetrate.

Ganz, Marie and Ferber, Nat J.
A story of Jewish immigrant life in America.

George, Walter Lionel
Traces career of Israel Kalisch from Cracow through Hungary, through his struggles in New York, to his death in Piccadilly. Published in London under the title "Israel Kalisch."

Gerard, Dorothy
Scenes of Jewish life in Galicia, where the mean and degraded conditions of existence are portrayed with a rather hard brush, though the book has a charm of style that atones for its unpleasant character.

Glass, Montague
Photographic sketches of Jewish types on the East Side of New York, against the background of the ventures and adventures of "Abe" Potash and "Mawruss" Perlmutter, partners in the suit and cloak business. Has been followed by several other volumes dealing with the same or similar characters.

Glossop, Reginald

Golding, Louis

An autobiographical study of a Jewish youth whose parents emigrated from Russia to England. Brought up in the orthodox faith, the young man combines filial loyalty with a poetic sensibility.

Carries on the story of "Forward from Babylon", weaving in the lives and fortunes of Jews and Gentiles living on Magnolia Street, through a generation.

The action takes place in England and in Nazi Germany. Many of the characters appearing in Mr. Golding's earlier books about the Doomington section of London reappear in this novel.
GOLLOMB, JOSEPH

An autobiographical detailed account of David Levitt's life from early childhood in Russia, through adolescence in East Side New York tenements, his education, and early career as a journalist.

GORDON, SAMUEL

A study of the Jews in East and West London in the early years of East European immigration, dealing with the useful life of two youths who do excellent work for the less fortunate of their people.

GRATACAP, LOUIS POPE

Benjamin, the Jew. New York, Benton, 1913. 492 p.
Relates the history of Benjamin Nassi, a Russian Jew who, escaping a pogrom, comes to New York, where he becomes an influential citizen. After his death, his son heads a group who seek to re-establish the Jews in Jerusalem.

HARRISON, SAMUEL B.

An historical novel of the rise of a Jewish business man of pioneer days in Texas, 1864-1918.

HATVANY, LUDWIG

Excellent character delineation, coupled with dramatic and psychological conflicts. Portrays Hungarian-Jewish family through almost a hundred years.

HERRMANN, LAZAR (Leo Lania, pseud.)

A love story against the background of the rising Nazi power in Germany and the terror that followed. The Jewish tragedy in Germany is set forth with dramatic intensity.

HERSCH, VIRGINIA

A chronicle of several generations of a proud and wealthy Jewish family, the Carvalhos, who escaped from the black revolt in Santo Domingo and established themselves in Charleston during the early years of the 19th century.

HUME, FERGUS


HURST, FANNIE

Collection of eight notable short stories with ghetto background.

HUTCHINSON, RAY CORYTON

The tragic story of a young German-Jewish scientist caught in the Nazi movement.
JACOB, NAOMI
A picture of Parisian and Viennese society from the time of Napoleon to the
60's. Introduces in chronological sequence the ancestors of the English branch
of the Gollancz family. The first volume of a series in which the same characters
are used.

JANSEN, WERNER
The light of Egypt. Trans. from the German by William A.
Preseats fact and fiction with a new interpretation of the birth, life and ideals
of Moses. Written in fine style and translated into modern terms of thought and
political suggestion.

KANDEL, ABEN
A story of New York from 1907 to 1927 set forth in the lives of a half dozen or
more characters, most of them originally from the lower East Side.

KATZ, H. W.
The Fishmans. Trans. from the German by Maurice Samuel.
This book, by a German refugee, is the history of a family of Galician Jews
from 1905-1914, and of its struggle against hunger and hatred.

No. 21 Castle Street. Trans. [from the German] by Norbert Guter-
A tragic narrative of the experiences of a family of Galician Jews in Germany
from 1914 to 1933.

KOBRIN, LEON B.
A Lithuanian village. Trans. from the Yiddish by Isaac Gold-
Intimate sketches depicting Jewish life in a Lithuanian village.

KOENIG, LEO
A week after life; the tale of a Shib'ah. Trans. from the Yiddish
Finely drawn contrasts of Jews of the modern generation with their strictly
observant forebears. The setting is a mourner's household during the Jewish
Shib'ah, or mourning week.

KUSSY, NATHAN
The adventures of a Jewish boy raised in poverty, who falls into a life of vag-
rancy and is afterward unable to escape the brand of criminality despite sincere
efforts to live decently.

LACRETELLE, JACQUES DE
Silbermann. Trans. from the French by Brian Lunn. New York,
An appealing story of anti-Jewish prejudice, in a French setting; vividly
depicting the unreasoning cruelty of the school-fellows toward a sensitive Jewish
lad whose supreme desire is to be French, and who exhibits a fine capacity for
absorbing French culture. Awarded La Prix Femina Vie Heureuse.
JEWISH FICTION IN ENGLISH

LAGERLOF, SELMA

The first part of this book, chronicling the family history of the Ingmarssons through two generations, is an epical narrative breathing the spirit of the old sagas. The second part tells of the founding of an idealist community in Jerusalem—an enterprise in which the authoress participated.

LANDA, GERTRUDE
A novel of London Jewish life after the World War, by a well-known Anglo-Jewish writer.

LANIA, LEO, pseud. See Herrmann, Lazar

LAUFERTY, LILLIAN
The conflict of Jewish and Gentile blood in the descendants of a Jewish family which has established itself in New York and intermarried, is the theme of the novel. The author is better known as "Beatrice Fairfax."

LAZARRE, JACOB
A collection of poignant dramatic short stories, each portraying a different period in history, but dealing with the same main theme: the love of a Jewess for one outside her faith, ending in the renunciation of love.

LE FORT, GERTRUD VON
An historical novel written in the literary style of an old chronicle around the Jewish family of Rome. Beautifully written by a convert to Catholicism but filled with a reverence for things Jewish.

LEFTWICH, JOSEPH, compiler.
A selection of writings culled from the works of the more modern Jewish authors. Includes some excellent stories which are not translated elsewhere, or which have appeared in magazines.

LEHMANN, MARCUS
Akiba. Trans. from the German by Aaron Schaffer. New York, Jewish Forum, 1925. 367 p.
A Jewish classic. The character of Akiba is an embodiment of all that is holy and exalting in the teachings of Judaism.

LESSING, BRUNO
Stories of Jewish life in New York City, told with minute realism, full of the struggle for bread, amid sordid surroundings, but not without the touch of romance and sublime religious sentiment.
LEVIN, Meyer
The story of a group of Jewish boys and girls growing up in the years between the World War and the Chicago Fair in 1933 ably drawn against a background of nerve-shattering world events. Not too pleasant in its realism but, in the main, true to life.

Portrays the life of Halutzim in Palestine, as seen by the author who spent a year in a colony.

LEVINGER, Elma Ehrlich
The hero is the prototype of the immigrant Jew who, through sheer grit and tenacity, wins material success, forces recognition, and becomes a leader in American community life.

LEWISOHN, Ludwig
Saga of a Jewish family, beginning in 1840, in Poland, and continuing down through five generations to the problems of a twentieth century American Jew who is unable to integrate himself in our civilization.

Using Shylock as he steps forth from the trial scene in the court of Venice, the author recreates those turbulent times in a vivid narrative, against the background of Jewish history of the period.

LINKLATER, Eric

Ludlow, James M.
An historical novel of the Maccabaean rebellion against Syria, in which the conflict between Judaism and Hellenism is presented.

Mann, Thomas B.
Based on the familiar Bible story of Jacob, Esau, Isaac, Rachel, and Joseph, elaborated and enriched by details presenting the culture and primitive life of biblical times, and by vivid characterization of the leading figures. It is the first of a trilogy . . . A long anthropological and mythological introduction discusses the philosophy of history and the legendary beginnings of the Jews. The story itself is deeply moving and is written in a simple and beautiful style, suited to the subject. Published in England under the title "Tales of Joseph."

Part II of the trilogy.

Part III of the trilogy.
MEKLER, DAVID L.
These tales are imbued with the beauty and the sincerity of the Baal Shem Tov and his disciples.

MELLER, SIDNEY
The story of a Russian-Polish scholar, Elchanan Drobnen, who settles in California, where his children, becoming absorbed in the new life, lose the beauty of traditional Judaism.

MENDELE MOCHER SEFORIM, pseud. See Abramowitz, Shalom Jacob.

MENDELSOHN, PETER
A tragic tale faithfully recalling the savagery of Nazism. The story describes the horrible fate of fifty Jews who were cornered in a hamlet of Austria at the time of the Nazi invasion. The chapters which depict the plight of this group, driven like cattle onto a filthy barge floating down the Danube, are the essence of drama.

MEYRINK, GUSTAV
Weird retelling of the old legend of the Golem, a Frankenstein monster, made centuries ago by a rabbi of Prague.

MOSENTHAL, SALOMON HERMANN
Ghetto stories of the German synagogue and market place.

NATHAN, ROBERT
A fantasy describing a great caravan of the Jews of all the nations, driven out of the western world to the Gobi Desert, offered by the Mongols as a haven. The misery, destitution, the quarrels and hopes of these people during their long journey go to make up the tale.

There is another heaven. New York, Bobbs-Merrill, 1929. 191 p.
Depicts the pathetic plight of a converted Jew who attempts after death to adjust himself to a Protestant heaven.

NEMIROVSKY, IRENE
The story of a Russian-Jewish immigrant to America, whose name in the money markets of the world becomes a synonym for riches, power and an implacable will. A swift-moving, pathetic tale of a man who is dead while living because he fails to estimate life's proper values.

NEUMANN, ROBERT
A novel about a small group of passengers on a bus which meets with disaster on the desert border of Palestine. The passengers are Jewish refugees from various countries, who hope to find peace and solace in Palestine.
Nyburg, Sidney
Portrays the sharp contrasts in the life of the Jews of Boston, their idealism and crass materialism; their self-consciousness and pride of race as well as their desire to contribute their best to America.

Opatoshu, Joseph
A novel of Jewish life in Poland. Regarded as one of the best Yiddish historical novels. First published in 1921, the book has appeared in Hebrew, Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, and German translations.

Oppenheim, James
Experiences of a young Jewish physician who rejects prosperity and devotes himself to alleviating the bodily ills and overcoming the spiritual crises of his people on the East Side of New York City.

Peretz, Isaac Loeb
Twenty short stories of Jewish life. The first story has gained universal recognition as a classic.

Representative selections from the writings of one of the greatest Yiddish writers.

Pinski, David B.
The story of the development of a Jewish family through three generations, showing how members of the family lose their attachment to traditional Jewish character values under the impact of assimilative forces in American life.

Pollakoff, Salomon
A biographical novel of the medieval figure, Sabbatai Zevi, known in history as the Turkish Messiah.

Rabinowitz, Shalom. (Shalom Aleichem, pseud.)
The author is universally known as the “Jewish Mark Twain.” Here are nineteen of his short stories all with a holiday flavor which are masterpieces of their kind.

Raymond, Adolphus and A. Bunin
Amongst the aristocracy of the ghetto (Les nouveaux riches); sketches drawn from life of the new-rich. London, S. Paul, 1921. 287 p.
REZNICKOFF, CHARLES
By the waters of Manhattan. New York, Boni, 1930. 255 p.
A narrative of two years in the life of a family of Russian Jews, who struggle against poverty and oppression abroad, and of the career of the grandson in the East Side of New York.

RINEHART, MARY (ROBERTS)
A gently humanitarian tale of a modern Good Samaritan who achieves peace of mind in the course of a long walk along the open road.

ROSENHOLZ, JENNIE
The story is painstakingly honest in its attempt to depict the life of a lonely orthodox Jewish family in a pioneer settlement in Wisconsin surrounded by Christian neighbors.

ROTH, JOSEPH
A moving story of a modern Job, which portrays with dignity the spiritual values of Judaism.

ROUSSEAU, VICTOR, pseud. See EMANUEL, VICTOR ROUSSEAU

SACHS, EMANIE N.
A dramatic story of German Jews, their life and traditions, in modern New York.

SACKLER, HARRY
An historical novel of great charm and inherent beauty, depicting Jewish life in Palestine during the second century of the present era; includes the story of the martyrdom of Rabbi Akiba and of the spiritual triumphs of his disciple, Simeon Ben Yohai.

SCHNEIDER, ISIDORE
The story of a hard, bitter life, presumably autobiographical, in which a sensitive personality seeks a place in modern society.

SHNEUR, ZALMAN
The simplicity of the book is astounding. It depicts life in the rough in a Russian village. The leading character, Noah Pandre, is a human clod but endowed with an uncommon physique. He gropes dumbly, from infancy to manhood, for a unity and enjoyment of Jewish life and lore.

SHORE, VIOLA B.
The heritage, and other stories. New York, Doran, 1921. 293 p.
A collection of short stories. The title story deals with intermarriage.
SINGER, ISRAEL JOSHUA
Against a background of pre-World War industrialism, capitalism, and class warfare, marked by the industrial development and decay of the Polish city of Lodz, this extraordinary novel tells the story of several generations of Polish Jews, some rising like their city from anonymity to power, others submerged as workers battling for bread. The central characters are the twin brothers, Max and Yakob Ashkenazi, who represent two classic sides of the Jew: the ambitious, brilliant, uncrushable man of business and the eager, warm-hearted voluptuary.

A powerful novel of Jews in Poland during the World War. The scene later shifts to Soviet Russia. A dramatization of the story has been produced in Yiddish as "Chaver Nachman."

Tragic stories of Polish Jewish life.

A tale of Hassidic life in Eastern Europe.

SIWERTZ, SIGFRID
The story of a Polish Jew who builds up a huge department store in Stockholm. Sympathetic and humorous.

SMILANSKY, MOSHE
Short stories of Palestine told with vividness and charm.

STEINBERG, MILTON
As a driven leaf. Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1939. 480 p.
A novel of life in the second century in Palestine and Syria. The representation of the learned Rabbi Elisha ben Abuyah is vivid and authentic.

STERN, GLADYS BRONWYN
The four books trace the lives of Babette Rakonitz, the original matriarch, and her family through successive generations in Vienna, London, and Paris.

STONE, L. C. N., (pseud.)
German family. Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1934. 345 p.
A tragic story of a Jewish family in Germany from the post-war occupation of the Rhineland to the regime of Hitler.
Tobenkin, Elias
The story of Samuel Waterman, a product of a Russian ghetto, who comes to America to escape persecution, and whose chief desire is to become a good American.

The adaptation of the Jewish immigrant to American life. The story of Witte and his family from his arrival in this country up to his recognition as a writer.

Waldman, Emerson
A powerful novel of an immigrant Russian family who settle in the South and experience the joy of laboring for one's own. They find life here not without its difficulties, for King Cotton and the Ku Klux Klan remind them of Tsarist Russia.

Waldman, Milton
A problem novel dealing with intermarriage between Jew and Gentile. Walter Michaelson, a Jew, is content to renounce his Jewish heritage until, estranged from his wife, he decides to go to Palestine, there to seek spiritual peace.

Wassermann, Jacob
A story of the Jews of Zirndorf from the 17th century to 1885. The book was published in Germany under the title, "Die Juden von Zirndorf."

Wassermann, Moses
Judah Touro; a biographical romance. Trans. from the German by Harriet W. Mayer. New York, Bloch, 1923. 275 p.
"A biographical romance" describing a Jewish settlement in Rhode Island at the time of the War of 1812; the hero's participation in mercantile life on the seas and in France and his pioneer life in Mississippi and Louisiana.

Werfel, Franz
A powerful, gigantic novel which parallels today's social and religious confusion with the days of the thundering Prophet Jeremiah.

Wolenstein, Martha
Fascinating pictures and short sympathetic sketches of a town of Jews in Maritz, an Austrian ghetto. Jewish observances, superstitions, hopes, and sufferings at the hands of the Jew-baiters are vividly described.

Thirteen delightful stories of Jewish life in Galicia and Hungary.
YEZIERSKA, ANZIA
Vivid short stories dealing with the Russian Jew in the New York ghetto, interesting as a study of Jewish temperament revealing the immigrant hungry of heart and struggling desperately to achieve not merely material, but also spiritual betterment in America. Made into a motion picture in 1922.

ZANGWILL, ISRAEL
The lighter side, but still a serious delineation of Jewish life. Also appears in the "Selected Works of Israel Zangwill," a Golden Jubilee volume issued by the Jewish Publication Society of America in 1938.

ZARA, LOUIS
An excellently written inherently honest story of a Russian Jew of fine type who emigrates to America and lays the foundation of a successful business career through thrift and industry.

This land is ours. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1940. 779 p.
An historical novel of eighty years of America in the making, 1755-1835, depicting life on the frontier. Hosea Simon, one of the characters, is perhaps "the first use of a Jewish figure in a modern historical novel on early American life." The basis for this character was found in the lives of the Gratz, Simon, and Frank families of Pennsylvania.

ZWEIG, ARNOLD
Against a background of conflict between Jew and Arab, Zionist and anti-Zionist, is told the story of the murder of de Vriendt, a learned Dutch Jew. The scene is Palestine during the 1929 disturbances. The original of de Vriendt was Jacob Israel de Haan, who was murdered in 1924.

An understanding story of the trial of a young German-Jewish girl, whose lover has been torn from his books and sent to the front. — This novel precedes "The Case of Sergeant Grischa" in point of time.

ZWEIG, STEFAN
An ancient Jewish legend of the lost Menorah, or the seven-branched candelabrum, carried off by vandals which, tradition said, had lighted the altar in the Temple of Solomon.