Instrument *of* Memory

Encounters with the Wandering Jew

Erinnerung
1914
Chagall

Lisa Lampert-Weissig

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University of Michigan Press
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For my mother, Frances Sandra Lampert

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Introduction

I saw by looking in his eyes
That they remembered everything;
And this was how I came to know
That he was here, still wandering.
For though the figure and the scene
Were never to be reconciled,
I knew the man as I had known
His image when I was a child.

What would it be like to meet an immortal being? In this opening stanza to Edwin Arlington Robinson's 1920 poem "The Wandering Jew," the speaker depicts an encounter with the legendary figure, said to be cursed by Jesus with a supernaturally long life (Robinson 1928, 456; see also Stanford 1978). According to legend, as Jesus bore the cross along the Via Dolorosa, he paused before a man's home and asked to rest. The man refused, heartlessly urging him to hurry to his death. Jesus turned to him and said, "I will go, but you will tarry until I return." Since that moment, the Wandering Jew has been unable to die; he must await Jesus's return at the Second Coming. Converted to Christianity by his experience, the Wandering Jew shares his story with all he meets. This legend has been circulating since at least the sixth century, and during this time the cursed man has been known by many names, including Cartaphilus, Buttadeus, Ahasver, Isaac Laquedem.[1] Two of the figure's names reference the temporal and spatial nature of his curse. His wandering homelessness is emphasized in English, French, Italian, Spanish, and other tongues (*le Juif errant*, *l'ebreo errante*, *el judío errante*). In German, he is *der ewige Jude* (the Eternal Jew), a name that underscores his paradoxical curse of immortality (see Băleanú 1991, 27). These two ways of naming the figure—the Wandering Jew and the Eternal Jew—reveal how extremes of time and space shape the legend. The time of the Wandering Jew reaches back to the Passion and stretches forward toward the end of days. On his many journeys, the Wandering Jew has roamed from the Bering Strait to the Indian Ocean, from Armenia to Finland (Hasan-Rokem 1986a). He is always, though, tied in some way to the place where his story began, the Jerusalem of memory. And it is the Wandering Jew's memories, especially his memory of his misdeed, that transform his immortality into a curse, as Robinson shows through his image of remembering eyes.

The Wandering Jew is also himself transformed: he becomes a living witness. He is, indeed, the only living witness to the Passion. The Wandering Jew's sharing of his personal memories with those he encounters brings that past alive for them. In many of the greatest imaginings of the legend, as in Robinson's poem, an encounter with the Wandering Jew is the spark that lights a creative flame. As Robinson conveys, it is the encounter with the Wandering Jew, that moment that cannot be "reconciled," that contains imaginative power. The power of the encounter is not only something represented as happening to the imagined figures in the works we examine. It extends to the encounters between the legend and the artists themselves, as they also often represent their own engagement with this legend about memory.

In this book, we will seek out significant artistic encounters with the Wandering Jew as well as another related kind of encounter, the centuries of encounters between Christians and Jews.[2] The Wandering Jew's original treatment of Jesus mirrors negative Jewish-Christian confrontation, and this tension endures throughout the centuries of the Wandering Jew tradition. But there is another way that Jewish-Christian relations shape the Wandering Jew legend. Existing alongside, and interacting with, the well-known Christian version of the legend are Jewish narratives concerning an apocalyptic messiah who also wanders. In pathbreaking scholarship, Galit Hasan-Rokem (2016, 159) has established the Wandering Jew legend as an important Jewish-Christian "coproduction" (see also Hasan-Rokem 1999 and Hasan-Rokem 2015). Hasan-Rokem's work expands and enriches the focus on the tradition's Christian elements that has predominated scholarship since the early nineteenth century and that also guides the most well-known study of the legend, George K. Anderson's encyclopedic *The Legend of the Wandering Jew* (1965).[3] Recognizing and acknowledging the "two-headed" nature of the Wandering Jew tradition reveals not only its complexity as transmitted over time, but also the rich intersections and interchanges between Jewish and Christian traditions, especially traditions around memory (Pedaya 2013; see also Massenzio 2010).[4]

Wanderer figures from the Jewish tradition include, of course, Cain, whose cursed state influences treatments of the Wandering Jew legend from Matthew Paris's thirteenth-century *Chronica majora* through Matthew Lewis's 1796 gothic novel *The Monk*, to the modernist poetry of Uri Zvi Greenberg (1896–1981) (see Mellinkoff 1981).[5] Jewish tradition also figures Elijah the prophet as a wanderer. Harold Fisch (1980, 132) has noted connections between Elijah and the Wandering Jew but argues that while the Wandering Jew "is viewed as the bearer of ancestral records and memories," his wandering has no goal. Elijah, in contrast, wanders with messianic purpose.[6] Most interesting for us is the story of a wanderer searching for Messias Menachem, who was born on the day of the Second Temple's destruction (Hasan-Rokem 1986b, 193). This last narrative shares with the Christian Wandering Jew tradition an anchoring in the memory of a profound event. Memory of the Passion and memory of the Second Temple's destruction, or Hurban, endow the legend with emotional power (see, respectively, Kupfer 2008; Mintz 1996). Jan Assmann (1988, 12) speaks of such foundational moments as temporal "fixed points," and we will see that Jewish and Christian variations of the legend resemble each other in that both are rooted in such fixed points.[7] The varying contours of the legend of the wanderer reflect what Eviatar Zerubavel (2003, 7) calls the "social shape of the past," the way that the memories of foundational events both shape and are shaped by the communities that remember them. Robinson's verse captures this important element of the legend as well. The speaker's encounter with the Wandering Jew reveals the legend's alchemy of personal and collective memory. Throughout the legend's long existence artists have deployed this alchemy as a means to represent the interface between an individual life and the greater flow of time that all humans experience.

The Wandering Jew through the Lens of Memory

If we understand the Wandering Jew legend as concerned not only with prodigious life span and displacement, but also with a singularly extraordinary individual memory, its potential value to memory studies becomes clearer. The notion that interactions between an individual and a group shape that individual's memory derives from the work of sociologist Maurice Halbwachs ([1925] 1994), who introduced his concept of "collective memory" nearly a century ago. Halbwachs contends that individual memories, which we typically think of as organic and unique, are, in fact, shaped by social frameworks of memory (*les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*), such as family, religious community, or political affiliation. These frameworks do more than connect groups of people in the present. The present "needs and interests" of the community create an orientation toward the past (Erll 2011a, 17). Perceptions of the past—memories—are constructed within and through these social frameworks. Individual and "collective" memory are therefore interdependent. Collective memory can exist over several generations, as in the case of family memory, stretching back to the memory of the oldest member in the group.

What of remembrances of events that are older than any living member of a group? How are these remembered collectively? Halbwachs explored this question by visiting the Wandering Jew's place of origin. In his *Legendary Topography of the Holy Land*, Halbwachs (1971) focused on the role of place in the development of collective memory over the *longue durée*, considering some of the same Christian memory practices and beliefs that also, we will see, influenced the development of the Wandering Jew legend. Building on Halbwachs's work, Aleida Assmann (1995; 2011) and Jan Assmann (1988) developed the concept of "cultural memory" (*kulturelles Gedächtnis*), which includes "the realm of tradition, transmissions, and transferences" they see left out of the concept of "collective memory" as put forth by Halbwachs (Assmann, 2008, 110). The Assmanns distinguish between two distinct forms of memory: "communicative memory" and "cultural memory." Communicative memory is memory shared among individuals within a limited time frame, roughly between two generations. Cultural memory is a cultivated form of memory within a group that reaches back into an ancient or mythic past. The development of cultural memory is, in the Assmanns' conceptualization, essential to group identity and cohesiveness.

The Wandering Jew legend engages both of these distinct memory forms (communicative and cultural memory) as it is typically through personal interaction with the Wandering Jew that individuals learn about a central event of the distant past. The Wandering Jew's curse—that is, his immortality and his compulsion to tell his story, which is also a narrative of the Passion—represents a bridging of these two different memory forms through the encounter between the Wandering Jew and mortals. The artistic depictions of the encounter with the Wandering Jew that this project analyzes explore that intersection between memories shared between individuals and memories shared among larger groups. They also examine what a Christian legend focused on the memories of a fictional converted Jew can mean for actual diasporic Jews, whose complicated and often fraught status as a minority group can necessitate a complex negotiation of memory and identity.

The concepts of collective and cultural memory are, of course, not meant to evoke some kind of organic hive mind. They are conceptualizations of memory as a process, an interaction between and among individuals, and between individuals and their environments, drawing on sensory, locational, and other cues. These cues emerge during encounters, and the artists whose works we will examine in this book use the Wandering Jew legend to explore such encounters and to represent how the interface between individual and collective memory is negotiated through them. Such encounters can be, as in Robinson's poem, between the Wandering Jew and a mortal, or, as we will see, they can be set in relation to a specific place, such as in Heinrich Heine's and Edmond Fleg's depictions of the Wandering Jew in Jerusalem. The artists examined use the Wandering Jew legend as a means to represent how memories are made and to reveal the friction of that interface between an individual and the social structures that support individual memory. The Wandering Jew legend, because of its preoccupation with memory, provides fertile ground for these artistic explorations. And through these explorations, we will see, these creators not only craft artworks but also present their own interventions into the production of cultural memory.

In order to better understand the role of place and its relation to the legend's engagement with memory, we will also consider the Wandering Jew as what Pierre Nora (1996), building on Halbwachs's work, calls a *lieu de mémoire* or site of memory.[8] *Lieux de mémoire* are loci, often but not always associated with a physical location, that become invested with meaning through their connection to the past. They can be constructed or built, perhaps to serve an intentional memorial function, as in the case of monuments, or they might also be sites of worship. Artworks or other texts, buildings, holidays, historical personages, or figures like King Arthur, Joan of Arc, or the Wandering Jew can also be sites of memory. Our examination of artists' engagements with the Wandering Jew as sites of memory has the potential, I believe, not only to produce new understandings of the legend, but also to deepen our understanding of the development of such memory sites over time.

Nora (1989, 23) asserts that "there are *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory, because there are no longer *milieux de mémoire*, real environments of memory." As we examine the medieval and early modern treatments of the legend, however, we will see that this formulation of an organic premodern past obscures the fact that *lieux de mémoire* were constructed, sometimes very consciously, well before the nineteenth century.[9] Furthermore, the concepts of cultural memory and *lieu de mémoire* have been deployed in ways that can lead to static, nationally focused uses, what Astrid Erll (2011b, 7) calls formulations of "container cultures." In response to this overly fixed conceptualization, Erll argues that cultural memory is actually always in motion; it "travels," crossing through and over borders and media, a characteristic of many legends, but, again, one that is specifically incorporated into key details of the Wandering Jew legend. The Wandering Jew legend, due to its "two-headed" nature and the fact that the legend itself is *about* Jewish-Christian relations, is also a prime example of Jewish-Christian entanglement, including entangled forms of memory. This entanglement will become readily apparent as we examine works by Jewish writers and artists in the modern period, but we will also see that the strands of entanglement stretch back further than one might expect (Feidnt et al. 2014; see also Baumgarten et al. 2017; Kim 2014).

Michael Rothberg (2009, 5) notes astutely that "memory's anachronistic quality—its bringing together of now and then, here and there—is actually the source of its powerful creativity, its ability to build new worlds out of the materials of older ones." The encounters with the Wandering Jew legend discussed in this book provide compelling examples of artistic creativity that are not limited by periodization boundaries. Heinrich Heine (1797–1856), for example, ranges freely in the zodiac of cultural memory. In Heine's 1851 "Jehuda ben Halevy," Alexander the Great and Cleopatra appear alongside renowned medieval Sephardic poets and hundreds of generations of the Jewish faithful. Heine's poem sings of all their memories, intertwined with the memories and longings of the Wandering Jew and with the poet's own. The power of Heine's representation derives from the anachronism that Rothberg describes.

Instrument of Memory

From the many hundreds of adaptations of the Wandering Jew legend, I have selected striking instances of the legend used as an instrument of memory, a rendering that entwines past, present, and future, often with the purpose of navigating the complex borders of centuries of Jewish-Christian relations.[10] I am interested in how artists, particularly literary artists, engage with and reimagine the Wandering Jew legend in order to explore personal and cultural memory and their intersections.

The two most influential early written versions of the legend illuminate the Wandering Jew as an instrument of memory: Matthew Paris's thirteenth-century *Chronica majora* and the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung und Erzehlung* *von einem Juden mit namen Ahasverus* (A Brief Description and Narration Regarding a Jew Named Ahasuerus). In these works, the Wandering Jew serves not only a narrative, but a worldview. Matthew's world chronicle depicts Christendom as threatened by Muslims, Mongols, and Jews, the latter two of which he even depicts as colluding with each other. The Wandering Jew, as we will see, is a figure very much rooted in Christian temporal figurations of Jews and Judaism. Matthew, following medieval conceptualizations of the Jew that reach back into the patristic period, depicts the Wandering Jew as out of sync with the natural flow of time, as existing in a kind of stasis, endlessly awaiting redemption and release.

In addition to the temporal dynamics of Christian representations of Jews and Judaism, medieval Christians also located Jews within a spatial scheme. According to Christian tradition, Jews are exiled and homeless as punishment for crimes against Christ, as I will discuss in relation to the medieval context of the Wandering Jew in the next chapter. Christian tradition regards the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE, the destruction of the Second Temple, and the Jewish diaspora as punishments for alleged Jewish crimes against Christ. Just as supersession posits Judaism as old and outmoded, its prophecies fulfilled and subsumed by Christianity, so too does Jerusalem, earthly and heavenly, become, within the framework of supersession, rightfully Christian. In the *Kurtze Beschreibung*, these interreligious tensions, including the complicating element of an Ottoman-controlled Jerusalem, serve as background to the author's reshaping of the Wandering Jew legend to reflect contemporary Jewish-Christian relations, as well as controversy between Lutherans and Catholics over Christian belief and practice. The Wandering Jew's memory of the Passion renders him an authoritative instrument through which Christian past, present, and future, as well as Christian claims to holy spaces, can be imagined. Even later, in the eighteenth century, as writers expand the Wandering Jew narrative to have him voice his memory of great swathes of world history, the Passion remains the narrative's fixed point, its memorial core. In these works, the Wandering Jew becomes witness and mouthpiece for cultural memory ever more broadly conceived, but still fundamentally Christian.

The Wandering Jew's voice itself is another instrument of memory that develops along with the narrative tradition. Early versions do not represent his voice directly, but in the late eighteenth century writers began to present direct encounters between the Wandering Jew and the reader. Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart's 1783 "Der Ewige Jude: eine lyrische Rhapsodie" (The Eternal Jew: A Lyrical Rhapsody) is notable in this regard because it depicts the Wandering Jew lamenting the loss of his family as he flings his deceased father's skull down from Mount Carmel. Schubart thus shifts focus from the Passion story to personal loss. The Wandering Jew's affront to Jesus at the time of the Passion becomes the backdrop for personal expression and even for rebellion.

The development of a voice for the Wandering Jew also extends to expressions of Jewish cultural memories. In Heine's "Jehuda ben Halevy" this first-person voice is used to convey, in an intimate and personal manner, Jewish cultural memory of a fallen Jerusalem. Heine's example provides yet another nuance to the idea of the Wandering Jew as an instrument of memory, the sense of an instrument used for delicate or precise work, or to measure, register, and record a phenomenon (*OED*, s.v. "instrument"). Heine's recalibration of the Wandering Jew legend with a fixed point in Jewish rather than Christian memory—the fall of Jerusalem—transforms the Wandering Jew into the voice of the Jewish lamentation tradition. In this tradition, of course, the fall of Jerusalem is not vengeance for alleged Jewish actions against Jesus.[11] It is the Hurban, brought on by sins against God. Heine's recalibration to this fixed point in Jewish cultural memory does not break with Christian cultural memory. Heine portrays the two as entangled and does so in a way that creates a sense of interaction, rather than Christian dominance. Uri Zvi Greenberg's recalibration of the legend is more radical. In his early work, Greenberg transforms his Wandering Jew from a desperate, tormented figure shambling through a European hellscape into a king who is the sole survivor of the Bar Kokhba revolt. Greenberg's choice of a completely new and original fixed point by which to center the legend remakes his Ahasver into a Zionist symbol.

Conceiving of these different approaches to the Wandering Jew legend as recalibrations also helps us avoid a problem in Anderson's approach to variations in the legend's form. Anderson's (1965, 11, 349) search for the "true" legend seems to have led him to overlook variations based in Jewish tradition or to dismiss them as "alien," a troubling orientation for this magisterial work, which provides an indispensable survey of the tradition.[12] Rather than measuring conformity to a specific strand in the Wandering Jew tradition, we will consider artistic choices as calibrations and look for meaning in those choices. Artists who calibrate their instrument of memory by the fixed point of the Hurban are setting out a course according to the tradition of their choosing and should be understood as such. These artists' choices will influence how they portray the Wandering Jew's past, his memory, and his relation to the future, a future often understood through the lens of Jewish or Christian messianic tradition.

Reimaginings of the legend by artists whose work is informed by both Jewish and Christian cultural memory reveal how the interface between individual and collective memory can be fluid and, to use Rothberg's (2009, 34) conceptualization, "multidirectional." The Wandering Jew legend presents a unique case for memory studies because it is, in distinction from other legends such as those of King Arthur or Joan of Arc, centrally concerned with memory itself. It is also deeply implicated in the history of Jewish-Christian relations, including Christian antisemitism, which, like the Wandering Jew legend, developed over centuries. Indeed, the Wandering Jew has figured in some of the most notorious works of antisemitic polemic and propaganda.[13] Analyzing the Wandering Jew figure as an instrument of memory over the *longue durée* provides an opportunity to look beyond the typically modern emphasis of memory studies. This may help us better understand how influential premodern cultural forms endure into the present, a line of investigation with implications not only for memory studies, but for the study of antisemitism as well.

The Time of the Wandering Jew

As Mary Carruthers (2009, 238) notes, "Memory is the matrix of all human temporal perception," and the legend's representation of memory and of temporalities are, as Carruthers's work on memory would suggest, generative. The Wandering Jew legend functions on fixed points in the past in order to support visions of messianic, restorative futures. While scholars have often interpreted the Wandering Jew's unending displacement as symbolic of the Jewish diaspora, less attention has been paid to his uncanny temporality. The temporal dimension of the Wandering Jew's curse reflects Christian denial of both Jewish coevalness and the tripartite nature of medieval anti-Jewish temporality, which viewed Jews of the past, present, and future in terms of their relation to Christian history. This denial is a core, if less acknowledged, component of antisemitism.

If we consider the thirteenth century, when the first written accounts of the Wandering Jew legend appeared, we can see that at that time medieval Christians honored the so-called Old Testament Jews of the past as Christian precursors, and acknowledged that, in the future, a "remnant" of Jews was needed for the end time. Contemporary Jews were, in contrast, represented as stubborn resistors to the progress of Christian spiritual history, who should be tolerated primarily so as to be preserved for their prophesied eschatological role. Jews, then, played valued roles in the Christian past and future, but not in the Christian present. The Wandering Jew's endless punishment reflects the uncomfortable spiritual stasis to which medieval Christians typically relegated their Jewish contemporaries. One of several paradoxes of the Wandering Jew legend—that he remains cursed despite conversion—reflects this anti-Jewish temporality. The Wandering Jew embodies the denial of Jewish coevalness, presenting a Jew who is alive in the present, but never truly of it. Spiritually mired in a pre-Christian past, this Jew is preserved in a kind of spiritual stasis awaiting a prophesied Christian future (see Biddick 2003, 22–23; Fabian 1983). As with so many aspects of the Wandering Jew myth, this temporality serves, as Hasan-Rokem (2001, 52) puts it, as a "refraction" of Christian identity.

In recent years, numerous scholars have explored the complexities of the temporal dimensions of interactions between medieval Jews and Christians. Kathleen Biddick (2003), in delineating the "Christian typological imaginary," examines the workings of supersession, the idea that Christianity is the rightful inheritor of Jewish prophetic tradition, and that the truth of Christianity thus supersedes Judaism. Steven F. Kruger (2006, 1; and see 2013) has illuminated the "Christian reorganization of history" that supersession necessitates and that also undergirds Christian notions of conversion. Mo Pareles also focuses on conversion to explore Christian "repudiations of Jewish time" (Pareles 2019). Anthony Bale (2010, 55) explores another type of reorganization of temporality; showing how the "memory work" of medieval Passion devotion could make Christ's suffering immediate, collapsing the time between the present and the memorialized event. Anna Wilson (2016, 54) has written of "colliding" Jewish and Christian "temporal regimes" in the making of ritual murder accusation narratives, and Miriamne Ara Krummel (2022, 230–36) has recently analyzed what she calls "the empire of common time," through which Christian temporality casts itself as normative while marginalizing or even demonizing the Jewish notions of time from which it emerged. Historians Elisheva Carlebach (2011), C. Philipp E. Nothaft (2014), and David Frick (2003) have each explored how Jewish-Christian relations were often mediated through calendars and other means of measuring time. Israel Jacob Yuval's (2006) work examines what he calls the "dialogism" between Jewish and Christian messianisms. These scholars demonstrate both how medieval Christian theology attempted to subsume Jews and Judaism into a temporal frame that subordinated them to Christian triumphalism and also how actual interactions among medieval Jews and Christians reflect entanglements between Jewish and Christian temporalities that complicate models of Christian dominance.

The paradox of the Wandering Jew—cursed to unending life—reflects the complexities of medieval Christian spiritual temporalities and the ways that "the Jew" figures into them. In a now-classic study, Aron Gurevich (1985, 109–10) explores the notion of "sacral time," the only time, he asserts, that "possessed true reality" for medieval Christians. He writes that within medieval Christian theology, Christ's "act of redemption" created a dual Christian temporality: "the kingdom of God exists already, but earthly time is not yet concluded, and the kingdom of God remains the final end, the aim towards which all must strive." Emphasizing the experiential nature of this complex and multiple temporality, Gurevich (1985, 139) argues that it shapes how medieval Christians experienced time, feeling themselves "on two temporal planes at once: on the plane of local transient life, and on the plane of those universal-historical events which are of decisive importance for the destinies of the world—the Creation, the birth and the Passion of Christ."

These two temporal planes come together in the figure of the Wandering Jew, who exists in the world of "local transient life," encountering Christians for whom he can act both as an eyewitness of Christ's Passion and as a sign of the end time to come. These dual elements are related to each other in ways that are complex and multiple. Writing about Christian eschatology, Debra Strickland (2016, 15) has argued that this aspect of Christian temporality is "not linear and sequential, but rather multi-directional and disruptive, pointing simultaneously to past, present, and future." If, as Gurevich (1985, 110) posits, "at certain crucial moments human history 'breaks through' into eternity," then the unnatural, cursed existence of the Wandering Jew literalizes this breakthrough. The Wandering Jew brings the biblical past, the messianic future, and the present day together in one figure. The Wandering Jew thereby embodies the temporality of Jewish-Christian relations from the perspective of Christian theology.

Christianity's complex temporal relationship to Judaism generates paradox. Jeremy Cohen (1999, 60) points this out in his insightful discussion of "the Jew" in the writings of Augustine, perhaps the most significant Christian theorist of temporality: "Augustine's Jew constitutes a paradox, a set of living contradictions. He survived the crucifixion, though he deserved to die in punishment for it; he somehow belongs in Christendom, though he eschews Christianity; he accompanies the church on its march through history and in its expansion throughout the world, though he remains fixed 'in useless antiquity.' This Jew pertains, at one and the same time, to two opposing realms." We can see in Cohen's description of Augustine's Jew the outlines of the Wandering Jew legend. More significantly, the Wandering Jew's unnatural stretch of life marches along with Christian history, but he always remains trapped in his past, continually reliving the day he cursed Christ and sharing that experience with those he encounters. If we recall the German name for this legendary figure—*der ewige Jude* or the Eternal Jew—it should come as no surprise that his legend touches on so many aspects of Jewish-Christian relations as expressed through temporal concerns. The Wandering Jew legend has at its core a clash—an ugly encounter that results in a curse—and many of the works we will discuss are concerned with contested and clashing "temporal regimes" (Wilson 2016, 48–54). A clear point of intersection is messianism. The Wandering Jew of Christian legend is forced to wait until Christ's return, and the two Jewish wanderer legends we have mentioned, that of Elijah and Messias Menachem, are also shaped through messianic hope.

A less obvious connection is the way that these legends link past, present, and future through an immortal figure. Let us recall the temporality that animates the first stanza of Robinson's poem, in which the speaker knows at a glance the depth of the Wandering Jew's memory, a recognition that collapses his own temporal experience of past and present: "I knew the man as I had known / His image when I was a child." Robinson's poem and so many other works about the Wandering Jew represent a temporality in which past, present, and future collapse, as do the boundaries between personal and group memories. The speaker in Robinson's poem encountered the Wandering Jew tradition as a child; as an adult he encounters him in the flesh. The effect of such representations can feel supernatural or uncanny, as in Robinson's poem, or as in a work like Sholem Asch's novel *The Nazarene* (1939), discussed in chapter 8, which uses *gilgul* (the transmigration of souls) as a temporal device.

We should also remember that this temporal collapse shares something with a sacred temporality that facilitates and is facilitated by memory practice. In her study of collective memory in early Christian martyr narratives, Elizabeth A. Castelli (2004, 13) points to how "Christianity's relationship to time . . . claims to be simultaneously *both* historical at its root *and* outside of time, eternal." She sees this temporality exemplified in the Eucharist, "a ritual restaging of a purported historical event; both event and ritual reenactment take place in history, in time. The cultic, commemorative repetition, however paradoxically, seeks to remember something that recedes ever more persistently into the past the more it is reenacted." Christian theologians have attempted to explain this eucharistic temporal paradox, which, as established through the doctrine of the real presence, truly collapses both time and space. Odo Casel (1926), for example, refers to eucharistic temporality as the *Mysteriengegenwart* (mysterious presence). This temporality operates in Christian versions of the Wandering Jew legend, as Edgar Knecht (1977, 7–8) argues, in which legend makes the experience of the practicing Christian contemporaneous with *illud tempus*, that mythical time before time.

This uncanny temporality can also help illuminate some of the temporal dynamics of antisemitism, which posits Jews as eternal threats to Christians precisely through a form of temporal collapse, coupled with the charge against the Jews as Christ killers (see Lampert 2001, 249; J. Cohen 2007). We can see this, for example, in the vivid meditation practice of late medieval Christian mystic Margery Kempe (1940, 70–71) and her account of such experiences while on pilgrimage in Jerusalem. Kempe's meditations include a focus on alleged Jewish abuse of Christ during the Passion. This deeply anti-Jewish aspect of medieval Christian ritual meditative practice encourages the participant to collapse time and make themself "present" at the Passion. The Wandering Jew embodies this temporal collapse, which is facilitated through his own memory and his sharing of it. Although the Wandering Jew is regretful and penitent, his original act represents eternal Jewish crime, and his curse is eternal Christian vengeance. This representation illustrates how vengeance is itself a form of memory and of temporal collapse, as vengeance cannot exist without some form of memory, with the initial action and revenge for it forever joined.

Temporal collapse also animates the Jewish memory practices that inform the Wandering Jew tradition. Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi (1996, 17–18) writes about the rabbis seeming to "play with Time as though with an accordion, expanding and collapsing it at will," with many temporal levels "placed in an ever-fluid dialogue" with one another. He also points to how medieval Jewish response to catastrophe, and the collective memory of it, was created through the social framework of remembering previous events already part of the sacred corpus, such as the connections made between *kiddush ha-Shem* as a response to Crusader violence, and images of the Akedah, the binding of Isaac (see also Einbinder 2009). This sort of schematization can be found represented in celebrations of Second Purims, in which the triumph or escape from violence of specific communities was commemorated in relation to the Purim narrative (Yerushalmi 1996, 47–48). Yerushalmi's distinctions between Jewish memory and historiography as well as his periodizations have been subject to critique and debate (see Gribetz and Kaye 2019, 349–50), but his insights are important to us for how they highlight the complexity of Jewish memorial forms. While not equivalent to each other, the temporal "concertina effect" Peter Brown (1981, 81) detects in early Christian sources and Yerushalmi's "accordion" reveal complex temporalities within both Jewish and Christian memory traditions, temporalities that inform the Wandering Jew legend over its centuries of existence (see also Castelli 2004, 13 and 208n18; Schmitt 2001, 55). Theoretical discussions of collective memory and of memory practice tend to rely on traditional periodization models, which posit radical shifts around moments like the French Revolution. I wouldn't deny radical shifts caused by "foundational events" (see Confino 2011), or the impact of less dramatic historical shifts and trends. We can discern, however, the enduring influence of long traditions of memory on the Wandering Jew legend, examples of which we find even today. This enduring influence demonstrates the limits of rigid periodization schemes.

Jewish and Christian temporal regimes are part of how cultural memory is constructed and cultivated within communities through text and through liturgical and ritual practice. I've tried to outline here what I see as the important role of Christian temporalities in the development of the anti-Jewish aspects of the Wandering Jew legend. Jewish and Christian temporal regimes not only clash with each other, they are entangled. Both the Christian and Jewish strands of the Wandering Jew tradition emerge from events that shape community timescapes. The Christian version of the Wandering Jew legend emerges from the Passion narrative and, crucially, focuses on the trauma of the Passion. The traditional Wandering Jew narrative includes an encounter not with the risen Christ as described in the Gospels, but with the suffering Christ on the Via Dolorosa. The Wandering Jew's punishment is to endure an endless stasis between Jesus's violent sacrifice and his eventual return. So too do Jewish versions of the legend derive from a moment of trauma that operates on the scale of time, space, and memory: the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in 70 CE (see Gribetz 2020, 8–13). We will consider the literary tradition that grows out of Jewish trauma, what David G. Roskies (1989) calls the "Literature of Destruction," when we turn to modern representations by writers of Jewish origin such as Heine, Greenberg, Fleg, and Asch. We can also see recognition of the significance of the Second Temple's destruction reflected in a work like the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung*, the subject of chapter 2. This text stresses the Wandering Jew's expulsion from Jerusalem and his later return to find the city destroyed beyond recognition.

Not all versions of the legend are, however, focused on exile and wandering. Medieval and early modern pilgrim accounts, like that of late medieval Dominican friar Felix Fabri, make reference to the Eternal Jew of Jerusalem, who serves as "the last living relic of Jesus' presence on earth." This manifestation of the Wandering Jew speaks not to the Jewish exile from Jerusalem, but to Christian desires for the Holy City, that which they "covet the most, but are unable to possess" (Shagrir 2018, 358). While less prevalent than accounts of the Wandering Jew in exile, this version shares in its temporality. The Wandering Jew's immortality puts him outside the natural flow of time. This temporal displacement is in keeping with the dynamics of Christian supersession, which posits Christianity as the rightful successor of a Judaism portrayed as old and outmoded, as symbolized by the frequent representation of the Wandering Jew as an old man. The "hidden Jew of Jerusalem" may live out his uncanny existence not in exile, but in Jerusalem. Immortality, however, remains the essence of his punishment.

How This Book Works

In addition to the many hundreds of creative works depicting the Wandering Jew legend, we also have a rich body of scholarship dating back at least two centuries (see G. Anderson 1965, 399–413). These studies include illuminating examinations of individual works, but treatments of the legend's *longue durée* tend to be surveys, providing synopses and brief assessments, rather than in-depth readings. *Instrument of Memory* instead highlights specific reworkings of the legend, organized diachronically from the Middle Ages to the present day, and provides in-depth readings of these essential texts.

Part I deals with the medieval and early modern periods, reading Matthew Paris's *Chronica majora* and the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung* to demonstrate how in these texts the Wandering Jew serves as a living reminder of the Christian idea that the Jewish diaspora is a form of vengeful punishment for alleged Jewish actions against Christ. These texts also shape the Wandering Jew's uncanny temporality in ways that make him resemble a Christian relic. Chapter 1 looks at the *Chronica*, where Matthew's Wandering Jew references appear among many other references to Jews, including his mentions of the English monarchy's financial exploitation of the Jewish community, a particularly gruesome ritual murder accusation, and an account of an alleged Jewish-Mongol plot to overthrow Christendom. Matthew depicts the Wandering Jew in ways that make him resemble the many relics, such as the Holy Blood and the Crown of Thorns, that also appear in the *Chronica*. Like these relics, Matthew's Wandering Jew, I will argue, is both a person and a thing (Geary 1986, 169).

Chapter 2 deals with the other most important early Wandering Jew text, the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung*, which features a 1542 encounter between the Wandering Jew and the Lutheran leader Paulus von Eitzen in a Hamburg church. The 1602 pamphlet proved enormously popular and strongly influenced later representations (Neubaur 1884; Băleanú 2011). In the pamphlet, the Wandering Jew becomes, I contend, a particularly Lutheran kind of relic. The Wandering Jew's banishment from Jerusalem and his endless movement, given new emphasis in the *Kurtze Beschreibung*, as well as his name, Ahasver (Ahasuerus), show how he has become an ambulatory *lieu de mémoire*, designed not only to address intra-Christian struggles, but to inspire a specific approach to Jewish communities in German-speaking territories.

Part II moves to the Age of Emancipation and shows how the Wandering Jew morphs again. Some representations alter the legend to acknowledge the pain of Jews who love a culture that does not love them back, others focus on the wanderer's suffering and simultaneously reduced emphasis on his Jewishness. This period saw a flowering of the legend in all forms of media, making choosing texts for this project challenging (see G. Anderson 1965; Davison 2004: 87–119; Felsenstein 1995, 58–89; Körte 2000; P. Rose 1990; and Shapiro 1996). Chapter 3 examines Eugène Sue's 1844 *Le Juif errant* because it is perhaps the most widely read of any work treating the Wandering Jew, even though, as Edgar Allan Poe pointed out, the Wandering Jew (and Jewess) in this novel is not a well-developed figure (Huntington Library, HM 1183, 19–20). In chapter 4, I pair examination of Sue's novel with Heine's representations of the Wandering Jew. Heine, who lived in Paris at the same time as Sue, takes an opposite approach to the legend. His references to the Wandering Jew, scattered across several works, are even briefer than Sue's, but they endow the Wandering Jew with a humanity understood through Jewish cultural memory. Heine is not the first to give the Wandering Jew a voice, but his "Jehuda ben Halevy" makes that voice part of a Jewish chorus that includes the voice of the great Hebrew poet of the poem's title and Heine's own.

In part III, we turn to a cluster of works by four writers and artists, Marc Chagall (1887–1985), Uri Zvi Greenberg, Edmond Fleg (1874–1963), and Sholem Asch (1880–1957), each of whom drew on the Wandering Jew legend during the turmoil, violence, and tragedy of the first half of the twentieth century. These men, whose personal and professional paths crossed in various ways, engage the figure of the Wandering Jew to address escalating catastrophe. Their works are connected because each reimagines the traditional relationship between Jesus and the Wandering Jew. Their representations of Jesus are part of what Matthew Hoffman (2004; 2007) calls the "Jewish reclamation of Jesus," a cultural development in which the Wandering Jew plays an underexamined role. The area commonly known as "the Holy Land," particularly Jerusalem, also plays an important role in these works. This landscape serves as a site of memory through which to consider the Jewish experience in relation to both Europe and the Holy Land, a relationship saturated in memory. Like Heine, each of these creators recognizes the Wandering Jew as entangled in both Christian and Jewish traditions. They are also highly aware of the grave threat faced by the European Jews literally and physically entangled—trapped—in Europe during the Second World War.

In part IV, the legend shifts again, to address the postwar memory of the catastrophic violence inflicted on European Jews by their fellow Europeans, the founding of the State of Israel, the threat of nuclear war, and questions of identity, gender, and power in the post–World War II era. Chapter 9 works with Stefan Heym's 1981 novel *Ahasver*, which includes depiction of the time of Luther. Heym wrote his novel as a critique of a state-sponsored intervention in collective memory: the commemoration of the 1983 "Luther-Year" by the repressive leadership of the German Democratic Republic. Heym reimagines the Wandering Jew legend in order to address state manipulation of the past, including a cultivated collective amnesia about centuries of German antisemitism and its catastrophic consequences.

Chapter 10 addresses works from the recent past. In Eshkol Nevo's *Neuland* (2011) the Wandering Jew legend is used to explore the burden of memory among different generations of Israeli Jews and to question how contemporary Israel compares with the utopian visions of a Jewish state that emerged in the nineteenth century. Dara Horn's novel *Eternal Life* (2018) is notable for being built on a foundation of Jewish cultural memory of the Second Temple. The work eschews any reference to Christian versions of the legend, beyond the connection to the Eternal Jew that her title evokes. Horn's novel innovates by featuring a female Eternal Jew, whose immortality comes not from sin but from sacrifice, and whose personal memory, focused on family, is a source of pain but also of resilience. Sarah Perry's *Melmoth* (2018), in contrast to the Nevo and Horn novels, draws on the Christian tradition of the Wandering Jew legend. The work is an homage to Charles Maturin's 1820 *Melmoth the Wanderer*, a novel of nested stories that feature the demonic immortal Melmoth. While drawing inspiration from *Melmoth the Wanderer* and its gothic depths, Perry also, however, reaches back to the fixed point of the Christian Wandering Jew legend, the life of Christ. Perry innovates by focusing not on the Passion but on the resurrection.

Throughout our exploration of the legend, I will refer to the memory traditions on which the authors rely as Jewish or Christian, but as we will see, the readings of individual texts demonstrate the complex entanglement of the two religious traditions and their cultural memories. The labels of "Jew" and "Christian" will sometimes seem appropriate for our artists. Matthew Paris, after all, was a Benedictine monk, and it seems safe as well to assume a Christian subject position for the author of the *Kurtze Beschreibung*, which advances an interpretation of the legend adapted to early modern Lutheran beliefs. Asch, Chagall, Fleg, Greenberg, Nevo, and Horn all openly identify as Jewish.

Other writers are not so easy to categorize. Sue's *Le Juif errant* combines a vicious attack on the Jesuit order with a critique of the plight of France's poor and working classes. And yet, we will see how much Sue's representation of the Wandering Jew retains a focus on sacrifice modeled on the Passion: Sue relies on the same depictions of Jewish temporality that we find in Matthew's *Chronica*, as well as in the work of polemicists of Sue's own time who combine newly emerging antisemitic formulations with time-worn supersessionist models. Heine, Sue's contemporary, was born into a Jewish family but converted to Christianity in the hope of social advancement, a decision he immediately regretted.[14] Heym, also born into a Jewish family, demonstrated throughout his life a deep commitment to his socialist ideals. His deepest commitment, it could be said, was to his vocation as a writer, a role he thought should be dedicated to speaking truth to power, whoever or whatever that power might be. Contemporary English novelist Sarah Perry has spoken publicly of being raised in a Christian "fundamentalist sect," describing herself as "post religious" (Saner 2016). We will consider how the influence of these varied subject positions can sometimes be discerned, or at least intuited, as we examine each writer's engagement with the legend.

One thing we can be sure of is that while Heine and Heym might not have had strong commitments to Jewish faith and practice, they do share with Asch, Chagall, Fleg, Greenberg, and Horn the experience of living as some sort (or multiple sorts) of outsider within a dominant Christian culture. These writers and artists of Jewish descent are all aware of what Heine (1970, 20:265) calls the "myth of the eternal Jew." They cannot afford not to be. Matthew Paris, Eugène Sue, and the author of the *Kurtze Beschreibung*, in contrast, appear to know little if anything of the Jewish side of the coproduction of the Wandering Jew legend. To them, as to Anderson, the dangers of the unknown or "alien" are imagined rather than existential, a difference we will see reflected in creative works and in scholarship about the Wandering Jew.

As will become clear in these pages, my encounters with the Wandering Jews created by artists of Jewish descent have sparked my curiosity the most. This project centers their voices for several reasons. First, despite the voluminous scholarship on the legend there is still much to say about the treatment of the Wandering Jew by writers like Heine, Fleg, Greenberg, and Asch, whose works are only briefly mentioned or are even omitted from many book-length studies of the legend. I am eager to share my enthusiasm for these Wandering Jew works with an Anglophone audience. Second, close analysis of these works allows us to trace new paths through a long tradition of Jewish and Christian entanglements. The Wandering Jew has been symbolically deployed against Jewish communities, but it has also been used to navigate Jewish and Christian memory traditions in ways that honor lived Jewish experiences. Finally, the legend, while it is not as well known today as in the past, lives on. Earlier examples and scholarship about them continue to stimulate creativity. I hope new understandings of the legend's rich and complex past can inspire its future.

Part I

The Wandering Jew and Christendom

Matthew Paris's thirteenth-century *Chronica majora* and the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung und Erzehlung von einem Juden mit namen Ahasverus* (A Brief Description and Narration Regarding a Jew Named Ahasuerus) are arguably the two most influential early written accounts of the legend of the Wandering Jew. Both the *Chronica* and the *Kurtze Beschreibung* use the Wandering Jew as an instrument of memory, calibrated to reflect their own historical and cultural contexts, which include complex and frequently contentious Jewish-Christian relations. Both narrative accounts center the Wandering Jew's unique attribute: personal and cultural memory of the Passion united in one living person. According to Maurice Halbwachs's ([1925] 1994) theory of collective memory, its direct transmission is limited by the life span of a group's oldest member, but the Wandering Jew serves as an immortal source. Each encounter with him enables what Jan Assmann (2008) calls communicative memory, direct communication of memories drawn from personal experience. This collapse of personal and cultural memory, at the core of the overdetermined temporality of the legend (everything is happening at once, to put it plainly), allows the Wandering Jew's story to do unusual things: he may become a living relic, as in the *Chronica*, or an always-but-never-quite convert who can undo narratives of Jewish rebellion before they begin.

The *Chronica* and the *Kurtze Beschreibung* present encounters with the Wandering Jew as signs of wonder and of Christian truth. Yet, such Christian truth comes at a cost: after all, an instrument can also be a weapon. And, indeed, these two influential sources for the legend contain elements that have been weaponized in the service of Christian anti-Judaism. As with the Wandering Jew's unique blending of personal and collective memory, his punishment has twofold signification. Both the *Chronica* and the *Kurtze Beschreibung* represent the Wandering Jew's curse as a form of vengeance directed not only at an individual, but against a people. The Wandering Jew's cursed state is, of course, the consequence of his individual actions, but it also represents a Christian belief that the Roman destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Temple in 70 CE was a form of divine vengeance against the entire Jewish people for their actions against Christ. In this way the Wandering Jew's curse, which involves his memory of his individual actions, is expanded to include Jewish and Christian collective memory of these two memorial "fixed points"—the events of 70 CE and the Passion of Christ some years earlier—at the heart of both Jewish and Christian iterations of the legend.

The idea that Jewish diasporic life is the result of divine vengeance is not unique to the Wandering Jew legend. An important strand of Christian exegetical interpretations of the story of Cain (Genesis 4:1–15), which scholars see as an inspiration for the Wandering Jew legend, also takes this dual approach (G. Anderson 1965, 3; see also Mellinkoff 1981, 38–39; Thorslev 1962, 92–107). Indeed, we can see biblical exegesis as its own kind of memory tradition, as it provides commentary on what Aleida Assmann (1995) calls a "cultural text," a text so central to memory and tradition that it creates its own reality, the primary example of which is the Bible. Christian exegetical interpretations of this "reality," I believe, inform the legend. Augustine (354–430 CE), whose thinking influences not only the Catholic but also the Protestant tradition, contributed significantly to the Christian exegetical understanding of Cain's punishment as analogous to the Jewish diaspora. Augustine likens Cain's undying wandering to the fate of the "nation of impious, carnal Jews [who] will not die a bodily death [*non corporali morte*]" (*Contra Faustum* 16.9, cited in J. Cohen 1999, 28). The Jewish diaspora that follows the destruction of the Second Temple becomes, in Augustine's eyes, a kind of undeath. The Jews continue to live as Jews among the nations, with their observance of the Jewish faith serving as a Cain-like mark of their sin.

Augustine also views the continued existence of the Jewish people as something that serves Christendom: the Jews exist to preserve the Old Testament for Christians, providing "proof to all peoples that Christians have not forged biblical documents concerning Jesus." Augustine uses a range of metaphors to describe this function for the Jews who "serve Christians as guardians (*custodes*) of their books, librarians (*librarii*), desks (*scriniaria*), and servants who carry the books of their master's children to school (*capsarii*) but must wait outside during class" (J. Cohen 1999, 36). The Jews are also like "milestones" (*lapides ad milliaria*) that help a traveler find his way, "while themselves remaining senseless and immobile" (Augustine 1959, 61, cited in Cohen J. 1999, 36). Each of these many Augustinian metaphors frames Jewish existence as a form of service to Christians. For Augustine, then, Jews are instruments of memory. His thinking transforms Jewish cultural memory into a vehicle to support Christian spiritual claims.

This instrumentalization of Jewish existence also forms the core of Augustine's "doctrine of Jewish witness," centered on his interpretation of Psalm 59:12 ("Slay them not, lest at any time they forget your law; scatter them in your might")[1] as applying to the Jewish people after the coming of Christ. The leader of the Cistercian order, Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), for example, one of the initiators of the Second Crusade (1147–50), drew on Augustine's doctrine of Jewish witness to speak out against violence against Jews at the hands of Crusaders. Peter the Venerable (1092–1156), abbot of the important Benedictine abbey at Cluny, was also deeply engaged in intellectual and ideological debates about the Crusades and in both anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim polemic. Like Bernard, Peter referenced Augustine's use of Psalm 59:12 as an interdict against anti-Jewish violence. Peter, however, emphasizes that this preservation is itself a form of punishment (J. Cohen 1999, 246–47). In his treatise *Adversus Iudaeorum inveteratam duritiem* (Against the Inveterate Obstinacy of the Jews) Peter addresses the Jews directly about the doctrine of Jewish witness:

> "Slay them not"? Actually, he does not want you to be preserved for honor but for opprobrium, not for your advantage but as a spectacle for the world [*sed ad mundi spectaculum*]; he wants you to be preserved like the fratricide Cain. Cain, who said to God when the latter upbraided him for spilling his brother's blood, "All who find me will slay me," heard, "Never will this be so." But, "You will be cursed upon the earth," and, "You will be a fugitive and wanderer upon it." Thus are you cursed, thus are you fugitives, thus were you made insecure upon the earth after you spilled the blood of Christ, your brother with respect to the flesh but your Lord with respect to deity, so that, in what is worse than death, for the duration of the present age you are made a reproach among men, while for the future forevermore you will be a mockery among the demons. (*Adversus Judaeos* 5, cited from Peter the Venerable 2013, 232; for the Latin see Peter the Venerable 1985, 141)

The Christian exegetical transference of Cain's curse of undeath for an individual crime unto the entire Jewish people makes Cain a sign, in Peter's words, a "spectacle" for those who encounter him. In this formulation, the Jews—the "you" that Peter addresses throughout his polemic—are to be punished for their role in the Passion, a suffering that they must endure until the Second Coming. The punishment of Cain and the punishment of the Jewish people in diaspora therefore mirror each other. We can also readily discern the imprint of this exegetical notion of an eternal, scattered Jewish witness in the Wandering Jew legend.

As a living embodiment of the memory of the Passion, the Wandering Jew is not only like the Cain of Christian exegesis. He is also like a Christian relic. Relics are instruments of memory. Revered "contact relics" of the Passion, such as pieces of the True Cross or the Crown of Thorns, derive their numinous power from their contact with Christ. These and other relics bring the suffering and holiness of the venerated into the time of the venerator. The numinous presence of the relic collapses this time, bridging the historical and the eternal (see Castelli 2004, 13). The Wandering Jew, who shares with the relic a strange dual status as both person and thing, exists in the same moment as those he encounters, but also in the historical past, in his unceasing personal memory of the time of the Passion. This uncanny temporal fusion also allows him to serve as a sign of the end time. Both Matthew Paris and the anonymous author of the *Kurtze Beschreibung* see the Wandering Jew as a sign of the Passion, of the present day, and of the yet-to-come.

The *Kurtze Beschreibung* adds yet another historical layer to the Wandering Jew's complex temporality by introducing a new name for him: Ahasverus [Ahasuerus]. This name evokes the Persian king who rules the Jews in the Purim story, introducing reference to Jewish memory practice, as the annual Purim holiday celebrates Jewish deliverance from the plot of the villain Haman, advisor to King Ahasuerus. The Purim festival allows for the celebration of other instances of deliverance as well (Yerushalmi 1996, 46–50). We will find in both the *Chronica* and the *Kurtze Beschreibung* complex temporal layers that shape the Wandering Jew as an instrument of memory throughout the later tradition.

The Wandering Jew's unique characteristics as an instrument of memory also shape how locality figures into his representations. It is not only the "when" to which he carries the memory of the Passion that matters, but the "where." This is also reflected in the early sources. Matthew Paris and other thirteenth-century sources place the Wandering Jew in Armenia, an area Matthew locates near Jerusalem, where he says that Noah's ark can also be found. This placement is significant because after Christian Crusaders lost control of Jerusalem and its environs, Armenia remained a Christian foothold in a region controlled by Muslims. The Wandering Jew's appearance there signaled not just past and present, but also future Christian hopes and expectations. Similarly, in the early seventeenth century, the *Kurtze Beschreibung* looks to a Jerusalem under Ottoman control while also describing "sightings" of the Wandering Jew in European locations that reflect contemporary tensions between Christians and Jews and among Christians in the wake of the Protestant Reformation.

All these elements—the Wandering Jew's strange temporality, the importance of location, and the role of memory (as punishment and as sign)—persist in iterations of the legend into the present day. We will delve into the workings of these elements in these two important early sources so that we can discern their influence on later imaginings of the legend.

One

The Wandering Jew as Relic in Matthew Paris's *Chronica majora*

By the thirteenth century early versions of the Wandering Jew legend merged and traveled to western Europe with a body of Eastern oral tradition, catalyzed by the Crusades (G. Anderson 1965, 17).[1] Written reference to the Wandering Jew legend first appears in a Latin chronicle from Italy in an entry for the year 1223. In this text, *Ignoti monachi Cisterciensis S. Mariae de Ferraria chronica*, the wanderer is described as a Jew who has been seen in Armenia and who has been cursed to wander the earth since the Passion, when he assaulted Christ (Gaudenzi 1888, 38). The next known reference to the Wandering Jew, also recorded as part of an Armenian account, appears in Roger of Wendover's *Flores Historiarum*. We do not know whether Roger, Matthew's predecessor as chronicler of the abbey of Saint Albans, knew the Italian source. Because both Roger and Matthew relate that the monks of Saint Albans ask for information about the Wandering Jew, however, it seems clear that by the early thirteenth century the story of the Wandering Jew was circulating widely, perhaps primarily orally (G. Anderson 1965, 18). The Wandering Jew legend, therefore, was already part of cultural memory when Matthew Paris (d. 1259) took over from Roger of Wendover as the Saint Albans chronicler. Matthew includes mention of the Wandering Jew in an entry for the year 1228, adapted from Roger's entry, and provides a new entry about the Wandering Jew for 1252.

I focus on the *Chronica majora* as it is presented in two manuscripts currently housed in the Parker Library at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge University (CCCC), with reference to a related manuscript version, the *Historia Anglorum*, preserved in the British Library. The wide-ranging *Chronica* comprises nearly 3,500 pages in its nineteenth-century edition, and, as Björn Weiler (2009, 257) has pointed out, it is often treated as a "storehouse of useful facts, or of entertaining anecdotes." Matthew's *Chronica* proceeds along a linear temporal frame, starting at the Creation, as does Roger of Wendover's *Flores Historiarum*, Matthew's source for entries until 1235. The *Chronica* continues along year by year until 1259, the year of Matthew's death, and, in this way, displays a hallmark characteristic of the annal form (S. Lewis 1987, 9).[2]

The chronicle's apparently linear form and wide-ranging scope can obscure how Matthew himself appears to have viewed his project. Matthew and his contemporaries used the chronicle form to present history in a way that provided moral guidance, helping readers understand events within God's larger plan. These events included not only wonders, disasters, and the supernatural, but also the actions of human beings in the worlds of secular politics and the church, and among the people more generally (Weiler 2009, 257–58). Matthew makes clear his goal of providing moral edification in his preface to the *Chronica*, where he compares his work to that of Moses the lawgiver and to that of all those who seek to write the "sacred page." He commends virtue and condemns vice out of fear and love of God (Matthew 1872–84 [hereafter *CM*], 1:1–2; see also Weiler 2009, 258–59).

Matthew also desires to record events for posterity, providing a record shaped not only by messianic expectation, but by a sense of history (*CM*, 5:197). Matthew's chronicle is deeply engaged with the present, with the political struggles between Frederick II and the papacy and with the reign of Henry III and the politics of England, but his temporal frame of reference always stretches back to the time of Christ and forward to Christ's awaited return. This simultaneous engagement of past, present, and future, along with the expectation that they must be read in relation to one another, is the main temporal mode for Matthew as historian and of the *Chronica* itself. Within that collapsed temporality, the Wandering Jew functions as a kind of contact relic, his relic status made possible by his vexed temporal status.

The *Chronica* and Notions of Time

Chronicles, whose generic name derives from the Greek word for time, *chronos*, typically proceed year by year, but they derive their historiography from the traditions of the ancient world. While the annal form may seem straightforwardly linear, annals are believed to have developed from marginal and interlinear notation in early monastic Easter tables, records used to calculate the date for Easter.[3] The Easter date depends on the Jewish lunar calendar and the date for Passover. The relationship of Christianity to its Jewish past is thereby structurally embedded in the formal origins of Christian annals and chronicles even as those genres may seem to follow a straightforward recording of events year by year (see Carlebach 2011, 8–11; Nothaft 2014; Krummel 2022). The Christian measure of time is, therefore, another type of coproduction, although one based in separation rather than integration. Indeed, the "entire enterprise of the Christian computus" used to calculate the Easter date is based on "the need to elude the Jewish calendar" (Carlebach 2011, 117). The Christian practice of computing the date for Easter goes back to the Council of Nicea (325) and is part of a conscious break from the Jewish calendar on the part of Christian leaders. The emperor Constantine declared of the new practice for calculating the date of Easter: "First of all, it appeared an unworthy thing that in the celebration of this most holy feast we should follow the practice of the Jews, who have impiously defiled their hands with enormous sin. . . . Let us then have nothing in common with the detestable Jewish crowd; for we have received from our Saviour a different way" (cited in Carlebach 2011, 8). The Christian *computus* and the Christian chronicle form itself were bound from their origins to the same anti-Jewish accusations that animate the Wandering Jew legend. Christianity is always tied to its Jewish past, but the Easter table is a technology designed to sever the innate connections between the two faiths. Jewish knowledge and practice are used without acknowledgment; indeed, Jewish cultural memory is renounced. As Eviatar Zerubavel (1982, 288) points out, Christians strove to ensure that Easter never coincided with Passover, a maneuver that has only served to "immortalize" recognition of that very observance.

Matthew's design for the Easter table in the *Chronica* is innovative. He used a vovelle, a wheel chart, with a lunar table and other data written on a separate piece of vellum, attaching the vovelle to the manuscript folio with a metal pin, allowing for rotation (CCCC MS 26 fol. 5r; see S. Lewis 1987, 11). This table forms part of the *Chronica*'s front matter, which also includes a map and genealogical information. The Easter table's round shape creates a visual echo with Matthew's illustration of the heptarchy of Britain, a diagram of Britain's original seven kingdoms, stretching back to their mythical founding by Wodan's sons. King Alfred forms the center of this image, the beginning of a genealogy of English kings, which is followed by materials for Saint Albans, including the Easter table (Connolly 2009, 21).[4] Matthew's design thus brings together his preoccupations with the Christian and English pasts. These pasts are represented as entangled even as their relationship to a Jewish past is obscured. Matthew's approach to the past frames his representation of the Wandering Jew, which should be understood within Matthew's historiographical scheme and within the physical makeup of the *Chronica* manuscripts themselves.

Announced by his innovative Easter table, Matthew's Christian temporal frame reveals itself in the body of the *Chronica*'s text as well. Matthew sensed that the world might end in 1250, and his final entry for that year sums up the preceding fifty years, which he regarded as unprecedented (*CM*, 5:191–98). Matthew saw such great significance in 1250 because, like the Wandering Jew, he looked forward to the Second Coming with both anticipation and fear. Matthew's belief in the imminence of the end time shapes the *Chronica*, providing what Daniel Kevin Connolly (2009, 13) calls its "apocalyptic scaffolding." The year 1250 holds additional significance for Matthew because, as he writes, "at the expiration of this year, there had elapsed since the year of grace twenty-five half-centuries, that is, one thousand two hundred and fifty years" (Roger 1849 [hereafter *FH*], 2:405; *CM*, 5:191). Matthew's apocalyptic expectation is anchored in the Christian past.

Matthew concludes his entries for 1250 with statements about the purpose of the *Chronica* and some verse:

> Here ends the chronicle of Brother Matthew Paris, monk of St. Albans. He committed to writing for the benefit of posterity, out of love for God and for the honor of St. Alban, the English protomartyr, in order that the memory of modern events might not be destroyed by age or oblivion.
>
> Since first the Virgin bore her son, now Phoebus
> One thousand, fifty and two hundred times
> His annual course has run; in all that time
> Easter has never fallen on the sixth day
> Preceding April's calends, in a year
> That ends half a century, save the year now ended.
> (*FH*, 2:410–11; *CM*, 5:197–98)

Even when contemplating judgment day, the *Chronica* measures Christian time not only in epochs or years, but also in days. This segment, which Matthew anticipated might conclude his *Chronica*, ties back to the Easter tables in its front matter. The year 1250, a date that draws its primary significance from its relation to the date of Christ's incarnation, is remarkable for other reasons that Matthew goes on to list, including storms, earthquakes, and fires, but also because of basic calendrical time. The timing for Easter in 1250 that Matthew finds noteworthy in the lines above would presumably have been calculated through the use of Matthew's opening Easter table. As with the genealogy at the beginning of the *Chronica*, this daily passage of Christian time is rooted in England's soil, even the very chalky soil of Chiltern. Numerous illustrations—likely in Matthew's own hand or at least of his design—grace the *Chronica* alongside his maps and Easter table. As Binski (2006, 88) observes, all these features provide a complex framework of meaning for the *Chronica*. Matthew's entries about the Wandering Jew must be understood, then, within the *Chronica*'s, including its temporality.

The Wandering Jew Entries

1228

Roger of Wendover's *Flores Historiarum* records that in 1228, an Armenian archbishop made pilgrimage to England to visit relics and holy places. He arrived with letters of recommendation from the pope and, weary from his journey, stopped at Saint Albans to rest. Using an interpreter, the archbishop entered into dialogue with the Saint Albans monks and inquired about the customs of England. The Armenian archbishop also shared information with the monks, relating remarkable things from the East (*CM*, 3:161–64). The English monks asked him "whether he had ever seen or heard anything of Joseph, a man of whom there was much talk in the world, who, when our Lord suffered, was present and spoke to him, and who is still alive in evidence of the Christian faith" (*FH*, 2:513; *CM*, 3:161). The archbishop, whose words Roger says were relayed in French, answered that he knew the wanderer well. In Armenia, the two had several times shared a table and conversed. The monks pressed on, asking what had occurred between Christ and this man. The archbishop then recounted the tale of Joseph, who was present when Pilate condemned Jesus. The archbishop's account emphasizes the role of the Jews, echoing how their alleged culpability and cruelty are stressed in Passion meditations, Grail narratives, and other medieval accounts and remembrances of the Passion (see Lampert-Weissig 2007).

In the archbishop's telling of the wanderer's tale, it is the Jews who seized Jesus, goaded Pilate, and dragged Jesus away. At this point, as Jesus was leaving, a man named Cartaphilus (later baptized as Joseph), "a porter of the hall in Pilate's service," struck Jesus on the back with his hand. Cartaphilus taunted Christ: "'Go quicker, Jesus, go quicker, why do you loiter?' And Jesus looking back on him with a severe countenance said to him, 'I am going, and you will wait till I return'" (*FH*, 2:513; *CM*, 3:162). Cartaphilus mocks Christ for "loitering" in the hall, goading him on to his doom, and for this insult Cartaphilus receives a punishment fitting his crime, an endlessly cycling lifetime. In another context, such a life could be seen as highly desirable, even as a kind of blessing. Cartaphilus does not decline into old age; when he reaches the age of one hundred, he is continually renewed back to thirty years old, his age at the time of the Passion. Despite this physical renewal, however, Cartaphilus's long life is a punishment, as is reflected in his demeanor. Many come to Cartaphilus from all over the world in order to hear his firsthand account of events in the life of Christ and the beginnings of the Christian faith: "all this he relates without smiling or levity of conversation, as one who is well practiced in the sorrow and the fear of God, always looking forward to the coming of Jesus Christ, lest at that last judgment he should find him in anger, whom, when on his way to death, he had provoked to just vengeance" (*FH*, 2:514; *CM*, 3:163). In calling Cartaphilus's punishment *dignam ultionem* (just vengeance), Matthew invokes the tradition that views the fall of Jerusalem and the Roman destruction of the Temple as vengeance for Jewish perfidy, especially as portrayed in medieval texts such as the Latin *Vindicta Salvatoris* and its later vernacular versions, such as *La Vengeance de Nostre-Seigneur* (on *vindicta*, *ultio*, and *venjance*, see Throop 2011, 5–6). So, too, was this vengeance associated in the Christian exegetical tradition with another punished wanderer, Cain. Even as the Wandering Jew's temporal orientation is said to look forward to Christ's messianic return, the text's language continues to point backward with vengeful memory.

In later versions of the Wandering Jew legend, notably the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung*, which we will examine in the next chapter, the Wandering Jew's punishment entails him being forced to leave his family home in Jerusalem instantly; he will not return to Jerusalem again until after the Roman destruction of the Second Temple, finding the city utterly devastated. The narrative of "just vengeance," which is connected as well to stories of Joseph of Arimathea and Saint Veronica, creates new apocryphal typologies, making the temporal layers of Christian history even more numerous and complex (see Birenbaum 2010; Lindner 1996; Throop 2011, 38–49).[5] Cartaphilus's baptismal name connects him to Joseph, husband of the Virgin Mary, and also to Joseph of Arimathea, who is part of the "new apocryphal gospel" of the Grail in this period, a literary tradition about which Matthew may have been aware.[6] The destruction of Jerusalem, as the prime example of "just vengeance," becomes yet another new typology, which not only configures the relationship between the Old and New Testaments, but also relates them to future actions that echo and fulfill the Passion. This "just vengeance" has no temporal limits, at least until the end time.

In a further apocryphal typology, Cartaphilus is converted to the Christian faith and baptized by Ananias, who also baptized Saint Paul. This detail provides yet another layer of temporal complexity. Both Cartaphilus and Paul are persecutors of Christians who then experience radically redemptive conversion experiences and go on to spread the word of Christ, in Paul's case to enduring effect and in the Wandering Jew's through an endless endurance. At his baptism, when Cartaphilus takes on the name of Joseph, he becomes a holy man of humble demeanor. The wanderer is not talkative, but when asked he "tells of the events of the old times, and of the events which occurred at the suffering and resurrection of our Lord, and of the witnesses of the resurrection." Joseph is sought after for his knowledge, and to "men of authority, he explains all doubts on the matters on which he is questioned" (*FH*, 2:513; *CM*, 3:163). He accepts no gifts for his answers, living ascetically and ever in the hope that he will eventually be redeemed.

Matthew's 1228 chronicle entry about the Wandering Jew differs from Roger's version in only a few details. When Cartaphilus cycles back in age from one hundred to thirty, he is healed as from a kind of illness and then transported into ecstasy. Matthew illustrates this with Psalm 103:5, "My youth is renewed as the eagle's." The apocalyptic dimensions of Cartaphilus's fear of the Lord (*timore Domini*) are emphasized, since he dreads a Christ returned in fire to judge the world (*CM*, 3:162–63; see S. Lewis 1987, 302–3).[7] This emphasis on judgment seems to mark Matthew Paris's preoccupation with the end time. The wanderer, like all Christians, anticipates final judgment, and his miraculous existence serves as a warning to the reader that their own sinfulness will also be judged.

Matthew concludes the episode somewhat differently than Roger does, by elaborating on the different wages of different sins. Paul sins in ignorance and is ultimately saved, Matthew Paris writes, as is Peter. Judas, in contrast, betrays the Lord out of greed and receives due punishment. Cartaphilus longs for a kind of conversion for the good, unlike the eternally damned Judas. This characterization of Cartaphilus carries echoes of both Paul and Judas, both Jews inextricably interwoven into the early Christian story, as Cartaphilus is. Cartaphilus travels widely telling of the life of Christ, an itinerant life with some parallels to Saint Paul's, but, like Judas, he has committed a thoroughly repugnant act against the Savior, and the consequences of this crime cling to him.

In describing Cartaphilus's hopes for redemption, Matthew not only quotes Luke 23:34 as Roger does, but also uses Ovid's *Fasti* (1.32): "Erroremque suum quo tueatur habet" (and for his error he might urge a plea) (*CM*, 3:163–64; Ovid 1996, 4–5). Matthew uses quotations from Roman authors, particularly Ovid, throughout the *Chronica*, often to make a point about contemporary politics (see Marshall 1939, 467–68). These early lines from the *Fasti* are from a discussion of the Roman calendar year and a defense of Romulus's belief that the year should only be ten months long, in accordance with the period of human gestation. This Ovidian quote is apt because Cartaphilus's hoped-for redemption would be a kind of rebirth, and a final release from the uncanny seventy-year life cycle that he has endured for centuries. The choice of the *Fasti* quote also links Cartaphilus to the importance of calendrical time in the *Chronica*, a text of vast historical scope that is nevertheless shaped by the diurnal rhythms of the Christian calendar.

1252

In his 1252 entry, Matthew records more visitors from Armenia, described as a place thirty days' journey from Jerusalem (*CM*, 5:340–41). The Armenian guests themselves resemble Cartaphilus in their asceticism and, with their long beards and pale faces, seem the source of later physical descriptions of the Eternal Jew. They once again tell his tale. This time the visitors also speak of a great preoccupation of Matthew's in the *Chronica*, the Mongols, whose destructive path he saw as presaging the apocalypse. The Armenians bring news that the Mongols—or, as Matthew calls them, Tartars—have been driven back to whence they came, not by the actions of men, but through God's vengeance:

> These Armenians, in reply to questions which were put to them, as they seemed to be men worthy of belief, asserted as a fact, that the Tartars had, through the vengeance of God rather than man, been so diminished in numbers by a deadly disease amongst themselves, as well as by the swords of their enemies, that they were completely overcome, and were compelled to return to their former localities. Indeed, the people of the West might be assured that such an awful and destructive calamity had never visited the world. (Matthew 1853 [hereafter *EH*], 2:532; *CM*, 5:340)

Matthew uses the same word for "vengeance" as he did in discussing the fate of the Wandering Jew in the 1228 entry (from the verb *ulciscor*). He thereby links the fate of the Tartars with other forms of divine vengeance, such as that enacted against the Wandering Jew and the Jews more generally (Lewis and Short 1879, s.v. "ulciscor"). Vengeance, we should recall, is an act related to memory, retribution taken in response to a past action, an action neither forgiven nor forgotten. The vengeance enacted can be personal (as in the case of Cartaphilus), political, or even global in scale, as with the narratives of the fall of Jerusalem, or as in Matthew's belief that it is divine wrath that stops the advance of Mongol forces.

Along with this sign of divine action, the Armenians reassert the continued existence of the Wandering Jew: "They also stated that they knew, without a doubt, that Joseph, who saw Christ when about to be crucified, and who is awaiting the day when he will judge us all, is still living, as is his wont; and this circumstance is one of the wonderful events of the world, and a great proof of the Christian faith" (*EH*, 2:532; *CM*, 5:341). Both the disease afflicting the Mongols and the curse of Cartaphilus are figured as retributive curses, punishments for past deeds. The Wandering Jew stands, then, as a sign not only of hope and faith in uncertain times, but of a divine justice that never forgets.

The Wandering Jew in Armenia

The Saint Albans accounts of Armenian guests are taken by historians as evidence of travel by Armenians to western Europe and of western European presence in Armenian territory (Evans 2018, 40). I am interested less, though, in whether these conversations actually occurred, and more in how they serve as a context for the Wandering Jew. The 1223 Italian chronicle entry, the Saint Albans chronicle entries, and—as I will discuss shortly—Matthew's description of Armenia for the Palestine map he drew for his *Historia Anglorum* all closely associate the Wandering Jew with Armenia.[8] What can we make of this connection? A clue is to be found in his symbolic visualization for Armenia on the *Chronica* map of the itinerary to Jerusalem, where Matthew draws Noah's ark atop Mount Ararat. This image unites God's destruction of the world through the flood, materially attested by the ark, with the redemption achieved through the Passion, the memory of which is guarded by the Wandering Jew, who now inhabits the same place where the ark still stands. Jean-Claude Schmitt (2001, 61) calls this formulation a "double-memory" linking the Wandering Jew with the ark.

We find a similar connection in a less-referenced mention to Joseph Cartaphilus in Matthew's *Historia Anglorum*, this time in a map legend for Armenia: "In Armenia is Noah's Ark. Toward these regions, that is to say, the north, twenty days [journey] from Jerusalem, is Armenia, which is Christian, where Noah's Ark is, which still exists. There dwells Joseph Cartaphilus, who saw where our Lord was led to be crucified; Ananias, who baptized St. Paul, baptized him."[9] The *Historia Anglorum* map notation thus also emphasizes the importance of Noah's ark, which remains in Armenia as a site of memory and sign of divine reconciliation. Humans survived Noah's flood through God's grace. Cartaphilus's fate likewise represents a form of punishment that will end in forgiveness. Both the ark and the Wandering Jew are enduring tangible remnants of fixed points in the past—the flood and the Passion—that are also signs of a redemptive future.[10]

Cartaphilus's location in Armenia holds additional significance. Matthew's references to Armenia in the maps for both the *Chronica* and the *Historia Anglorum* indicate that Armenia is Christian territory. By 1252, Armenia was one of the last Christian footholds in the region near Jerusalem.[11] In 1228, when Roger made his first entry about Joseph Cartaphilus, Frederick II negotiated for some regained Christian control in Jerusalem, which had been lost to Saladin's forces at the Battle of Hattin in 1187. This Christian influence in Jerusalem lasted until 1244, the year of the Khorezmian conquest of the city and massacre of Christians. Matthew relates the 1244 events in dark detail, including a graphic image of the massacre (CCCC MS 16, fol. 170v). For Matthew, the Khorezmian conquest marked a turning point in his outlook, intensifying his belief that the end time was nigh (S. Lewis 1987, 289–90, and see 269–90). For the Christians in the two regions of Armenia, Greater Armenia and the kingdom of Cicilia, the situation was extremely precarious. The king of Cicilia, Hetum I, was the first Christian to negotiate a treaty with the Mongols. Hetum had allies in western Europe, including Louis IX, the king of France, and ambitions to have his kingdom become a regional Christian power (Evans 2018, 35). The story of the Wandering Jew, with its memory of the Passion and promise of redemption, serves in Matthew's texts as a marker of enduring Christian presence in a tumultuous world. For Matthew, the Wandering Jew is a sign that while Christians may have lost Jerusalem for the time being, their time will come again. Like Joseph Cartaphilus, they must wait.[12]

Matthew's Visualization of the Wandering Jew

Although Matthew made only minor changes to Roger's 1228 account of the Wandering Jew, the drawing he made to accompany this entry "deviates so radically from Roger's text that it seems almost independent of it" (S. Lewis

1987, 303). One striking difference between the text and the visualization is location. Both Roger's and Matthew's textual accounts speak of Cartaphilus as a porter in Pilate's court, where, they tell us, the infamous exchange between Cartaphilus and Christ takes place. Matthew's illustration, in contrast, places the encounter on the road to Calvary, after Christ has taken up the cross. The difference in location is important because an essential feature of Matthew's visual representation is the contrast between how Christ moves forward and how the Wandering Jew is left behind. Placing the event on the road to Calvary helps accomplish this effect. A graceful, almost spry Christ turns backward to face an older, hunched man, with their dialogue shown in banners.[13] Christ seems to move forward even as he glances back; the flowing banners add to the sense of Christ's movement, emphasizing a contrast to the stationary man facing him (Amishai-Maisels 2006, 60). The Wandering Jew appears stuck, both spatially and temporally, in Christ's wake.[14] In visualizing an encounter between a Christ on the move and a Jew stuck in place, Matthew visualizes denial of Jewish coevalness.

Neither Roger nor Matthew refers textually to Cartaphilus as a Jew. Scholars have used Matthew's drawing of the Wandering Jew to confirm the wanderer's Jewish identity (see fig. 1). The figure Matthew depicts as standing still on the page is marked as Jewish not simply by his bulbous nose, profile positioning, and beard, but also by his mattock, long associated with Cain and through Cain with the Jews (S. Lewis 1987, 303).[15] The wanderer's tool droops downward, making him a strikingly unenergetic contrast to the younger Christ, who stands upright and poised, merely pausing as he moves forward energetically despite his carrying of the cross, which is massively larger and heavier than the mattock. The mattock's downward slant not only symbolizes the weight of Cartaphilus's sinfulness, but also creates a visual echo of the fallen or broken lance of allegorical representations of the synagogue, as well as a contrast to the cross, borne upright, even jauntily, by Christ (see Rowe 2011; Seiferth 1970).

Matthew's choice to depict the wanderer as an old man is especially interesting given that the text tells us that the Wandering Jew is thirty years old at the time of the Passion, roughly the same age as Jesus (*CM*, 3:162). The Wandering Jew's aged appearance and lagging stance not only visually reinforce the temporal dynamic of Christ's curse, but also visualize supersessionist representations of Jews and Judaism. Christian supersessionism, the idea that Christianity is the true fulfillment of Jewish belief and prophecy, represents Jews as old, worn, and defeated. In the supersessionist scheme, Judaism's meaning has been both fulfilled and transcended by Christianity.

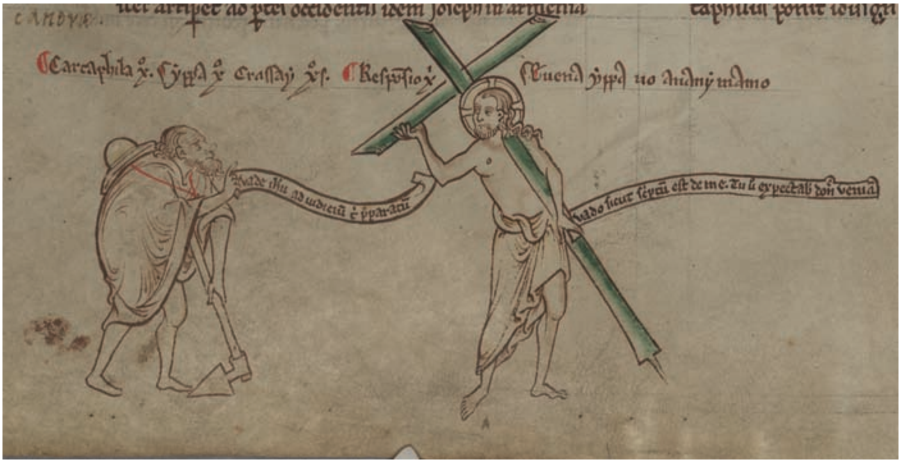


Fig. 1. Image of the Wandering Jew, created by Matthew Paris in the *Chronica majora*, part II, thirteenth century. Corpus Christi College Cambridge MS 16, fol. 74v (detail).
Reprinted by permission from the Parker Library, Cambridge.

According to Suzanne Lewis (1987, 303), Matthew presents "the encounter between Christ and Cartaphilus as the ineluctable unfolding of a predetermined sequence of events . . . infusing the legend with the gravity and ongoing efficacy of a scriptural text." This rendering of the legend as "ineluctable" reflects the sense of prophetic momentum that underlies belief in Christian supersession. Supersession posits a triumph over Judaism that renders Jews and Judaism as both defunct and stuck in time, forced to wait for prophesied release and redemption.

Cartaphilus's garb, however, adds a paradoxical twist to this depiction. Lewis (1987, 303) describes the wanderer's attire as that of a peasant, but as Ziva Amishai-Maisels (2006, 60) has shown, the Wandering Jew has much in common with the pilgrim, as Cartaphilus's hat seems to signal. This interpretation allows us to read the mattock as an inversion of the pilgrim's traditional staff. Instead of helping the wanderer forward, the mattock's iron end slows his progress. This implement then not only becomes an emblem of the wanderer's sin, but also links his transgression both to the first act of violence—Cain's murder of Abel—and to the momentous violence the Jews allegedly committed against Christ at the time of the Passion. Lewis has suggested that this mattock also alludes to the connection made between

Cain and the Jews by Augustine, which as we saw in the introduction to this section was part of the Christian exegetical tradition, itself a form of cultural memory (*Contra Faustum* 12.12–13, cited in J. Cohen 1999, 28). Cain's sins, the wanderer's sins, and, by implication, the sins of all Jews collapse together. The time between these events folds into a single moment in a way we have already discussed in the introduction in relation to the entangled dynamics of Jewish-Christian time and memory. This collapse of time also reminds us of those dual temporal planes that Aron Gurevich (1985) tells us medieval people experienced simultaneously. Jewish crimes against Christians are, once again, portrayed not only in material terms, but in temporal ones, as the Passion disrupts and transcends diurnal temporality.

The wanderer is forced to linger, suspended in this moment of temporal collapse. He is, however, not only caught in an uncanny temporality, but also trapped between Jewish and Christian identities. His encounter with Christ converts him, but he is still always—eternally, as his German name emphasizes—a Jew. He remains endlessly trapped in what Steven F. Kruger (2013, 24) calls the "and yet and yet and yet" stage of conversion. His state reflects how medieval Christians typically regarded their Jewish contemporaries: he exists in a kind of spiritual suspended animation. From the perspective of his own journey, however, the Wandering Jew is a type of pilgrim, attempting to move forward both literally and spiritually, but doomed instead to repeat endlessly the moment when he insulted the Savior. He is doomed, then, by perpetually living memory. His entire existence becomes the penitent journey of the pilgrim, even while he can be seen as a type of contact relic of Christ to those who will later encounter him, serving as a physical bridge between their own time and the time of the Passion.

The Wandering Jew as Relic

Locating the fateful encounter between Jesus and the Wandering Jew on the Via Dolorosa also allows Matthew to feature the cross in his depiction. Suzanne Lewis (1987, 304) has suggested that this, along with the other differences between Matthew's image and his text, reflects a recurring and "strong preoccupation with relics, miracles, and sacred images associated with the True Cross."[16] Lewis (1987, 303) notes that the dark green cross that Jesus carries in Matthew's illustration has a spike at the bottom of its vertical shaft, thereby resembling a processional cross. This detail makes "the instrument of the Passion . . . traverse time and space from the Crucifixion in Jerusalem to the medieval present in a visible reflection of the legend's central temporal juxtapositions."[17] Through this image of the cross, itself a holy relic, Matthew visualizes the temporal collapse at the heart of the Wandering Jew legend.

In the *Chronica*, Matthew describes several important moments where contact relics, *brandea*, including a piece of the True Cross, have been brought to Europe (see Merback 2012, 194; S. Lewis 1987, 304–12). In 1240, the king of France obtained the Crown of Thorns from the emperor of Constantinople and had it ceremoniously placed in his chapel in Paris. Matthew's account notes that the crown was made by the Jews, who placed it on Christ's head (*CM*, 4:75). In an entry for 1241, Matthew recounts in great detail how the French king had also obtained the True Cross and placed it alongside his other wonderful relics, which included the body of Edmund of Canterbury, the head of the lance that pierced Christ's side, and the sponge used to torment him with vinegar. The relics in the king of France's chapel were of such spiritual importance that the "pope granted an indulgence of forty days to all who went to them in the chapel at Paris for the sake of paying their devotions" (*EH*, 1:325; *CM*, 4:92).

This concentration of contact relics of Christ in France is an important subtext for Matthew's entry about King Henry III's gift of some of Christ's blood to Westminster in 1247, an event that the king specifically requested that Matthew himself record for posterity. King Henry ordered all his nobles to assemble at Westminster on the feast of Saint Edward to install a portion of Christ's blood, which had been sent to England from Jerusalem. The king himself carried the crystalline vial containing the blood with great ceremony and care to the altar. "Finally, he presented and made an offer of it, as a priceless gift, and one which had made England illustrious, to God, the church of St. Peter at Westminster, to his beloved Edward, and the holy brethren who at that place minister to God and his saints" (*EH*, 2:241; *CM*, 4:642).

Matthew recounts some of the sermon preached by the bishop of Norwich on the occasion. The bishop emphasized that this blood relic was the most holy of all relics: "In truth, the cross is a most holy thing, on account of the more holy shedding of Christ's blood upon it, not the blood-shedding holy on account of the cross." This relic's power transfers to English soil. Those who come to visit the relic in this English place will receive a remission of penances for six years and one hundred forty days (*EH*, 2:241–42; *CM*, 4:642–43). The sermon declares the English king to be the most Christian of princes, a holiness that led to the bestowing of the treasure of Christ's blood by the patriarch on the English king and on England. This assertion of the spiritual supremacy of the relics obtained by the English king is in keeping with the importance of the English nation in Matthew's *Chronica*. As Björn

Weiler (2009, 271) asserts, throughout his oeuvre Matthew "sought to celebrate and maintain the memory of England's prominence in Latin Christendom."[18] We should also note that Matthew describes Saladin's victory at Hattin as the capture of the True Cross, which thereby becomes a symbol for the city of Jerusalem itself (see S. Lewis 1987, 271). Matthew's understanding of these contact relics of Christ is therefore both theological and geopolitical. And his placement of the Wandering Jew in Armenia seems equally so. If a relic is, as Annabel Jane Wharton (2006, 9) suggests, "a remnant of a history that is threatened by forgetting," then the geographic location of relics holds significance as well, as relics bring memory with them. The Wandering Jew conceived of as a relic therefore has this power as well.

Relics are sites of memory, but they are also more than that. Cynthia J. Hahn (2012, 8) defines a relic as a "physical object understood to carry the *virtus* of a saint or Christ, literally 'virtue' but more accurately the 'power' of a holy person" (see also Bartlett 2013, 275; Geary 1990). *Brandea* such as the True Cross or the Veronica, the veil imprinted with the image of Christ's face, are not part of the body of Christ, but are relics by virtue of their contact with Christ's body. This contact is part of the story of Christ; the relics acquire some of their power by being part of that story, even in the case of apocryphal stories about Christ, such as those of the Grail and the Veronica. The story of the relic, its history, is "essential, not incidental, to its value" (Appadurai 1986, 23). Relics also have a specific temporality that keeps that life story alive. They exist, according to Peter the Venerable in his twelfth-century *Adversus Judaeos* (Against the Jews) between times (*interim*): "sacred relics . . . reveal the beatitude and glory that the souls of the saints (*spiritus*) acquire between-times (*interim*) in the presence of the Almighty" (*Adversus Judaeos* 4, cited in Iogna-Prat 2002, 300). Relics are things, but they also "constantly pass beyond themselves, and give more than they have" (Maritain 1944, 397, cited in Gayk and Malo 2014, 457). What a relic gives and to whom it gives are very much at issue if we consider the Wandering Jew in relation to relics, because what the Wandering Jew—that being who also exists outside the natural flow of time—gives to and for Christians is his memory.

Matthew's representation of the Wandering Jew includes the traversal of time and space, a connection to the relic of the True Cross, and the sense that the Wandering Jew's presence has meaning not only for individuals that encounter him, but for the place he is located. What we have in Matthew's depiction of the Wandering Jew resembles the construction of a living human relic. The numinous power of relics like the True Cross and the Crown of Thorns has to do with their proximity to Christ and their connection to the very time and place of the Passion. Cartaphilus's encounter *is* his contact with Jesus; he interacts with Christ and, in some versions of his story, even strikes him. The Wandering Jew is not only a living sign of Christian faith or a site of memory for the Passion. His testimony, his sharing of his personal memory of the Passion, has spiritual power.

To be sure, Matthew and his contemporaries would have understood the difference between the Wandering Jew and a recognized relic of Christ such as the Crown of Thorns or the Holy Blood, but what Robyn Malo (2013, 7) calls "relic discourse," the medieval "interpretive framework" for understanding the meaning of relics, serves as an essential context for medieval engagement with the Wandering Jew legend. The Wandering Jew is a living eyewitness, indeed *the* living eyewitness, to the events of the Passion. He is the relic who can actually respond, by drawing on his personal memory, to urgent questions about the events at the time of the Passion. The Wandering Jew's encounter with Jesus has transformed him, literally and spiritually, and he can and is willing to share his memory of this encounter. Indeed, in some versions of the legend this retelling of events takes the form of a compulsion.

In the *Chronica*, visiting Armenian Christians retell this legend, one among many remarkable things from the East (*CM*, 3:161).[19] At a time when western Europeans were eager to bring holy relics into their midst from the East, as Matthew himself relates in his accounts of royal relic acquisition, the Wandering Jew also represents a holy exchange between East and West. Just as the Armenian visitors have made pilgrimage to England because of its precious relics, so too their account of the Wandering Jew's location in Armenia serves as a sign of their faith and of a continued Christian presence in the Holy Land, a presence that dates back to that fixed point of memory: the Passion. Relics, and the legendary Wandering Jew, as Jean-Claude Schmitt (2001, 55) has observed, are able to convey the double and contradictory nature of Christian temporality, which cultivates the memory of the Passion at the same time that this memory is endlessly reactivated in the present—through rituals like the Mass or through meditation—with the temporal distance between past and present inexorably collapsed. Contact relics rely on the idea of a mystical temporal *presence*, intimately tied to the real presence, the actual presence of Christ on the altar at the moment of transubstantiation in the Mass. The Wandering Jew, that convert who comes from the past, is noted to reappear in this account from Eastern Christians as a continually living, faithful testament to Christ, able to bring this past into the present as a kind of sentient relic.

The Wandering Jew's imbrication in relic discourse make him a particularly potent instrument of memory. He performs conceptual work within Christian thought, mapping a temporally continuous Christian cultural memory in space. This function calls to mind Patrick Geary's (1986, 169) observation that "like slaves, relics belong to that category, unusual in Western society, of objects that are both persons and things." This idea of the Wandering Jew as relic, as a kind of slave, is of interest given discussions among historians about the term *servus* as sometimes applied to Jews, considered to be if not the "property" of various Christian rulers, then on some level their possessions (see Young 2011, 79–85; Sapir Abulafia 2011, 194–228). As Sophia Menache (1997) has shown, Matthew's varied representations of the Jews in the *Chronica* are bound up with his critiques of those who attempt to use their power for the economic exploitation of their subjects (see, e.g., *CM*, 5:136). The relationship of Henry III to Anglo-Jewry was colored by his desire to convert them, as well as their economic value.[20] Excessive draining of Jewish money and property rendered Anglo-Jewry penniless. When no longer of financial use, the Jews of England were expelled in 1290, the first in a long series of expulsions across medieval Europe, which created many groups of Jewish wanderers.

Matthew noted the king's exploitation of English Jews in his *Chronica* in order to remark on the king as an exploiter of his people more generally, rather than to express any particular sympathy with the Jewish community. The *Chronica* includes vicious and damning allegations against the Jews, including an influential version of the blood libel—the alleged ritual murder of Hugh of Lincoln in 1255—and another blood libel, an account of an alleged ritual murder in which Hebrew letters were said to have been carved into the flesh of a murdered child (see E. Rose 2015; Teter 2020). Matthew also relates a complex alleged conspiracy against Christendom mounted by Jews and Mongols that involved smuggling arms in wine casks (see Menache 1985; 1996, 319; Nisse 2017; Weiss 2012; see also Lampert-Weissig 2021). With Joseph Cartaphilus, who is both Jew and not-Jew, Matthew has an instrument through which he can express both the temporality and spatiality of Jewish-Christian relations within a Christian theological framework. The Wandering Jew is both convert and tamed Jew, fully interpolated into systems of Christian time and Christian space, which do not allow him to exist within a natural flow of time or to lay claim to a home.

Matthew wrote during a time of terrible hardship for medieval Anglo-Jewry. Historian Robert C. Stacey (1988) refers to 1240–60 as "watershed years," during which exploitation and persecution of England's Jewish population ratcheted ever higher. On July 18, 1290, when the wealth of the Jewish community had been bled dry, King Edward I issued his Edict of Expulsion. It decreed that all Jews must leave the country by November 1 of that same year. The dates of the decree are a perverse example of memorial entanglement: in 1290, July 18 coincided with the Hebrew date Av 9, 5050. Av 9 is Tisha b'Av, the day of mourning, fasting, and prayer in remembrance of catastrophes that have befallen the Jewish community, including the destructions of the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem. November 1 is All Saints' Day, a celebration of all Christian martyrs. We do not know definitively whether this cruel potential of Jewish-Christian entanglement was realized by design, with the Christian monarchy not only forcing its Jewish subjects to give up their homes and goods, but also timing that blow so it would be a conscious perversion of Jewish memory practice.[21] These resonant dates, however, remind us of memory's powerful potential to serve as weapon.

Two

The 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung*

A Lutheran Recalibration

Matthew's vision of the Wandering Jew influenced the other most important early textual source for the legend, the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung und Erzehlung von einem Juden mit namen Ahasverus* (A Brief Description and Narration Regarding a Jew Named Ahasuerus), which George K. Anderson (1965, 42) calls "perhaps the most important single milestone in the progress of the Legend of the Wandering Jew." Like Matthew Paris, the anonymous author of the *Kurtze Beschreibung* deploys the Wandering Jew as instrument of memory. This time, however, the instrument is recalibrated in response to tensions among Christians in the wake of the Lutheran Reformation and controversies over Christian belief and practice such as relic veneration. The *Kurtze Beschreibung* describes an encounter between Lutheran leader Paulus von Eitzen and the Wandering Jew in a Hamburg Protestant church, where the Wandering Jew is listening raptly to that central Lutheran activity: the preaching of the word (Karant-Nunn 2003, 194–95; and see Dudulaeus 1602). The pamphlet's detailed account of an encounter with the Wandering Jew reflects both this Christian internecine strife and tensions between Jews and Christians. The pamphlet's author draws on the writings of Martin Luther, specifically his *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen* (On the Jews and Their Lies), written in 1542, the same year of the Wandering Jew encounter, and featuring an attack on the Book of Esther, a source for Jewish collective memory of danger and deliverance (Yerushalmi 1996, 46–48). The name Ahasver (Ahasuerus), which the *Kurtze Beschreibung* introduces into the textual tradition of the legend of the Wandering Jew, further entangles Jewish and Christian memory traditions.

The 1602 Pamphlet and a Lutheran Wandering Jew

The *Kurtze Beschreibung* begins with a brief and arresting description of its contents:

> A Brief Description and Narration Regarding a Jew named Ahasuerus who was personally present at the Crucifixion and also helped in the cry against Christ and the pardon of Barrabas. Who also after the Crucifixion of Christ could never again come to Jerusalem and who also never again saw his wife and children and since then has remained alive and after many years came to Hamburg and was also come to Danzig in December of the year 1599. (G. Anderson 1965, 45; Körte and Stockhammer 1995, 1)[1]

These opening lines announce the existence of a Jew personally present at the Crucifixion who was not only a witness to the Savior's suffering, but a cause of it. The detail that Ahasuerus was subsequently compelled to leave his wife and children forever brings a personal urgency to this apocryphal offshoot of the master narrative of the Passion and heightens the pathos of his curse as retribution. The individualized details also herald the pamphlet's compelling mixture of contemporary locations and dates with a legend that reaches back to that fixed point in Christian cultural memory, the time of the Passion. As early modern historian Judith Pollman (2017, 121) argues, it is this combination of a powerful mythical story with concrete historical places, persons, or objects that propelled the endurance and popularity of legends like the Pied Piper of Hamelin. The *Kurtze Beschreibung* presentation of the Wandering Jew legend was, indeed, immediately popular, with numerous printings created in its first publication year and three other related texts appearing soon thereafter, forming what Anderson (1965, 52) calls the "German *Volksbuch* on the Wandering Jew."[2]

The 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung* announces that it will relate an encounter with an otherworldly figure, a man who was alive at the time of Christ, who can provide news and history of the Holy Land not only in the time of Christ, but since it as well. The text's blending of contemporary details and sacred past continues in the next lines as the pamphlet announces that Paulus von Eitzen, a prominent Lutheran, along with the Hamburg rector, had encountered the Wandering Jew and conferred with him. The ability of the Wandering Jew to relate not only the Passion narrative but also the subsequent history of the Holy Land makes him an emblem of both Jewish and

Christian exile from Jerusalem. We saw Matthew Paris locate the Wandering Jew in the Christian foothold of Armenia at a time when Christians felt their loss of control over Jerusalem especially keenly. For an early seventeenth-century audience, Ahasuerus's endless wandering can, at least, provide them with news of the "Oriental lands" then under control of the Ottoman Empire (see Francisco 2007, 131–41).

The Wandering Jew, Eitzen's encounter with him, and the information he can provide are all things about which people cannot marvel enough. The pamphlet's stress on the "wonder" involved in this sighting is continued in lines that further convey that something supernatural has appeared amid the contemporary everyday: "Since these times have contributed little that is news to us, I will relate to you something old which is still considered with awe by many as something new" (G. Anderson 1965, 45; Körte and Stockhammer 1995, 9). The contemporary world (*dieser zeit*) may seem to be devoid of wonder, but the Wandering Jew sighting proves this to be untrue. The idea of something that can, despite the times, still cause wonder (*welches doch bey vielen mit verwunderung*) is emphasized alongside the notion that the Wandering Jew is a bit of "news" that is actually very old. This temporal paradox becomes a kind of advertisement for the pamphlet itself. The juxtaposition of the old and the new resonates with the mention of *Verwunderung*, a word tied to the German word for miracle, *Wunder*, indicating the supernatural and sanctified nature of what will be revealed.[3] The story of an ancient Jew, now turned Christian but cursed to endless waiting, also contains this "wonder" within the familiar frame of supersession. A Jew is punished with an uncanny stasis that will only end with the fulfillment of Christian prophecy.

And while this mysterious combination of the old and new is a source of wonder, it is also presented as the factual testimony of Paulus von Eitzen, known, among other things, for his standing as a Lutheran bishop. Eitzen died in 1598, so he could not refute or support the pamphlet's claims. In 1542, when his encounter with Ahasuerus supposedly occurred, Eitzen was the student of Philip Melanchthon, Luther's reformist contemporary in Wittenberg.[4] Eitzen would later take up a post in Hamburg and then eventually become bishop of Schleswig.

The Relic and the Pulpit

According to the *Kurtze Beschreibung*, Eitzen was visiting his parents in Hamburg when he encountered the Wandering Jew at church. The young Eitzen spotted him during the sermon: a strikingly tall man standing very near the pulpit. The man's hair hung down past his shoulders; he was thinly clothed and barefoot despite the winter cold. This man listened to the sermon with such rapt attention that "one could detect no movement in his body, except that when the name of Jesus Christ was pronounced he bowed his head, beat on his breast, and sighed very deeply" (G. Anderson 1965, 45). One might imagine that a barefoot stranger, a man so clearly marginal in appearance, might be lingering in a doorway or sitting in a back pew. Ahasuerus, however, stands at the church's center, transfixed by the sermon.[5] In a period marked by significant regional differences in piety in German-speaking lands, we find in the *Kurtze Beschreibung* a depiction of the Wandering Jew as a fiercely individualized figure, focused on God's preached word, who appears in a Lutheran church in Hamburg. This vision of the Wandering Jew as held rapt by a preached sermon has resonance with the Lutheran emphasis on the word of God. It is to God's word—Eitzen spots the stranger during the sermon—and specifically to the name of Christ that Ahasuerus focuses his attention, indeed the entirety of his being. When the name of Christ reaches his ears, he makes gestures of remorse, with bowed head, beaten breast, and heavy sigh (Körte and Stockhammer 1995, 9).

Ora Limor (1996, 76) has observed of medieval contexts that the "Jew is to be found at the heart of the Christian sacred space." In its representation of the Wandering Jew standing rapt below the pulpit, the *Kurtze Beschreibung* has shifted this spatial representation of the Jew to reflect the status of the pulpit, as opposed to the altar, as the new center of Lutheran spiritual gravity (see Coster and Spicer 2005, 3–4). In the previous chapter, I noted that in Matthew Paris's thirteenth-century *Chronica*, the Wandering Jew is sighted in the kingdom of Armenia, a last Christian foothold in the Holy Land. In the *Kurtze Beschreibung*, this living, ambulant *lieu de mémoire*, the Wandering Jew, is relocated to suit Lutheran belief and practice. The pulpit from which the word of God is preached has become even more important than the altar, a site in Catholic churches typically connected to a relic or holy item as part of the consecration of the holy space.[6] The *Kurtze Beschreibung* does not specify which Hamburg church Ahasuerus appears in, but we might imagine him standing in the crowd beneath one of the elevated pulpits that were already part of the Catholic churches in larger urban areas of the region. These pulpits would remain intact as churches were taken over by Reformed congregations (Karant-Nunn 1997, 136). A contemporary audience may have imagined the Wandering Jew standing under such a raised pulpit, viewed by Paulus von Eitzen (see Neubaur 1884, 45–47).

Ahasuerus, the wondrous sign of Christian truth that Eitzen witnesses, acts as evidence of the rightness of Lutheran belief. He is still a relic of sorts, an entity literally present in Christ's time that endures into the present and whose personal memory includes the Passion and all the history since that time. Ahasuerus provides an example of the Jew transformed into an instrument of Christian memory and Christian faith, transmitted and shaped according to Lutheran tenets. He is, however, altered to fit a new confessional identity at a moment when the status of the relic in the Christian world has been the subject of intense controversy among the various Christian confessions for almost a century. Memory of the Passion was enacted through mnemonic practices, including pedagogical ones, as well as ritual, liturgy, and what Mitchell B. Merback (2012, 284) calls the "topography of cult and memory" (see also Merback 2019; Bennett 2001, 1). This active cultivation of collective memory, especially through pilgrimage, endured into the early modern period, acting as a powerful form of "historical imagining" that was not only available to Catholics, but known to Protestants as well (Merback 2012, 294). As it reached back to that fixed point of the Passion, that cultural memory also included, indeed depended on, a representation of the Jews as violent threat to Christians (see Bale 2010).

The *Kurtze Beschreibung* emerged in this context, presenting a narrative of the devout piety of an individual who shares his devotion with other individuals. The Wandering Jew is not simply a physical embodiment of Christian history, he tells this story—he is a preaching relic. His transformation from ordinary man to extraordinary being, like his conversion from Jew to Christian, is based on contact with the words of the living Christ. His fate is to walk the earth spreading these words. As Robert Kolb (1987, 4) notes, Protestant discourse shifted to focus on a "confession of faith. . . . Focus on holy people now came to mean a focus on those who confessed the Word and in that confession demonstrated and advertised the power of God." The Wandering Jew, converted to a deep Christian piety through his sin against Christ and subsequent punishment, is not a martyr or a saint, but is nevertheless a type of holy person whose very existence is focused on God's word and its spread. The *Kurtze Beschreibung*'s depiction of the Wandering Jew and his legend embodies the emphasis on witness so important to Lutheran theology.

This witness is meant not only to reinforce the true faith, but also to spread it. The *Kurtze Beschreibung* also recounts a later sighting of the Wandering Jew by two German ambassadors who were sent to the king of Spain and then to a duke of the Netherlands in 1575. They gave report that they had seen a man who had the same distinguishing characteristics as Ahasuerus and that they had spoken with him; he was able to speak good Spanish. The year 1575 is an interesting date in Catholic-Protestant relations, as it was the year that the government of Spain, already facing Dutch confessionally motivated rebellion, went bankrupt. Unable to pay its soldiers, it had to deal with even further mutiny and unrest. That the Wandering Jew, a living relic of the true faith, traveled to Spain and conversed with Spaniards at this moment in time seems to me to reveal either a simple desire to place Ahasuerus in contemporary "hot spots," connected to names and places that would be recognized and seem legitimate, or, even more compellingly, a suggestion that he travels to spread the faith to Catholic regions where the true faith is not yet recognized.

In Hamburg, Eitzen is eager to speak with the mysterious witness to the Passion and learns from him that he was a Jewish shoemaker who "had been living at the time of Christ in Jerusalem. He had been stirred against the Lord Christ, whom, along with Jewish elders, he considered a heretic and seducer of the people." Ahasuerus had taken his child out in front of their home in order to witness the spectacle of Jesus bearing the cross. When Jesus paused along the way and leaned on Ahasuerus's house, Ahasuerus ordered him away with curses. "Then Christ looked sternly at him, and spoke to him with meaning, 'I will stand here and rest, but you must walk.'" Immediately Ahasuerus was compelled to put down his child and to leave Jerusalem; he never saw his family again. "Forthwith he went into foreign lands, one after another, until the present time. When, after many centuries, he came back to his land, he found it all laid waste and Jerusalem destroyed, so that he could no longer recognize it" (G. Anderson 1965, 46).

We have already seen that Christians regarded the fall of Jerusalem in the year 70 CE as revenge on the Jews for Christ's sufferings. This narrative of vengeance is part of how the legend of the Wandering Jew is woven into a great fabric of apocryphal narratives, including the stories of the Veronica and the Grail and the tales of Titus and Vespasian. The pamphlet makes reference to subsequent governments that the Wandering Jew can speak of from memory. It also asserts that the Wandering Jew has detailed knowledge of the whole history of the Holy Land from the time of Christ, which would include the gain and subsequent loss of the area by Christians in the Crusades. These details evoke a Christian exile that parallels the Jewish diaspora, as Jerusalem and surrounding areas are now controlled by the Turks. Ahasuerus does not return to Jerusalem for several centuries. When he does, he finds the Holy City destroyed and so changed that he cannot recognize it (Körte and Stockhammer 1995, 11). The personal story of the Wandering

Jew is therefore intertwined with the story of Christ and the story of Christendom on several levels. These narratives emanate from the Holy Land, but expand to include the fate of all humanity until the end time. Time and history are the very essence of this narrative.

As a living repository of Christian collective memory, the Wandering Jew serves as an ideal source for knowledge both of Christ and of Christian history more generally. He is an expert in both the time of Christ and all the years that followed because he

> had been present at the Crucifixion of Christ, and since that time had remained alive and had traveled through many lands, and for proof of the truth of his assertions he had knowledge of many circumstances concerning Christ after he had been taken and led before Pilate and Herod and finally crucified. He could tell more of such things than either the evangelists or the historians. He told further of many changes in government, especially in Eastern countries, as they had occurred through these many centuries since Christ's sufferings. Then he told with great minuteness the lives, sufferings, and deaths of the holy apostles. (G. Anderson 1965, 45, with modifications; Körte and Stockhammer 1995, 10)

Ahasuerus is, of course, a source for the details of the life of Christ, but the narrative does not re-create the sorts of intense and vivid imaginings of the Passion connected with texts such as the fourteenth-century *Meditations on the Life of Christ* or with Catholic practice (see Yoshikawa 2007). Rather than retelling Christ's story, the author of the pamphlet goes on to note that Ahasuerus tells stories of the apostles, which the pamphlet's author renders rather gracefully as *wo jeder gelebt/gelehrt/vnd endlich gelitten* (where each lived, taught, and finally suffered) (Körte and Stockhammer 1995, 10). The apostles' sufferings resemble those of Christ. The wanderer, as promised in the opening lines of the pamphlet, can also relate news of the East *nach Christi Leiden* (after Christ's sufferings). This use of Christ's sufferings as a temporal reference point resembles the use of the Passion as a temporal marker in the Grail narratives. There the apocryphal story of Joseph of Arimathea and the Holy Grail was shaped through a temporal frame that had the Passion at its center. This same temporal frame shapes the legend of the Wandering Jew, with the narrative arc of the Jew's story corresponding to a Christian telos that will end in the Second Coming.

The *Kurtze Beschreibung* further evokes the end time as it ruminates on the fate of the Wandering Jew: "What God now intended to do with him, in leading him about so long in this wretched life, he could not explain otherwise than that he should be on Judgment Day a living witness of the Passion of Christ, to the greater confusion of the godless and the infidels. But he must endure his portion until it pleased God to call him forth from this vale of sorrow to eternal peace" (Anderson 1965, 46; Körte and Stockhammer 1995, 11). The Wandering Jew is a living witness who stands as a testament of God's truth for the benefit of the godless and the unbelieving. His life, indeed human life itself, is characterized by suffering (*elenden Leben*). Ahasuerus does not know what God has in store for him, but he wanders in a kind of valley of lamentation (*Jammerthal*), waiting for peace.

As in Matthew Paris's account of the eternal penitent, end-time anticipation pervades the narrative. Indeed, the *Kurtze Beschreibung* appears at what some have called the moment of highest apocalyptic expectation in European history, with the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries "characterized by a general anxiety which found expression in, and was stimulated by, apocalyptic expectations and speculations" (Cunningham and Grell 2000, 15). Historian Robin Bruce Barnes (1988, 3, 261, 265) argues that sixteenth-century Germany was permeated by an "apocalyptic expectation that finds few parallels in Western history." This "apocalyptic sensibility" reached its peak "in the confused era around 1600," receding at the beginning of the the Thirty Years' War.[7]

The *Kurtze Beschreibung*'s explicit reference to the end time signals the appearance of the Wandering Jew as another of the many signs and portents of the Second Coming, whose imminent arrival Ahasuerus so fervently awaits (see Barnes 1988, 82–93). The work of Philip Melanchthon, Paulus von Eitzen's teacher, figured largely in Lutheran eschatological theology of the period, and Melanchthon was deeply involved in both the historical study that attempted to read for signs of the imminent end times and the search for witness to Christian truth (see Barnes 1988, 76–82, 106–8; Wengert 2006). Anderson (1965, 41) has argued that early modern representations of the Wandering Jew were explicitly linked to apocalyptic concerns and to the antichrist: "The Protestant called the pope Antichrist; the Catholic returned the compliment and bestowed it upon Martin Luther. Both kinds of partisans agreed that the Wandering Jew, whoever or whatever he might be, belonged to Antichrist." As Rebekka Voß (2011) and others have shown, Christian representations of Jews, both the Wandering Jew and other figures such as the legendary Red Jews, loomed large in early modern Christian messianic belief (see also Gow 1995; 1996).

We find then in Ahasuerus a representation of a Jew who embodies many aspects of Christian temporality. He was present at the origins of Christianity, and the arc of his life runs from this beginning to the prophesied end time. His living presence embodies for Christians the double and contradictory nature of Christian temporality, which cultivates the memory of the Passion at the same time that this memory is endlessly reactivated in the present, with the temporal distance between past and present inexorably collapsed. These elements were all present in earlier representations of the Wandering Jew, most notably in Matthew Paris's *Chronica*, but here they are refreshed to suit a new time of Reformed piety and a Lutheran context. While, however, the representation of the Wandering Jew in the *Kurtze Beschreibung* is very much one created in a context of interconfessional struggles among Christians, it also reflects Jewish-Christian relations of the period. Ahasuerus might be represented as an ideal convert to Lutheran belief, but he nevertheless remains marked as a Jew, and the details of his story as related in the *Kurtze Beschreibung*, including the time and place of his appearance to Eitzen, reflect this identity.

Ahasuerus in the Context of Jewish-Christian Relations

I suggested in my reading of Matthew's *Chronica* that an understanding of the Wandering Jew as relic helps us recognize the conceptual work performed by the Wandering Jew in support of Christian belief in Jesus Christ as messiah. While this representation is shaped by its function as an instrument of memory, with a focus on the past and the future, it was created with some reference to the situation of actual, contemporary Jews. The Ahasuerus of the *Kurtze Beschreibung* is also a response to actual conditions for the Jews in German-speaking regions, a reflection not simply of broader Christian-Jewish tensions, but one that engages with specific diasporic and transnational currents, just as Matthew Paris's focus on Armenia reflects Christian sentiment regarding the Holy Land.

The early modern era was characterized by changing demographics as populations increased, soldiers of Europe's many wars straggled home, and the Jews experienced wave after wave of expulsion (Cunningham and Grell 2000, 15, 113). As historian Andrei Oisteanu (2009, 331) writes, "Under these circumstances, bearded Jews bent under the burden of their belongings could be seen . . . treading the roads of central Europe, impressing the image on people's minds and eyes of the Wandering Jew, cursed by fate to find no place of rest. A specter was haunting Europe. A legend that could account for this phenomenon had to follow." The *Kurtze Beschreibung* reflects on both a global and local scale the conditions for Jewish communities in German-speaking territories as these communities were expelled and then sometimes given readmission in location after location across the region. This cycle of expulsion and readmission reflected not just religious tensions, but local political conflicts, all resulting in an endless, restless flux of emigration and immigration for European Jews.

Two specific dates mentioned in the pamphlet resonate with the precarious nature of Jewish existence in early modern German-speaking regions. The *Kurtze Beschreibung* appeared in 1602, just a few years after a new settlement of Jews arrived in Hamburg, where Eitzen encounters Ahasuerus. The *Kurtze Beschreibung* sets the encounter in 1542, I believe, because this date resonates with a watershed moment in Lutheran-Jewish relations. Luther's infamous tract *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen* (On the Jews and Their Lies) appeared in 1543. The year 1542, in which Luther appears to have composed it, figures prominently within the tract (see David 2003). The *Kurtze Beschreibung* merges the image of the Wandering Jew, the specter haunting Europe, with the Jew as potential convert that Luther wrote of in his 1523 *Daß Jesus Christus ein geborener Jude sei* (That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew). We can even discern an echo of the 1523 tract's title in the *Kurtze Beschreibung*'s description of Ahasuerus as *ein geborner Jud von Jerusalem* (a Jew born in Jerusalem).

In *Daß Jesus Christus ein geborener Jude sei* Luther argues that the Jews are ripe for conversion and that when Christians reform their ways the Jews will then see Christian examples that will bring them around to Christian truth. Despite Lutheran reforms, however, the Jews did not convert en masse as Luther had hoped. Some two decades later, in 1542, a frustrated Luther penned the now infamous tract *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen*. Luther frames his tract as a response to an alleged debate between an obstinate Jew and Count Schlick, who had sent to Luther a Jewish reaction to Luther's 1538 treatise *Wider die Sabbather: An einen guten Freund* (Against the Sabbatarians: Letter to a Good Friend) (see Kaufmann 2017, 88–93). In *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen* Luther asserts that the Jews are so misguided, recalcitrant, and dangerous that it is not actually worthwhile to engage in debate with them, comparing them to sows (Luther 2017, 523). Despite this misgiving, Luther (2017, 573) nevertheless presents long exegetical arguments against "Jewish lies," until finally concluding that the Jews should have their synagogues torched and should be expelled from Christian lands.

Reading the *Kurtze Beschreibung* in concert with the *Von den Juden und* *ihren Lügen*, one can hear echoes of Luther in the 1602 text. Here, for example, is Luther's counsel to Christians on how to interact with Jews:

> They [the Jews] have failed to learn any lesson from the terrible distress that has been theirs for over fourteen hundred years in exile. . . . Therefore, a Christian should be content and not argue with Jews. But if you have to argue or want to talk with them, do not say any more than this: "Listen, Jew, are you aware that Jerusalem and your sovereignty, together with your temple and priesthood, have been destroyed for over 1,460 years?" For this year, which we Christians write as the year 1542 since the birth of Christ, is exactly 1,468 years, going on fifteen hundred years, since Vespasian and Titus destroyed Jerusalem and expelled the Jews from the city. Let the Jews bite on this nut and dispute this question as long as they wish. (Luther 2017, 456–57; for the German, see Luther 1920, 418)

Luther here is imagining a kind of lay disputation between a Christian and a Jew. Luther encourages goading the Jew with the destruction of the Second Temple, that formative moment of loss in Jewish cultural memory. This goading is bolstered by a taunting arithmetic, using the fall of Jerusalem as a fixed point to measure Jewish failure, calculated with the Christian reckoning of the year 1542, determined by the Christian fixed point of Jesus's birth. Luther urges probing the wounds of Jewish memory, ignoring if not remaining oblivious to a Jewish temporal understanding in which it is actually a different year altogether. Luther deploys here what Eviatar Zerubavel (1985, 22, cited in Gribetz 2020, 7) calls "the calendrical contrast," a potent method of accentuating social difference. Zerubavel writes, "Schedules and calendars are intimately linked to group formation, and a temporal pattern that is unique to a group often contributes to the establishment of social boundaries that distinguish as well as actually separate group members from 'outsiders.'" Luther invokes the destruction of Jerusalem, which we have seen was regarded in the Christian tradition as divine vengeance visited on the Jews for their treatment of Christ. This interpretation of the historical fall of the city is intertwined into apocryphal narrative. The *Kurtze Beschreibung* weaves the story of the Wandering Jew together with the story of Jerusalem's destruction by depicting Ahasuerus as returning to his fallen birthplace, now unrecognizable. The individual story of punishment for one Jewish affront to Christ personalizes the Wandering Jew story and links it to sin, but also makes the Wandering Jew's fate emblematic of that of the entire Jewish people. This fate, according to Luther's 1542 tract, is a deserved one, and the Wandering Jew, as depicted in the *Kurtze Beschreibung*, is a man who fully admits his wrong and accepts his fate. I read the *Kurtze Beschreibung* as a specific response to *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen*. The anonymous author of the *Kurtze Beschreibung* gives Eitzen the chance to talk not just with any Jew, but with *the* Jew who would best understand these centuries of exile, because he has lived all of them. Armed with these centuries of understanding and his eyewitness memory of the Passion, Ahasuerus has made that leap that Luther had desired for all Jews: he embraces Christianity profoundly.

The connection between the Wandering Jew and the Jewish people exists, however, on more levels than just the polemical and the legendary. If we look at the 1602 publication date and the location in which Paulus von Eitzen reportedly encounters the Wandering Jew, we can see that close to that time "a group [of Jews] was allowed to settle in the port of Altona, outside Hamburg, in 1584. . . . The city of Hamburg had never before admitted Jews but, in the 1590s, while still excluding German Jews, allowed a dozen Portuguese refugee families, whom the city council knew to be crypto-Jews, to settle within the city limits and engage in trade" (Israel 1985, 43; see also Hasan-Rokem 2010, 549; Daube 1986; Bodian 1997). Many of the Portuguese Jews who settled in Hamburg wanted to return to their ancestral faith without fear of the Inquisition. These immigrants became part of a complex environment of mercantile growth and interdenominational Christian strife, as a newly developed Lutheran orthodoxy strove to maintain its centrality in Hamburg religious life (D. Kaplan 2020, 18; see also Bell 2006). The Portuguese immigrants were tolerated, despite their otherness, because they were major merchants who helped Hamburg achieve a place as an important trading center and a site of increasing immigration (Braden 2001, 27). The appearance in Hamburg of Ahasuerus, the idealized Jewish convert, responds to the new Jewish presence in Hamburg. This is a moment in which Jews are not being expelled from a specific community, but instead are entering it and becoming a significant part of a commercial center. The presence of the new Jewish community was not, however, without controversy. As R. Edelmann (1986, 7) notes,

> In 1603, that is to say within one year after the appearance of the pamphlet, citizens of Hamburg, backed by the clergy, demanded that the Senate of the city banish the Jews living there. The Sephardim, however, were too much of an asset for Hamburg because of the international connections, and in 1612 they were permitted to stay. From

> Danzig, however, the Jews were expelled a few years later, in 1616, after they had been prohibited from meeting for religious exercises by an edict of the council in 1605.

Danzig is another city in which the *Kurtze Beschreibung* places the Wandering Jew, who is said to have been seen there in 1599. This additional locale further indicates, I believe, that the pamphlet is a response to actual Jewish-Christian relations as well as to broader theological concerns. It is also, of course, a kind of policing of memory. Jews, including recently converted Christians, have ties to Jewish memory and Jewish memory practices that are also presumably unsettling to the author of the *Kurtze Beschreibung*.

Ahasuerus represents a kind of triumph over his own Jewish memory. In response to tensions caused by an actual Jewish presence in Hamburg and Danzig, the *Kurtze Beschreibung* depicts a model Jew whose presence is acceptable, placing his appearance in a year that marked a critical juncture in Lutheran-Jewish relations, 1542, when Luther penned his anti-Jewish diatribe. Ahasuerus is a pious, true convert to Christianity, and his connection to Paulus von Eitzen also shows the Jew to be a specific kind of Christian, an orthodox Lutheran. And, indeed, Ahasuerus is not an immigrant to the Hamburg community. Hamburg is one stop among many. If Ahasuerus is part of any community, it is the community of Christians. The *Kurtze Beschreibung*, then, shows that the ideal Jewish immigrant is a convert to Christianity.[8]

Even the name Ahasuerus, an innovation of the *Kurtze Beschreibung*, represents a taming of the Jew. As Evi Butzer (2003, 1) notes, “Purim is an observance of a Jewish minority within another, foreign culture,” a minority position that could perhaps be seen as exemplified by the Wandering Jew, a figure for the condition of diasporic Jewry. The exact origins of the choice of the name Ahasuerus are unknown, but many major scholars of the legend link the name to the Book of Esther, in which Ahasuerus is the Persian king whose advisor Haman threatens the destruction of the Jewish people, which they escape through the deeds of the beautiful Jewish Esther, whom the king loves (see Daube 1986; Hasan-Rokem 2010; G. Anderson 1965, 50).[9] Purim is also, of course, an observance designed to cultivate Jewish cultural memory, and a defiant memory at that.

The name Ahasuerus, some speculate, could have been known to the author of the *Kurtze Beschreibung* through Jewish Purim plays, which could be quite rowdy dramatic depictions celebrating the triumph of the Jews over their enemies, or through other forms of Purim celebration. According to Elliott S. Horowitz (2006), medieval Purim festivities were not merely raucous; at times they could be characterized by violent behavior both toward fellow Jews and toward Christians. Purim observance itself could also have been seen as a form of Jewish defiance against Christian dominance.[10] Certainly in *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen*, Luther rails against the Book of Esther, seeing the text itself as a bloodthirsty expression of Jewish desire for vengeance against Christians:

> Their hearts' most ardent sighing and yearning and hoping is set on the day on which they can deal with us Gentiles as they did with the Gentiles in Persia at the time of Esther. Oh, how fond they are of the book of Esther, which is so beautifully attuned to their bloodthirsty, vengeful, murderous yearning and hope. The sun has never shone on a more bloodthirsty and vengeful people than they are who imagine that they are God's people who have been commissioned and commanded to murder and slay the Gentiles. In fact, the most important thing that they expect of their Messiah is that he will murder and kill the entire world with their sword. They treated us Christians in this manner at the very beginning throughout all the world. They would still like to do this if they had the power, and often enough have made the attempt, for which they have got their snouts boxed lustily. (Luther 2017, 474)

By giving the Wandering Jew the name Ahasuerus, the author of the *Kurtze Beschreibung* alludes to the Purim story, but presents not a triumphant Jew celebrating deliverance from a historical threat, but a converted Jew who has the foreign name of a former ruler of the Jews.[11] Mordechai, a hero of the Purim tale, would not bow to Haman, the king's prime minister; the Wandering Jew, Ahasuerus, has become fully and completely submissive to the dominant Christian culture. Although the *Kurtze Beschreibung* relates that Ahasuerus was originally "poisoned" against Christ by rabbinical teachings, just as Luther (2017, 491) asserts all Jews are in *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen*, the Wandering Jew has chosen to convert.[12] Ahasuerus does not view the cross as an abomination, as it is referenced in various Jewish writings, but reveres it deeply (see Cluse 1995; Hames 2013; Teter 2011).[13] He exists not as a Jew, but as a patient, long-suffering Christian sign, an instrument of memory. The Jewish "defiance" shown through the commemorative celebration of Purim—a holiday of triumphant Jewish memory—is countered with this instrument.

Finally, if Luther rails against Jewish lies and "legalisms" in *Von den Juden* *und ihren Lügen*, the Wandering Jew is a living eyewitness who comes literally to embody pure Christian truth. His conversion is an extreme and total one. The experience that moves him to convert is also direct; it requires no exegesis, the textual parsing or "tearing apart" that Luther attacks in his critique of Jewish exegesis. Ahasuerus is an example of belief through contact and witness, a belief that is then lived and embodied, eternally. Through this representation of Ahasuerus we can discern not only an embodiment of Christian collective memory, but also a reworking of the Jewish collective memory kept alive in Purim observances. The story of Ahasuerus the Wandering Jew both inverts and supersedes the story of the Purim triumph, as his legend depicts a Jew who insulted Christ only to face enduring punishment and, ultimately, conversion.

This Wandering Jew is now a true believer in Christ; he wanders, which embodies Jewish exile, but he wanders alone in foreign lands. In the *Chronica*, Hebrew sets the Jewish nation apart from other nations, allowing Jews to communicate with one another across linguistic borders for nefarious purposes, as with the 1241 alleged Mongol-Jewish plot against Christendom detailed by Matthew or the Hebrew letters carved into a murdered boy's body described in an entry for the year 1244. Hebrew functions here as a dividing line to highlight the separation between Jewish and Christian communities.

In the *Kurtze Beschreibung*, the Wandering Jew has been endowed with an amazing facility to linguistically assimilate; the Wandering Jew can speak the language of wherever he is like a native. "In whatever land he came he spoke the language; he could at that time speak Saxon as well as if he had been born a Saxon" (G. Anderson 1965, 46; see also Gribetz 2011, 171). This linguistic facility is, moreover, not used to plot against Christians, but only used for Christian ends. The Wandering Jew's mother tongue, that intimate and powerful marker of identity, is not specified. Perhaps it is Hebrew or Aramaic, but it is, in any case, superseded by whatever language suits the Wandering Jew's role as instrument of memory (see Chomsky 1951; Grintz 1960). Finally, that the name Ahasuerus is not a traditionally Jewish one but a loan name extends that erasure of language to the Wandering Jew's very name, marking this instrument of memory as an instrument of submission.

Part II

The Wandering Jew in the Age of Emancipation

Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart's 1783 poem "Der Ewige Jude: eine lyrische Rhapsodie" (The Eternal Jew: A Lyrical Rhapsody) marked a new era in the history of the Wandering Jew legend (Schubart 1972, 65–69). The poem opens with Ahasuerus hurling the skulls of his dead family down from Mount Carmel and paints his historical experiences and opposition to tyranny with lurid strokes. Schubart allows Ahasuerus the opportunity to lament his fate and to describe his personal torments, the most significant of which is his inability to die.[1] Finally, an angel promises Ahasuerus the release of a sleeplike death, consoling him that God will not remain angry forever and that Ahasuerus will also find redemption. This merciful angel contrasts with the angel of death, who condemns Ahasuerus, and with a demon escaped from hell, who torments him. These avenging supernatural beings represent a departure from the traditional legend, where Christ himself curses Ahasuerus for his transgression against him. Schubart's addition of angels and demons sublimates, to a degree, the legend's central tension between Judaism and Christianity. Ahasuerus's story becomes more like that of Faust, a tale representing human sinfulness rather than the sins of a people. Schubart's poem ends with Ahasuerus's death and promise of redemption, thereby circumventing the legend's traditional Christian teleology. The depiction of his release from a punishing immortality further attenuates the severity of Ahasuerus's sin just as he shifts from a symbol of the Jewish people to a representation of a more generalized humanity (P. Rose 1990, 24–25).

Schubart's poem ushered in what George K. Anderson (1965, 174) calls the heyday of the Wandering Jew narrative motif. This heyday would last until the First World War. During this time, the familiar use of the Wandering Jew as a symbol for the Jewish diaspora endured, alongside an increasing number of works influenced by Schubart's more universalizing representation. In these, typified in works by Percy Bysshe Shelley, Ahasuerus becomes a figure for "Promethean" rebellion against and liberation from stifling and unjust institutions (P. Rose 1990, 25).[2] Lea Weik (2015, 22), writing of Ahasverus in the works of Edgar Quinet, calls this Romantic Ahasverus "*Weltschmerz* personified."[3] In those adaptations that represent the Wandering Jew's suffering as heroic, the previous emphasis on his Jewish origins and identity fades further and further into the background.

Jewish writers also took up the legend during this period, a trend that Weik (2015, 23) attributes to its shift away from a strongly anti-Jewish perspective. I see in this nineteenth-century Jewish engagement with the legend a recognition and appropriation of the Wandering Jew as instrument of memory and an attempt to represent the complex entanglement of European Jewish and Christian cultural memory. For Heinrich Heine, the figure of the Wandering Jew is a vehicle for expressing not *Weltschmerz*, but what Heine's contemporary Ludwig Börne (1964, 286) called *Judenschmerz*, the particular pain of Jewish marginalization in an age of rising nationalism, the pain of loving a national culture that does not love you back.[4] Other nineteenth-century Jewish intellectuals, such as German writers Berthold Auerbach (1860) and Fritz Mauthner (1882), used the figure of the Wandering Jew to explore this experience of marginalization, what Jonathan Skolnik (2014, 1–2) characterizes as dissimilation, a "dynamic of minority memory" that asserts a Jewish perspective.

It is not a coincidence, I believe, that the period Anderson identifies as the Wandering Jew's heyday correlates with the period of Jewish emancipation, as Jews slowly began to gain legal and civil rights in Europe. During this period the Wandering Jew legend became a way for both Jews and non-Jews to explore the changing and contested role of Jewish Europeans in the areas they inhabited. France and Germany, Eugène Sue's and Heine's respective places of birth, provide two different examples of what Pierre Birnbaum and Ira Katznelson (1995, 3, 12) call the "complex variegated family of instances" of European Jewish emancipation. Birnbaum and Katznelson stress that this process had great variation among states and populations during its "long century," the years between the founding of the American and French republics and the Bolshevik Revolution. The advancements for European Jewish populations began with the French Revolution and ended with the First World War, the aftermath of which saw an increasingly precarious existence for European Jews and devastating regressions of the gains made in their civil rights, as well as increased violence against Jewish populations and individuals. The encounters of Sue and Heine with the Wandering Jew legend near the beginning of the Age of Emancipation reveal the very different types of meaning that the legend can hold for those included in the imaginary community of the rising nation-state and for those kept at the margins. The different ways that Sue and Heine use the Wandering Jew to express and shape cultural memory reflect their different experiences in relation to their homelands.

Eugène Sue and Heinrich Heine may well have encountered each other in Paris.[5] As residents of the city, Sue and Heine shared in some experiences, most notably the 1832 cholera epidemic, which both of them wrote about in vivid, horrifying detail. But crucial differences also shaped the life experiences of the two men. Sue was born in Paris into a family of famous physicians. Joséphine Bonaparte, Napoleon's wife, served as a witness on his certificate of birth (Bory 1962, 16). While Sue's sometimes inflammatory writings and his outspoken political views caused controversy and even led to his exile from Paris in 1851, we can safely, I think, consider Sue a man at home in the land of his birth (see Eco 1979, 127–30).

Heine's residence in Paris, in contrast, was a self-exile from his birthplace. Born into a Jewish merchant family in Düsseldorf, Heine also found his life touched by Napoleon, whose victories in France seemed to herald an era of possibility for German Jews. These hopes were dashed, however, with Napoleon's defeat. Advances in Jewish civil rights instituted during Napoleonic occupation were reversed or even regressed. In 1826, hoping for career advancement, Heine famously paid the price of "the entrance ticket" to German society: baptism. His baptismal certificate never, however, bought him the opportunities he desired. Because of this decision, Heine remained marked as a Jew among Christians, faced backlash among Jews, and experienced feelings of self-loathing. Heine relocated to Paris in 1831, residing there until his death (see Prochnik 2020).

Sue's and Heine's different life experiences influence their contrasting visions of the Wandering Jew, as seen in Sue's blockbuster 1844 novel *Le Juif errant* (The Wandering Jew) and "Jehuda ben Halevy," a poem from Heine's 1851 *Romanzero*, which he once called his most beautiful (letter to Julius Campe, August 21, 1851, in Heine 1970, 23:112). Sue's depiction reflects his point of view as an insider, someone who, despite his public progressive politics, still sees the world from a majority Christian perspective. We will see this perspective subtly revealed by Sue's Jewish Parisian contemporary Ben-Lévi (Godchaux Baruch Weil, 1806–78) in an 1844 essay, "Les Israélites de Gerolstein" (The Israelites of Gerolstein). Sue's adaptation of the Wandering Jew legend, while offering some innovations, does not challenge the legend's Christian representation of the Wandering Jew as a vehicle for serving Christian needs. Instead, it simply transposes that framing to suit a modern French context. Sue deploys the Wandering Jew and the other Jewish characters in *Le Juif errant* as instruments of memory that exist to serve the legacy of the novel's Christian characters. In "Jehuda ben Halevy," Heine, in contrast, introduces the Wandering Jew as an instrument of Jewish memory whose depiction highlights the Wandering Jew's voice, itself an instrument. Heine, while well aware of the Christian legend of the *ewige Jude* and its meanings, endows his Wandering Jew with the voice of Jewish cultural memory, interweaving this voice into a complex, entangled poetic tradition that includes Christian and Jewish voices, as well as Heine's own. Heine's innovations, of course, must be understood within the context of a literary history that featured ever-deeper explorations of interiority and continuing techniques for communicating that interiority. Nevertheless, Heine's contribution stands out for the way it conveys a minoritized subjectivity and for the way that his poetic adaptation empowers and elevates the figure of the Wandering Jew.

Three

Eugène Sue's *Le Juif errant*

The plot of Eugène Sue's 1844 *Le Juif errant* (*The Wandering Jew*) hinges on specific elements of date and place. These elements, I will argue, are meant to trigger and to shape his contemporary readers' collective memory of the 1830s. Sue approaches this through the story of a French family that grows out of older memories of prerevolutionary Catholic-Protestant strife. The Wandering Jew (and Jewess) and the family's Jewish servants serve as instruments of memory for the novel's plot and themes. In *Le Juif errant*, the 1682 will and testament of persecuted Huguenot Marius Rennepont dictates that at noon on February 13, 1832, his surviving heirs must be gathered in Paris at 3 Rue Saint François. Only then and there can they claim their inheritance, which Marius intended them to use to educate, and thereby liberate, humanity. The evil and ambitious Jesuit Rodin wants to claim this fortune for the Jesuit order by any means necessary. Halfway through the novel, it seems that Rodin has achieved his goal. Only one of the Rennepont heirs appears at the appointed time and place, and this young man, Gabriel, has long before been tricked into membership in the Jesuit order and is therefore under Rodin's control. At the stroke of noon on February 13, however, the Wandering Jewess, Hérodiade (Herodias), mysteriously appears. She presents a codicil that extends the will's terms until June 1. The complex twists and turns of Rodin's machinations against the innocent Renneponts continue for hundreds of pages more. Hérodiade and her companion, the legendary Wandering Jew, strive to aid the Renneponts because the family descends from the Wandering Jew's sister. The Renneponts are also served by another Jewish pair, David and Bethsabée Samuel, the hereditary caretakers of the Rennepont home and fortune. They carry out a final maneuver that forever keeps the treasure out of Jesuit hands, but by the novel's end all seven of the Rennepont heirs are dead. Sue's choice of dates for the novel's turning points, February 13 (the anniversary of an assassination that led to a failed 1832 legitimist coup) and June 1, allows the novel's action to stop short of the beginning of the so-called June Rebellion, mounted by antimonarchist republicans on June 5 and 6. Sue's temporal limits for the novel focus the collective memory of 1832 not on the year's political upheaval, but on its terrible cholera epidemic. Sue ties this epidemic to the movements of the Wandering Jew, making him into an instrument of terror and death as well as one of memory.

Le Juif errant first appeared as a serial novel, running in the feuilleton section of the Paris journal *Le Constitutionnel* from June 15, 1844, to August 26, 1845.[1] Readers in Paris and beyond devoured it daily. Indeed, the novel caused a sensation even before it appeared. *Le Constitutionnel* had not only paid Sue the unprecedented sum of 100,000 francs to steal publication rights from another newspaper, but also battled the rival press in court, providing a prominent example of the ever-increasing commodification of literature in the period (Bory 1962, 296). Sue, already made hugely popular by his *Les Mystères de Paris* (*The Mysteries of Paris*, 1842–43) capitalized on his success. *Le Juif errant* replicates the earlier bestseller's potent combination of the vivid descriptive technique pioneered by Sir Walter Scott and inflames it with the urgency of an ideologically driven novel (*roman à these*). Both of Sue's best-known novels, *Les Mystères* and *Le Juif errant*, condemn the abuse of the poor and working classes (Adamowicz-Hariasz 2001, 71–91; Samuels 2004, 151–94). Sue's socialist leanings did not, however, interfere in any way with his pursuit of profit through his writings. Born into comfortable circumstances, Sue had squandered his inheritance. His successful career in sensationalist literature supported his lifestyle.

Le Juif errant is, then, a *roman à these* with a side helping of Gothicism, but it is also a *histoire contemporaine*, a historical novel set in the recent past (Bory 1962, 297). As a novel of 1832, *Le Juif errant* engages in the development of the collective memory of its readers, most of whom would have had, along with Sue, their own lived memories of that time. The year 1832 gave the French much to remember (see Martone 2013). Sue's focus is centered on the cholera epidemic, of which he provides a vivid and compelling account. His novel omits two other significant 1832 events: the attempted legitimist coup and the June Rebellion. These outbreaks of political violence, as we will see, nevertheless haunt the novel through the dates critical to Marius Rennepont's will and codicil: February 13 and June 1. By the time *Le Juif errant* appeared, these calendar dates already held significance for Sue's French readers; they marked the death of leaders that led to 1832's episodes of violent unrest. Sue's choice of timeline for the novel's action, late fall 1831 to June 1, 1832, stops before the year's political violence. This timing centers the cholera epidemic as a unifying collective memory, to be consumed in daily doses by Parisian readers of *Le Constitutionnel*. The publication of *Le Juif errant* was itself a kind of public event, a daily collective experience that constructed a collective memory of 1832 and through it a sense of community. The Wandering Jew, portrayed by Sue as bringing the cholera into Paris, becomes the instrument of this collective memory of trauma. By literally ushering catastrophe into the environs of Paris, the Wandering Jew therefore embodies the Jew as a marginal, even threatening, being, even as he is portrayed as devoted to the Rennepont (see Trachtenberg [1943] 1983, 106–8; Gilman 1991, 210–33).

I read the novel's treatment of the Wandering Jew and its other Jewish characters as a reflection of their more generalized marginalization in French society, despite France's place at the vanguard of European Jewish emancipation. In *Le Juif errant*, Sue crafts a collective memory of a single year designed to present the Rennepont story as the story of all humanity. But like Sue's choice of which 1832 events to portray, his sense of humanity is also selective. The novel's focus on the traumatic experience of the pandemic, to the exclusion of contemporaneous political turmoil, allows for an imagined community that unites some readers, but excludes others.[2] The novel's conspiracist anti-Jesuit plot is a clear example of exclusion, but so too, despite the novel's title, is its treatment of Jews. Sue's Jewish characters, the supernatural and the merely human, serve as instruments of memory, literal guardians of Marius Rennepont's will. *Le Juif errant* concludes with the Wandering Jew and Jewess released into death, but not until the reader learns that the working-class characters who have supported the Renneponts are now living in rural self-sufficiency, peaceful despite the tragedies that they have endured. Their living situation results from the sacrifice of the Rennepont heirs and the efforts of David Samuel, faithful to Marius Rennepont's memory until the bitter end. The final fate of the Samuels, however, is never shared. After a hidden lifetime as caretakers, these Jews have, by the novel's end, simply disappeared.

Sue's narrative, not unlike Matthew Paris's thirteenth-century *Chronica*, is shaped around a remembered past sacrifice and the redemptive conclusion that this sacrifice ensures. Christian memory and telos are transferred to the fate of the French nation, a process made possible by Jewish instruments of memory. Sue's *Le Juif errant* provides a social vision for France, a country that had, in the half century since the French Revolution, seen dramatic shifts in governance and leadership. Sue's vision is a national one and a Parisian one, and it presents a framework of collective memory around a collective trauma—the cholera epidemic—with only marginal reference to the political tensions and divisions among the French of his time. Sue's use of Jews as instruments of memory reflects the place of French Jews in the body politic when the novel appeared; they exist within the nation, but are not seen as fully of it.

Representations of Jews and Judaism in the July Monarchy

For centuries after the expulsion of 1394, there was no official Jewish community in Paris. At the time of the French Revolution, some Sephardic Jews did reside in southwestern France, primarily in Bordeaux. An Ashkenazic Jewish presence could be found in Alsace. While Jewish residents made up a very small percentage of France's population, they nevertheless figured prominently in discussion of the revolutionary political order. The new National Assembly debated the status of Jews in no fewer than thirty-two sessions, drawing on timeworn patterns of thinking that stretched back well before the time of philosophes such as Voltaire into the writings of the church fathers (Hallman 2002, 287). The Jews served, as David Nirenberg (2013, 365) puts it, as a kind of "limit case" from which to approach questions of citizenship and human rights. In the end, the French revolutionary government did grant citizenship rights to Jewish men, first to Jews of Sephardic descent in January 1790, and to the Alsatian Ashkenazim in September 1791 (Birnbaum 2000, 21).

Despite this development, however, the status of Jewish individuals remained fraught. When Napoleon rose to power, his law against Jewish moneylending lent new life to old charges against the Jews. His creation of the Sanhedrin, a governing body for Jews, also stirred prejudice. Napoleon's measures were not renewed at the time of the Restoration. In 1831, France became the first nation to include Judaism as a religion subsidized by the state. This was a powerful step toward Jewish social integration into broader French society (Samuels 2010, 10). Because of the changes begun at the time of the Revolution, French Jews could and did advance to leadership roles in government, business, and cultural institutions without having to abandon their faith by accepting baptism. The normative identity of the French citizen, however, was still fashioned as white, Catholic, and male by individuals who held those identities. The Jewish citizen (also male since all women were excluded from citizenship) was always subject to the charge of split allegiance.

Le Juif errant appeared during the reign of King Louis Philippe, otherwise known as the July Monarchy, a period inaugurated by the July Revolution of 1830 and ending with the Revolution of 1848. In 1840, French Jews numbered around 70,000 to 80,000 in a country with a population of around 33 million. About 9,000 of these French Jews lived in Paris, their numbers having increased substantially from their 1809 census count of 2,908. The Jewish demographic in Paris would increase tremendously over the course of the nineteenth century, reaching 40,000 by 1880 (Samuels 2010, 11–12). This increase in population accompanied one in social prominence. For example, one of the most heralded actresses of the era, Rachel Félix, enthralled audiences, celebrating and capitalizing on her Jewish heritage rather than trying to hide it (Samuels 2016, 50–72). Audiences also flocked to see Jewish composer Fromental Halévy's 1835 opera *La Juive* (The Jewess), which was staged at the Paris Opera, then directed by Louis Véron. Véron went on to edit *Le Constitutionnel* and contracted Sue for *Le Juif errant*. The box office success of *La Juive* may well have convinced Véron of the marketability of Jewish themes, helping justify Sue's eye-popping advance.

Toussenel and Hallez

Artistic representations of Jews were popular moneymakers, but actual Jews making money were more controversial. As Diana R. Hallman (2002, 254) notes in her study of the social milieu of *La Juive*, the "capitalistic expansion" of the July Monarchy only enhanced "a growing mythology" about the Rothschild banking family. In the 1840s, the decade in which *Le Juif errant* appeared, and during which political tensions reached a critical climax in the Revolution of 1848, the heightened discourse about the Jews became increasingly vicious in character (see also Samuels 2016, 51). Nineteenth-century French thinkers grappled with new modes of historical thinking, and with the impacts of secularization and industrialization, which were growing at what seemed to them a frenzied pace. Despite this modernizing upheaval, however, the temporalities of Christian anti-Judaism that we have seen as shaping the development of the Wandering Jew legend endured. Amid the "shocks of temporality and culture" non-Jews were still using the figure of the Jew to think about time (Samuels 2010, 21). Alphonse Toussenel (1803–85) and Théophile Hallez (d. 1858), for example, used Jews to critique and lament social and economic change. They deployed the figure of the Jew to attack what they saw as a new and dangerous form of economic modernity, but their usage had roots in medieval and early modern thought. Particularly of interest to us is how they drew on long-standing portrayals of the Jew as a figure not only out of place in France, but, using a tradition I referenced in the introduction, out of step with the natural flow of time itself. Toussenel and Hallez used distortive figurations of time and space to shape a cultural memory for France that excluded Jews.[3] It is worth spending a few moments looking at these prominent publications in order better to understand the milieu in which Sue's representation of Jews in *Le Juif errant* appeared.

When Alphonse Toussenel's *Les juifs rois de l'époque: histoire de la féodalité financière* (The Jews, Kings of the Epoch: A History of Financial Feudalism) was published in 1845, it claimed that the Jews had used their new status as citizens to overrun France (Toussenel 1886, xxvi). The work was part of what Hallman (2002, 256–57, 263) calls an "explosion" of antisemitic literature in the 1840s. Toussenel's virulent polemic mixes the thinking of "utopian socialist" Charles Fourier (1772–1837) with the traditional framing of the Jewish Old Testament as a violent contrast to mercies of the New (J. Kaplan 2015, 40; and see Hoog 2001, 114). And while Toussenel aims his work at what he views as contemporary abuses, he employs timeworn Christian rhetoric to do so. When in his authorial introduction to a reprint of his tract, Toussenel (1886, xxvii) declares that "the God of the Jews is none other, indeed, than Satan," he is not simply creating a contrast to the loving "God of the Gospels," but picking up on a long tradition of aligning the Jews with Satan (see Trachtenberg [1943] 1983). Toussenel's (1886, xliii) rhetoric resurrects attacks on the Talmud pioneered in France in the 1240s, demonstrating the endurance of medieval Christian ideas about Jewish-Christian relations, even in a context of modernizing "secularization."[4]

Toussenel (1886, 10) creates a sense of both continuity and epochal transition by figuring the Jews as the new "kings" of France. He argues that the Jews want to reduce all forms of human transaction and organization to the capitalist exchanges that they control. He cites the army, banking, journalism, and transport as examples of social institutions undergoing Jewish takeover, asserting that if one could catch and sell air, a Jew would do so.[5] Toussenel's attack, while purporting to be forward thinking, relies on a specifically crafted cultural memory. The old kings of France, even if their rule has been superseded by newer, more democratic visions, represent true Christian rule for Toussenel. The new economic order that Toussenel takes aim at represents not simply an all-consuming capitalism—one where even air can be commodified—but an overthrow of a Christian order, however flawed, by a Jewish one.

In the same year that Toussenel published his diatribe, Théophile Hallez put out his *Des Juifs en France: de leur état moral et politique* (On the Jews in France: Their Moral and Political State). Hallez (1845, i, v) claims in his second sentence that he did not write this work out of hostility toward Jews; he considers the Jewish religion itself as a side question to the matter at hand.[6] Nevertheless, Hallez charges that the Jews, as a group, engage in real estate speculation and human trafficking along with other nefarious enterprises, dealing honestly only with their coreligionists (x–xi, 6). Like Toussenel, Hallez weaponizes the past, reaching back into the Merovingian period (which ended in 751) to argue that the Jews are not truly part of the French nation.

After Hallez (1845, 153) elbows Jews out of the French past, he moves on to attack their place in the French present. He meditates on a question that he attributes to Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès: "Are the Jews men? That's the question."[7] Hallez avers that one must question not so much Jews' humanity as their Frenchness: "Are they French? Not just in a juridical sense, but in a moral one" (154).[8] He concludes that, after fourteen centuries, amid revolution and upheavals, "the Jews" have clung to superstitious practices and to their own national mores. These habits of life are, he contends, "completely incompatible with the conditions of modern society" (262–63).[9] Hallez's attack separates out the Jewish faith from what he characterizes as Jewish habits of being, "leur moeurs . . . leur idées" (154). His essentialism is of special interest to our study of the immortal Wandering Jew because it is based in temporality. Hallez accuses Jews of simultaneously being prisoners of a backward, superstitious past and heralds of a frightening capitalist future. What of his French Jewish contemporaries who wish to participate actively as full agents in civic life? Hallez's vision cannot accommodate them. They are relegated to inclusion as protected members of a minority religion. Their actions and way of life must conform to standards deemed "French," as determined by Hallez.

Both Toussenel and Hallez accuse the Jews of crimes that are, essentially, temporal. In their eyes, the Jews contaminate the present through their attachment to a religious past that they should rightly recognize as superseded. The Jews also offend, according to Toussenel and Hallez, through their engagement with an economic future that the authors find frightening and immoral. The onslaught of social and economic changes for which Toussenel and Hallez blame the Jews created what Richard Terdiman (1993, 3) speaks of as a nineteenth-century "memory crisis." I think we can say that Toussenel and Hallez are, in fact, accusing the Jews—who dare to retain cultural memory that does not conform to majority ideals—of a crime of memory. Toussenel's and Hallez's diatribes reveal the temporal and memorial dynamics that informed representations of Jews by French non-Jews at the time *Le Juif errant* appeared. Even though Sue depicts the Wandering Jew as a supporter of the Renneponts, indeed, as their ancestor, we will discern traces of Hallez's eternal stranger and Toussenel's archaic and malevolent force in Sue's portrayal. Indeed, the Wandering Jew's very status as ancestor reflects the dynamics of supersession. In this schema, Jews are the ancestors of Christians, but Jewish adherence to their faith places them outside the flow of time. The non-Jewish writers Toussenel, Hallez, and Sue all partake in a tradition that uses the Jews "to think with" (see J. Cohen 1999; Lampert 2004; Nirenberg 2013). Whether representative of the archaic, superseded past of the Old Testament or the infernal engines of industrial modernity, the figure of the Jew is used to signal various, even contradictory, forms of temporal threat.

The vilifying representation of Jews we find in Toussenel and Hallez is not limited to polemic. Some of the most acclaimed writers of French fiction, such as Honoré de Balzac and Gustave Flaubert, peopled their works with unsavory and unscrupulous Jewish characters from the worlds of finance, journalism, art, and even the criminal underworld (Samuels 2010, 19). One can, for example, discern a not-so-subtle satiric jab at Jewish bankers in Balzac's *Melmoth réconcilié* (*Melmoth Reconciled*, 1835). Balzac's punning title, which hints at both the soul and the balance sheet, alludes to Charles Maturin's 1820 *Melmoth the Wanderer*, a novel also based on the Wandering Jew legend. Balzac uses Melmoth to poke fun at the world of finance by landing his immortal in an impregnable bank vault, attracted there by a crime of forgery. From this beginning, more unsavory than uncanny, Balzac's novel take on immortality devolves into a sordid tale of infidelity and despair. It is no accident that the vault where this sordid imagining of the Wandering Jew legend begins belongs to the Jewish banker who appears in other Balzac works, Baron de Nucingen (Samuels 2010, 19–20; and on *Melmoth* in France see Lanone 2002).

And, of course, such representation was by no means limited to French authors. The general representation of Jews and Judaism in nineteenth-century literature is a vast topic, but one can readily point to works in German such as Wilhelm Hauff's *Jud Süß* (1855) and Gustav Freytag's *Soll und Haben* (*Debit and Credit*, 1855) to see a similar dynamic of unsympathetic portrayal. Literature in English also abounds in examples, such as in works by Maria Edgeworth, Charles Dickens, Anthony Trollope, and George du Maurier. Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, published in 1819, transformed the dyad of the greedy Jew and his daughter from William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* into Isaac and Rebecca of York. *Ivanhoe* was enormously popular in France. Scott's Orientalizing descriptions of Isaac and Rebecca resonate in the physical features of Sue's Wandering Jew and Hérodiade. Sue's *Le Juif* *errant* brilliantly capitalizes, literally and figuratively, on the trends of the time, including a fascination with Jewish characters. Sue's uncanny Wandering Jew and Jewess do not merely lend a marketable gothic tinge to the novel; they and the Samuels provide what one contemporary commentator called *le juif obligé*, the obligatory Jewish figure, which the French public lapped up in paintings, opera, and literature as an exoticizing element of "local color" (Samuels 2013, 22). Sue uses this local color to paint instruments of memory suited to the moment in which he lived.

Sue's Wandering Jew and Jewess

Le Juif errant opens with the Wandering Jew standing amid a wild, majestic setting, the Siberian side of the Bering Strait. Just across the water is a mysterious woman, the Wandering Jewess, Hérodiade, whose role in the death of John the Baptist parallels the Wandering Jew's legendary mistreatment of Christ.[10] The two figures gesture to each other: he in despair and she with hands aloft, urging him to have faith. The scene, replete with blustering wind and the northern lights, ends with the pair parting without meeting face-to-face, an event that can occur only once in a century. The chapter, whose style is as overblown as the tempest it depicts, is rendered in prose so pocked with ellipses and exclamation points that the narrator almost seems to pant out his description. This scene is the first of the very few in the novel featuring the supernatural pair. Hérodiade will emerge to produce the codicil to Marius Rennepont's will. She will also save, in a flashback, the Jesuit Rennepont, Gabriel, from Native American warriors during his time missionizing in North America. The Wandering Jew's appearances are similarly dramatic, especially when he brings cholera to Paris despite his good intentions. His fate is cursed.

Sue alters the source of this curse. He portrays the Wandering Jew's ill-treatment of Jesus as stemming from his experience as an oppressed member of the artisan class. Although the Wandering Jew toiled incessantly during his mortal lifetime, he still could not provide for his family, and this led to his cruel treatment of Jesus. Despite harnessing the legend and its curse to the worker's plight, Sue keeps his wanderer a sinner, marked not only by his immortality, but by his Jewish origins. Notably the appellation *Juif* disappears for the final appearance of the Wandering Jew and Jewess in a chapter entitled "La Redémption" (The Redemption), which depicts the release into death of both supernatural wanderers. In their final scene, Hérodiade and the Wandering Jew speak to each other of their longed-for salvation, referring to each other as "brother" and "sister," presumably not only twins in their immortality, but siblings in "the grand human family" created by God and redeemed through Christ (Sue 1940, 2:346; Sue 1845, 4:346).[11] Hérodiade again helps the Wandering Jew affirm his faith in Christ, and she assures him that the sufferings of the Rennepont family have not been in vain:

> No, no, my brother! And instead of weeping over your lost race, rejoice for them—since their death was needed for your redemption, and in redeeming you, heaven will redeem the artisan, cursed and feared by those who have laid on him the iron yoke. Yes, my brother! The time draweth nigh—heaven's mercy will not stop with us alone. Yes, I tell you; in us will be rescued both the Woman and the Slave of these modern ages [*la femme et l'esclave modern*]. The trial has been hard, brother; it has lasted throughout eighteen centuries; but it will last no longer. (Sue 1940, 2:684, with slight modification; Sue 1845, 4:345–46)

Hérodiade refigures the Renneponts as Christ figures, with their deaths ensuring not only redemption for herself and the Wandering Jew, but also the liberation of women and those trapped in slave-like poverty. In their final moments, the Wandering Jew and Jewess appear to have "transcended" or at least escaped their Jewish identities. They become symbols of a new, redemptive future. This symbolism fits with Sue's polemic against the mistreatment of France's workers and poor, which has been detailed in descriptions of the hard lives of characters such as Mayeux, an industrious seamstress whose intellect and compassion are hidden beneath disfigurement; she struggles in utter poverty. The character Adrienne de Cardoville, a freethinking noblewoman and Rennepont heir, exemplifies the plight of women, who had been excluded from citizenship and whose rights were severely restricted through the institution of marriage and other legal structures.

But if the novel's conclusion allows the Wandering Jew and Jewess to escape the cruel state that they have endured for eighteen centuries, the novel itself does not achieve escape velocity from as many centuries of anti-Jewish rhetoric. Responding to Hérodiade, the Wandering Jew heralds the dawn of a new day, pledging:

> Henceforth I will only shed tears of pride and glory for those of my race, who have died the martyrs of humanity, sacrificed by humanity's eternal enemies—for the true ancestors of the sacrilegious wretches, who blaspheme the name of Jesus by giving it to their Company,

> were the Pharisees, the false and unworthy priests, whom the Saviour cursed!—Yes! glory to the descendants of my family, who have been the last martyrs offered up by the accomplices of all slavery and all despotism, the pitiless enemies of those who wish to think, and not to suffer in silence—of those that would fain enjoy, as children of heaven, the gifts which the Creator has bestowed upon all the human family. Yes, the day approaches—the end of the reign of modern Pharisees—the false priests. (Sue 1940, 2:684, with modifications; Sue 1845, 4:346)

The Wandering Jew's final speech relies on the anti-Jewish trope of Pharisaic oppression, which he uses to condemn by analogy the Jesuit order. Although the charge of despotic and false religious leadership has been shifted to the Jesuits, the model of priestly corruption itself remains identified as Jewish. The Wandering Jew accepts the destruction of his descendants, the Rennepont family, as a necessary Christlike sacrifice for a redemptive future. This redemptive future differs from the Christian eschatological visions that shaped Matthew's *Chronica* and the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung*, but shares with them a diametric opposition between an enlightened Christianity and a stifling Judaism. Such a dichotomy between Jesus and those who oppose him can also be found in Toussenel's (1886, xix) toxic brew of conservative Catholicism spiked with radical socialism, which includes a call to "war" against Jewish monopolists and satirically decries "children of Israel" as the descendants of the Pharisees and scribes. Even as Sue modifies the Wandering Jew legend to fit his class politics, he relies on old interpretations of the Passion narrative long used to vilify Jews and Judaism.

The Samuels of the Marais

The Wandering Jew and Hérodiade are not the only Jewish figures in *Le Juif errant*. The novel's other Jewish characters are the opposite of wanderers. They are part of a family that remains in one place, guarding and keeping it for a century and a half. To find them, one must travel to the Rennepont home, a location that Sue maps out both in space and in time (see Kalifa 2004). While it can be accessed by traveling streets likely familiar to Sue's readers, 3 Rue Saint François seems to exist in a time apart:

> On entering the Rue Saint-Gervais, by the Rue Doré (in the Marais), you would have found yourself, at the epoch of this narrative [*à l'époque de ce récit*], directly opposite to an enormously high wall, the stones of

> which were black and worm-eaten with age. This wall, which extended nearly the whole length of that solitary street, served to support a terrace shaded by trees of some hundred years old, which thus grew about forty feet above the causeway. Through their thick branches appeared the stone front, peaked roof and tall brick chimneys of an antique house, the entrance of which was situated in the Rue Saint-François, not far from the Rue Saint-Gervais corner. (Sue 1940, 1:598; Sue 1845, 2:211)

The narrator studs the passage with details that locate the house in the past. The black, worm-eaten stones create a sense of age and decay for this house hidden by old shade trees. The narrator specifically notes that his description holds for the time of the telling (*l'époque de ce récit*), implying that the scene found in 1832 no longer remains when this passage first appears twelve years later.[12] The description of the house is itself a type of memory.

The narrator continues, conjuring for the reader a structure that is less a home than a massive, impenetrable fortress, or, as is explicitly stated, a *tombeau*, a tomb, comprising stone, brick, and lead. Xiaolu Hu (2007, 23) observes that this house, like the entire quartier, seems to exist outside of time. Hu notes that the Marais, the district where Sue (twice) mentions that the Rennepont house is located, is portrayed as the very image of isolation, darkness, decay, antiquity, and conservatism.[13] The Marais, not incidentally, is also a section of Paris associated with the Jewish community since the medieval period and forward into today as well (see Azéma 2005; Caron 2010). The Jewish section of Paris is, it seems, the ideal place for preserving the Rennepont legacy.

In contrast to its decaying exterior and location, the interior of the Rennepont house is hermetically sealed; no human has entered it for 150 years. The house has been protected by its extreme fortifications of stone and lead, but also by its guards. The faithful and fierce Great Pyrenees dogs that patrol the house's grounds at night are bred and cared for by another loyal race of guardians, the Samuel family, which has for three generations devoted itself to carrying out the last wishes of Marius Rennepont. In a novel that overflows with animal imagery (and that devotes an entire chapter to a fatal encounter between two canines), the implicit comparison between the Samuels and the guard dogs is worth noting.

Despite their essential roles as caretakers of the Rennepont fortune, the Samuels have, however, received little critical attention, an oversight that perhaps proves just how completely the novel marginalizes them; they are identified more as servants than as people.[14] And yet David and Bethsabée are sympathetic characters, not only because of their absolute devotion to the Rennepont, but also for their personal story as bereaved parents.[15] We are introduced to the pair as they are making a final check of the account books on the night of February 12, the eve of the will reading. Bethsabée is struck with grief when her husband calls out the accounting for October 19, 1826, the date of the last letter they received from their son, who was murdered in an act of anti-Jewish violence while carrying out Rennepont business in the East. The grieving father pauses briefly in his accounting to declare his lost son a martyr and to lament the cruelty of the persecution suffered by the Jews. He then begins to ponder of what use his family will be without his son and once Marius Rennepont's will has been executed. He is distracted, however, by mysterious glimmers from the roof of the Rennepont mansion. This light, it is later clear, comes from the presence of the Wandering Jewess, who has entered the sealed home, likely by supernatural means. The light serves as a reminder to the Samuels that they do not have time to dwell on the memory of their son; their lives—past, present, and future—are subsumed by the demands of the memory of Marius Rennepont, who saved David Samuel's grandfather from the Inquisition and then entrusted the Samuels with the Rennepont legacy when he learned that the Catholic Church would execute him as a Huguenot. This couple, although named for a biblical king and queen, embody servitude, body and soul.

Because they hold true to the memory of a seventeenth-century legacy, David and Bethsabée are guardians of a house frozen in time, hermetically sealed from time's effects within the decaying district of the Marais. As guardians, the Samuels live on Rennepont time. It could be said, of course, that the entire novel is on Rennepont time. The Christmas season passes without notice, for example, as all eyes fasten on February 13, but the Samuels, who barely have even a minute to dwell on the memory of their own son, seem especially synchronized with the temporality of their master. This temporal fixation is so marked that the 1845 Belgian *Parodie du Juif errant* pokes fun at it specifically with a repetitive comic *toc toc!* (Philipon and Huart 1845, 120). While Samuel is himself hyperattuned to the passage of time, his personal relationship to time seems slightly uncanny. Representations of the Wandering Jew are split between depictions of the wanderer as youthful or aged (Hoog 2001, 118). Sue's Wandering Jew is young and handsome until his final days. David Samuel, the octogenarian scion of a family line marked by longevity, is the quintessential old Jew, reinforcing the dichotomy between an old superseded Judaism and a new, young, triumphant Christianity.[16]

David and Bethsabée resume their accounting task, and David explains to Bethsabée (and, of course, to the reader) the "law of accumulation," extolling the glories of compound interest to such an extent that this element of the novel too was soon transformed into parody (Philipon and Huart 1845, 115). Sue's detailing of the financial growth of the Rennepont fortune is accompanied by a chart, a "Statement of the account of the heirs of M. De Rennepont, delivered by David Samuels" for the date of February 12, 1832. This ledger, marked "Debit and Credit" (also the title of the chapter), appeared on the pages of *Le Constitutionnel* (November 7, 1844), followed on the next page by actual economic news, the "Bourse." Such proximity seems, if perhaps inadvertently, to reinforce the association between Jews and finance attacked by Toussenel and Hallez.

These prejudicial associations influence other aspects of Sue's portrayal of the Samuels. Sue relies on the centuries-old stereotype of innate Jewish financial acumen. He draws on the legend of the Jewish invention of the bill of exchange, an attribution that dates back to the early modern period. Sue may have been familiar with the origin myth for this financial instrument through the writings of Montesquieu. The story of the bill of exchange was particularly charged at the time Sue published *Le Juif errant*, when Parisians, at the forefront of European industrialization and modernization, felt buffeted by such developments, which were attacked by Toussenel as the unhealthy creation of Jewish capitalists. Even as Sue attempts to portray the Samuels in a sympathetic light, his observation that bills of exchange had been, since the medieval period, mysterious instruments of transferring money across the globe only reinforces negative representations of Jews as secretive agents of financial exploitation. As Sue has David explain to his wife, the three generations of Samuels are aided by a large network of fellow Jews across the globe, who masterfully use financial instruments in ways "certain and secret" in order to create the enormous Rennepont fortune.

This evocation of a Jewish financial network echoes centuries of portrayal of the Jews as a clannish, secretive group dedicated to money and gain as well as to other forms of secret deeds. Sue's depiction of the Samuels' activities resonates not only with the supernatural travels of the Wandering Jew and Jewess, who also travel around the globe by unfathomable means, but with the secret, nefarious network of the Jesuits and of the "Thugs," which Sue introduces as a network based in India and recruited by the Jesuits to aid in their plot against the Rennepont. The Jews, Jesuits, and Thugs engage in activities that seem to shadow the globe. The activities of the Samuel clan are only rendered acceptable because they are carrying out the will of Marius

Rennepont. Indeed, it is Marius Rennepont's orders that keep Jewish activity in check, as we are told that the three generations of Samuels, clever financiers all, could have accumulated even more wealth for the Renneponts, if they had not been told by Marius to keep their investments free of usury. Like the Great Pyrenees guard dogs, then, the Samuels are potentially dangerous agents, rendered benign only because they serve a wise master like Marius Rennepont.

Even as David Samuel is portrayed as a loyal servant, a kind husband, and a grieving father, the reader has a sense that he holds a frightening power that he can unleash if he chooses. At the novel's climactic conclusion on June 1, 1832, when Rodin believes he is about to take control of the Rennepont fortune, Samuel doesn't simply thwart this goal by burning financial documents; he does so in a setting of high drama as he reveals the corpses of the six Rennepont heirs. This moment is made possible because Samuel has haunted cemeteries, obtaining the remains through pleading and, ultimately, through cash bribes. While Sue depicts Samuel as operating on the side of good and, indeed, as motivated by a fierce and laudable loyalty, the old man's charnel house dealings lend him a frightening dimension. The true goals of his graveyard hauntings, all in the service of the Rennepont family, are only revealed at the novel's end. While this withheld revelation creates, of course, a thrilling climax, it nevertheless raises doubts about Samuel's character that are, in my opinion, never fully dispelled. The fear of the body snatcher was real at the time the novel appeared. In *Les Mystères de Paris*, for example, Sue depicts women in a charity hospital desperate not to have their bodies fall into the hands of medical dissectionists after their death. These fears lend new life to the accusations of Jewish murder of Christians and desecration of their bodies that we have seen in relation to Matthew Paris's *Chronica*. These libels had gained new life in France just four years before *Le Juif errant* appeared. News of the "Damascus affair," in which Jews were accused of ritual cannibalism, was splashed all over the pages of French periodicals (Hoog 2001, 114).

As David Samuel reveals the corpses of the Rennepont heirs, he also physically transforms from a little old man into an imposing, even threatening figure. He becomes, literally, an instrument of memory, acting in memory of Marius's will even as the Rennepont family's truly supernatural protectors fade away. David Samuel's powers are not, however, so much supernatural as made possible by means marked as Jewish. His final thwarting of Rodin and the Jesuits by burning the notes that constitute the Rennepont fortune is only possible because of the innovation of the bill of exchange, which Sue specifically attributes to Jewish invention. Samuel turns this paper fortune into something rather like a burnt offering, his biblical sense of vengeance revealed on his distorted visage.

The novel's dramatic conclusion, which leaves Rodin and his coconspirators dead, brings together the plotting of the Jesuits and the Thugs with the revenge plot of the Samuels (Charnon-Deutsch 2013, 148). While the Samuels are on the side of the Rennepont s, they remain secretive figures. This sense of occult machination is strengthened by an interesting detail that Sue includes as he builds up to the burning of the fortune. Before leading Rodin and his companion up to the chamber where the treasure is stored, David and Bethsabée confirm between themselves the details of their plot—in Hebrew. Knowledge of this Jewish language allows the couple to discuss their plans right in front of Rodin without risk, an open subterfuge of which the pair is ruefully aware.[17] Here, as in Sue's deployment of the myth of the bill of exchange and his characterization of Jewish global banking networks, Sue colors his description of David and Bethsabée with the shades of old stereotypes. Again, the Samuels, while loyal, have traits that could make them dangerous if their energies were directed against the wrong target.[18] And indeed, Sue presents the Jesuit order as a malign global conspiracy, a powerful organization that can yet be dealt a blow by the Samuels, who rely on means marked as Jewish. Rodin's demise also involves both the Thugs and his own enemies within the Jesuit order. Sue's depiction of all these groups draws some of its power from a longer tradition of Christian conspiracy theories about the Jews, a tradition stretching back to the dawn of the second millennium, through ritual murder accusation, and then appearing in an especially virulent form a few decades after the publication of *Le Juif errant*, with the anonymously authored *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (see Eco 1994, 117–40). Sue's portrayal of the Jesuit order as a global threat to what Sue would call "true Christians" and, indeed, to all of humanity, draws additional strength from its proximity to these earlier narratives about the Jews, as well as the novel's racist exoticization of India and Indians and inhabitants of other parts of the globe, such as Native Americans in North America.

I read the portrayal of David and Bethsabée Samuel as part of a larger nexus in Sue's work that represents non-Christians and nonwhite people as exotic foils to white Frenchmen and women. In *Les Mystères de Paris*, Sue presents another David, a Black physician, as a model of loyalty. This characterization, while by no means identical to that of David Samuel, is profitably compared to it. David the physician's sense of loyalty is so extreme that he returns voluntarily to a state of enslavement in the Americas after completing medical school in France at the behest of his enslaver. Prince Rodolphe, the main protagonist of *Les Mystères*, buys David and his wife, Cecily, from their American enslaver in order to free David. Rodolphe's purchase of David by no means undermines the institution of slavery, but rather supports the idea of David as commodity. And, indeed, after his "emancipation," David remains fiercely loyal to Rodolphe, even carrying out one of Rodolphe's most grisly vigilante punishments on a criminal—a blinding—in direct contradiction of the Hippocratic oath: do no harm. Sue's depiction of Cecily as an evil, manipulative, and highly sexualized Creole woman, whose blackness is only visible in her fingernails, only reinforces the novel's racism. Edward Tannenbaum (1981, 504) argues that Sue is the original "bleeding heart liberal." Reading Sue's global references through Lisa Lowe's (2015) brilliant analysis of the origins of liberalism indicates the limits of Sue's vision of the human. The deficiencies of this social vision are nowhere more apparent than in characters such as David in *Les Mystères* and the Samuels in *Le Juif errant*. Whatever sympathy Sue might attempt to generate for these characters, they are never allowed truly independent agency. Nor do Sue's narratives portray any substantive change to the social structures that harm the actual groups that these characters are supposed to represent. Despite liberation, David the formerly enslaved doctor serves his enslaver willingly—no matter what—just as David the Jewish guardian acts without question as an instrument of memory for a long dead benefactor.

Le Choléra

Sue, a trained physician from a family of distinguished physicians, would have been familiar with the details of the 1832 cholera epidemic. Sue drew from actual occurrences, such as a "cholera ball" and a mob attack on individuals suspected of causing the scourge by using poison (see Goulet 2016; Hu 2007). The links between his fictional account and actual events, some of which had been covered in the pages of *Le Constitutionnel*, lend Sue's depiction a metafictional quality as he shapes collective memory of the event for his community of readers. We have evidence from one of Sue's harshest critics, Alfred Nettement (1805–69), that Sue's portrayal of the cholera had a notable popular reception. In an extended diatribe against Sue and *Le Juif errant*, Nettement (1845, 111–28) describes himself conversing with others and listing fault after fault with Sue's novel. His interlocutors agree with his points, but always offer the refrain, "but the cholera!" For these readers, the novel's dramatic presentation of the epidemic makes up for all its other failings. This section of Nettement's polemic, conveyed through dialogue, brings to life a sense that Sue's novel was the talk of the town, and hints at just how much Sue's rendering of the cholera outbreak resonated with Parisians who had themselves experienced the actual event.

Further, Sue's striking portrayal of the epidemic anchors the novel, for all its flights of fancy, to the actual historical timeline of Paris. *Le Juif errant* begins in late fall 1831 and ends on June 1, 1832. Living through 1832 in Paris meant experiencing political turmoil and epidemic simultaneously, as satiric caricatures of the time illustrate so powerfully (Bourdelais and Dodin 1987, 19–21). On June 1, 1832, in real life, Jean Maximilien Lamarque, a former general who was critical of King Louis Philippe's rule, died of cholera. Rioting broke out in the streets of Paris on June 5 and 6 because the popular Lamarque was denied the type of state funeral that had recently been held to honor political leader Casimir Périer, who had died of the cholera in mid-May. This uprising, captured by Victor Hugo in his 1862 *Les Misérables*, was also part of the collective memory of the readership that so savored Sue's depiction of the cholera.

The unrest on Paris streets in June was not the only political violence of 1832. The duchess of Berry was arrested on November 6 for her failed attempt at a military coup. While these events are not included in *Le Juif errant*, the duchess and her plot are alluded to by the date of February 13 (see Samuels 2019). In *Le Juif errant* this date for the Rennepont will reading is inscribed on medals held by each of the seven heirs, images of which appeared in the pages of *Le Constitutionnel*. February 13 is reinforced by the frequent repetition of this date by good and evil characters alike. Readers could not have missed that February 13 held significance outside of the novel. On that day in 1820, the duke of Berry had been assassinated and "Le Treize Februar" (February 13) had been observed as significant since the 1820 assassination. The date's centrality in *Le Juif errant* allows the political tensions of the time to haunt the text, just as the date of the codicil, June 1, truncates and alters the real political timeline of 1832. The failed coup led by the duchess of Berry in 1832 was an attempt to regain the throne for her son and to return it to the Bourbon dynasty. The duchess was betrayed by Simon Deutz, a Jewish convert to Christianity and the son of the chief rabbi of France, an act for which he received a large sum of money, an act in direct antithesis of the absolute dedication of the Jews in Sue's novel.[19]

While alluding to the political violence of 1832, Sue's novel omits any direct reference to the turmoil fomented by the legitimist right and the republican left. We are left with an 1832 oddly stripped and pared away. Only the cholera remains, rendering Sue's Wandering Jew an instrument for a revisionist memory. Sue's collective memory of 1832 relegates its violent political struggles to the margins, recalled only as echoes through the *lieux de mémoire* of February 13 and June 1. The novel's representation of 1832 forms around the cholera epidemic and the collective trauma it created by devastating Paris. This epidemic struck down rich and poor, legitimist and republican, alike. As the Wandering Jew thinks of the Renneponts, "the history of this single family is the history of the whole human race" (Sue 1940, 1:133; Sue 1845, 1:122). In their suffering, the Renneponts come to represent all of humanity, although identification with them is achieved by collapsing the scope of humanity into something that seems equated with France and centered on Paris. Sue's universalism is actually quite particular.[20]

This particularity becomes even more specific when we consider that the Renneponts are related by blood to the Wandering Jew. The Renneponts descend from the Wandering Jew's sister, yet he is a figure apart not only because of his immortal curse, but because of the cholera that he brings with him wherever he goes. The mother of two of the Rennepont heirs, Rose and Blanche, dies of cholera within hours of being visited by the Wandering Jew. Sue strengthens the connection between the Wandering Jew and the cholera with two additional chapters in an 1845 edition of *Le Juif errant*. This edition also features a striking foldout map that covers regions stretching from Portugal to Manila, Java, and equatorial Africa.[21] Red lines show the path of the cholera epidemic from 1817 to 1832. The lines branch out across the map like veins, but a direct path can nonetheless be traced from Mongolia to Paris, the destination of the Wandering Jew because of the terms of the Rennepont will.

In the chapter titled "Le Voyageur" (The Traveler) the Wandering Jew stands at the top of Montmartre, lamenting that he is once again forced to bring the scourge of plague, represented as a red-eyed specter, to the residents of Paris. The Wandering Jew brings the disease against his will, in ironic contradiction of the words he often repeats, "Love you one another!" A footnote in an edition of *Le Juif errant* that appeared very soon after the end of its serial run links the 1832 cholera epidemic to the fourteenth-century black death: "In 1346, the famous Black Death ravaged the earth, presenting the same symptoms as the cholera, and the same inexplicable phenomena as to its progress and the results in its route. . . . It is well known that when the cholera first broke out in Paris, it had taken a wide and unaccountable leap; and, also memorable, a north-east wind prevailed during its utmost fierceness" (Sue 1940, 2: 237, with modifications; Sue 1845, 2:255). Here Sue ties the Wandering Jew's route to Paris from the northeast to the details held in collective memory of the 1832 Paris epidemic. This connection back to the black death, a moment of significance in European cultural memory, is an interesting choice. When this plague raged across medieval Europe, Jews were made the subject of conspiracy theories about its origin, leading to persecution and massacre (see Cohn 2007). Sue's Wandering Jew pleads with God that he not be forced to bring plague once more to Paris. This linkage between the Wandering Jew and devastating plague taps into a tradition of antisemitic conspiracy theory that endures to this day.[22] In this cultural memory of plague, the figure of the Jew is not only supernatural, but dehumanized. Although Sue's stated motives and politics differ greatly from those of writers like Toussenel and Hallez, like them he locates Jews on the margins of humanity. In the tradition of anti-Jewish representation in which these schema share, Jews are figured either as threats, as in Matthew Paris's recounting of a Jewish-Mongol plot, or as fossilized guardians of an originary past. As scholars such as Jeremy Cohen (1999) have shown, Jews traditionally served as "living letters of the law": Christian predecessors who preserved a past seen as the key to Christian eschatological hopes. In the world of *Le Juif errant*, where the Rennepons represent humankind, the Wandering Jew acts as ancestor and the Samuels serve as guardians. As instruments of memory, they protect Rennepont history and the Rennepont fortune, the key to what Marius Rennepont hopes will be its utopian, redemptive future.

At the time of the French Revolution, as the French attempted to reshape their society and its institutions, they were forced to grapple with history and memory themselves. After the earthquake of the Revolution, in the tremors major and minor that followed—empire, restoration, more revolution, more empire—the French continued to develop and to question the nature of their collective national identity. What did it mean to be French, and how was this identity expressed through history and memory? The Jew, whose status as a French citizen (and as a human being) was debated well before the Revolution, continued to be used as a way of exploring and expressing "French" identity. Sue's remaking of the Wandering Jew into a symbol for the oppressed artisan—and transformation of his sister's descendants into a symbol for the entire human race—does not constitute a transcendence of the instrumentalization of the figure of the Jew. Sue instead, as we have seen, recast the Wandering Jew as a symbol for humanity while retaining other elements of traditional representation of Jews through Hérodiade and the Samuel family. The legend's roots in the Passion story are reinforced by the presence of Hérodiade, who appears in the Gospels (Mark 6:17–27; Matthew 14:3–4). While the Wandering Jew's actions are explained in a way that reflects Sue's belief that oppressed people do wrong because of their circumstances, Hérodiade's activities are never clarified. Her story is said to represent the stifling societal constraints imposed on "woman," but we are never given insight into *why* she acted against John the Baptist. We know only that she craves forgiveness. The sensual malice that surrounds her myth is never dispelled, and, indeed, its violence is accentuated by Sue's choice to continually refer to John as *Saint Jean le décapité*—Saint John the Decapitated.[23]

The Wandering Jew legend typically equates the Wandering Jew's personal memory with Christian cultural memory. By having the Wandering Jew and Jewess die, Sue ends this role for the wanderer. The Wandering Jew expires having made his peace beneath a statue of the crucified Christ. In this presentation, the time between the past fixed event and its ultimate consequence collapses, but the Wandering Jew and Jewess are not returned to Jerusalem, its original site. The working-class survivors of the story—Dagobert, a soldier devoted to the Rennepont twins Rose and Blanche and his family, and Mayeux, their kind neighbor, working-class people who have suffered and sacrificed to support the Rennepont—become the representatives of Marius Rennepont's dream. Their lives on a small farm are a utopia realized on a tiny scale. The surviving Rennepont, the priest Gabriel, dies only four years after the events of 1832. David Samuel has procured for him a resting place. This mention of David Samuel is the novel's last. His final fate and that of his wife remain unknown. Equally as loyal to the Renneponts as Dagobert and his family are, these Jewish caretakers are nevertheless excluded from the novel's idyllic end. Did they also find peace or release in death? Redemption? After hundreds of pages of exhaustive details, Sue did not find this one worth including.

Ben-Lévi's Response to Sue

Sue's depictions of the Samuels and of Hérodiade and the Wandering Jew are in keeping with the long tradition of European representation of Jews by non-Jews. But, of course, Jews are not only good to "think with." They can also think for themselves (Samuels 2010, 20).[24] In 1844, just after *Le Juif errant* had begun its run in *Le Constitutionnel*, the writer Ben-Lévi penned a remarkable response to its appearance.[25] *Le Juif errant* was still in its first months of publication, so Ben-Lévi creates a critique of French society by writing a kind of satiric fan fiction of Sue's hugely popular *Les Mystères de Paris*. Ben-Lévi's essay, I submit, draws on Sue's serial novels as forms of collective memory—the memory of Sue's imagined Paris—in order to critique the limits of inclusion in the universalist model of French citizenship.

"Les Israélites de Gerolstein" (The Israelites of Gerolstein) opens with a light, humorous domestic scene. Returning exhausted from an hour in the heat, stink, and noise of a Paris boulevard café, Ben-Lévi (1844) sinks onto his "Voltaire" sofa. He is still inhaling "delicious" fumes, this time from the gas lamp in front of his home. His servant (who answers to the fashionably British name of Robinson but who hails from the French provinces) brings him the latest installment of *Le Juif errant*. All these opening details endow the essayist with the persona of an urbane Parisian, as much comforted and exasperated by the vicissitudes of modern life in the capital as is any citizen of means. As Ben-Lévi reads Sue's work, described in lively and positive terms, his mind begins to wander (*vagabonder*). It is here that we realize that this Parisian writes from a Jewish perspective, as he wonders how a Jewish writer might try to portray the "true Wandering Jew." Ben-Lévi deftly balances praise of Sue's popular work with a question about his perspective. What *would* a Jewish author do with the Wandering Jew legend? This question of perspective subtly colors the essay's reverie on *Les Mystères*, cleverly setting the stage for Ben-Lévi's critique of Jewish marginalization in French society.[26]

Ben-Lévi's essay is quite literally a reverie. He describes himself as falling asleep over the feuilleton section, deploying the centuries-old technique of garbing satire in a dream vision. His imagination is submerged by the rising tide of his memories (*mes souvenirs*) of Sue's earlier novel. The pages of *Les Mystères* unfold before him like a fascinating panorama. Ben-Lévi's reference to memories and to a panorama, a popular form of immersive entertainment at the time, indicate how he harnesses not only his own memory of *Les Mystères*, but a collective memory of the novel that he shares with his readers (see Samuels 2004, 18–62). In her illuminating analysis of the historical novels of Sir Walter Scott and their influence, Ann Rigney (2012, 8) points to Scott's oeuvre as launching "the beginning of a mass-media era in which collective memory was based on imagined experience reaching across enormous territories, rather than on lived experience and the sharing of stories in face-to-face contexts." Ben-Lévi draws on the collective memory of an imagined reality shared by readers of *Les Mystères*. He then challenges his readers to reexamine this collective memory from the perspective of the lived experiences of French Jews, presumably, given the essay's venue, *Les Archives Israélites*, from their own experiences. His satire demonstrates that our conceptions of collective memory require nuance to accommodate different experiences within a larger imagined community.[27]

To explore Sue's fictional world from a Jewish perspective, Ben-Lévi follows the Swiftian mode of *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), using a description of a utopian realm to critique contemporary French society. Gerolstein is the idyllic (and imaginary) German kingdom ruled by the protagonist of *Les Mystères*, Prince Rodolphe. During his Gerolstein visit, Ben-Lévi encounters many of the novel's most popular characters, including Rodolphe's long-lost daughter, Fleur-de-Marie; the reformed murderer Le Chourineur; Prince Rodolphe, who dispenses his own brand of justice as he moves incognito through Paris; and Rodolphe's loyal retainer, the British nobleman Murph. Ben-Lévi (1844, 713) learns that the Jews have inhabited Gerolstein since the legendary exile of the ten tribes of Israel. In their home in Gerolstein, where the state is completely separate from any and all religion, Jews are truly equal citizens. This state contrasts with France, that "monstrous fruit of the coupling of political liberalism and political absolutism." In Gerolstein, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism coexist in equality. Jews are so fully integrated as equals in Gerolstein that, as Ben-Lévi is shocked to find, Rodolphe's beloved friend and mentor Murph is a Jew. This Jewish Murph is, no less, Gerolstein's minister of the interior. As Ben-Lévi again notes with satiric shock, however, the Jewish identity of such an important political leader is no matter of consequence or even notice to any of his fellow Gerolsteiners.

In Gerolstein, indeed, the potential for Jewish equality promised by the ideals of the French Revolution is actually realized. Murph opines:

> With you, each Israelite example is a conquest of prejudice and an argument against malice; so that we can say that in Europe: "We are born Jewish, we become Israelite; in our country we are born, we live and we die as citizens, and the country is not more unhappy for it, I assure you." (Ben-Lévi 1844, 714)[28]

Ben-Lévi plays here with the distinction between the term *juif*, which carried pejorative weight, and *israélite*, the identifying name preferred by many French Jews (Ben-Lévi 1842a; see also Samuels 2010, 82n25; 2013, 32n13). In Gerolstein, the reader learns, no one needs such fine distinctions, or any narrative of "becoming," with its insinuation of self-betterment. All Gerolsteiners are citizens. They are all equal, full stop.

While Ben-Lévi's critique is focused on French society, rather than on Sue's fiction, he does, I think, exact a kind of critique precisely by relying on his readers' collective memory of the world of *Les Mystères*. Ben-Lévi's dream vision reimagines the identities and fates of Sue's characters in ways that not only critique the failures of French religious pluralism, but also critique class dynamics and the social order in which the Jewish question is imbricated. For example, in *Les Mystères de Paris*, Le Chourineur, a murderer who remains virtuous despite his early misdeeds, willingly dies to protect Rodolphe and his daughter. In Ben-Lévi's Gerolstein, Le Chourineur survives and is able to take up his dream profession as a butcher, something that a kind of post-traumatic shame prevents him from doing in *Les Mystères*. Ben-Lévi's (1844, 717) alteration ostensibly critiques corrupt tax practices in contemporary France, but it also underscores a tension in *Les Mystères*, which encourages charity but never advocates real, systemic social change. In Ben-Lévi's Gerolstein, reformed murderers need not die for their benefactors.

Ben-Lévi (1844, 718) similarly alters the fate of Fleur-de-Marie. In *Les Mystères*, Fleur-de-Marie, despite her high birth, became the victim of child sexual trafficking. She has internalized her shame and is unable to recover from it, even after Rodolphe brings her to Gerolstein. Fleur-de-Marie rejects the possibility of marital happiness, and even after she retreats from the world by taking the veil, her mental anguish kills her. In Ben-Lévi's Gerolstein, in contrast, Fleur-de-Marie does not die of shame, but instead serves in a hospital as a nurse. Ben-Lévi's depiction of her workplace allows for a critique of the normative Christianity of French institutions and of the controlling nature of philanthropy. And, in allowing Fleur-de-Marie to live and to be useful despite her "fallen" state, Ben-Lévi offers a far more progressive vision for women than does Sue, despite Sue's overt championing of "woman." In keeping with his critique from the Jewish perspective, Ben-Lévi notes that the hospital where Fleur-de-Marie cares for patients has no crucifix on its walls. The purpose of the institution is to cure patients, not to convert them. Ben-Lévi's satire harnesses the power of readers' collective memory of the imagined world of *Les Mystères* in order to reflect the French Jewish experience of their actual world as well as to subtly expose the limits of Sue's politics.

In a brief letter to *Les Archives Israélites* dated November 14, 1844, Sue, noted for his correspondence with readers, responded to Ben-Lévi's piece publicly. Sue's tone is appreciative and cordial; he stresses how he has tried, in a modest way, to call attention to the mistreatment of Jews in Poland and Russia. No mention is made, however, of Ben-Lévi's critique of the challenges faced by Jews in France. Sue either ignores or does not fully understand Ben-Lévi's critique, which imagines Jews not as victims, but as full human agents. During his lifetime, Sue was known for his progressive political stands. Buoyed by his readership, he was elected to political office following the 1848 Revolution. He was then exiled following his protest against Louis-

Napoléon Bonaparte's seizure of power in 1851. Despite his future-oriented stands in public life, however, Sue's literary vision of Jews remains, as we have seen, mired in old ways of thinking. The Wandering Jew and the other Jewish characters in *Le Juif errant* are not emancipated fellow citizens. Instead, they provide local color and intrigue and, most critically, serve as instruments of memory, enacting the will, literally and figuratively, of Christians.

In addition to complicating the worlds created by Sue's novels, Ben-Lévi's work also provides for us an opportunity to think more deeply about Pierre Nora's concept of the *lieu de mémoire* and the ways in which the concept can be used to homogenize or exclude. In an insightful evaluation of Nora's seven-volume *Lieux de mémoire* project (1984–92) and its English-language version, Hue-Tam Ho Tai (2001) reveals the project's focus on a narrow vision of France, centered within the traditional hexagon, with little recognition of France's imperial history and related failure to represent a polyphony of voices and perspectives that reflects the demographic and historical complexity of France and the Francophone world. Building on this critique, Michael Rothberg (2010) proposes reconceptualizing the *lieux* or places of memory as *noeuds* or knots of memory, in recognition of their complex and dynamic nature. Ben-Lévi's work, including his response to Sue, embodies this dynamism.

Maurice Samuels (2010) has written a brilliant exposition of Ben-Lévi's writings, demonstrating their range of exploration of the French Jewish experience of the mid-nineteenth century, an exploration that is striking in its evocation of Jewish cultural memory. In comparing Ben-Lévi's stories to Sue's *Le Juif errant*, one is struck by Ben-Lévi's very different use of what I see as *lieux de mémoire*. Ben-Lévi's 1841 short story "Le décret du 17 mars" (The Decree of March 17) uses a date that serves as a French Jewish *lieu de mémoire*, the date of Napoleon's 1808 decree restricting the economic activities and movements of Jews in the east of France, known among Jews as the "infamous decree." The story follows David Blum, a Jew whose life is tragically altered by this decree, but who nevertheless dies with two items in his possession, his Cross of the Legion of Honor and a paper referencing the 1808 decree. Samuels shows how the story turns the decree date into what is almost a form of ritual incantation, merging Jewish ritual practice (with its obligation to remember) with the French cultural memory of Napoleon himself. Ben-Lévi's use of both dates and objects as sites of memory reveals the complexity of French Jewish memory (Ben-Lévi 1841b, 79–88; Samuels 2010, 89–95). In the 1841 "Grandeur et décadence d'un taleth polonaise" (Rise and Fall of a Polish Tallit) a ritual prayer shawl, or tallit, is handed down through generations of a Parisian Jewish family, but finally loses its power as a memory object. The son from the third generation, not educated in Jewish practice, loses not only family memory but the Jewish cultural memory that the tallit represents (Ben-Lévi 1841a, 752–55; Samuels 2010, 85–86). It is last spotted at the opera, draped on a grisette who wears it as a fashion accessory.

Finally, Ben-Lévi provides another example of the entanglement of French and Jewish memory in his "Mémoires d'un colporteur juif, écrits par lui-même" (Memoirs of a Jewish Peddler, Written by Himself). This story (published in two installments) is a first-person account narrated by a Jewish peddler who has reached the age of one hundred and whose personal memory not only includes events of the Revolution and well before, but is also shaped by markers of Jewish cultural memory, such as Tisha b'Av (Ben-Lévi 1841c, 688). The peddler can even recount an attempt to reach out to the imprisoned Marie Antoinette herself, which he could do in her native German, a language he notes is known to all Jews at the time (Ben-Lévi 1842b, 462). Ben-Lévi's aged peddler narrates French cultural memory from his intimate and Jewish perspective. When Ben-Lévi's story appeared, there was a strong association between the Wandering Jew and peddling, both through the linkage between Jewish peddlers and the ancient wanderer that we find in works like the English satirical print "Moses Gorden or the Wandering Jew" (1788) and through nineteenth-century *littérature de colportage* (peddling literature), which included Wandering Jew texts (Felsenstein 1995, 62–64; Milin 1997, 111–18).[29] I see Ben-Lévi's tale of the long-lived peddler as providing a glimpse into how Ben-Lévi himself might have written the story of the Wandering Jew had he chosen to do so. The character of the long-lived peddler affords a perspective rooted in Jewish experience and Jewish cultural memory, conveyed through an individualized account that reflects dignity and agency. In depicting a more complex, entangled memory, Ben-Lévi reveals the complexity of cultural memory in France.

Four

Heine and the Wandering Jew's Beard

Two decades before Ben-Lévi wondered how a Jewish writer might portray the Wandering Jew, Heinrich Heine pondered the figure in a letter to his friend Moses Moser. He and Moser knew each other through, among other things, the Verein für Kultur und Wissenschaft der Juden (Society for the Culture and Science of the Jews), a group formed in the wake of the 1819 Hep Hep riots. The Verein, of which Moser was a founding member, was formed to "bring ordinary Jews into the orbit of German culture and at the same time reinforce their Jewish identity by bridging the gulf between secular and religious education" (Elon 2002, 110). Heine took part in Verein activities in 1822 and 1823 and also began his own study of Jewish history and culture (Hoffmann 1999, 30). The Verein and Heine's activities, as well as the work of writers like Ben-Lévi, are part of the beginning of a new, purposeful kind of entanglement undertaken by European thinkers, writers, and artists of Jewish descent. Both Jewish and Christian cultural memory were accessible to these creators and thinkers, even if, for Heine at least, a sense of belonging within either community proved elusive. For these Europeans, the Wandering Jew legend provided a way to express this experience of memorial entanglement and of simultaneous yearning and alienation. I see Heine's contribution to the legend as inaugurating the complex and moving use of the Wandering Jew figure by creators of Jewish descent that we will trace for the remainder of this study.

Heine wrote to Moser from his parents' home, where he was working to finish his law thesis. He pursued a law degree in the hope of gaining a university appointment, which would secure his financial future. Heine was part of a generation of German Jews for which there had been hope for greater equality during a brief period under Napoleonic rule. Those hopes were soon dashed. Because his Jewish identity was an obstacle to his career goals, Heine converted to Protestantism. It was, as he famously put it, the price for an entrance ticket into mainstream German society. Heine paid this price despite his utter lack of religious conviction and was immediately struck with self-loathing. He also soon realized that even baptism was not enough for him to find acceptance among non-Jewish Germans, and it brought him criticism from members of the Jewish community (Elon 2002, 101–48; Prochnik 2020).

We can see the impact of Heine's choice in the letter to Moser, dated October 14, 1826, just over a year after his conversion. It opens with Heine sharing future plans, including his desire to leave Germany, a desire driven by his agonizing realization that even baptism could not "wash away" his Jewishness in the eyes of his fellow Germans (Heine 1970, 20:265).[1] Heine then describes his swimming regime, a seemingly mundane detail that actually speaks not only to his attempt to lessen his debilitating headaches, but also to his *Judenschmerz*, the pain of not being accepted by the German Christian majority, a lack of acceptance that is the result of habits of thought such as the vengeful memorial traditions we saw illustrated in part I).[2] Heine likens his own thoughts of drowning to his baptism ceremony. Discussion of the sea leads deep into a forest, where we find the Wandering Jew:

> Wie tief begründet ist doch der Mythos der ewigen Juden! Im stillen Waldthal erzählt die Mutter ihren Kindern das schaurige Mährchen, die Kleinen drücken sich ängstlicher an den Herd, draußen ist Nacht—das Posthorn tönt—Schacherjuden fahren nach Leipzig zur Messe—. Wir die wir die Helden des Mährchens sind, wir wissen es selbst nicht. Den weißen Bart, dessen Saum die Zeit wieder verjüngend geschwärzt hat, kann kein Barbier abrasieren. (Heine 1970, 20:265)

> How very deeply grounded is the myth of the Eternal Jew! In the silent woodland valley a mother tells her children a frightening tale; the little ones, frightened, press anxiously at the stove; outside it is night—the post horn sounds—*Schacherjuden* travel to Leipzig for the Fair. We, we are the heroes of the tales, but we don't know it ourselves. No barber can shave away the white beard, whose edge has been blackened again by time.[3]

Heine's hearthside scene captures how the Wandering Jew legend is kept alive in German cultural memory.[4] In a house within a hushed forest, nestled by the warmth of the stove, a mother tells her children about the Eternal Jew.

Heine calls this tale a *Mährchen*, the same kind of folktale collected by the brothers Grimm in the early years of the nineteenth century. Such tales were associated with the domestic transmission of home and hearth. This *Volkskunde* also animated Romantic literary works, which frequently used topoi like the post horn, hearth, and forest; both the folklore and Romanticism fed a rising German nationalism (see Schreiber 2005, 13, 31; Williamson 2004; Och 2003, 106).

As the frightened children listen intently to their mother, the still of the forest is broken by the sound of the post horn, announcing a passing mail coach. Heine imagines Jewish merchants aboard such a coach, making their way to the famous Leipzig Fair via the postal route. Heine's use of *Schacherjuden* to describe the merchants is ambiguous. S. S. Prawer (1983, 207) translates the word as "tradesmen," but Amos Elon (2002, 29) prefers "Jewish crooks." Heine makes deprecatory use of the term elsewhere (see, e.g., Heine 1840, 306; 1970, 20:96, 21:266). In any case, the passage connects the Eternal Jew of myth with the Jewish merchants in the coach, actual human beings like Heine's beloved father, a merchant who dealt in fabric (Prochnik 2020, 18–19). The post horn that signals the merchants' real-life location breaks the silence of the forest, and yet, despite this brief rupture, the *Schacherjuden* and the *ewige Jude* are linked in the scene and in the German imagination.

Further complicating the scene, Heine then asserts that "We, we are the heroes of the tales," with the "we" clearly including both Heine and Moser. This "we" seems to imply that assimilated Jewish men like Moser and Heine, no matter how much they attempt to conform to the dominant culture, are unable to escape their status as eternal Jews. Heine distills German Jewish existence into that mythic Jewish essence he refers to as indelible (*der nie abzuwaschende Jude*) in the letter's first paragraph. The Wandering Jew's beard, with its ever-blackening tip, is a sign of this eternally renewing, indelible nature. Heine's remarkable and unique imagining of the Wandering Jew's beard is how the reader can spot the Wandering Jew in two of Heine's published works: the prose narrative *Die Stadt Lukka* (*The Town of Lucca*, 1831) and the poem "Jehuda ben Halevy," a "fragment" in the larger poetic work *Romanzero* (1851).[5] Before discussing these two representations, however, we should briefly consider Heine's larger approach to the question of Jewish cultural memory, of which his Wandering Jew references form a part.

Der Rabbi von Bacherach

In 1824–25, during his time as a student in Göttingen, Heine undertook an ambitious study of Jewish history in order to write the first part of his *Der*

Rabbi von Bacherach (The Rabbi of Bacherach). This historical novel remained unpublished until 1840, when Heine, spurred by the Damascus affair, picked up the work again, writing a new section and publishing it (Hermand 1997, 152–53). *Der Rabbi von Bacherach* has been called the "first and wholly independent attempt towards the literary reproduction of Jewish collective memory in modernity" (Hoffmann 1999, 42; and see Warren 2020, 74–81). By setting his novel in the medieval past, Heine evokes the centuries of Jewish history and presence in the Rhine Valley. However, by combining physical markers of Christian presence, references to German myth, and the personal and collective memories of a Jewish daughter of the region, Heine contests and expands the complexity of the Rhine as a *lieu de mémoire* (Hoffmann 1999, 34–5; Warren 2020, 77).[6] In *Der Rabbi von Bacherach*, Heine brings together personal memory, his awareness of the German Romantic tradition, and his knowledge of Jewish traditions in innovative, daring ways.

The novel opens at Passover in the medieval town of Bacherach, where, the narrator explains, a Jewish community has existed since Roman times. He also notes how, over the centuries, the Jews of the Rhine region have been subject to violence and persecution by Christians. The narrator points to Saint Werner's Church, founded in memory of the late thirteenth-century ritual murder accusation surrounding Werner of Oberwesel, for which Rhineland Jews had suffered. The church is, therefore, a conflicted site of memory for the region's Christians and Jews.[7] In the novel, Rabbi Abraham and his wife, Sara, are forced to flee their home in the middle of a Passover seder. Two strangers at the seder have, horrifically, left a child's corpse in Abraham and Sara's home in order to frame the couple and the Jewish community for ritual murder. In one of the novel's most memorable scenes, Abraham and Sara escape by crossing the Rhine. The ironic beauty of the night is richly described, along with all the familiar landmarks and associations that made (and continue to make) the Rhine a *lieu de mémoire* (Hoffmann 1999, 37; see also Münkler 2009, 397–98). Heine's Rhine has a soundscape marked by the watchman of Castle Stahleck and the funeral bells of Saint Werner's; its landscape features a spiteful moon and menacing clouds. And yet, when Sara and Abraham board a boat, "old, kind-hearted Father Rhine," who "cannot bear that his children weep," comforts Sara, prepared to tell her beautiful stories with his murmuring waters and perhaps even share the location of the famed Nibelungen hoard (Heine 1987, 36).

Aboard the boat, Sara is also visited by memories of her family. She recalls her aunt telling her tales of knights and dwarves, and she remembers family celebrations of Shabbat and a childhood steeped in biblical stories. Sara's personal memories are shaped, as Maurice Halbwachs's ([1925] 1994) theory of collective memory explains, through social structures. Heine makes clear that the memories of Sara, who was born and raised in the region, are informed by many influences. Jewish cultural memory plays an integral role, but if the Rhine is a father, then Sara is his daughter as well. Sara's journey into memory on the Rhine renders the landscape around her a site not only of national memory, but of personal memory shaped by the environment and its cultures.

Heine ends this descriptive sequence about the Rhine by explicitly grounding Sara's experience in one of the most essential parts of Jewish cultural memory, the Exodus:

> And so the old stories swept through her soul like a hurried play of shadows, the images intermixing and blending strangely, while between them went and came unknown bearded faces, and great flowers with marvelous broad spreading foliage. Then the Rhine seemed to murmur the melodies of the *haggadah*, and from its waters the pictures, large as life and in strange exaggerated guise, came forth one by one. There was the forefather Abraham painfully and hurriedly breaking the idols, who were hastily running out of his way; Mizri defending himself fiercely against the maddened Moses; Mount Sinai flashing and flaming; King Pharaoh swimming in the Red Sea, holding his zigzagged gold crown tight in his teeth, frogs with men's faces swimming in between, and the waves foaming and roaring, while a dark giant-hand rose threatening from the deep. (Heine 1987, 39, with slight modifications)

The Haggadah is the text used in the Passover seder, the paradigmatic rite of Jewish collective memory, which memorializes the Exodus by asking participants to imagine themselves as part of that flight from Egypt (see Yerushalmi 1996, 43, 120n5). As the Rhine seems to sing seder melodies, it becomes a Jewish *lieu de mémoire*. The flight of Abraham and Sara, namesakes of the Jewish patriarch and matriarch, is another Exodus and folds into a larger Jewish tradition of lamentation and struggle as multiple moments in Jewish history collapse into one another. The history of ritual murder accusation, as Saint Werner's Church proves, is literally part of the topography of the Rhineland, grounded in a tradition of persecution and lamentation that endures into the time of Heine's writing (see Hoffmann 1999, 38; Mintz 1996; Roskies 1984).[8] Even in this early writing, Heine displays a grasp of the rich complexities of German Jewish cultural memory and the relationship between individuals and this collective experience. Like Ben-Lévi, Heine offers a glimpse of complex, entangled histories of European *lieux de mémoire*—here the Rhine—that include elements of both German and Jewish traditions, a move that for Heine, steeped in this national imagery, constitutes a bold appropriation.

The Wandering Jew's Beard

By the nineteenth century, the Wandering Jew figure already had many readily recognizable attributes. His traditional staff, for example, shows up in representations as diverse as an image used by Jewish leader Menasseh ben Israel (1604–57) as his personal print mark and popular renderings of the legendary figure by artist Gustave Doré (1832–83) (Amishai-Maisels 2006). The "mark of Cain," which we have seen is both an individual and a collective branding, flares on the Wandering Jew's forehead in Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (1796) and a Doré caricature (see M. Lewis 2008; Sigal-Klagsblad and Cohen 2001, 202). Heine, however, chooses to endow the Wandering Jew with a unique beard that symbolizes not only his immortality, but the "indelible" nature of diasporic Jewish identity. Heine's choice of the Wandering Jew's beard as his identifying feature shows Heine's awareness of the beard as both a positive sign of Jewish observance and, simultaneously, a distinguishing Jewish sign among Christians, a sign used to further anti-Jewish isolation and discrimination (see Jütte 2021, 39).

We can see a blending of personal and cultural memory in how Heine fashions the Wandering Jew's beard in a way that is similar to his rendering of Sara's Rhine journey. Here the personal memories are not those of a literary character like Sara, but Heine's own. In his *Memoiren* (Memoirs), Heine describes a childhood incident at the Catholic school he attended as a boy. Heine had asked his father, a man not inclined to conversation, to tell him about his grandfather, to which his father had replied, "Your grandfather was a little Jew and had a long beard" (Heine 1973–97, 15:75).[9] Heine repeats this formulation to his classmates, raising a clamor for which he receives his first-ever beating. Heine's personal memories—of his own past as a Jewish child enrolled in a Franciscan school, of the image of his grandfather as a little Jew with a long beard, and of the clamor and resulting punishment—inform his use of the Wandering Jew as an instrument of memory. The Wandering Jew represents tradition and paternity, but also the pain of assimilation, of *Judenschmerz*. The beard becomes a symbol of masculinity and of strangeness, of the grandson of a "little Jew with a long beard," who will never be accepted by his Christian peers.

Heine also saw the Jewish beard as a sign of strength. In a letter to Immanuel Wohlwill of April 1, 1823, two years prior to his conversion, Heine writes, "We no longer have the strength to wear a beard, to fast, to hate, and through that hatred to endure. This is the motive for our Reformation." This assertion is followed by Heine's own admission that he himself lacks the strength to wear the beard, fast, or "hear people taunt me for 'Jewish mumbling' [*Judenmauscheln*]" (cited in Jütte 2021, 39). Heine's remarks are notable for their equation of positive markers of religious observance, such as wearing a beard or observing a ritual fast, with "hate," here meant as animosity toward the enemies of the Jewish people. In his writings, Heine shows how this hatred, which stretches back at least to Heine's favorite psalm, Psalm 137, has become part of Jewish cultural memory and Jewish identity.[10] In the poem "An Edom!" (To Edom!), Heine distills the essence of Psalm 137's final verses, which lament the fall of the First Temple, and blends them with the experience of subsequent millennia. Heine included the poem, which long remained unpublished, in an October 25, 1824, letter to Moser sharing news about his work on *Der Rabbi von Bacherach:*

Ein Jahrtausend schon und länger,	For millennia now, as brothers,
Dulden wir uns brüderlich,	We've borne with each other an age;
Du, du duldest, daß ich athme,	You bear the fact that I'm still breathing,
Daß du rasest dulde Ich.	And I—I bear your rage.
Manchmal nur, in dunkeln Zeiten,	But often you got in strange tempers
Ward dir wunderlich zu Muth,	In dark times since the Flood,
Und die liebefrommen Tätzchen	And your meekly loving talons
Färbtest du mit meinem Blut!	You dyed in my red blood.
Jetzt wird unsre Freundschaft fester,	And now our friendship grows firmer
Und noch täglich nimmt sie zu;	And daily increases anew,
Denn ich selbst begann zu rasen,	For I too have started raging—
Und ich werde fast wie Du.	I'm becoming much like you!

(Heine 1970, 20:177; trans. in Heine 1982, 285)

The brief lyric encapsulates centuries of a dark Jewish-Christian symbiosis (see Nisse 2017, 49–50). Its final lines reveal a Jewish hatred that both absorbs and reflects the persecution Jews have experienced at Christian hands. The letter to Moser in which the poem is included continues with reference to the pain of Israel. All these elements demonstrate Heine's familiarity with the Jewish lamentation tradition, and his recognition of its relevance to his own experience and that of his fellows (Heine 1970, 20:178).

Die Stadt Lukka

The Wandering Jew and his beard make their first appearance in Heine's published works in *Die Stadt Lukka* (*The Town of Lucca*, 1831).[11] The narrator and his companion, the English lady Mathilde, have been wandering among some Roman ruins, discussing relationships between religions in terms that recall the outlines of cultural memory.[12] According to the narrator, religion, in its ancient form, is a familiar and intimate tradition passed down through kinship lines. The narrator further contends that a Greek would have felt outrage if someone outside his circle of kin had wanted to partake in his religion or, worse still, had wanted "by compulsion or cunning" to force his conversion. This final observation, of course, recalls Heine's own futile baptism and his subsequent despair. The narrator then opines on the emergence of "state religion," with its forced conformity and dogma, a phenomenon he traces to a "strange" religion that comes out of "Egypt, the fatherland of crocodiles and priesthood." This sets the stage for "all the holy horrors that have cost the human race so much blood and tears" (trans. in Heine 1993, 178–79). As S. S. Prawer (1983, 162) discusses, the narrator expounds on this a bit longer, damning the Egyptians by describing them in terms that "convey a sense that orthodox Judaism had become an anachronism in the modern world" and that "suggest that just as Christianity derived from Judaism, so Judaism itself was influenced by Egyptian cults." The "living dead" atmospherics of this description, Prawer argues—complete with a reference to a *Volkmumie*, a mummified people—heighten the sense that both Judaism and Christianity are trapped in soul-killing structures inherited from Egypt.

It is in this context of decadence and decay that Heine (1970, 6:169) introduces a "sighting" of the Wandering Jew. The narrator calls Mathilde's attention to a man, sitting among the old Roman graves, who has a "white beard that seems to be turning black again at the tip" and "haunted eyes."[13] The narrator imagines that this strange man is "even now saying his prayer, an eerie prayer [*ein schauriges Gebet*] in which he laments his sufferings and accuses nations which have long vanished from the earth and survive only in old wives' tales [*Ammenmährchen*]—but he in his pain [*in seinem Schmerze*] scarcely notices that he is sitting on the graves of the very enemies whom he is beseeching heaven to destroy" (Heine 1970, 6:169; trans. in Heine 1993, 179). Here Heine projects onto the Wandering Jew the same tensions between Jewish and Christian identities that he explores in his letters to Moser. This strange and haunted man with the singular beard has the strength to endlessly lament the losses of his people and to curse their enemies. To do so, he draws on an ancient store of cultural memory, the Jewish lamentation tradition. Heine illustrates memory's control over the human experience of time by depicting the Wandering Jew as so consumed by the desire to collapse time for the purposes of vengeance that his ability to perceive the changes time has wrought around him is impaired. We have seen this collapse of temporality for purposes of vengeance in medieval and early modern examples. Here, however, the pain is a specifically Jewish one, and the suffering Jew's experience, emotion, and memory are made central. This endless suffering blinds the Wandering Jew to his people's resilient endurance. He is so engulfed in memory that he remains trapped, futilely, among the dead. The Wandering Jew figure here becomes, as Gunnar Och (2003, 108) argues, an allegory, albeit one with a sense of irony of the perils of religion explored in the scene overall. Heine has once again altered the traditional figure of legend. As we have seen, the Wandering Jew legend has long featured two memorial fixed points, the Passion and the Hurban, the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple by the Romans. Here the latter is the Wandering Jew's consuming memory. Heine's innovation shifts the focus of the Wandering Jew's memory away from the Passion, thereby centering Jewish experience.

"Jehuda ben Halevy"

We can find traces of both of Heine's earlier Wandering Jew references in his most important use of the figure, the poem "Jehuda ben Halevy," from the 1851 collection *Romanzero*.[14] *Romanzero* was written from Heine's "mattress grave," in which he lay suffering from 1848 until his death in 1856. *Romanzero* overflows with myth and mythologized history that ranges from brushes with supernatural beings to an epically bloody confrontation between Hernán Cortés's forces and the devotees of the Aztec deity Vitzliputzli (Huitzilopochtli). *Romanzero* consists of three books: "Tales," "Lamentations," and "Hebrew Melodies." The name for this last book, in which "Jehuda ben Halevy" appears, alludes to Lord Byron's similarly titled 1815 collection of thirty poems, which also includes poems that treat Jewish loss and Jewish memory, such as “On the Day of the Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus” and “By the Rivers of Babylon We Sat Down and Wept” (Byron 1815, 42–45).

Byron’s *Hebrew Melodies* collection consists of lyrics that showcase Jewish-inspired poetry rather than foregrounding the Jewish poets who themselves created these works. In other words, Byron presents Jewish poems without Jewish poets. “Jehuda ben Halevy,” the middle poem in Heine’s “Hebrew Melodies,” is devoted to one of the greatest Hebrew poets, Judah (Yehuda) Halevi (c. 1075–1141). Halevi’s “Zion will you not inquire” has, since the medieval period, been part of the Jewish liturgy for Tisha b’Av, making him one of the greatest poets of Jewish cultural memory as well.[15] “Jehuda ben Halevy” provides an origin story for Halevi’s famed Jerusalem poems: an encounter with the Wandering Jew, who is endowed by Heine with a distinct voice, which I read as the voice of Jewish cultural memory. Heine blends the Wandering Jew’s voice with the poem’s lyric “I,” a lyric “I” that also clearly has autobiographical elements.[16] Heine’s dazzling shifting and mingling of voices binds his poetic project to Halevi’s, locating them both in a long poetic tradition whose entangled Jewish and Christian strands his own contribution to the poetic tradition reveals.[17]

The Wandering Jew is the crucial instrument in Heine’s endeavor, an instrument of memory through which to honor Jewish cultural memory and to locate his own place within it. Heine reshapes the Christian tradition of the legend to which he refers in his letter to Moser: this Wandering Jew suffers from the loss of Jerusalem, not because of his actions toward Jesus. The Wandering Jew’s encounter is with the poet Halevi; Jesus is nowhere to be found. This alteration of the Wandering Jew tradition resonates with Heine’s larger melding throughout the poem of traditions usually considered separately as either Christian or Jewish. For example, Heine identifies the work of Halevi and other great medieval Jewish poets with *Minnesang*, the revered Middle High German poetry to which Heine had been drawn since his youth. Writing of Romantic poetry as a revival of medieval poetics, Heine had asserted that Middle High German poetry was “eine Passionsblume, die dem Blute Christi entsprossen” (a flower of the Passion, sprung directly from Christ’s blood) (Heine 1973–97, 8:1:126).[18] The Wandering Jew legend, of course, also grows out of the Passion story. In “Jehuda ben Halevy,” however, neither medieval poetics nor the Wandering Jew legend is the exclusive property of Christian cultural memory. They also belong to Jewish cultural memory or, perhaps, to a cultural memory of poets, a group that would include

Heine, Byron, Halevi, Petrarch, Moses ibn Ezra, and other greats celebrated in "Jehuda ben Halevy."[19]

Before we further explore the poem's remarkable representation of the Wandering Jew, we must try to situate this representation within the total poem, which, although labeled a fragment, is nearly nine hundred lines long. "Jehuda ben Halevy" consists of four sections linked together through recurring images, allusions, themes, and phrases. These features wind throughout the entire work and reference other poems in *Romanzero* and beyond. The overall effect is one of "a shifting pattern seen and lost in the bed of a stream," as Barker Fairley (1954, 163) has so beautifully characterized Heine's work more generally (cited in Preisendanz 1993, 347). While the poem seems to break off rather than to conclude, Heine has nonetheless orchestrated its shifting patterns to a kind of climax, a celebration of poetry and poets deeply enmeshed in a Jewish history of song consecrated to God (*gottgeweihten*), a history that stretches back to the Psalms and that can ring with tenderness even in the darkest of times.

Section 1

"Lechzend klebe mir die Zunge	"Dry with thirst, oh let my tongue cleave
An dem Gaumen, und es welke	To my palate—let my right hand
Meine rechte Hand, vergäß' ich	Wither off, if I forget thee
Jemals dein, Jerusalem—"	Ever, O Jerusalem—"

(Heine 1970, 3:110; trans. in Heine 1982, 655)

The opening lines of "Jehuda ben Halevy" seem to quote Psalm 137 but actually invert the order of the original's fifth and sixth verses. This change is a noticeable alteration to what Aleida Assmann (1995) calls a "cultural text," a text so central to memory and tradition that it creates its own reality. The Bible, according to Assmann, is the quintessential cultural text. Heine's change to Psalm 137 sets up, in the very first verse, a central element of his project in "Jehuda ben Halevy." The alteration to the psalm locates Heine himself within a cultural memory shaped over centuries by both Jews and Christians and identifies his project as one of innovation rather than imitation.[20] The opening image of the dry tongue and withered hand alludes to Heine's own embodied state; he wrote the poem from his "mattress grave."[21]

The inversion, finally, allows Heine to end the stanza with reference to Jerusalem, the muse for the poem's named central figure, Halevi, the poet of Jerusalem. Heine's use of quotation marks reminds us that these lines are part of a text intoned for centuries: Halevi's voice, like Heine's, is only one among legions over the centuries.

The speaker then tells us that these words are not spoken aloud. He hears them in his head:

Wort und Weise, unaufhörlich	Words and melody keep buzzing
Schwirren sie mir heut' im Kopfe,	In my head today, unceasing,
Und mir ist als hört' ich Stimmen,	And I seem to make out voices
Psalmodirend, Männerstimmen—	Singing psalms, I hear men's voices—
Manchmal kommen auch zum Vorschein	Sometimes, too, I catch a glimpse of
Bärte, schattig lange Bärte—	Shadowy long beards in darkness—
Traumgestalten, wer von euch	Phantom figures, which of you
Ist Jehuda ben Halevy?	Is Jehuda ben Halevy?

(Heine 1970, 3:111; trans. in Heine 1982, 655)

These lines make explicit that the psalm is a collective, a cultural text. The words and melody that buzz in the speaker's head are a form of memory that binds the individual to the collective. Psalm 137 is, of course, also a cultural text for Christians, but it is the chanting of the psalm, the *how* of memory transmission, that makes this memory a Jewish memory. The melody generates visions of the countless Jewish men who have chanted it, represented metonymically by their beards, which are mentioned twice in one line. *Psalmodieren* (singing psalms) and *Männerstimmen* (men's voices) also convey how cultural memory is sustained by individuals over generations through a ritualized collective experience. Through the ancient Jewish tradition of cantillation, the singing of sacred text, the psalm (song) is instantiated through the individual and in the moment by means of sound (see Schorsch 2003). In other words, the individual's singing brings the text to life.[22] The poem's speaker searches for one such individual, Halevi, among the many.

In his evocation of the psalm tradition, Heine as poet explores that interface between the individual and social structures that Halbwachs identifies in his theory of collective memory. In "Jehuda ben Halevy," Heine both depicts and enacts this phenomenon. The psalm singing in these stanzas merges personal and cultural memory in a way reminiscent of Heine's description of Sara on the Rhine in *Der Rabbi von Bacherach*. Here, however, the personal memories belong to Heine himself. In a regret-saturated letter of April 23, 1826, that brims with nostalgic reference to the Verein and its members, Heine writes to Moser:

> Ich erinnere mich, der Psalm "wir saßen an den Flüssen Babels" war damals Deine Force, und Du rezitirtest ihn so schön, so herrlich, so rührend, daß ich jetzt noch weinen möchte, und nicht bloß über den Psalm. (Heine 1970, 20:240)
>
> I remember the psalm "we sat by the rivers of Babylon" was then your special strength and you recited it so beautifully, so wonderfully, so touchingly, that I still want to cry, and not just about the psalm.[23]

For Heine, we could say that Psalm 137 serves as a kind of *lieu de mémoire* or, at least, as a memory touchstone for his experience with the Verein and its members, an experience through which his partaking in and contributing to Jewish cultural memory were thereafter always constructed. It is a memory not only of text, but of sound, of a means through which the Jewish tradition is sustained among the community: the chant.

In "Jehuda ben Halevy," the speaker explicitly connects the poet Halevi to the tradition of Jewish chanting in his description of the poet's boyhood education:

Diesen echten alten Text	This authentic ancient text
Rezitirte auch der Knabe	Was recited by the youngster
In der uralt hergebrachten	In the old, original singsong
Singsang-Weise, Tropp geheißen—	Known as *Tropp* down through the ages—

(Heine 1970, 3:112; trans. in Heine 1982, 656)

While acknowledging Halevi's renown as a scholar and master of the law ("Halacha"), the poem understandably celebrates his wanderings in the "phantasmagoric garden" of "Haggadah," by which Heine refers to the narrative aspect of Talmudic writings (see Heine 1970, 3:113; 1982, 657). The poem's exploration of this garden is an enchanted stroll through cultural memory, where legend, hyperbole, and sacred tales bloom like flowers. In depicting young Jehuda's inspirations and passions within this garden, Heine mirrors his own lifelong fascination with story and myth, linking himself to the poet in yet another fashion.

Section 2

It is not, however, Jehuda's youthful studies that lead him to Jerusalem, his muse. This love was inspired by an encounter with the Wandering Jew, who traveled to Toledo, Jehuda's home, from a "far-off eastern country" (Heine 1982, 662). The speaker describes how, as a boy, Jehuda would listen to pilgrim tales of the devastation and defilement that had befallen Jerusalem, a place powerful with the trace of memory:

Wo am Boden noch die Lichtspur	Where the soil still glowed with radiance
Von dem Fuße der Propheten—	From the footsteps of the prophets,
Wo die Luft noch balsamiret	Where the air was still imbued with
Von dem ew'gen Odem Gottes—	The eternal breath of God—
O des Jammeranblicks! rief	"What a lamentable sight!" once
Einst ein Pilger, dessen Bart	Cried a pilgrim, whose long beard
Silberweiß hinabfloß, während	Flowed down silver-white, though strangely
Sich das Barthaar an der Spitze	At its tip the hair was growing
Wieder schwärtze und es aussah,	Black again, and almost seemed to
Als ob sich der Bart verjünge—	Undergo rejuvenation—

(Heine 1970, 3:119; trans. in Heine 1982, 662)

Heine evokes a Jerusalem still glowing from the past presence of Israel's prophets, where God's breath still balsams the air, rendering the numinous power of this Jewish *lieu de mémoire* as a delicate, but palpable, afterglow. The physicality of this memory seems to attach to the pilgrim's uncanny, rejuvenating beard, which marks him as the Wandering Jew.

The speaker then describes the encounter between Jehuda the boy and the Wandering Jew:

Ein gar wunderlicher Pilger	Yes, a curious-looking pilgrim
Mocht' es seyn, die Augen lugten	Must this man have been, whose eyes
Wie aus tausendjähr'gem Trübsinn,	Held a thousand years of sorrow;
Und er seufzt': "Jerusalem!"	And he sighed, "Jerusalem!"

(Heine 1970, 3:119; trans. in Heine 1982, 662)

The speaker's description of the Wandering Jew as *wunderlich*, which Hal Draper translates as "curious-looking," bears within it the seeds of the medieval Wandering Jew, portrayed by Matthew Paris, for example, as a sign and as a miracle, the German word for which is *Wunder*, as we saw in the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung*.

The Wandering Jew then continues, describing the desolation of a fallen Jerusalem in terms that evoke Psalm 137 and the larger Lamentations tradition, including Halevi's own "Zion will you not inquire."[24] Jerusalem is inhabited by "wood demons, werwolves, jackals . . . snakes and birds of night," along with foxes. Jerusalem's glory molders among weeds, its old stones "Looking so forlorn and woeful / One might fancy they were weeping" (Heine 1982, 662–63). And indeed, according to the pilgrim and in keeping with the Jewish Lamentations tradition, this sorrow finds its fullest expression on Tisha b'Av:

"Und es heißt, sie weinten wirklich	"And it's said they really do weep
Einmal in dem Jahr, an jenem	One day every year, upon the
Neunten Tag des Monats Ab—	Ninth day of the month of Ab—
Und mit thränend eignen Augen	I myself, with hot eyes streaming,
"Schaute ich die dicken Tropfen	"Saw the heavy teardrops seeping
Aus den großen Steinen sickern,	Slowly from the mighty stone blocks,
Und ich hörte weheklagen	And I heard the lamentations
Die gebrochnen Tempelsäulen."	Of the broken temple pillars."

(Heine 1970, 3:120; trans. in Heine 1982, 663)

Here the Wandering Jew speaks not about any misdeed during the Passion, but about Jerusalem, and its place in Jewish cultural memory, a memory sustained through a ritual observance so powerful that it causes the very stones of the temple's ruins to weep and lament. The Wandering Jew's speech both invokes and sustains that cultural memory, since it is depicted as inspiring Halevi's "Ode to Zion," a poem that was integrated into the Tisha b'Av liturgy and that inspired further poetic works.[25] By writing "Jehuda ben Halevy," with its depiction of Jehuda's encounter with the Wandering Jew, Heine also places himself in this tradition, contributing in his own way to what Jeffrey Sammons (1969, 391) calls the "immortal Jewish spirit."

Heine is not the first, of course, to give the Wandering Jew poetic voice, but his treatment stands out against other poetic depictions of the Wandering Jew's speech, such as Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart's 1783 "Der Ewige Jude: eine lyrische Rhapsodie" (The Eternal Jew: A Lyrical Rhapsody) or the various appearances of the Wandering Jew in Percy Bysshe Shelley's poetry, said to be inspired by Schubart (see Schubart 1972, 65–69).[26] Some of these works endow the Wandering Jew with agency and voice. In these Romantic treatments, however, the Wandering Jew's Promethean laments are expressions of *Weltschmerz*. The Jewish identity of those who lament seems faded in significance when compared to earlier representations such as in the *Kurtze Beschreibung*. Further, the pain these works convey resides in an individual, who is cursed for a singular deed.[27] In "Jehuda ben Halevy," the Wandering Jew utters his laments from within the flow of Jewish cultural memory, mourning as part of a collective; his is one of the *Männerstimmen* the speaker has heard in his head. The Wandering Jew's immortality allows him to embody and express literally and for always the enduring pain of Jewish exile, of which his experience is a part.

Heine frames his portrayal of the encounter between the wanderer and the young Jehuda in an interesting way. The formulation *mocht' es seyn* (must have made) removes the speaker's position from that of a witness to one of speculation and reflection. This speaker will become, in the fourth part of the poem, a modern man who much resembles Heine, with a wife who values beautiful luxury items over poetic jewels. What happens, though, when we read this unusual formulation alongside the opening lines of the section in which they appear? Whose voice is speaking there? Like the poem's opening lines, its second section begins with slightly altered lines from Psalm 137:

Bei den Wassern Babels saßen	"By the Babylonian waters
Wir und weinten, unsre Harfen	There we sat and wept—our harps were

Lehnten an den Trauerweiden—	Hung upon the weeping willow . . .”
Kennst du noch das alte Lied?	That old song—do you still know it?

(Heine 1970, 3:116; trans. in Heine 1982, 659)

These lines omit the original’s reference to mourners weeping when they remember Zion. Instead of focusing on the place of longing itself, then, these lines emphasize the *mode* of memory, ending by asking the reader whether they still know this “old song”? And, although Draper’s translation places them in quotation marks, they are not marked in this way in the German critical edition. If they are not a citation, are they a memory? Whose?

In the next stanza, the speaker repeats this question in slightly different form, asking the reader whether they know the *alte Weise*, which Draper translates as “old tune,” but which can also mean “manner” or “fashion.” Both meanings evoke the specifically Jewish use of this cultural text: through song, melody, and cantillation, the traditional chant. From this evocation of the unbreakable bond between the psalm, its meaning, and the way this meaning is sustained through Jewish practice, the speaker launches into a conceit that I will quote in full so we can see its trajectory:

Kennst du noch die alte Weise,	That old tune—do you still know it?—
Die im Anfang so elegisch	How it starts with elegiac
Greint und sumset, wie ein Kessel,	Whining, humming like a kettle
Welcher auf dem Herde kocht?	That is seething on the hearth?

Lange schon, jahrtausendlange	Long has it been seething in me—
Kocht’s in mir. Ein dunkles Wehe!	For a thousand years. Black sorrow!
Und die Zeit leckt meine Wunde,	And my wounds are licked by time
Wie der Hund die Schwären Hiob’s.	Just as Job’s dog licked his boils.

Dank dir, Hund, für deinen Speichel—	Dog, I thank you for your spittle,

Doch das kann nur kühlend lindern—	But its coolness merely soothes me—
Heilen kann mich nur der Tod,	Only death can really heal me,
Aber, ach, ich bin unsterblich!	But, alas, I am immortal!
Jahren kommen und vergehen—	Years come round and years pass onward—
In dem Webstuhl läuft geschäftig	In the loom the spool is whirring,
Schnurrend him und her die Spule—	Busy flying hither-thither—
Was er webt, das weiß kein Weber.	What it weaves no weaver knows.
Jahre kommen und vergehen,	Years come round and years pass onward,
Menschenthränen träufeln, rinnen	And men's teardrops trickle slowly
Auf die Erde, und die Erde	Into earth, and earth absorbs them
Saugt sie ein mit stiller Gier—	In a dark and greedy silence—
Tolle Sud! Der Deckel springt—	Seething mad! The lid blows off—
Heil dem Manne, dessen Hand	Hail to him, the man "that taketh
Deine junge Brut ergreifet	All thy little ones and dasheth
Und zerschmettert an der Felswand.	This young brood against the stones."
Gott sei Dank! Die Sud verdampfet	God be thanked! the steam is cooling
In dem Kessel, der allmählig	In the kettle, which now slowly
Ganz verstummt. Es weicht mein Spleen,	Quiets down. My spleen subsides,
Mein westöstlich dunkler Spleen—	That black Western-Eastern spleen—

(Heine 1970, 3:116; trans. in Heine 1982, 659–60)

We can discern, I think, in the metaphor of the boiling kettle the poetic shapes of Psalm 137 and of "An Edom!" Both of these works crescendo into violence (but cf. Wittler 2010, 35–37). We are also, through Heine's strong association of the psalm with Moser, back around the *Herde* (stove) of Heine's 1826 letter to him. The focus here, though, is not the family storytelling by the stove, but the pot aboil on top of it.[28] I read this pot aboil as the Wandering Jew himself, seething inside for a thousand years. In these stanzas the voice of the speaker merges with that of the Wandering Jew.[29] The powerful line "Aber, ach, ich bin unsterblich!" (But, alas, I am immortal!) is the lament of the Wandering Jew, but through Heine's rich multivocality and his use of Psalm 137, it becomes the voice of Jewish cultural memory as well. The "we" of the letter to Moser has become the "I" of "Jehuda ben Halevy" but the first-person voice now speaks not for Jews as a spurned minority, but as a living collective bound by cultural memory. The stanza's use of *du* (you) in its questions—"do you still know it?"—creates an encounter: an encounter between the poet and the reader and between the reader and the Wandering Jew. All partake in this memory tradition, in the interface between individual and collective.

The poem then makes another of its thrilling and disorienting shifts, as the speaker's "winged horse" encourages him with a glance to return to young Jehuda's story. His voice disentangles from that of the Wandering Jew.[30] The winged horse's urging is answered by seventeen stanzas that extol Halevi as poet. His story is woven into a tapestry of poetic history that includes the medieval troubadours of Provence and Languedoc. The speaker ascribes to Halevi a mastery of forms well beyond his known corpus and compares his love of Jerusalem to Petrarch's devotion to Laura, a significant reference given Petrarch's place in the development of European lyric and the role of Christianity in his work. The speaker then follows Halevi's poetic career in a chain of stanzas, a chain of European cultural memory transmitted through poetry, through which Heine leads us to that critical encounter between the young Jehuda and the Wandering Jew, described above.

Heine's use of voicing and framing makes his poetic representation of the Wandering Jew unlike any other. Through his subtle blending of the Wandering Jew's voice with that of the poem's lyric "I" and his depiction of the young Jehuda's encounter with the Wandering Jew, Heine empowers and elevates the Wandering Jew. Heine transforms the Wandering Jew from a suffering sign of Christian memory into the inspiration for one of the greatest poets of Jewish cultural memory—Judah Halevi—a poet who contributed his own poetic treasures to this tradition and who inspired others, including Heine himself.

Section 3

I have used the word *treasure* purposefully, since poem as treasure is the central metaphor of the third section of "Jehuda ben Halevy." While Heine grounds his Wandering Jew figure in Jewish rather than Christian cultural memory, he carries through an important aspect of the Christian tradition of the Wandering Jew as an instrument of memory: the idea of the Wandering Jew as relic that we explored in relation to Matthew Paris's *Chronica* account and to the *Kurtze Beschreibung*. Here, the relic is not the Wandering Jew himself, but the "pearl of Darius," which serves as a focal point in the poem's two final sections. In an extended conceit, the speaker tells of how, when fleeing Alexander the Great, King Darius left behind a casket filled with his jewels. One of these pieces, a pearl necklace, ends up dispersed across history. The pearl treasure is of worth not only monetarily but because of its contact with important historical figures and moments. It is a kind of relic, one that, like the Wandering Jew himself, moves throughout the world over centuries. Cleopatra, for example, grinds up the finest pearl in the strand and drinks it, just to tease Marc Anthony. A Spanish queen dons some of the pearls to watch (and smell) a Jew roasted in an auto-da-fé (Heine 1970, 3:123; 1982, 666).

For the speaker, the casket containing the pearls becomes a type of reliquary. Alexander uses it to store his treasured Homer, poetry that the speaker himself once also loved "just as keenly" as Alexander, in the happy days of youth (Heine 1982, 666). The speaker then rather abruptly dismisses his own nostalgic musings and declares that if he were to own this casket (and didn't have to sell it for ready cash), he would fill it with Halevi's work:

Des Jehuda ben Halevy
Festgesänge, Klagelieder,
Die Ghaselen, Reisebilder
Seiner Wallfahrt—alles ließ ich

Von dem besten Zophar schreiben
Auf der reinsten Pergamenthaut,
Und ich legte diese Handschift
In das kleine goldne Kästchen.

All Jehuda ben Halevy's
Festal songs and lamentations,
Madrigals and travel pictures
Of his pilgrimage—I'd have it

All engrossed on purest parchment
By the greatest scribe that's living,
And I'd place this manuscript in
That same golden little casket.

(Heine 1970, 3:124–25; trans. in Heine 1982, 667)

The speaker's mention of the importance of the scribe and the purity of the parchment recalls Jewish attention to the copying of the Torah, and its contained nature evokes a mezuzah or the tefillin. The idea of a parchment copy, made from skin and then enshrined in a precious container, mirrors the medieval Christian relic, a numinous organic object enshrined in a gorgeous, costly container or reliquary.[31] Medieval Christians like Matthew Paris believed that a reliquary's true treasure was the relic contained within. For the speaker as well, the true treasure is the poetry; the costly casket is nothing but a "roughhewn shell."[32]

Heine carries this conceit further by describing Halevi's poem as "teardrop pearls" over a fallen Jerusalem:

Dieses Perlenthränenlied	This, his song of pearly teardrops,
Ist die vielberühmte Klage,	Is the famous lamentation
Die gesungen wird in allen	Sung in all the tents of Jacob,
Weltzerstreuten Zelten Jakob's	Scattered far through all the world,
An dem neunten Tag des Monats,	On the ninth day of the month that's
Der geheißen Ab, dem Jahrstag	Known as Ab, the year's remembrance
Von Jerusalems Zerstörung	Of Jerusalem's destruction
Durch Titus Vespasianus.	By Vespasian's scion Titus.
Ja, das ist das Zionslied,	Yes, it is the song of Zion,
Das Jehuda ben Halevy	Which Jehuda ben Halevy
Sterbend auf den heil'gen Trümmern	Sang amid the holy ruins
Von Jerusalem gesungen—	Of Jerusalem, and died.

(Heine 1970, 3:126; trans. in Heine 1982, 668–69)

These stanzas show *how* Halevi's poetry shapes Jewish cultural memory in the diaspora: it becomes part of Tisha b'Av, an observance previously mentioned by the Wandering Jew as turning another inanimate substance—the stones of Jerusalem—into tears. These lines transform Halevi's poems into "teardrop pearls," precious, beautiful relics that are part of a strand, the Jewish Lamentations tradition. The poem's story is also, though, like the complex history of Darius's jewels, whose fame has spread throughout the world.

Heine's metaphoric descriptions capture the unique relationship between Jewish diasporic memory and Jewish texts. These connections culminate in the description of Halevi's death. Heine retells a legendary account of the poet's death at the hand of a Muslim (see Cooper 2020, 62). The speaker does acknowledge the role of legend in this account. He states that "an ancient legend" tells that this "Saracen," was "an angel in disguise," providing Halevi with painless "Passage to the Blessèd Kingdom" (Heine 1982, 669). Death is a passage that, not incidentally, is unattainable for the Wandering Jew and, if we read the speaker autobiographically, momentarily unattainable for Heine as well.[33] The poem's third section, which begins with Darius's treasure, then ends with Halevi's heavenly exit, complete with angels who sing words from the Sabbath hymn "L'khah dodi likras kallah," which the poem incorrectly attributes to Halevi. This attribution, purposefully or not, enlarges the poet's role in Jewish ritual and thereby in Jewish cultural memory.

Section 4

"Jehuda ben Halevy" does not conclude with this blast of angel chorus. In another of its dizzying transitions, the poem's final section shifts to the "dissatisfaction" of the speaker's wife, who would rather have Darius's casket than Jehuda's. Indeed, she desires the casket in order to sell it so that she can purchase a cashmere shawl. Critics usually read these lines autobiographically, with Heine as the speaker, referring to his beloved wife, Crescence Eugénie Mirat, whom he affectionally called Mathilde. This autobiographical echo is not merely playful. Through it, Heine further, and more directly, inserts himself into Jewish cultural memory. Like Halevi, Heine, his story, and presumably his poem will become part of the Jewish tradition, of Jewish cultural memory. As the poem shows, this cultural memory is not exclusive to any one group. Heine's work speaks to a more general European cultural memory, a poetic memory.

This last section of "Jehuda ben Halevy," which provides a "history" of the word *Schlemihl*—a term for an incompetent person or a fool—is dominated by a satiric tone. The speaker directs his query on schlemihl to one "Court Investigator Hitzig," a converted Jew so assimilated that he at first balks at the request. Hitzig recovers to create a humorously fake biblical provenance for the term that transforms the schlemihl into an "innocent bystander." The speaker at first picks up this satire in the same vein, asserting that it is the age of a family line, rather than its greatness, that most matters (Routledge 2015, 71–72). The speaker's tone then shifts, however, to one more elegiac and mournful with this line: "Years come round and years pass onward" (Jahren kommen und vergehen), lines that I have suggested are first spoken by the Wandering Jew. The speaker then passes into a meditation on Halevi and other great Jewish poets of medieval Spain: Moses ibn Ezra and Solomon ibn Gabirol. The poem begins to describe their sad ends, specifically the legendary killing of ibn Gabriol by a Muslim. Then, the fragment breaks off with this Moor hanging on the gallows, at the command of the caliph.

This abrupt and sorrowful ending is a complete shift from the section's earlier references to the speaker's French wife, who will not, despite the speaker's urging, learn Hebrew. The speaker's description of his marital life ties him to a very real, very material world. It is a life of assimilation in a Christian world as well, in stark contrast to the life of Halevi, whose great love is not even a woman at all, but a feminized vision of Jerusalem (see Ezrahi 2007). At the same time, through the poem's unfinished catalog of great Jewish poets from the medieval past, there may be an implied place for the speaker in this tradition. Dating from his days with the Verein and his work on *Der Rabbi von Bacherach*, Heine had been seeking, as Jonathan Skolnik (2014, 58) shows, to create work that could also serve as a source, or *Quelle*. Heine achieves this in "Jehuda ben Halevy." The poem's numerous historical inaccuracies remind us that Heine is not interested in creating a source for historians. Instead, Heine uses legend and imagination to create a work of cultural memory, a synthetic cultural memory in which both Jews and Christians share. The most profound expression of this memory is uttered by the Wandering Jew, a figure whose voice merges with the poem's speaker and through him with Heine's own. Heine's "Jehuda ben Halevy," which he called "the most beautiful of my poems," is not the first work to give the Wandering Jew a voice (Heine, letter to J. Campe, August 21, 1851, cited in Preisendanz 1993, 338). I believe, however, that it is the first so powerfully to deploy the Christian tradition of the Wandering Jew legend and to transform it to represent the experiences and values that sustain Jewish cultural memory.[34] Heine's hybrid is not a two-headed monster, as Haviva Pedaya (2013) metaphorically describes the Jewish-Christian wanderer tradition, but a marvelous winged horse.

Part III

The Wandering Jew and Jerusalem in an Age of Global War

In 1939, sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, who introduced the concept of "collective memory," visited Palestine, an experience that informs his *La topographie légendaire des Évangiles en Terre sainte* (The Legendary Topography of the Gospels in the Holy Land), published in 1941. In this work, Halbwachs examines the mechanisms through which geographic sites acquire memorial significance. This process can occur anywhere, but in no other city is it more complex or of interest to more global constituencies than it is in Jerusalem. Halbwachs's account of memory creation in the place known as the Holy Land also illuminates the ways in which engagement with memory fuels the depictions of the Wandering Jew by Marc Chagall, Uri Zvi Greenberg, Edmond Fleg, and Sholem Asch that I examine in the chapters that follow.

The fact that Halbwachs developed his theories of memory within a specific historical context is not much discussed (but see Becker 2005). One such context is the history of the Jerusalem that Halbwachs visited. In *Jerusalem 1900: The Holy City in the Age of Possibilities*, Vincent Lemire (2017, 32–38) historicizes the prevalent and influential understanding of Jerusalem as divided into four "quarters," each associated with a different religious identity. This schema, he shows, is a conception created by nineteenth-century western European pilgrims and tourists, who ignored the actual makeup of the city that had developed during the period of Ottoman control (1517–1917). This nineteenth-century Western vision of the city, which continues to be influential, was accompanied on the ground with what Lemire (2017, 54) calls an aggressive “patrimonialization,” a reconstitution of ever-proliferating Christian pilgrim sites that in the late nineteenth century turned Jerusalem into an “open-air biblical museum.” The British colonial takeover of the region in 1917 only exacerbated these conditions.

Halbwachs (1992, 218), a keen observer of the tensions around these processes, describes in his conclusion to *Legendary Topography* how Christian memories in Jerusalem both grow out of and then eventually disassociate from “places consecrated by the official Judaism of Jesus’s time.” After reflecting on this process as it has occurred around sites such as the Mount of Olives, Halbwachs offers a striking description of how a new community can build its memory traditions out of those of an older one. Halbwachs’s observation emerges from a detailed discussion of various locations in Jerusalem claimed as the site of events recorded in the Gospels, such as the Cenacle, said to be the location of the Last Supper. The passage is worth citing at length because it sheds light on the very memory processes that the artists we will examine both acknowledge and resist in their creative work:

> It is in this way that the traditions of older groups become the natural supports of the new community’s memories, which affirm and sustain such traditions as if they were its guardians. These memories slowly gain authority and a kind of consecration. But at the same time, and in the long run, the new community takes these traditions up in the current of its memories and detaches them from a past that has become increasingly obscure——from, so to speak, the dark times when these traditions had lost significance. A new community transforms and appropriates these traditions; at the same time, it rewrites them by changing their position in time and space. The new community renews them as well by unusual parallels, by unexpected oppositions, and by combinations. When the prophets are represented on cathedral windows carrying on their shoulders the Christian saints or Christ’s apostles, they are placed on a sort of atemporal plane among the latter. Saint Abraham, Saint Jacob, and Saint Moses are now flooded with a Christian light and preserve just enough of their Judaism to convince one that Christianity’s roots extend to the most ancient Hebraic history. Yet from the time this new group is formed, the Jewish milieu——Jewish remembrances such as they were, as the collective memory of the Jews recalled them——withdraws into an indefinite background and disappears into the twilight of ages gone by. (Halbwachs 1971, 144; 1992, 219)

In this passage, Halbwachs moves from a general discussion of how memories change over time and among groups to the very specific example of Christian supersession: the representations of the Hebrew prophets as "saints" in the stained glass windows of a Christian cathedral. Halbwachs's description of these "saints" being flooded with just enough Christian light to establish Christianity in "the most ancient Hebraic history" is a metaphor for supersession. It illustrates how, while maintaining Jewish origins, Christian supersession appropriates Jewish cultural memory in order to justify Christianity's self-proclaimed fulfillment of Jewish prophecy.

The Jewish artists Chagall, Greenberg, Fleg, and Asch use the Wandering Jew legend to turn the tables on the memory appropriation that Halbwachs describes, creating their own "unusual parallels," "unexpected oppositions," and "combinations." They reimagine the Wandering Jew legend in ways that resist the supersessionary impulse inherent in the legend and in the Passion story, while still incorporating essential elements of these narrative traditions. Indeed, much of the power of these works derives from the connections they make between Christian and Jewish traditions while nevertheless asserting Jewish humanity, the autonomy of Jewish traditions, and the devastation of persecution often justified by memories that are ancient, but false.

The works we will examine by Chagall, Greenberg, Fleg, and Asch also reflect the new political order that took shape in the aftermath of World War I, a world order with profound implications for the status of the Wandering Jew's place of origin, Jerusalem, and for his traditional territory of exiled wandering, Europe. The outcomes of the war also created new and precarious conditions for Jewish communities that had already been reshaped by a mass migration from eastern Europe that had begun in the 1870s. After World War I, instead of Jewish migration—or wandering, as it were—the very ground shifted underneath entire Jewish communities. The second decade of the twentieth century saw the collapse of the German, Habsburg, Ottoman, and Russian empires (Rozenblit 2017, 41). At the war's end, many Jewish communities suddenly found themselves, without ever having left their homes, in new states governed by new regimes. Changes in territories and borders, as well as the emergence of new nation states, raised questions about Jewish status and rights, and left Jews increasingly vulnerable in many regions. Since, as we have seen, individual and collective memory is intimately related to space and place, the migrations—often forced—that these shifts provoked also had profound effects on matters of memory. The legend of the Wandering Jew proved a powerful instrument to express these effects.

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Jews faced continual and ever-escalating threats to their physical security. The situation was the worst for those European Jews who had not gained citizenship rights prior to the outbreak of war in 1914. In 1919 "all the Jews of Europe had received citizenship in the countries in which they lived, but citizenship in the new states was far more complicated than it had been in the Western European nation-states or the old Habsburg monarchy" (Rozenblit 2017, 34). Jews from territories that had experienced emancipation could more readily identify as belonging to the nation where they resided, as we will see in very strong terms in the case of Edmond Fleg. For those in areas previously under Habsburg control, to give a contrasting example, the issue of belonging to a new nation-state based on "ethnic and national principles" was neither straightforward nor secure. When the Habsburg monarchy collapsed, Jewish communities within its former territories were left without protection against antisemitic nationalists, resulting in pogroms. In November 1918, Uri Zvi Greenberg returned home to Lviv from serving in the Habsburg army only to experience what Marsha L. Rozenblit (2017, 41) calls the "worst" of a number of pogroms, with seventy-two Jews murdered. In the new Soviet Union, which governed the territory where Marc Chagall was born, Jews gained legal equality but also faced new pressures to secularize and to embrace Soviet Communist identity (Rozenblit 2017, 35). In 1923, his experience in this environment led Chagall to leave Moscow and to return to Paris, where he had already lived from 1910 to 1914 (F. Meyer 1963, 303–19). As we will see, Chagall's many moves, some of which were forced by the widespread violence of the era, led him to think of himself as a Wandering Jew. We can discern a similar self-identification in Greenberg's literary personae. Both men drew on the Wandering Jew figure to express their experiences of the harsh reality of the refugee and the pain of the displacement that is the Wandering Jew's curse. Like Heinrich Heine, these twentieth-century interpreters of the legend revise it, transforming it from the narrative of divine vengeance of the Christian tradition to an exploration of Jewish experience and Jewish cultural memory.

At the same time as these artists were exploring and reimagining place in relation to Jewish cultural memory, they were also engaging with Christian cultural memory, specifically through what Matthew Hoffman (2007, 1–12) calls "the Jewish reclamation of Jesus."[1] In the early twentieth century, Jewish writers and artists increasingly began to engage with the figure of Jesus, whom Christian tradition had long depicted as the victim of Jewish violence (J. Cohen 2007; Schäfer 2007). The Jewish "reclamation of Jesus" not only portrayed Jesus as a "brother," but also inverted the traditional anti-Jewish narrative of Jews as Christ killers, by making Jesus a symbol for the persecution *of* Jews. Indeed, Melissa Weininger (2010, 7, iv) makes a compelling case for this Jewish engagement with the figure of Jesus as part of a "constructive ideological project" that creates "a modern, secular, Jewish identity." This engagement with Christian cultural memory has roots in a complex number of cultural and historical developments, including Haskalah ecumenical engagement and new historicist approaches to the life of Jesus by scholars both Christian and Jewish.[2] This work opened a space for more multifaceted and analytic views of Jesus's life, and for a reevaluation of entangled Jewish and Christian memory traditions. These learned reevaluations of the Jesus story from a Jewish perspective also fired the imaginations of Jewish writers and artists, who explored these entanglements from perspectives informed by Jewish cultural memory and their own lived experiences as Jews, exposing complexities that were always present, but that had remained unspoken. The Wandering Jew legend, based in the Christian tradition about Jesus, proved a powerful instrument to explore this tradition that also allowed latitude through which artists could attempt to respect both Jewish and Christian religious sensibilities even if they sometimes did not accomplish this.

Although recent years have seen a flowering of scholarly examination of the "Jewish Jesus," the resulting concomitant transformation of the Wandering Jew by Jewish writers has been underexamined. As we have seen, the Wandering Jew, as a (still) living witness to Jesus's time, offers a powerful means through which to retell the Jesus story. The Wandering Jew is, to borrow a phrase from Sholem Asch, "the man who was there."[3] The feature of the legend that has made the Wandering Jew such a compelling figure for Christians—that he has a personal memory of the time of Jesus and of the Passion—draws Jewish artists to his story as well. The Wandering Jew provides a lens of memory that Jewish writers and artists can use to bring the story of Jesus alive from a Jewish perspective. In these writings the Wandering Jew is still an instrument of memory, but one deployed with goals and ends very different from those associated with the Christian Wandering Jew tradition since at least the time of Matthew Paris.[4]

The portrayals of the Wandering Jew and Jesus examined in the next four chapters should be understood not only in relation to one another, but in the context of the major shifts in political power in their traditional realms of encounter. Chagall, Greenberg, Fleg, and Asch don't simply create imagined encounters between the Wandering Jew and Jesus, they radically reenvision these figures as they do. They also relocate these encounters in important ways that not only shift the relationship between Jesus and the Wandering Jew as traditionally depicted, but also alter the site of this encounter. In doing so, they shift the relationship between the reader/viewer and the legend, and between the legend and the artists themselves. In this way their art confronts more than just the legend and its relation to Jewish and Christian cultural memory. These works take on the question of the place of Jewish communities and individuals in the modern world.

There is one final aspect of the place of the Jew to consider. At the same time that the curse of the Wandering Jew—who can never find a home—was visiting European Jews in new ways, the transfer of power in Palestine from the Ottoman Empire to the British Empire caused a shift in how Jews regarded the Wandering Jew's place of origin, Jerusalem. The 1917 Balfour Declaration opened up new Jewish perspectives by supporting a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine. The shift in horizons, and the possibility of an end to wandering, created a subsequent shift in treatments of the Wandering Jew legend. In the chapters that follow we will see Chagall, Greenberg, Fleg, and Asch each depicting encounters with the Wandering Jew in Europe and in Palestine, which are treated as sites of memory and identity. Each deploys the Wandering Jew as an instrument of memory in order to express and explore Jewish experience in both regions and to engage the roles of these spaces in shaping Jewish cultural memory.

Five

Marc Chagall's *Remembrance* and *White Crucifixion*

We will begin our exploration of early twentieth-century depictions of the Wandering Jew with the most internationally well-known among them, the works of Marc Chagall. Chagall—who engaged with the legend earlier than did Uri Zvi Greenberg, Edmond Fleg, or Sholem Asch—was a painter deeply inspired by memory (Compton 1990, 12).[1] Through his decades of making art, which included poetry, Chagall developed a distinct iconography for his own "autonomous world" (Harshav 2006, 20). This iconography draws on and expresses personal memory, including memories of his place of birth (Vitebsk, Belarus), his life as a painter in Paris, his work, and his many travels. These include a 1931 visit to Palestine, to which he traveled aboard the same ship as Fleg. Chagall never pursued the kind of ecumenical agenda that we find evidenced in works like Fleg's *Why I Am a Jew* or Asch's *What I Believe*, much less the political activism of Greenberg. Nevertheless, Chagall's deep engagement with the traditions of both Jews and Christians marks a commonality with these other artists in their literary and nonfiction works.[2]

Chagall's interpretation of these traditions includes many images of the Wandering Jew. Ziva Amishai-Maisels (1993, 21–22) has called Chagall the "originator of the modern vision of the Wandering Jew."[3] Chagall's images of the Wandering Jew appeared throughout his career, from his early days until his later years, but especially at moments when he made major moves, such as his 1914 return to Russia from Paris, his move back to Paris in 1924, and his 1941 flight to the United States. Benjamin Harshav (2006, 131), another important scholar of Chagall's life and work, views the Wandering Jew as one of Chagall's "key images." He reads Chagall's engagement with the Wandering Jew in relation to Yiddish writers like Mendele Moykher

Sforim (Mendele the Book Peddler, pseudonym of Sholem Yankev Abramovitsh) and Greenberg. We could understand the almost cyclical appearance of the Wandering Jew in Chagall's work as drawing from the figure's complex temporality. Chagall's use of the Wandering Jew to reflect personal and collective displacement reflects the complex interactions between personal and collective memory in Chagall's own life and in the lives of many of his Jewish contemporaries. His use of innovative, often dreamlike images allows for a powerful nonverbal expression of those interactions and of the interface between personal and cultural memory.

Although the Wandering Jew appears in Chagall's work most prominently after the rise of Hitler, we do find examples in his early work. *Erinnerung* (*Remembrance*) is a paper drawing in gouache, pencil, and india ink, dated c. 1915 (see fig. 2).[4] This representation of the Wandering Jew lacks the walking stick or cane that he holds in other Chagall works, such as *Over Vitebsk* (c. 1914), but his forward stride, traditional cap, and back stooped with the weight of a burden are all recognizable elements of Chagall's Wandering Jew iconography.

In *Remembrance*, strikingly, Chagall depicts this figure carrying on his back an entire house, complete with a female figure in the doorway. The house is the size of a large sack. There is no landscape to indicate the figure's location, or the starting and ending points of his journey. He appears against a muted background of blue, gray, and purple. Even if Chagall had not included the German word *Erinnerung* (memory or remembrance) at the bottom of the drawing, however, the house on the man's back would be readily recognizable as a home. This Wandering Jew, trudging through a kind of pale aimless void, takes this house with him, despite the clear burden of its weight, as indicated by the man's hunched back and his arm bent against his chest to balance the load as he moves forward.[5] Chagall's depiction of the Wandering Jew figure as an older man, as represented by the lines on the figure's face, is in keeping with traditional visualizations of the legend stretching back to Matthew Paris. Here in Chagall's rendering, however, the wanderer's age adds a new sense of poignancy, heightened by the woman framed in the house's doorway, her mouth rounded into an O. Is this a mother, a wife? The man's age does not point to a joyous or hopeful seeking of greener pastures; it depicts an older man displaced, a man old enough to have made memories that are now both treasure and burden.

But if *Remembrance* speaks of the sorrow of displacement, Chagall's most well-known representation of the Wandering Jew, his 1938 *White Crucifixion*, was painted at a time of even greater crisis, as German violence against Jews

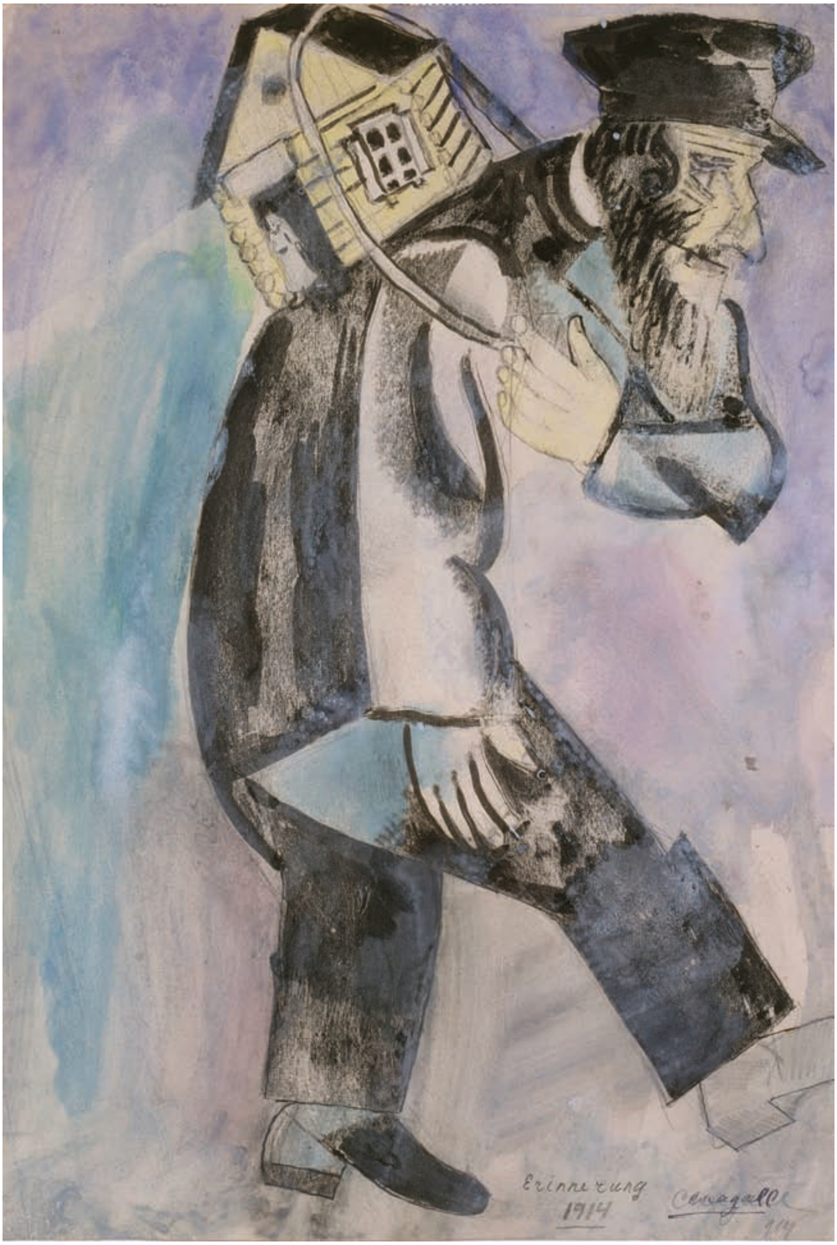

Erinnerung
1914
Chagall
914

Fig. 2. Marc Chagall, *Erinnerung* (*Remembrance*), circa 1914. Gouache, ink, and graphite on paper.
Courtesy Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. © 2023 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

descended to new lows (see fig. 3). Amishai-Maisels (1993, 182) places the creation of *White Crucifixion* in the context of the German deportation of 1,500 Jews to concentration camps on June 15, 1938, the mass deportation of Polish Jews from Germany that October, and Kristallnacht, in November.[6] Chagall initially made specific visual reference in the painting to Nazism, depicting inverted swastikas and including the words *Ich bin Jude* (I am a Jew) on a placard hanging around the neck of one of the male figures in the painting. These details appeared in the reproduction of the painting printed in *Cahiers d'Art* in 1939, but Chagall later painted over them, perhaps, Amishai-Maisels (1991) speculates, due to "fear of prosecution." Chagall experienced some direct persecution as an artist. His painting *The Red Jew* (1915) had been publicly burned in 1933. He and his family relocated to outside of Paris in an attempt to stay safe in June 1940, and they fled France for the United States in 1941 (see Weik 2015, 205).

In *White Crucifixion*, the Wandering Jew, clad in green, flees toward the painting's lower right corner. He moves with eyes lowered and hands raised, almost as if in prayer, his path cutting through the smoke of a smoldering unfurled Torah scroll. The plume of smoke from the scroll rises to become part of the cloud of white that seems to illuminate the cross. The Wandering Jew's closed eyes could seem to register pain, resignation, or the desire to block out the scenes of destruction that he leaves behind.

From the cross that floats in the center of the painting, Jesus's head inclines in the direction of the fleeing Wandering Jew. His eyes, like the Wandering Jew's, are closed, linking the two figures visually.[7] Jesus seems not so much to be watching as to be sensing the actions all around him, including the Wandering Jew's departure, even as he endures the violence committed against his own body as he suffers on the cross. Chagall's representation, in which Jesus wears a tallit in place of a loincloth, also evokes Greenberg's poem "Uri Zvi before the Cross INRI" (1922), which we will discuss in the next chapter. In the poem, the speaker addresses Jesus as a brother, but also rails against his inaction. Harshav (2006, 218) sees Chagall's choice of tallit for Jesus as inspired by Greenberg's poem. Critics have also suggested that Chagall's depiction of Jesus in a tallit emphasizes Jesus's identity as a Jew. This interpretation supports the idea that Chagall intended not to shock his audience—or, at least, to shock them not into offense, but rather into sympathy and support for Jewish victims of violence (Amishai-Maisels 1991, 151).[8]

Chagall emphasizes Jesus's Jewish identity in other ways as well. Traditionally, representations of the cross bear a plaque or title, sometimes inscribed

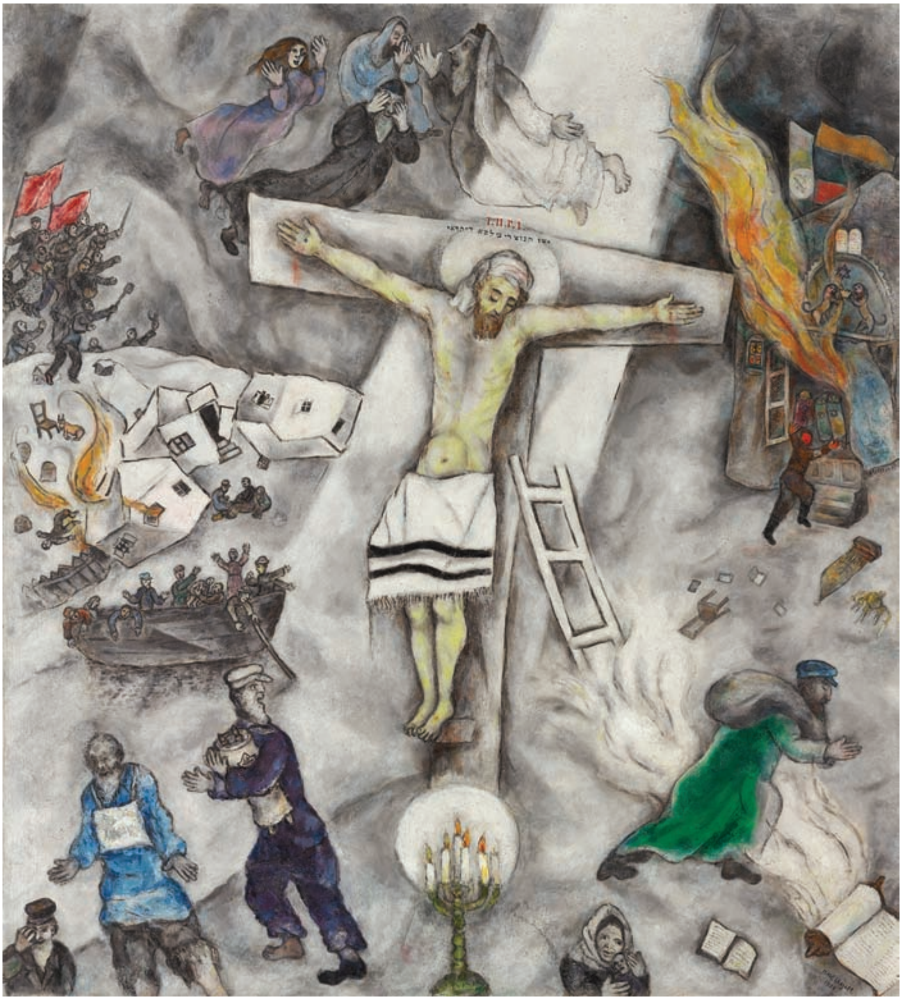


Fig. 3. Marc Chagall, *White Crucifixion*, 1938. Oil on canvas.
Courtesy Art Institute of Chicago. © 2023 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek as described in John 19:19–20 (Jensen 2017, 8). In *White Crucifixion*, just above the cross, we see the traditional letters INRI, which stand for Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews, in red. The words on the cross themselves are in Aramaic: "Yeshu HaNotzri Malcha D'Yehudai." Amishai-Maisels (1991, 139) notes that Chagall's use of Aramaic serves, like the tallit, to emphasize Jesus's Jewish identity. She also notes that Chagall's

Aramaic pun names Jesus not only as "the Nazarene," or "the man from Man from Nazareth," but as "the Christian."

The details of Chagall's representation of the cross create a Jewish claim both to Jesus and to the many traditions surrounding him. Aramaic places an intimate linguistic claim on Jesus that would be directed primarily at Chagall's Jewish viewers (Amishai-Maisels 1991, 139). In a change recognizable to a broader swath of viewers, Chagall replaces the Crown of Thorns with a simple cloth head covering. The Crown of Thorns and other Passion relics are memory objects; their power derives from their physical contact with Jesus at the time of his sacrifice. By removing the traditional Christian iconographic element of the Crown of Thorns, Chagall shifts the viewer's focus from memory of the Passion to contemplation of the catastrophes of Chagall's own time. He also creates a continuum between them. It is not simply that Jesus's wearing a tallit identifies *his* Jewishness, but rather that Chagall has changed the iconography of the Crucifixion to align with Jewish cultural memory, including the ritual objects used in maintaining Jewish traditions.

Chagall's choice to cover over certain markers that point specifically to National Socialist violence, such as the inverted swastika and *Ich bin Jude*, removes some of the specificity of the displacement of the Passion from Roman-dominated Jerusalem to contemporary Europe. Nevertheless, the painting's "unexpected opposition" of ancient and modern, rather than "detaching" a memory from the past, establishes a continuity of suffering. As David G. Roskies (1984, 286) argues, the "presence of red (revolutionary) banners in the upper left corner suggests that Chagall's intention was in fact to encompass *all* of recent Jewish history, not just the plight of the German Jews." It also, I would add, replaces the structure of Christian supersession, what Steven F. Kruger (2006, 6) calls "the Christian reorganization of history," with that of Jewish memory tradition, which mourns catastrophe through a "rhetoric of lamentations" (Mintz 1996, 17) reaching back to the destruction of the First Temple.[9]

Chagall's representation of Jesus subtly reimagines the cross as an object of memory. He chooses to depict a T-shaped cross (*crux comissa*), perhaps in order to make space for the illuminating beam that cuts down the center of the painting, connecting the scenes on both sides by blending with the earth, water, and smoke on, in, and through which catastrophic Jewish suffering takes place. The beam of light forms a kind of fourth point of the cross, thereby further visually tying Jesus's suffering to that of his fellow Jews. We can read this use of illumination as a literal reworking of Maurice Halbwachs's (1992, 219) stained glass window metaphor.[10] In *White Crucifixion*, Chagall's "unusual parallels . . . unexpected oppositions, and new combinations" of Christian iconography appropriate and transform it in order to reveal Jewish existence and Jewish suffering.

Chagall's painting also provides an example of a response to the supersessionist depictions of the patriarchs in Halbwachs's stained glass window. Over these scenes of chaos and violence, in the center top of the painting, four Jews hover in the air above the cross. Their eyes are covered, closed to, or averted from the scenes of terror below. Amishai-Maisels (1991, 143) identifies these figures as the patriarchs and Rachel, associated with mourning through popular Jewish legend and the Book of Jeremiah. These figures serve the same purpose as the light in Halbwachs's (1992, 219) metaphor: they anchor the scene, with all its horror and power, in Jewish memory, a Jewish memory that refuses to withdraw "into an indefinite background" or disappear into the "twilight of ages gone by." Rachel and the patriarchs are linked to the Wandering Jew through their clothing. Chagall's Wandering Jew typically appears in a shorter coat, perhaps better to reveal a sense of motion. In *White Crucifixion*, the Wandering Jew wears a green coat, the length and flow of which resemble that of the robes of the biblical figures above the cross.

The Wandering Jew himself, even as he must flee, seems to represent resilience and survival, as do the two other figures at the bottom of the painting: the man bearing the Torah scroll and the woman carrying an infant. This is a triad that appears with regularity in Chagall's works (see Amishai-Maisels 1993, 21–25). Each flees in a different direction, hopefully heightening the possibility of escape. But only the head and shoulders of the woman are visible, so her flight is not assured; so too, the man with the scroll seems to be standing still, perhaps arrested by terror. Only the Wandering Jew has almost reached the image frame. His positioning might seem to reinforce the traditional paradigms of his legend; he is forced to wander. Here, however, his forced movement is due not to his own sin, but to violence enacted against him.

An even more notable difference from the Christian tradition of the legend is that Chagall's representation of Jesus and the Wandering Jew is a representation not of an encounter, but of a parting.[11] Lea Weik (2015, 204) has suggested that *White Crucifixion* alludes to Gustave Doré's 1856 image of the Wandering Jew passing by a wayside cross (see fig. 4). In *White Crucifixion*, however, the memory that will haunt the wanderer is not that of his violence against Christ, but that of Christian violence against Jews.

White Crucifixion does, however, share a location with the Doré image. The forest setting, the wayside cross, and the church steeple in the background of Doré's image all point to a European location. In Doré's series of images of

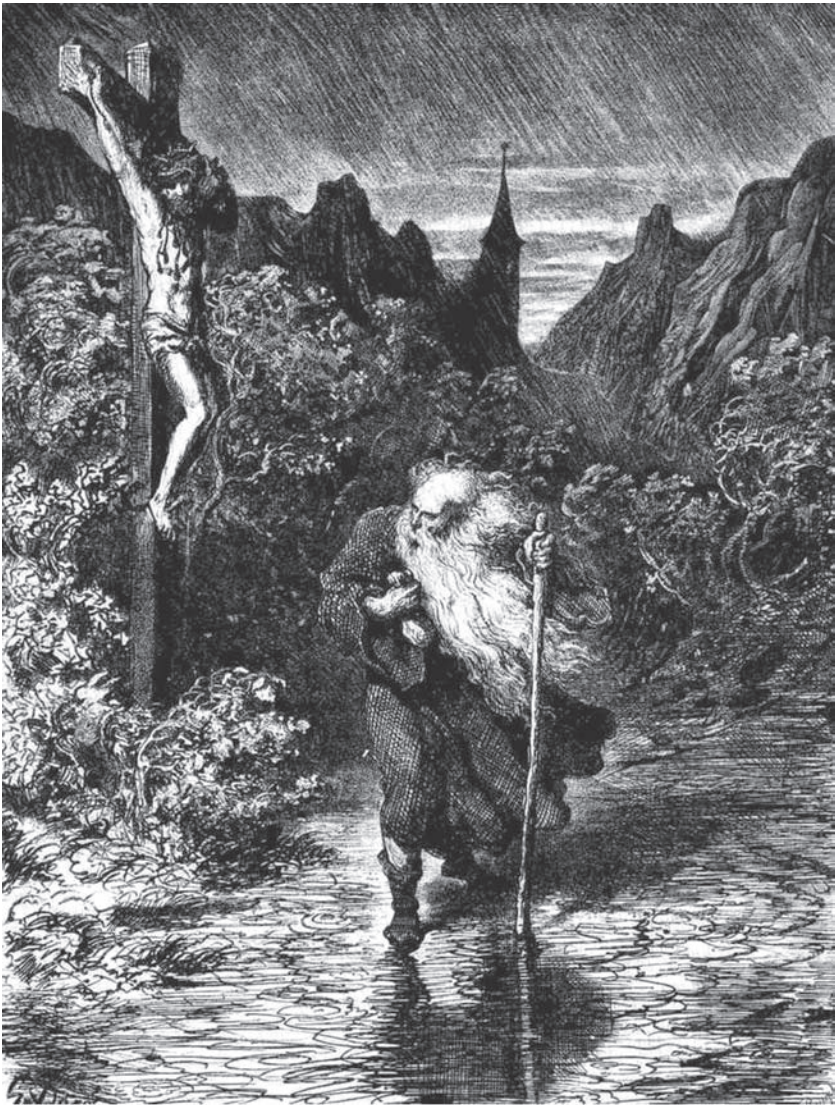


Fig. 4. Gustave Doré, *La légende du Juif errant*: "J'ai traité mon sauveur avec trop de rigueur" (I treated my savior too harshly). Woodcut. Paris, 1856.
Public domain.

the legend, he visualizes the intersection of personal and cultural memory in the Wandering Jew by melding images of the Crucifixion into a range of landscapes. The Crucifixion is sometimes visualized through a wayside cross as in figure 4, but elsewhere in Doré's scenes of Wandering Jew images it is superimposed into clouds in the sky above the Wandering Jew's head or visualized beneath the surface of waters that the Wandering Jew supernaturally crosses over. In this way, Doré has the image of Jesus appear everywhere the wanderer travels, thus visually rendering the memory of the Passion as, for him, an inescapable haunting memory, part of any landscape he traverses. Halbwachs (1992, 219) explains how traditions can be rewritten by "changing their position in time and space." Doré uses landscape to visualize memory as curse. *White Crucifixion*, in contrast, visualizes memory very differently by placing a crucified Jewish Jesus in the middle of a contemporary European pogrom.[12] The figures depicted around the cross are neither those who torment Jesus nor those who mourn him, as is typical of centuries of Christian visual representations of the Passion. Instead, Chagall's image depicts Jews contemporary to the artist's own time who suffer alongside Jesus.[13] Chagall's transposition of Jesus and the Wandering Jew disturbs the traditional Christian legend's portrayal of victim and victimizer as well as the temporality of the traditional Passion image, itself what Aleida Assmann (1995) calls a "cultural text."

Although in *White Crucifixion* Chagall transposes his Crucifixion scene into a European pogrom, his work was also influenced by the original location of the Passion. Upon visiting Jerusalem, Chagall, like Asch and Fleg, was seized by the palpable presence of history and memory.[14] In an article entitled "Voyage en Palestine," which appeared in the French newspaper *L'Intransigeant* soon after his return to Paris from Palestine, Chagall (1931, 5) describes his desire to visit the land of the Bible in order to experience it sensorially, without the mediation of a camera or a paintbrush. One vivid passage in the short piece describes first the steep streets where Chagall knows Jesus once walked and then bearded Jews in colorful clothing and fur hats at the Wailing Wall. This brief description shows that Chagall was highly attuned to the legendary topography of Jerusalem and its environs. Amishai-Maisels (1997–98, 518, 529–30) has analyzed Chagall's works made during or under the inspiration of the Palestine trip, demonstrating in great detail how Chagall's choice of subjects, his use of perspective and detail, and other features of these images (which include paintings of the Wailing Wall, Rachel's Tomb, and the Temple Mount, among others) reveal an emphasis on Jewish traditions, even as they also reflect concerns about Arab-Jewish tensions and the future of the Zionist project that we will also find in Fleg's writings. Most interesting for us is the way that, as Amishai-Maisels shows, Chagall's choice to paint Jewish memory sites like Rachel's Tomb and the Temple Mount recalls the frequent appearance of these locations on pictures placed in Russian Jewish homes as mizrachs, used to orient the viewer in the direction of Jerusalem. Jerusalem and the surrounding region inspired Chagall to create work that encompassed multiple layers of memory, just as his visions of the Wandering Jew present multiple, entangled memories as well.

Six

Uri Zvi Greenberg's King Ahasver

Uri Zvi Greenberg created some of the most original and striking reimaginings of the Wandering Jew. Yet, with the exception of Galit Hasan-Rokem's work, his contribution to the tradition has gone largely unnoticed.[1] Greenberg, a major figure in the modern poetics of Yiddish and Hebrew, encountered Ahasver as the Wandering Jew's long nineteenth century drew to a close with the onset of World War I. This unprecedented war had a profound impact on Greenberg, who experienced its horrors firsthand on the front line in Serbia. The conflict's slaughter and upheaval intensified the already-increasing violence against the Jews of eastern Europe; this violence also touched Greenberg directly and shaped his Ahasver, who ultimately figures as a Zionist symbol. Drawing on memory studies, historian Yael Zerubavel (1995, xviii) asserts "the centrality of the past" to Zionism, arguing that "Zionism shaped its views in reaction to traditional Jewish memory in order to actively change the course of Jewish history." We can see this type of engagement in the development of Greenberg's Ahasver, who transitions from a haunted wanderer to ancient king.

Greenberg first represents Ahasver in his 1923 poem "In malkhes fun tseylem" (In the Kingdom of the Cross) (Greenberg 1979, 2:457–72; trans. in Weingrad 2015). This Yiddish poem exhibits the disorienting and violent imagery and language characteristic of Greenberg's work in this period. It also draws on a form that David G. Roskies (1984, 91) identifies as "the pogrom poem," a genre that has deep roots in Jewish cultural memory and that burst into the modern era of Jewish writing with Hayim Nahman Bialik's 1904 "In the City of Slaughter," a profound and influential poetic response to the infamous Kishinev pogrom of 1903 (see Zipperstein 2018). After Greenberg moved to Palestine at the end of 1923, he began to publish poetry in Hebrew. In

Greenberg's 1926 "Masa' 'el 'Eiropah" (An Oracle to Europe), Ahasver, still marked by suffering, has become a king. Long silenced, he has finally found a voice—or, rather, he has been given one by Greenberg, who in the work adopts the poet-prophet persona found throughout so much of his poetry in order to reshape cultural memory.

As we have already seen in chapter 4, Heinrich Heine makes a similar move with the legend, locating Ahasver within Jewish cultural memory. This engagement with the Wandering Jew grew out of the *Judenschmerz* (pain or lack of acceptance) experienced by assimilated Jews in nineteenth-century Germany. We can discern the influence of Heine's multilayered evocation of the Wandering Jew in Greenberg's work. Indeed, Greenberg (1990, 1:101) admired Heine's poetry enough to crown Heine the "prince of the poets of Ashkenaz" in "Oracle." Greenberg, however, not only writes at a later historical moment than Heine, but comes from the eastern European Jewish background toward which Heine felt distanced ambivalence. Greenberg's work far more directly explores his deep pain over the persecution that he and his fellow European Jews have suffered in the very lands in which they were born. The trauma Greenberg personally experienced and his conviction that Jewish life in Europe was both threatened and impossible led him to break with Europe and to bring Ahasver along with him.[2] In this chapter, we will examine how Greenberg reimagines the Wandering Jew legend in "Kingdom" and "Oracle," providing Ahasver with a voice that echoes that of Greenberg's own distinctive poetic-prophetic persona and that reflects Greenberg's embrace of Zionism.

Greenberg, born 1896 in Galicia, was the scion of two revered Hasidic families. He began his poetic career in his early teens with romantically influenced verse in Yiddish (see Miron 2010, 192–95). In 1915, at age nineteen, Greenberg was forcibly conscripted to fight in World War I on the side of Austro-Hungarian forces. Near the war's end, having endured harrowing scenes of slaughter, Greenberg deserted. He returned home to Lviv, only to experience a terrifying pogrom on November 22, 1918 (Miron 2010, 198–99). He and his family members were lined up to be shot, but somehow survived. The family home was destroyed (Abramson 2008, 73–74). These ugly early experiences shaped Greenberg, who can be included in what Elazar Elhanan (2017, 53) calls the "lost generation of Yiddish modernism." Unlike their non-Jewish counterparts, Jewish veterans of the First World War experienced not only the horrors of the battlefield, but also the violent episodes that eastern European Jews had endured with distressing frequency since the 1880s. As Roskies (1984, 268) frames it, "trench warfare at one end and the pogrom at the other became the ultimate reference points for all of Greenberg's subsequent responses to catastrophe." Greenberg's poems from this period, then, can be placed alongside those of wartime modernists like Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, but also within the long tradition of Jewish literary response to catastrophe (see Goodblatt 2014). Harriet Murav (2019, 63–64) has shown that a sense of *hefker*, a feeling of exclusion from any societal order or protection, runs through the work of Yiddish writers, including Greenberg's during this period. Greenberg's early uses of the Wandering Jew should be understood in relation to that mood of alienation and despair.

Greenberg's personal memories provided fuel to fire his searing poetry, which he sought to make both formally innovative and politically engaged. In 1921 he moved to Warsaw and fell in with a group of avant-garde Yiddish poets who adopted an insult hurled at them as their moniker. "The Gang" (*Die Khalyastre*) was founded in 1922 by Greenberg, Peretz Markish, and Melech Ravitch (Winther 1997, 135; see also Wolitz 2010). This controversial group of poets, influenced by expressionism and futurism, sought to create exciting new pathways in Yiddish verse. They reveled in breaking taboos (see Elhanan 2017, 55; Seelig 2016, 115; Stahl 2009, 147). In September 1922, Greenberg debuted his own literary journal. *Albatros* ran in Warsaw for two issues, the second of which drew the ire of Polish censors, forcing Greenberg to flee to Berlin. There Greenberg published the journal's third and final issue, which features "Kingdom," before he left for Palestine at the end of 1923 (Winther 1997, 136).[3] *Albatros* presents a new context for treatments of the Wandering Jew not only because of its avant-garde modernism, but because with *Albatros*, Greenberg seeks to create a Yiddish modernism that serves Jewish goals. Greenberg's unique vision for Ahasver is part of that socially engaged poetic project (see Seelig 2016, 103).[4]

Before turning to "Kingdom," we need to consider Greenberg's journal, *Albatros*, as a broader context for Greenberg's representation of Ahasver in "Kingdom." The journal's title was inspired by an Esther Shumiatcher (1896–1985) poem of the same name. This Shumiatcher lyric was included in the first issue of *Albatros*, which sported on its front cover a striking image of the seabird by artist Ze'ev Weintraub (Lipsker 1995, 97). While likely inspired by nature, Shumiatcher's spare and striking verse also creates a complex intertextuality with the Wandering Jew tradition, as well as with related work by two of Europe's most renowned poets, Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834) and Charles Baudelaire (1821–67) (see Jones 2003, 17).

One of the most well-known offshoots of the Wandering Jew tradition, Coleridge's 1798 poem "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" transforms the

Wandering Jew into the Ancient Mariner, cursed to immorality because he shot down the soaring albatross that blessed his sailing ship with wind, dooming all on board except the mariner himself (Coleridge 2004, 59–99). Baudelaire alludes to Coleridge's albatross in his 1861 collection *Les Fleurs du mal* (The Flowers of Evil) (Winther 1997, 139–40; see also Lipsker 1995, 90; Seelig 2016, 103).[5] In "L'Albatros" (The Albatross), sailors amuse themselves by watching an albatross struggle on their ship deck. Cruelty reduces a once-beautiful creature to comical ugliness. The poem's last stanza transforms the albatross into a symbol for the Poet, the "prince of the clouds," who can "haunt the tempest" and "laugh at the archer." "Exiled on the ground," however, the albatross/Poet is the subject of taunts, hobbled by his massive wings (Baudelaire 1975, 1:9; and see Seelig 2016, 103–5).[6] Baudelaire's depiction of the albatross's exilic grounding skillfully weaves his poem into the Wandering Jew tradition from which Coleridge draws.

Shumiatcher's albatross becomes an even richer symbol, alluding to the Coleridge/Baudelaire poems and, through word choice, to Jewish tradition:

Na-venad iz dayn goyrl!	Wandering is your fate!
Kreytsndik vintn	Crossing winds
Nokh shifn fun shtol	After steel ships.
Tsirklendik	Circling
Nishtert dayn hunger	Your hunger seeking
Erdishe opfaln.	Earthly refuse.
Albatros!	Albatross!
	(text and trans. in Seelig 2016, 104)

The expression נע-ונד (*na-venad*; *na' vanad* in biblical Hebrew) comes from Genesis 4:12. These words curse Cain to be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, a state reemphasized by the expression's only other biblical appearance, in Genesis 4:14 (see J. Byron 2011, 97–98). While, as we have seen, the Cain figure has been part of the Wandering Jew legend for centuries, Shumiatcher's line expresses his vagabond state in a way that only Jewish linguistic tradition can, as the phrase in Yiddish uses the original formulation from the Hebrew Bible. By using this phrase, unique in the Bible to the description of Cain's punishment, Shumiatcher crafts an albatross that draws power from both modern poetic imaginings of the Wandering Jew legend and the related, more ancient story of Cain. This wandering exile, however, is interpreted not through a Christian lens, but through a Jewish one. The expression *na-venad* itself operates through a form of Jewish cultural memory—the allusive phrase triggers a memory chain.

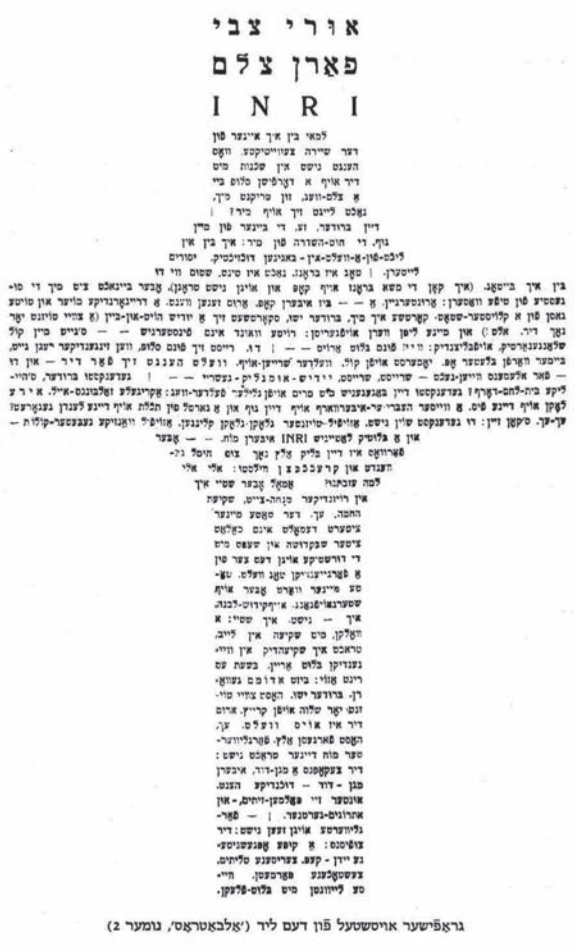
Shumiatcher thus not only extends her representation of the albatross back into the very origins of Jewish representation of wandering as punishment, but also updates the tradition as transmitted through Coleridge and Baudelaire to reflect her own historical moment. Shumiatcher's ships are not sailing vessels, dependent on albatross-inspired wind, but modern steel ships that serve the frenetic modernity with which the expressionism of Greenberg's journal *Albatros* grapples. Hunger forces Shumiatcher's albatross to circle these ships, seeking sustenance from refuse (*opfaln*), a word that also carries connotations of decline or "fall," as in the fallen state of humans after the expulsion from Eden (among whom Cain is the firstborn) (Seelig 2016, 104). Yet even when darkness envelops the sea, the albatross finds refuge in the waves. The sea becomes both home and bed, demonstrating the resilience of this gorgeous being, whose beauty transcends its forced nomadism.

Shumiatcher's poem, like Baudelaire's, shifts focus from the sinner of Coleridge's poem to the victim of his crime. Shumiatcher's poem further expands the meaning of the albatross to include a humanity beyond "the Poet," a broader, suffering humanity. Greenberg, who knew and admired Baudelaire's poetry, surely recognized the allusion. Shumiatcher's albatross, with its hunger and its grace, provides an apt emblem for the goals of Greenberg's journal, which seeks to create a voice not for a poetic elite, but for the Jewish masses (Wolitz 1997, 101). I see Shumiatcher's albatross as responding to the theme of just vengeance that, as we saw in part I, had played a formative role in the Christian Wandering Jew tradition since the medieval period. Greenberg's editorial choice of Shumiatcher's lyric, which speaks with such empathy and admiration for the wanderer, serves as background to Greenberg's poetic transformation of the Wandering Jew.

I have spent so much time with these complex allusions because I find it significant that Greenberg chose to feature Shumiatcher's poem within the first issue of *Albatros* and to grace the premier issue's cover with a striking image of the bird. Through these editorial choices, Greenberg participates in an intricate revision of the albatross as symbol of the theme of wandering, specifically Jewish wandering, which the Wandering Jew figure represents. The words of Genesis, unique in the Bible to its description of Cain, and then embedded in the Yiddish language itself, are woven into the linguistic fiber of Jewish cultural memory. Placed as they are in the context of *Albatros* as a journal, these allusions provide a new core to the Wandering Jew legend, one that is grounded in and by pain, but that is also resourceful, resilient, and even soaring. From the long cultural memory of Ashkenazic Jewry emerges a voice that throbs with hope even in a time of "black global pain," as Greenberg (1995, 109) characterizes the era in a manifesto in *Albatros*'s first issue. While not utopian, the journal's vision is nevertheless empowering, paving the way for Greenberg's later Zionist revisions to the Wandering Jew legend. We can read those revisions as a response to the deep strain of "just" and collective vengeance that has long inhered in the Christian tradition of the legend.

The modern strand of the Wandering Jew tradition that Coleridge began with his albatross in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" draws power from these Christian origins of the legend. The albatross has been understood as a Christ figure, a connection that opens the possibility of reading Shumiatcher's poem as well as engaging, albeit distantly, with the "Jewish reclamation of Jesus" (M. Hoffman 2007; and see Rowell 1962). In the second issue of *Albatros*, Greenberg participated in this reclamation project in the most provocative of ways. In "Uri Zvi farn tseylem INRI" (Uri Zvi before the Cross INRI) an autobiographical speaker, "Uri Zvi," addresses Jesus on a cross, where he is described as hanging at peace (see fig. 5). At first, the speaker himself laments that he isn't hanging beside Jesus on the wayside cross, but instead must linger among the tormented herd. The speaker addresses Jesus as "brother," and questions his long silence. In increasingly violent imagery of the type that Greenberg will also later deploy in "Kingdom," the speaker berates Jesus for his blindness to the devastation of his fellow Jews, devastation that for the last two millennia has been carried out in Jesus's name. The speaker sarcastically laments that he cannot bring Jesus hot coals in order to warm his feet in the hollowed-out skull of one of their fellow Jews. He then turns his thoughts to his other Jewish "brothers." These men suffer in Europe and also in Palestine, in Hadera's swamps, although the latter, at least, have the comfort of the mountains and the beautiful Sea of Galilee. Finally, the speaker again laments all their fates.

Many have noted how Greenberg's poem provides a potent example of the Jewish reclamation of Jesus. His use of the cross, which we have seen serves as a powerful symbol of memory, differs in its confrontational approach not only from the work of Christian authors like Matthew Paris, but from that of Jewish authors such as Sholem Asch as well. In Asch's 1909 "In a karnival nakht" (In a Carnival Night) and 1943 "Kristos in geto" (Christ in the Ghetto), for example, Jesus descends from a cross in order to join his fellow persecuted Jews, displaying the ecumenical compassion that, as we will see, Asch sought to foster. With his Yiddish concrete poem in the shape of a cross, in



אורי צבי
פארן צלם
INRI

גראפישער אויסשטעל פון דעם ליד ('אלבאטראס', נומער 2)

Fig. 5. Uri Zvi Greenberg, "Uri Zvi farn tseylem INRI" (Uri Zvi before the Cross INRI). *Albatros*, 1922.
Public domain.

contrast, Greenberg uses the cross as provocation. The *Kreuzdichtung* (cross poem) is a traditional form that can be traced back to medieval poets such as Hrabanus Maurus (Ernst 1986, 177–78; Higgins 1989). Shaping a poem as a cross emphasizes the material object of the cross itself, a materiality that we first considered in Matthew Paris's thirteenth-century illustration of the encounter between the Wandering Jew and Jesus. It serves devotion, but also memory, invoking the Passion as a concrete event. It also invokes Christian built environments, including the traditional shaping of church space in the shape of the cross. By forming the image of a cross using Hebrew letters and Yiddish words, Greenberg creates a visual provocation that a reader who can recognize the letters as Hebrew will—even if they cannot read the words—recognize as a Jewish occupation of Christian space. This occupation is symbolic, memorial, and intimate. With "Uri Zvi before the Cross INRI," Greenberg has created a new kind of relic. His appropriation inverts what he, in works like "Kingdom," shows to be the role of churches, crosses, and pealing church bells in marking claim to European lands as spaces of Christian hegemony. In such landscapes, Jews are mere interlopers, wanderers in exile even in the lands of their birth. "Uri Zvi before the Cross INRI" is a symbolic reclamation of this space.

"In the Kingdom of the Cross"

It is from such a place of Christian hegemony, a dark "woe forest" (*veyvald*), that the searing voice of the speaker emerges in the first section of Greenberg's Yiddish poem "In the Kingdom of the Cross." This poem appeared in the final issue of *Albatros*, published in Berlin in 1923. The poem's opening lines set out some of its major features. It presents a dark vision of Europe, in which the anthropomorphized landscape reflects the threatening, terrifying reality of its Jewish population. Greenberg exploits the poetic power of Yiddish compound words to conjure this "woe forest," where the very trees cry out in pain as the Jewish dead sway in their branches (Weingrad 2015, lines 9, 18, 25).[7] This repeated use of the compounding flexibility of Yiddish transforms space. The forest isn't simply described with adjectives. Instead, the European forest comes to embody the pain that Jews experience within it. The speaker moves through this space as an owl, the bird of night.

Sound imagery is important as well. In the opening of "Kingdom," the loud, incessant peal of church bells signals violence. The cries of the persecuted people are silenced or ignored: "with every cry of pain there each voice is a stone in water," and "the prayers of the bodies are tears in the abyss" (Greenberg 1979, 2:457).[8] All this pain takes place under a remote sky, which is sometimes tender, but where God himself wishes to escape his kingdom, such is his loneliness. From amid this scene, the speaker cries out against the silence of the Jewish community and their inability to find an answer to their vulnerability in this frightening place:

> Tsvey yortoyznt brent in opgrunt unter beymer do a shvaygn,
> Aza gift vos ligt un zamlt zikh in opgrunt—un ikh veys nisht
> Vos der mer iz: tsvey yortoyznt doyert blutung, doyert shvaygn
> Un keyn moyl hot nisht geshpign funem gumen nokh dem giftshpay.
> Un in sforim shteyt geshribn ale mises beyodey goim,
> Nor der entfer iz nishto dort, undzer entfer oyf di mises.

For two millennia a silence has burned beneath these trees,
A poison that collects in the abyss and festers—and I do not know
What the matter is: two-thousand years of blood, of silence,
Yet not one mouth has cleared the poison spittle from its palate.
Each death at the hands of the gentiles is chronicled in books.
Only the *answer* is missing, *our* answer to these deaths.
(Greenberg 1979, 2:457; Weingrad 2015, lines 19–24,
with slight modification)

The "I" voice here speaks of the two thousand years of silent Jewish suffering at the hands of non-Jews, a silence that contrasts sharply with those pealing bells. The speaker rails against the inadequacy of the response to violence of Jewish memorial culture and the practice begun in the medieval period of recording victims' names in a book. The speaker calls for a response that can end the violence rather than simply inscribing it for the sake of collective memory.[9]

Over the course of the poem, the identity of the "I" voice will shift (see Goodblatt 1993). It can be the voice of a son, speaking to his frightened father and mother (Greenberg 1979 2:460, 468) as he considers leaving Europe, a situation that mirrors Greenberg's own actual imminent departure for Palestine. The speaker also describes these parents in the third person in lines that evoke Greenberg's own experience during the 1918 Lviv pogrom. This sequence includes an image that recalls Shumiatcher's "Albatross": the speaker imagines a sea journey during which one can "lie down and float with the current" (Greenberg 1979, 2:468; Weingrad 2015, line 332).

This resonance with Shumiatcher's resilient albatross generates another facet of the "I" voice. The speaker is a "wanderer," an aspect of his identity that explodes in rage as he inhabits the persona of Ahasver in these lines:

Avade hob ikh faynt, biz-mayne-shpitsn-finger-faynt-aykh!
In mayne glider glit der gift fun-nisht-gezogtn-shvartsn-emes:
Tsvey-yortoyznt-zayn-Ahasver-un-nisht-gleybn-inem-tseylem.
Drayekik iz der shotn fun mayn pakhed yor tsvey toyznt.
Drayekik sharf dos meser, vos di veytik shnaydt in fleysh ayn.

Of course I hate you all, a hate that reaches to my fingertips!
A hate that sets my limbs afire with the poison of this unsaid truth:
For two-thousand years to be Ahasver yet not believe in the Cross.
Three-sided is the shadow of my fear these two millennia.
Three-sided is the knife-blade of the pain that cuts my flesh.
(Greenberg 1979, 2:463; Weingrad 2015,
lines 200–204, with slight modifications)

Here Greenberg transforms Ahasver from the penitent, long-suffering figure of Christian legend into an individual trapped and tortured not only by his own endlessly itinerant existence, but by his connection to the cross. He does not believe in the cross. It has no power for him as a material object or as an object of memory, and yet it shapes his life. If we think back to Matthew Paris's image of an aging Wandering Jew staring transfixed at a graceful Christ, transformed by his encounter in his body and his soul, we can see clearly just how stark the contrast is between Greenberg's rendition and the traditional Christian Wandering Jew legend. Greenberg's Ahasver is no Christian-called-Jew, eternally waiting for redemptive acceptance. He is a Jew forced into a hollowed-out eternity as a "Christian." Christianity—the "three-sided" (that is, the Trinitarian)—is not an inspiration of faith; it torments and injures him.

Greenberg deftly introduces Ahasver's voice in a way that feels both organic and abrupt, stylistically reminiscent of Heine's voicing of the Wandering Jew in "Jehuda ben Halevy" (1851). Greenberg's Ahasver, though, is not a desolate pilgrim moving through a fallen Jerusalem, but a raging figure of resistance in a hostile Europe. We could read him as the culmination of Heine's 1824 poem "An Edom!": the Jew, having learned from the Christian to hate, and to act on that hate, has finally had enough. Following intricate Heinesque shifts in voicing, Greenberg blends Ahasver's voice with other manifestations of the poem's "I," linking them through allusion to the mark of Cain. Ultimately the autobiographical "I" and the "I" of Ahasver seem to merge when the poem shifts to a "we" that calls to the speaker to leave Europe. Ahasver and "Greenberg" blend again as the speaker asks,

> Vos ken aza hoylekh [helekh] vi ikh—a misboyded,
> Mit groylndik blut un mit yidisher eyme
>
> What can I do, a traveler alone,
> With frozen blood and with Jewish fear
>
> (Greenberg 1979, 2:470; Weingrad 2015,
> lines 380–81 with slight modification)

The speaker then calls out again, referring to himself in the language of Cain's curse in Genesis. He is a Jew, both a wanderer and a fugitive (*a yid a navenader*), a line that shows an equation between these two elements. Just as Shumiatcher's use of this formulation from Genesis brings nuance and depth to her albatross, Greenberg's use of this language grounded in Jewish tradition deepens and complicates his Ahasver. *Helekh* (הֵלֶךְ) is a very old Hebrew word for wanderer or sojourner, as found in 2 Samuel 12:4.[10] The speaker's labeling of himself as a loner using the term *a misboyded* references the Hasidic tradition of which Greenberg's family was part. *A misboyded* is not, like Cain, someone cursed with solitude, but someone who seeks it, in order to undertake a spiritual quest. While such a project of pious contemplation could be undertaken anywhere, it typically refers to withdrawal to an uninhabited location, such as a forest or a mountain, in order to meditate and pray. With this rich range of references to different contexts of wandering in the Jewish tradition, Greenberg develops a speaker with a complex and ambivalent attitude toward his fate. His wandering speaker is like the cursed figures of Ahasver and Cain because the "wilderness" that the speaker inhabits is Europe, the continent of pain. Further, the speaker's isolation could be a purposeful, perhaps spiritual, "quest." The speaker desires to speak up and out for his people, but his quest is also isolating, terrifying, and dangerous.

That this voice hews close to an autobiographical "I" for Greenberg is reinforced by the last piece in *Albatros*'s final issue. Each of the three issues of *Albatros* ends with a short section entitled "Baym Shlus" (In Conclusion). In the third and final issue of the project, the concluding essay serves as both a polemic explaining why Greenberg is leaving Europe for Palestine and an explanatory guide to the complexities of "In the Kingdom of the Cross," including Greenberg's use of Ahasver. Here Greenberg not only refers to himself as *a misboyded* but does so twice with reference to Ahasver.

The essay, which has the subtitle "Veytikn-heym oyf slavisher erd" (Pain-home on Slavic soil), begins by announcing Greenberg's leave-taking. There is no possibility for joy in an "Ahasver-existence," shadowed by Cain's black glory.[11] Greenberg (1979, 2:473, 2:477) refers to this state despairingly as an "eternal Ahasver-existence" one additional time, in reference to the challenge and perhaps impossibility of the Zionist goal of a Jewish homeland amid other failed attempts for Jewish autonomy. The essay ends with the phrase "I am alone" (*Ikh bin eyner aleyn*). This final instance is the third repetition of this phrase, which echoes the lonely isolation often conveyed by the speaker in "Kingdom." In keeping with Greenberg's allusive style, this line also echoes Lamentations Rabbah: "The Holy One, Blessed be He, said: I have toiled to make my presence reside in the temple forever, and I became like a bird—in the same way that a bird, when you take away its young ones, sits all alone, so the Holy one Blessed be He says: I burnt my house, and destroyed my city, and exiled my children among the nations, and I remained alone. Eicha?"[12] This last word, *Eicha*, is the opening word of the Book of Lamentations, which questions "How is this possible?" *Eicha* is also the name for Lamentations in Hebrew and evokes the entire tradition of mourning for a lost Zion, as on Tisha b'Av, which we have already seen playing a role so powerfully in Heine's conjuring of the Wandering Jew. Greenberg's allusion to the Lamentations tradition, and to the entire tradition of mourning for a lost Zion that Heine has also invoked, further enriches the complex presentation of the poem's "I" voice. Furthermore, this section of Lamentations Rabbah refers to Psalm 102: "I resemble the wilderness jackdaw, / I become like the owl of the ruins" (trans. in Alter 2019, 3: 237). Here we have again the owl of Greenberg's opening section. Such a night bird is, of course, fitting for the forest, but Greenberg's use of Jewish tradition, of deep cultural memory, adds depth, poignancy, and a nobility to the speaker's voice. Greenberg gives the figure of the wanderer, in pain and in power, a distinctly Jewish voice, a voice that fuels his anger and his aspirations.

All these allusions and the interplay between "Kingdom" and "Pain-home on Slavic soil" create a multilayered "I" that serves as both a foil to and an additional facet of the Wandering Jew figure. This Ahasver is mythic, but also very much of the political moment. "Kingdom," though, ends more hopefully than does "Pain-home." The speaker in "Kingdom" gives away his European clothes, his dress coat, necktie, and patent leather shoes. He adopts an Arab abaya and throws a tallit over his shoulders, leaving the boulevards for the desert. The poem ends with the speaker surrounded by bronzed youths in the desert sands, where he is free from the oppressive tolling of bells. Only the constellations appear above his head (Greenberg 1979, 472).[13] These stars are silent, but one of the youths shouts up to them, crying out the word "love," to which there is this reply:

Dan entfert an oyfshtrom fun blo-blutik vaser baym zeym fun
  der midber:
  Ahave

And in answer a bloody blue torrent of water from the rim of
  desert says:
  Love

(Greenberg 1979, 2:472; Weingrad 2015, line 462)

The poem's conclusion reflects Greenberg's own imminent departure for Palestine. It also presents closure through a sharp contrast with the landscape of the poem's opening. The dark forest of pain where Jews have long suffered in silence is gone, and the speaker stands in the open where young men cry out, "Love." In the "woe forest," stones drop quietly into water; tears mingle with this water and disappear. In these final lines, a river gushes to the desert. The river is blood tinged, but this very blood seems associated with life, as the river's flow to the desert mingles grief and pain with rebirth.[14] Finally, this description of a journey's end reflects the movement of the poem itself and of the speaker throughout it. At his core, through all his manifestations, the poem's speaker is a wanderer, whose wandering connotes both curse and journey. At the poem's end, this wanderer seems to have found a home, although his closing declarations can also be read as ambivalent. Love is often held as a Christian ideal, as in the statement that "God is love" in 1 John 4:8, but, ironically, it is the violence of Christian Europeans that has forced the speaker to abandon his birthplace, as Greenberg himself had to do. Indeed, even after settling in Mandatory Palestine and remaining there when it became the State of Israel, Greenberg continued to identify himself, as Marc Chagall did, with the Wandering Jew.[15]

"An Oracle to Europe"

After relocating to Palestine, Greenberg began publishing in Hebrew.[16] In his 1926 "An Oracle to Europe," he returns to the figure of Ahasver, not only giving the legendary figure a powerful voice, but rewriting the legend to locate Ahasver's origins firmly in Jewish cultural memory. "Oracle" echoes and amplifies "Kingdom" in its violence, anger, and messianic energy. Greenberg's revisions of the Ahasver myth do not simply express and sustain Jewish cultural memory. His revisions subvert the traditional use of the Wandering Jew legend as an instrument of Christian cultural memory and of the Christian messianism and apocalypticism with which writers like Matthew Paris and the author of the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung* associated the Wandering Jew.

I want to suggest that part of this revision derives from and intersects with Greenberg's innovation with Hebrew poetry. As Dan Miron (2010) eloquently describes, Greenberg caused a furor among the community of Hebrew poets in British-mandated Palestine not only because he attacked political leaders like Chaim Weizmann, but because Greenberg's modernist mode utilized, reimagined, and challenged a literary tradition that reached back to the Bible. As Miron (2010, 207) puts it, in contrast to Yiddish,

> In Hebrew there was a "classical" rich and well-developed infrastructure, towards which one could evolve a complex relationship of

> negation based on reference. There was something to distort, break and mold into a fresh mixture, and something to revive and build anew. After all, the hallowed language and its high literary traditions were currently undergoing the same excruciating process of reification through re-territorialization which the nation as a whole was to undergo in order to survive, and which was the very essence of Zionism. The poetic experiment Greenberg was conducting amounted therefore to a spiritual equivalent of the Zionist experiment as a political and social Jewish revolution.

In my reading of "Kingdom," I highlighted how Greenberg's use of specific terms from Jewish tradition adds new layers of meaning to the poem's brief representation of Ahasver the wanderer. In "Oracle," we can see Greenberg's poetry "distort, break and mold into a fresh mixture" not only poetic form, but the Wandering Jew legend. This is accomplished through Greenberg's complex and learned use of Hebrew, where a phrase or even a word can serve as a rich allusive trigger, a trigger of cultural memory.

Greenberg's "Oracle" shows what happens when Ahasver not only is given an autonomous voice, but speaks in Hebrew, the ancient language of the Jews. Greenberg's works had already demonstrated great sensitivity to the power of language and its forms to shape (and corrode) memory. A passage from "Kingdom" reminds readers insistently that the names associated with Jesus had original Hebrew forms: Greenberg (1979, 2:464) drops the words *Betlehem* and *Maria Magdalena* in Latin script within the Yiddish poem to highlight the transformation of these names from their linguistic and cultural origins (see Weininger 2010, 79–80). Greenberg does not so much "translate" the Wandering Jew legend into a Jewish tongue as he finally allows Ahasver to speak in one. This revision plays with an important trope in the Christian forms of the legend: the role of language in communicative memory.[17] In his *Chronica*, Matthew Paris made careful note of the legend's translation into the French and its translator. The *Kurtze Beschreibung* made a point of relaying that the Wandering Jew could speak any tongue like a native, thus creating an uncanny solution to the problem of how he would share his memories, and perhaps also marking a distinction from the prejudice against Jewish speech that dogged Jews living in Europe for centuries (see Lampert-Weissig 2016). Greenberg's Ahasver, returned to his homeland, has no such linguistic exigencies.

As he did in "Kingdom," Greenberg (1990, 1:99) offers in "Oracle" a vision of Europe as a hellscape for Jews, where they are slaughtered like sheep. This suffering is firmly linked to the Lamentations tradition through reference to Titus's conquest of Jerusalem: "And we as well, the ancient captives of Titus: the-Jews-of-all-the-world, were led like cursed-at camps of captives."[18] The speaker's use of "we" not only signals connection to a Jewish people in exile, but collapses the temporal distinctions within Jewish cultural memory. The speaker then evokes further collapse in distinctions between sufferers, referencing those who suffered at a particular point in history, the ten million soldiers who perished in the First World War:

vekhol habokheh 'ei va'olam—tsqun bikhyenu betokh bikhyo
vekhol hake'ev hanoqev 'etsem—ḥod hamakh'ov bo: hayehudi
lu haytah qrovah bat 'eiropah le'lohim—vataqam livkot beqol gadol:
'al ḥet' sheḥat'ah lah velanu

And anyone who weeps anywhere in the world—the whisper of our
weeping is inside his weeping.
And any pain that pierces bones—the sharpness of ailment within it:
the Jew.
If the daughter of Europe had been close to God—she would have
risen to weep in a loud voice
Over the sin she has committed to herself and to us.
(Greenberg 1990, 1:99)

Here Jewish suffering becomes the connecting element in all human pain. The horrific violence of the world war is a consequence and outgrowth of Europe's enduring violence against its Jews. Greenberg's use of aural imagery—weeping, whispers, and silence—extends and complicates the soundscape he created for "Kingdom." Once more Greenberg creates a soundscape of Jewish pain, which is met with Christian silence and indifference. The next section recounts that since the destruction of the Second Temple, which was followed by the conversion of Rome to Christianity, the Jews, rendered here as "we," "have become road-engineers in the middle of the times: in our name and in the names of all those who roam and wander" (Greenberg 1990, 1:100).[19] Greenberg alludes to that same unique Genesis 4:12 expression for Cain's punishment that Shumiatcher uses in "Albatross," *na' vanad*. The Jewish diasporic plight is a curse that, through Cain, is tied to the Wandering Jew tradition, a reference that will echo with Ahasver's appearance toward the poem's end.

Before Ahasver is introduced, the speaker provides a list of the Jewish notables, which includes the crowning of Heine as the poet-prince of Ashkenaz. This eclectic list includes Rabbi Israel Baal Shem-Tov (c. 1698–1760), founder of the Hasidic movement; Sore (Sarah) bas Toyvim (eighteenth century), the author of a widely popular women's prayer book; Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky (1879–1940); and physicist Albert Einstein (1879–1955). All these figures are "brothers [kindred] to those in the Land of Israel" (Greenberg 1990, 1:101).[20] Ahasver's appearance comes after this litany of Jewish luminaries, his story transformed so that he is no longer that man who encounters Jesus, but instead is a king, the only survivor of the Bar Kokhba revolt (Miron 2002, 82). The poem's reference to Betar (site of the second-century revolt) ties this new Ahasver story to symbolism of Zionists on the right. This site gave its name to the Betar movement, which was founded in Riga in 1923 by Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky (1880–1940), leader of the Revisionist Zionist movement, which Greenberg later joined (Nash 1977). This Ahasver wanders in a type of disguise, as a Christian. Greenberg's expression of this wandering makes it a choice, rather than a curse, just as Yael Zerubavel (1995, 47–59, 96–113, 178–91) has shown how Revisionist Zionism cultivated memory of the Bar Kokhba revolt as heroic resistance. Greenberg's Ahasver is grounded in Jewish cultural memory through his origins, his beliefs, and even his movements. As with Jesus, the source of Ahasver's suffering becomes the source of his power (Wolf-Monzon 2006, 262).

This Ahasver, further, has not had an encounter with Jesus. He has been mistaken for him. Indeed, it is Ahasver, not Jesus, who has carried the cross, which is not an implement of Roman torture, but a heavy temple beam. The Gentiles mistake this beam for an instrument of the Crucifixion, an object used for vengeance (Greenberg 1990, 1:101; and see Roskies 1984, 272). Ahasver does not correct them, but instead holds a deep silence:

> ’ahasver lo’ ‘anah . . . ’akh he‘amiq lishtoq; vekhakh huqam hamivtsar hamutsaq mikol hamivtsarim ba‘olam:
> mivtsar-hashtiqah lemelekh ’ahasver
>
> Ahasver did not answer . . . but he kept silent deeply; and this is how the most solid fortress of all the fortresses in the world was erected:
> The silence fortress of King Ahasver
>
> (Greenberg 1990, 1:101)

Once again, Greenberg conveys Ahasver's story using sound imagery. This silence of two millennia is not simply a form of suffering, but a profound form of strength, erected like a battlement. Ahasver is now also elevated to the role of king, part of the new Jewish kingdom, marked by Jewish sovereignty, that Greenberg sought to build, not only in his poetry, but through his activism, of which his poetry is a part.[21] But, finally, after two thousand years, there has been a major change. The speaker cries:

'oi lakh, 'eiropah nifla'ah, la'amim 'ein navi'. 'elohayikh lo' met 'alei
tslav, 'ela' met betokh damekh:
mitat haḥashmal
bikhdi yaron 'ugav renanim baqloster hagoti—
beshiv'im leshonot 'ein sraf 'od limvaser lo'azi. dam ḥai yesh be'esrim
ushtayim 'otiyot-'ever:
reshut hadibur legufo hamgudaf shel melekh 'ahasver!
kol 'ever yesaper beqol kol qorotav bagoyim.

Woe to you, wonderful Europe, the peoples do not have a prophet.
Your god did not die on a cross, but rather died in your blood:
The death of electricity.
For naught an organ of sounds will sing in the Gothic cloister—
In seventy tongues there is no more sap for the foreign announcer.
There is living blood in the twenty-two letters of Hebrew:
Permission to speak for the cursed-at body of King Ahasver!
Every limb will tell out loud all that happened to it among the
gentiles.
(Greenberg 1990, 1:102)

These lines evoke Ahasver's silent raging in "Kingdom," where he proclaims that for two thousand years he has never believed in the cross. In the Christian tradition of the Wandering Jew legend since at least Matthew Paris, Ahasver's speech has been testimony for Christian belief. The Wandering Jew's recounting of his personal memory of the Passion has served as a sign for the Christian faithful, as an instrument of Christian cultural memory. In Greenberg's rendering, Ahasver's speech and his silence convey the truth of a Jewish cultural memory of persecution and of forced silencing as "nonbelievers." Here Christian belief is directly attacked as false. Further, Christian faith, the speaker proclaims, has been killed by modernity, represented through electrified cities. Greenberg again deploys contrasting images of sound to make his point. The organs of the great cathedrals are silenced. The seventy tongues, signifying the non-Jewish languages of the diaspora, are also silenced, here figured as a type of running dry, which contrasts with the living, liquid power of the "blood" of Hebrew (not unlike the blood-tainted river at the end of "Kingdom"). After two millennia of silence, Ahasver can speak and his entire body will proclaim the vast harm done to Jews by Gentiles.

In "Oracle," Ahasver is no longer a wanderer. He is elevated to rule over a kingdom and granted the power of speech. What does he say? The poem's final section appears to be in Ahasver's voice. He recounts the long Jewish memory of persecution in Rome, in Spain, in Russia, and in Poland. These lines are spoken in the present tense, in keeping with the way that traditional Jewish memorialization of past catastrophes can collapse past and present.[22] It is Ahasver who announces and authorizes the figure of a Jewish poet at the time of the poem's writing (the twentieth century), a poet whose path matches exactly that of Greenberg himself: stealing out of Europe to arrive in Jaffa, as Greenberg did in 1923 (Greenberg 1990, 102). Still using Ahasver's voice, Greenberg deploys the halachic image of the junction of the veins to sanctify the soil of Israel. As with "Kingdom," the final section responds to imagery set out in the poem's opening.

The poem's final section speaks of a change wrought not only through Gentile self-destruction in modern life and modern war, but, as is made clear in the poem's final section, through the Jews' return to claim Judea. These Jews have escaped the sites of persecution recorded in the Lamentations tradition—Rome, Spain, and Russia—and they have among them a poet-prophet who, like Greenberg himself, has fled Poland to arrive in Jaffa. Led by this poetic-prophetic voice, Jews will be no longer silent and suffering, but sovereign. The poem ends through a revision of its opening image of slaughtered sheep. In lines that seem to allude to the depiction of the biblical Judah as a lion (Genesis 49:8–10), the poem's lamb is transformed into a lion that rises and roars in the land of Israel. This lion creates a soundscape that is new and yet that heralds a rebirth of the deepest realms of Jewish cultural memory.

Greenberg's poetry, his written advocacy, and his politics, even as they changed and developed, were always intertwined, as reflected in the rich store of words, images, and postures that can be found throughout his corpus. Greenberg's evocation of Ahasver as king in a new Jewish dominion is in keeping with his turn to the Revisionist Zionist movement (see Band 1981, 319; Miron 2010, 217–20; Weininger 2010, 10). Greenberg harnesses the figure of Ahasver to express his messianic Zionism. In his "In the Kingdom of the Cross," Greenberg acknowledges the entanglement of the Wandering Jew tradition and uses Ahasver to speak back, forcefully, to the oppressive situation of Jews living in Christian Europe. In returning Ahasver to his place of origin and giving him a new history, a new fixed point of memory at Bar Kokhba, Greenberg breaks with the supersessionist claiming of space that Maurice Halbwachs (1992, 219) captures through his metaphor of the cathedral stained glass window. From the "dark times" when "traditions had lost significance," Greenberg revives and reshapes Jewish cultural memory, endowing Ahasver with a newly revived memory and a newly powerful voice.

Seven

Edmond Fleg's *Jésus: raconté par le Juif errant*

Uri Zvi Greenberg may have guided French writer Edmond Fleg to the Western Wall when the latter visited Palestine in 1931. As Fleg recounts in *Ma Palestine* (1932), his narrative about this journey, he also traveled with two other notable Jewish cultural figures on the sea voyage from Marseille to Palestine. On board the Jaffa-bound ship (sailing first class) was Marc Chagall, traveling at the invitation of Tel Aviv mayor Meir Dizengoff, who was planning to open a Jewish art museum. Also aboard ship was the renowned poet Hayim Nahman Bialik, whose 1904 poem "In the City of Slaughter" we noted as an important source for the tradition of the Jewish "pogrom poem" (see Amishai-Maisels 1997–98). Like Chagall, Fleg was involved in the art museum project, although the main impetus behind his trip was to gain inspiration for his planned novel about the life of Jesus. Fleg, a Swiss-born Alsatian Jew, had moved to Paris in 1895 to study at the prestigious École normale supérieure. Deeply assimilated and even drawn in his youth to Catholicism, Fleg was shaken by developments in the Dreyfus affair (1894–1906). This crisis led him to take up study of Jewish history and religion, along with learning Hebrew. Upon returning to Paris, he wrote his 1898 doctoral thesis on nineteenth-century German antisemitism (Charnow 2013a).[1] Like Greenberg, Fleg fought in World War I, but, unlike Greenberg, he was not conscripted. Fleg, already in his forties with two children, signed up voluntarily to serve in the French Foreign Legion, declaring to the enlistment board that he was moved to join the fight "for Israel and for France" (Landau 1999, 40–41, cited in Charnow 2013b, 563). Fleg's idealism, still in evidence even after the Great War, is grounded in memory. In the two works discussed in this chapter, *Ma Palestine* and *Jésus: raconté par le Juif errant* (1933a), memory sites such as Paris's Notre Dame Cathedral and Jerusalem's Western Wall spur Fleg to realizations about his identity. These revelations are explored most profoundly in the latter work, through dialogue between the Wandering Jew and a fictionalized Fleg-the-narrator. This innovation allows the reader to experience the act of communicative memory that the Wandering Jew's legendary immortality facilitates. Fleg uses these representations of communicative memory and a narrative technique that Paul Ricoeur (1984) calls "emplotment" to provide an alternative version of the life of Jesus as told in the Gospels.

When Fleg returned from the war he took full part in what has been called a French "Jewish Renaissance," or the emergence of a new "cultural Judaism" in early twentieth-century France (Charnow 2013a, 61n3). Along with many of his fellow French Jews, Fleg began to embrace Jewish identity as an ethnicity. He became active in the French Jewish community, serving in leadership positions, an involvement that continued into the 1950s (Charnow 2013a, 62; 2013b, 557, 578). He also began what would become a lifelong pursuit, which would continue even after the horrors of the Second World War: the promotion of ecumenical understanding between Jews and Christians. Fleg's goal was to foster "a more flexible, even pluralistic concept of national belonging unique for its acceptance of the possibility of multiple attachments" (Charnow 2013b, 558, 561).

A desire to promote good relations between Jews and Christians clearly manifests itself in Fleg's works, such as his 1923 *L'Anthologie juive* (The Jewish Anthology), which reveals his deep engagement with Jewish-Christian relations. The anthology both responds to the antisemitism epitomized by Édouard Drumont's infamous *La France juive* (The Jewish France, 1886) and gathers, in order to share in a positive vein, textual treasures from the Jewish tradition, including selections from the Bible and Talmud, for French-speaking Jewish and non-Jewish readers. A novel, *L'enfant prophète* (The Child Prophet, 1926), tells the story of Claude Levy, an assimilated French Jewish boy living in Paris, who, like Jesus, is a "child prophet" (Hagbi 2014, 217–18). Fleg favors the dialogue form in many of his works. Little Claude, attracted to Catholicism, talks to Jesus. He chooses, however, not to convert and remains true to his Jewish identity (Charnow 2013a, 62).

Fleg himself also never converted. This choice reflects not only his personal beliefs, but also the options and opportunities that Fleg's subject position as a French Jew afforded him. Such opportunities, as we saw, were not open to Heinrich Heine a century earlier, when he made his tortured decision to convert. These different circumstances affect how Fleg calibrates his Wandering Jew as instrument of memory and are reflected in other of his works as well. Fleg's 1928 *Pourquoi je suis Juif* (Why I Am a Jew) is framed as a letter to his son, again creating a form of dialogue. In the foreword to the 1929 English-language edition, Stephen S. Wise (1874–1949), a rabbi prominent in the American Reform movement, characterizes this work as not untouched by *Judenschmerz* (pain due to lack of acceptance). He observes, however, that this particular pain "is subordinated to the Hallelujah of the joyously self-affirmed and self-liberated Jew" (Fleg [1929] 1933, x). In *Ma Palestine*, Fleg stresses that Jews and Christians share the same God, a view that Sholem Asch, as we will see, also emphasizes. Supportive of the Zionist project, but in a form more universal than nationalist, Fleg had a sense of security and belonging in France, which, as we noted in chapter 3, was the first European nation to recognize Jews as citizens (Hagbi 2014, 217). Fleg became a naturalized citizen of France in 1920, an experience historian Sally Charnow (2013b, 564) likens to that of a "conversion." Providing a contrast to the young Greenberg, who wrote so vividly of Jews waiting in vain for travel visas in the pages of *Albatros* (1979, 2:475), Fleg felt he had a home in France. It is worth noting that the symbolic potential of the Wandering Jew legend is rich enough to be used by Fleg and Greenberg both.

Fleg in Palestine: A Double Love

Fleg's feeling of belonging in and to France is expressed vividly at the end of his 1932 *Ma Palestine*, published the following year in the United States as *The Land of Promise*. Fleg saw Zionism and Jewish life in the diaspora as complementary rather than opposing forms of existence, but in *Ma Palestine* they are often juxtaposed, or even rendered as being in opposition to each other (see Hagbi 2014, 227). This tension appears most markedly in sequences about memory and memory practice, intimating that the members of the Zionist community in Palestine are creating their own "unusual parallels" and "unexpected oppositions," which Fleg highlights in his travel account (Halbwachs 1992, 219). Fleg's experience of what Maurice Halbwachs calls the "topography of the Holy Land" is, indeed, shaped by what we could see as a form of double consciousness—an awareness of his dual identities as Frenchman and Jew—which he refers to as a "double love" (Fleg 1932, 290; 1933, 255).[2] This awareness seems to reflect as well the type of collapsing and expanding temporality that Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi (1996, 17–18) describes and that also shapes the figure of the Wandering Jew. In Fleg's writing, it is a source of strength.

This duality is apparent in his description of his time in Jerusalem and is framed through two memory practices: Fleg's tracing of important locations in the life of Jesus, and his visit to the Western Wall. These two experiences become emblems of dual, if not entirely conflicting, impulses for Fleg.[3] As he describes it, Fleg has been so eager to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, a memory practice that Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem have undertaken for centuries, that upon arriving in Jerusalem he doesn't even bother to freshen up or unpack his bags. When he finally lays eyes on the city's famous landmarks, however, he forgets the object of his quest—Jesus's path—and stands transfixed by the "blue cupola which marks the place of the ancient Temple!" This arresting view, which seems to symbolize for him his Jewish identity, also seems to bring on a strange kind of memory loss: "I could not think, I could not remember. None of the phrases of the *Book of Kings*, none of the imagery of the *Book of Psalms*, none of the traditions, none of the poems which had been uttered thru so many centuries by so many souls inspired by this place so charged with history and legend, were reawakened in my memory. I looked without seeing. I was stupefied" (Fleg 1932, 58; 1933, 52). Fleg's glimpse of the site of the ancient temple, arguably *the* most important *lieu de mémoire* for Jews, makes it impossible for Fleg to engage in his planned retracing of Jesus's path. The mainstays of Jewish cultural memory, the psalms that figure so importantly in poetic works like those of Judah Halevi and Heine, also fail him.

Fleg's trance is broken by the voice of his chauffeur, a diminutive, redheaded Jewish immigrant from Romania, part of a new Jewish community in Palestine:

> "Don't lean against that stone, the inscription is quite fresh."
>
> I turned and I saw Hebrew letters painted in black on a white stone:
>
> "The Martyrs of Hebron were buried here."
>
> The white slope was then only a cemetery!
>
> The dead of Hebron!
>
> The massacre of a year ago. . . . I must have misunderstood his Roumanian Yiddish. . . . Could the dead of Hebron be buried here? But ought I think of the dead of Hebron? Am I not here for Jesus? (Fleg 1932, 58; 1933a, 52)

This reference to Hebron refers to Jews killed during violence that began on August 23, 1929. The driver's warning about fresh paint underscores the event's recency, which contrasts sharply with the many centuries separating

Fleg from the time of the Second Temple. His question, "But ought I think of the dead of Hebron? Am I not here for Jesus?" conjures two contrasting memories—that of recently killed Palestinian Jews and that of the Jew, Jesus, dead for millennia. These two memories of the dead represent two competing aspects of Fleg's self. He is drawn both to Jesus, an ancient figure whom he regards as both Jew and Christian, and also to the recently deceased fellow Jews whose death is part of a contemporary struggle for "the new beginnings of the Jewish nation" (Fleg 1933a, 50).[4]

This inner tension continues as Fleg attempts to connect with the path Christian pilgrims traditionally have made to memorialize the Passion by walking the Stations of the Cross. Fleg's chauffeur, who accompanies him, is surprised when Fleg asks whether they are near the Garden of Gethsemane, seeming to indicate that he finds it unusual that a Yiddish-speaking visitor would make such a query. The chauffeur leads him farther and hands him off to a sacristan. At the enclosed garden site, memory comes: "Here, I remember, here I remember the texts" (Fleg 1933a, 53).[5] The words of Matthew 26:38–39 then appear, set off by italics that represent Fleg's internal recollection of them and also to highlight their status as a memory aid and a cultural text, something learned by heart. But then, suddenly, his attempt to engage in a meditative memory practice is stymied:

> I tried to relive within myself on this spot, which witnessed the greatest of sorrows, that moment when the man of a faith that could move mountains, in his turn knew doubt and fear.
>
> But I could not,—I was thinking of the dead of Hebron. (Fleg 1933a, 54)[6]

"The dead of Hebron" stand here as a reminder of the political situation in Palestine, a circumstance that interrupts Fleg's attempt to bring the Jesus story to life. The contrast illustrates a conflict within Fleg's own psyche, between an attraction to Christian cultural texts and a cultural memory that he has experienced since childhood.

Fleg (1932, 64; 1933a, 59) describes himself as puzzled over why he cannot reconnect with the powerful empathic emotions that the Jesus story had evoked in him as an adolescent, as well as more recently in his library at home by the Seine. He visits all the traditional Christian pilgrimage sites, but does so as a Jew who has read the modern scholarship and understands that the Christian memory tradition does not accurately reflect historical events. It is impossible, he shows, to find "the authentic Jesus" (*le Jésus authentique*) through traditional meditative methods, methods rendered nearly impossible as well by the brisk tourist trade drawn to the sites. Fleg (1932, 65; 1933a, 62) evokes his experience by quoting fragments of the various voices he hears surrounding him: guides, tourists, merchants, and the Christian faithful. This cacophony makes him desire only to flee even as he is pursued by an "odious" overzealous tour guide who seeks his business (see also Amishai-Maisels 1997–98, 518). He leaves asking, "Jesus, Jesus what have they made of thee?" and wonders as well what the historical Jesus would have made of him and of the Jewish people to whom he feels connected.

The "dead of Hebron" continue to haunt Fleg's account of his visit and, without ever explicitly detailing the violent events of August 1929, his narrative connects them to the Jewish *lieu de mémoire* of the Western, or Wailing, Wall. Long before he ever visited Palestine, the wall had held significance for Fleg. In 1919 he published a book of poetry, *Le mur des pleurs*, which appeared in English translation in 1929 as *The Wall of Weeping*. The volume's poetry sequence features the Wandering Jew, who, in an echo of Heine's poetry, mourns in Jerusalem (see Fleg 1929, 136).

Fleg (1932, 85; 1933a, 77) describes being taken to visit the Western Wall with a "young poet of the most advanced Hebrew school," a Revisionist Zionist, from whom Fleg is keen to learn about the Revisionist agenda.[7] Fleg's encounter with this unnamed poet, conveyed primarily through dialogue, displays the young man's deep distrust of and animosity toward Palestinian Arabs. As Fleg and the poet approach the Western Wall, Fleg can hear the mournful prayers of the Jewish faithful, which provokes in him a physical reaction: a deep shiver runs down his spine as though from a type of somatic recognition (Fleg 1933a, 84).[8] In the presence of the wall, Fleg attempts the same kind of memory practice he tried to use when tracing the path of Jesus. He tries to bring the memory of the Second Temple's destruction to life in his mind, by imagining himself present as the temple is destroyed.[9] Fleg seeks explicitly to access the temporal collapse that is part of the continual existence of the Wandering Jew. But, as it did with his "Passion meditation," the present moment interferes with Fleg's attempt to resuscitate the past. Finally, Fleg thinks ruefully to himself that it was, indeed, "Zealots" (*Zelateurs*) like the young poet who, in their refusal to work together with the Romans, led to the temple's demise. The young poet, speaking out loud, pledges his eternal loyalty to the temple site. He will remain in Palestine until the last.[10] The chapter closes with Fleg's reflections on his own diasporic identity and his personal responsibility to other Jews. He admits to himself that he has walked smiling through European streets while in Jerusalem the Jewish mourners at the wall had persisted in their prayers, despite being harrassed (Fleg 1932, 94; 1933a, 87). Fleg, in characteristic fashion, ultimately does not try to lay blame only on others for the problems he sees. He looks inward to assess his own responsibility as a diaspora Jew.

The next chapter, titled "The Dead of Hebron," opens with a question: "Why, on the day following these meditations, did I wish to be taken to Hebron?" (Fleg 1933a, 88).[11] This question, on one level, seems rhetorical or naive. Tensions over the Western Wall and Jewish access and presence at the site had been simmering and occasionally boiling over even in the years before 1929. The area around the wall had for centuries been under the control of Muslims, who revere the wall site as the place where Muhammad tied the Buraq, his flying mount. Jewish attempts to buy back this space in the decades leading up to the 1929 unrest were viewed by many Muslims as a first step toward taking over the area of the Temple Mount in order to build a Third Temple at the site of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. Jews were allowed to worship at the wall, but the British authorities prohibited seating and any erection of partition between the sexes.

The clashes of 1929 had a long buildup period, starting on the eve of Yom Kippur the previous year (September 23), when Jews coming to pray at the wall set up seating and a partition. British police forcibly removed these, and a riot broke out between Jews and Muslims. Other incidents followed, with violence culminating in summer 1929. Leaders in both the Muslim and Jewish communities mounted public campaigns about Western Wall access, leading to a British temporary prohibition on Jewish prayer at the site. On Tisha b'Av 5689 (August 14, 1929), a fast day in commemoration of catastrophes in the Jewish tradition, including the destruction of the temple, members of the Betar youth movement staged a march demanding Jewish worship rights. A British-sanctioned counterprotest was staged two days later by Muslims, where some religious objects and prayer books were vandalized. Then, on August 23, riots erupted, and Jews, Arabs, and British police were injured and killed. The clashes at the wall were not the direct cause of these deaths, but the ever-escalating conflict over the wall contributed to the charged atmosphere in which the violence erupted (Cohen-Hattab and Bar 2020, 32–40; see also Amishai-Maisels 1997–98, 517).

When Fleg visits Hebron, his interlocuter is another chauffeur, an observant Jewish immigrant from Poland, who was injured in the violence of the August 1929 unrest, but who, Fleg learns, had returned immediately to pray at the wall. The chauffeur describes the violence he himself experienced as he drives Fleg past the Tomb of Rachel, another Jewish *lieu de mémoire* (see

Cohen-Hattab and Bar 2020, 30). Fleg's response draws deep into Jewish cultural memory as he semiconsciously recites the words of Jeremiah 31:15, in which Rachel weeps for her children (see Roskies 1989, 55). Unlike his earlier, deliberate efforts at recall when he attempted to walk in Jesus's path and when he visited the Western Wall, Fleg's response to Rachel's tomb seems almost corporeal. It is depicted as a spontaneous expression of his Jewish identity, experienced through cultural memory, just like his physical reaction to hearing mourners at the wall or his mysterious desire, after visiting the wall, to journey to Hebron.

The chapter ends with an encounter that demonstrates the desire for peace and ecumenical understanding so important to Fleg. The chauffeur, who has experienced violence during Arab-Jewish clashes, and Fleg, who has described his own prejudicial fear of Arabs, stop to help an old Arab woman. They give her a lift, her first ride in an automobile. Here Fleg presents a metaphor of reconciliation that nonetheless relays a stark economic contrast. Fleg's description renders the old woman as someone who exists outside of the modern age, a move akin with the denial of coevalness that has long been directed, in a range of forms, against Jews. The anecdote displays Fleg's technique of carrying narrative through dialogue and his shaping of narrative through parallel and contrast. Using "unusual parallels" and "unexpected oppositions," Fleg's narrative "rewrites" Palestine in a way that reflects his understanding of the traditions of the Jewish community living there at the time of his visit.

At the same time, Fleg separates himself from this Jewish community by beginning and ending *Ma Palestine* with scenes set in Fleg's chosen homeland, France. The book begins with his taking his leave from Paris with a visit to Notre Dame, a *lieu de mémoire* for France that speaks to its centuries of history and to the importance of Christianity in French cultural memory. The book's penultimate chapter describes a visit to the Parthenon, which serves as a memory site for Western culture. Fleg here connects cultural memory to language, as he notes that he learned Greek before Hebrew.[12] Upon viewing the Parthenon, Fleg realizes that he has not forgotten the beauty of ancient Greek. He finds his heart "aflame" as the memories of his early lessons in the traditions of ancient Greece come flooding back (Fleg 1932, 283–84; 1933a, 247–48). He concludes, however, that the cultural memory of Greece has truly died, conquered by the iron and cement of the modern age. In contrast, he muses, through the work of the Jewish pioneers, Israel is being reborn, sustained as a living tradition for the Jewish people. Fleg nevertheless describes feeling drawn back to France, the place for which he had already risked his life as a soldier, and where his sons remain and where his grandsons will be born. He concludes by vowing that even though he is returning home to France, he will take up some of the burden of the Zionist pioneers, identifying their struggle as a struggle for humanity itself (Fleg 1933, 255). In the book's final short chapter, titled "My Paris," he identifies himself as a Jew with a "double love" for France and for Israel.[13]

Fleg's choice to frame his narrative with these two *lieux de mémoire* seems to show that his ultimate loyalty lies with his family. The work opens with Fleg's dialogue with his "unborn grandson," who chides him for never having visited Palestine before and for finally doing so to research Jesus, rather than for the sake of Israel. The book concludes with Fleg sailing to port, his two sons slowly coming into view through his binoculars. He once again invokes the site/sight of Notre Dame Cathedral and claims Paris as his true home, even as he vows to bring Palestine with him to France. The chapter has opened with the words of Psalm 137, which lament the fall of the First Temple.[14] The final words of the piece locate the composition of *Ma Palestine* in time and space: Champollion Villa Emile, March–September 1931, archiving the author's labor and his memory of it.

Fleg's Wandering Jew

Fleg's 1933 book *Jésus: raconté par le Juif errant* (*Jesus: Told by the Wandering Jew*) opens as Fleg-the-narrator finds himself with a "little" Franciscan guide who is showing him various sites featured in the Gospel accounts. Fleg-the-narrator attempts meditative time travel, as have so many pilgrims to Jerusalem before him, just as Fleg has described this experience in *Ma Palestine*. Fleg-the-narrator reaches back not only to the time of Jesus, but also, when his guide leaves him at the Mount of Olives, to his childhood memories of first reading the Gospels. He recalls not only the biblical text, but his youthful reactions to it, exploring that interface between personal and collective memory that Halbwachs's theory illuminates. In this section I will suggest that Fleg's use of fictional dialogue allows the reader to experience and explore the interface between personal and collective memory in a way that conceptual analysis cannot. This literary technique in combination with the legendary Wandering Jew's immortality allows Fleg to provide an alternative version of the life of Jesus from the one conveyed in the Gospels.

The Gospels and other Jewish and Christian Scriptures have shaped Fleg's memories at various moments in his life, and he is conscious of this temporal layeredness even as his presence in Jerusalem allows him a kind of direct access to the cultural memories of events preserved in these texts. In the form of his narrator-avatar, Fleg also thinks through all the scholars he has read on Jesus's life, listing them by name. Then the narrator finds himself in the Garden of Gethsemane, where he attempts one last time to "revive" Jesus, murmuring the words of Matthew 26 just under his breath, echoing the Gethsemane scene in *Ma Palestine* (Fleg 1933b, 7). Fleg sets up this scene as one of entanglement, as a French Jew draws on Christian memory practices while visiting a city that is a *lieu de mémoire* for both Christians and Jews. Fleg's formal choice to use dialogue is a reflection, I think, of this entanglement and its dual elements.

It is at that moment in the Garden of Gethsemane that the Wandering Jew's voice breaks into the narrative: "*From behind me came a voice*: No, not here, my dear sir. You are wrong" (Fleg 1935, 7).[15] Because the Wandering Jew was alive to witness events in Jesus's life and has survived ever since, he is able to correct Fleg-the-narrator. The entire first chapter consists of a dialogue between Fleg-the-narrator and the Wandering Jew, emphasized through contrasting italic and regular typefaces. This formal element itself suggests entanglement, and it brings to life a part of the legend that reaches back at least as far as the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung*: the Wandering Jew's personal memory is equivalent to both Jewish and Christian collective memory. The Wandering Jew is thereby a source of knowledge that can reveal the true entanglement of those memories. Although Fleg uses conventional punctuation (that is, quotation marks) for the dialogues within the biblical historical scenes in the novel, the dialogue between Fleg-the-narrator and the Wandering Jew is conveyed through this alternation of italic and roman type. To my eyes, this choice aligns Fleg-the-narrator's perspective with internal thoughts and impressions, while the Wandering Jew's perspective appears to stand as factual account. As in *Ma Palestine*, Fleg depicts Christian meditative memory practice as Fleg-the-narrator attempts to recall the Passion, merging personal and cultural memory to feed artistic practice. This act of memory is described as an attempt to bring Jesus back to life. The narrator cannot achieve this act of memory, according to the Wandering Jew, because the narrator is, literally, in the wrong place. The tradition is inaccurate and has, again quite literally, misled him. The Wandering Jew, then, in this scene and throughout the novel, shares his personal memory with the narrator in order to provide a "true" account of the Passion.

After Fleg-the-narrator moves past his initial suspicion that he has encountered a "madman," someone "unhinged" by the power of Jerusalem's overwhelming historical presence, he begins the dialogue that accounts for the novel's remainder (Fleg 1935, 14).[16] The pair move through the "topography of the Holy Land" together, as the Wandering Jew shares with the narrator the account the Wandering Jew would provide in his own gospel, had he ever chosen to write one down. Through this frame, the novel dares to create a counter to the cultural text of the Gospels. The Wandering Jew, whose voice conveys "intimate, personal memory," can achieve an inner vision of Jesus carrying the cross. He can then share this vision with Fleg-the–narrator in the opening chapter *because* these are his personal memories (Fleg 1935, 11).[17] Fleg's Wandering Jew therefore literally embodies the temporal collapse that we have seen scholars like Castelli and Brown attribute to the temporal dimensions of Christian collective memory. Near the end of the book, the narrator wonders: "*What words could I find to ask from these things which still had their being in his shuddering form? Had they taken place nineteen hundred years back—or only a moment ago?*" (Fleg 1935, 284 [original emphasis]).[18]

Throughout the novel, Fleg uses the formal elements of dialogue and striking typographic shifts to guide the reader in and out of the minds of the narrator and the Wandering Jew. These techniques attempt to represent that gap between consciousnesses that prevents two human beings from ever completely sharing their personal memories. In this way, Fleg uses the Wandering Jew to explore that interface between personal and collective memory that Halbwachs analyzes, even as Fleg also explores the entangled forms of Jewish and Christian cultural memory.

Through these narrative techniques, Fleg gives an innovative literary form to one of the most significant and persistent elements in the Wandering Jew legend: its representation of encounters with the Wandering Jew as acts of communicative memory. Indeed, since the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung*, which we examined in chapter 2, the Wandering Jew's curse has included a compulsion to share his story. Fleg's Wandering Jew does speak of sometimes being carried away in a reverie or, as he refers to such states, *ma crise*, rendered in the English translation as "brainstorm" (Fleg 1933b, 19; 1935, 16). The Wandering Jew, however, doesn't seem compelled to tell his story, or perhaps, more precisely, his compulsion comes not from a need to act as a wonder and sign of Christian truth, as in Matthew Paris's account, but from a need to set the record straight. Fleg includes other features from the tradition as well, sometimes rather playfully. The Wandering Jew speaks perfect French. He has read Fleg's *Why I Am a Jew*, having purchased it for five sous, the traditional amount that the Wandering Jew is said to carry in his purse.

Even as he deftly integrates traditional details of the Wandering Jew legend into his novel, Fleg also veers from the tradition by providing an original backstory for the Wandering Jew. This revised origin story serves Fleg's ecumenical goals through a rehabilitation of the Pharisee sect's reputation. *Jésus* portrays the Pharisees as falsely maligned (if we recall, Eugène Sue uses the term as a slur against the modern Jesuit order). In *Jésus*, the Pharisees show themselves to be virtuous and generous. Fleg's Wandering Jew character has been abandoned by his parents because he was born severely disabled. He is basically immobile and completely dependent on others for his survival. His Uncle Simeon, a Pharisee, and his Aunt Sephora take him in and care for him tenderly and with love. Their actions toward him grow out of their beliefs as Pharisees.

In keeping with Fleg's ecumenical goals of Jewish-Christian reconciliation and cooperation, the Wandering Jew's account corrects charges of collective guilt against the Jews and other enduring anti-Jewish elements of the Passion tradition as well. The English-language edition of the book makes explicit that the charge that Jews are Christ killers is especially dangerous in the early 1930s, as the Wandering Jew laments that some "from those of Pilate's day to those of Hitler's" lay "guilt on Israel." The Wandering Jew likens this scapegoating to the blaming of every Christian, in perpetuity, for the burning of Joan of Arc (Fleg 1935, 269).[19] Jesus, we learn, has appointed the Wandering Jew as *le Témoin* (the Witness), and his account serves as a correction both to the Gospels and to the scholars (Fleg 1933b, 262). Judas, traditionally figured as the archetypal traitor, is a family neighbor of the Wandering Jew, and is also recuperated in the text. Judas and all the Wandering Jew's family are captivated by the charismatic Jesus, who heals the Wandering Jew.

Fleg links these revised perspectives on the events leading up to the Passion to his concerns about the rising tensions and militarism of his own time. The Wandering Jew recounts his memories of a familiar listing of Jewish catastrophe, from Crusader slaughter of Jewish communities through the Inquisition to the Chmielniki massacre. The English-language version of this listing of persecutions again ends with reference to "Hitler, the Messiah of brute beasts, [who] has restored the wheel and the branding iron, torture by water, and the garotte!" (Fleg 1935, 210). The Wandering Jew informs the narrator that he has "fought in all the armies," his account drawing on one of Fleg's personal memories of a stone statue of Christ that he encountered while fighting in World War I. The Wandering Jew also imagines the scene that might result if Jesus attempted to speak before a body like the League of Nations. He likens contemporary nations to the various factions at the time of Jesus and urges Jews to take the lead in disarmament. In such scenes, Fleg's concern with ever-growing militarism and violence is palpable, rendering *Jésus* not only a work of memory that encourages ecumenical reconciliation, but a call for peace.

In Fleg's account of the Wandering Jew's youth, his entire family is captivated by Jesus; they, and by extension the Pharisees, are not his persecutors but are themselves persecuted. In contrast to the traditional Christian version of the legend, in *Jésus*, the Wandering Jew fails to aid Jesus because he himself is also in danger. He flees along with others when Jesus is taken. He then chooses to help his own cousins—members of the family that has cared for him with such love—as they are crucified alongside Jesus, again instead of aiding Jesus. The Wandering Jew's memory of his last encounter with Jesus, his vision of Jesus's suffering and pleas for aid, causes the Wandering Jew to collapse momentarily. Fleg-the-narrator must revive him in order that he continue his recounting. The Wandering Jew then explains that his cousins, Reuben and Baruch, are not "Christians." They were believing Jews who supported Jesus, presented by Fleg's Wandering Jew as also unequivocally Jewish. The Wandering Jew rails that much of the Gospel accounts have "concocted" a "spun-sugar Jesus" who is utterly unlike the real man the Wandering Jew encountered. This Jesus "was Jewish, sir, Jewish from head to foot" (Fleg 1935, 126).[20] The Wandering Jew lays much of the misinterpretation and revision concerning the end of Jesus's life at the feet of the Sadducees, who were, he contends, seduced by Hellenistic influence. This influence and the misinterpretation and misinformation it generated have led to the occluding of the essential sameness of Judaism and Christianity.

The Wandering Jew, remembering the teaching of his beloved Uncle Simeon, has devoted time to comparing Christian and Jewish writings. Of this study he wryly observes that "one has to have some interest to occupy one's time during twenty centuries." His studies have led him to the conclusion that "in our writings, in the Old Testament, and the two Talmuds, the spirit of Christianity is sprinkled and diffused like the salt in the sea; whereas in their Gospels it is condensed and compressed like the salicylic acid in aspirins" (Fleg 1935, 48–49). Fleg's Wandering Jew, then, becomes an expert witness whose uncanny presence invalidates the belief that the Jewish diaspora is a righteous form of Christian vindication. He demonstrates the wrongness of the centuries-long conflict between the two faiths, a conflict that has led to devastating persecution for the Jews. In this way, Fleg again responds directly to the Christian Wandering Jew tradition, which, as we saw in part I, focuses on memory as vengeance.

In providing an alternative account to the cultural texts of the Gospels, Fleg, despite his conciliatory tone and ecumenical goals, treads, as we have noted, in dangerously controversial territory.[21] Fleg intervenes most radically when he pushes against not only emphases and details from the Gospels, but the Gospel accounts' own "emplotment." Emplotment, a concept put forth by Paul Ricoeur (1984), functions at the interface of fiction and memory. Ricoeur observes how literature mediates our experience of reality by arranging or "imparting" elements from outside the narrative into what Astrid Erll (2011a, 153–54) describes as a specific "temporal and causal order." "Making a narrative," Ricoeur (1984, 81) argues, "resignifies the world in its temporal dimension." In *Jésus*, the world that Fleg remakes is the world created by the cultural text of the Gospels.

Just as these Gospels have created the cultural memory of the Passion, Fleg uses the Wandering Jew tradition to assert a new memory of Jesus's life and world, one supported by the Wandering Jew's personal memory. *Jésus* not only rewrites the Gospels in terms of emphasis, point of view, and interpretation. The novel suggests, through the figure of the Wandering Jew, that the Gospel accounts are "jumbled" and that "fashion is as fickle in chronology as it is in dress" (Fleg 1935, 154).[22] The authors of the Gospels, according to the Wandering Jew, have not only shuffled events, but invented parts of the story, such as the figure of Barabbas. The Wandering Jew exclaims that it is only because he has never published his own gospel account that no one has ever been able to alter it.

Here Fleg implies that the very transmission of cultural memory is itself fraught with potential conflict. At the novel's opening, we will recall, when Fleg-the-narrator attempts to access the collective memory of Jesus's life, he cannot do so, the Wandering Jew informs him, because the New Testament—the paradigmatic Christian cultural text—has got it wrong (Erll 2011a, 150; see also A. Assmann 1995). Implicit here is the idea that the "shuffling" and revising of the actual events of Jesus's life are at the root of the pernicious anti-Jewish views surrounding figures like Judas and the Pharisees. The Wandering Jew does not claim to have personal memory of the entirety of the Passion: "So, as you will understand, there are many things in the Gospels that I only know, as you know them, because I have read them, like you. I was no longer his witness alone—I was theirs! . . . when Simon of Cyrene took his cross, I was helping Baruch and Reuben to carry theirs" (Fleg 1935, 288).[23]

Of course, this "personal memory" is created by a fictional frame. Fleg is in part asserting a new narrative to counter the studies by historians of the Bible like Ernest Renan, whom the novel references directly. The novel's final scene has the Wandering Jew reciting lines from Matthew 5:3–12, with the narrator interjecting questions about the world's future, the future of the Jewish people, and the future of his own wife and sons. The Wandering Jew responds by exhorting the narrator to speak out. He uses phrases that resemble those of Matthew: “Blessed are those who die for peace, for they shall see God!” (Fleg 1935, 316).[24] These cries echo through Jerusalem and appear in quotation marks, almost as if they come not from the Wandering Jew’s lips, but from his unpublished gospel. Fleg’s new emplotment of the Gospels and his addition of these new gospel-like exhortations are future focused. The novel uses the Wandering Jew as an instrument of memory in order to try to influence the world to choose a peaceful future.

Remarkably, though, at the same time that the novel’s ending seems to acknowledge its overriding motive of revision of a tradition of New Testament interpretation, Fleg adds an unusual feature, an appendix of citation. This appendix reads like a scholarly apparatus, and it includes not only canonical texts from the Hebrew Bible and New Testament, but rabbinic sources, the works of Josephus, medieval apocryphal accounts of the life of Jesus, and—listed side by side for likely the only time in history—the early Jewish *Sefer Toledot Yeshu* (Book of the Life of Jesus) and the *Visions* of Catholic mystic Anne Catherine Emmerich (1774–1824) (see Biale 1999; Weeks 2005). This appendix calls attention to Fleg’s bold re-emplotment. The Bible, as “the paradigmatic cultural text,” shapes a “reality” that the appendix references (Erll 2011a, 163). The cultural texts themselves are so powerful that they too can be mediated by an author in the same way as lived experience. Fleg’s novel about the Wandering Jew, that paradigmatic instrument of memory, reveals through its formal elements how narrative constructs memory. Written in the aftermath of the First World War and during a time of escalating militarism before the outbreak of the Second World War, Fleg’s reimagining of the legend attempts to transform this instrument of memory, often used as a weapon, into an instrument for reconciliation and peace.

Eight

Sholem Asch's *The Nazarene*

In 1939, Sholem Asch published *The Nazarene*. Like Marc Chagall, Uri Zvi Greenberg, and Edmond Fleg, Asch drew inspiration from visiting sites of memory in and around Jerusalem.[1] Published at a time of rising, violent antisemitism, the novel provoked intense controversy, as has been covered extensively by other scholars.[2] What has not been delved into, and what concerns us here, is how *The Nazarene* engages with the Wandering Jew legend, transforming the figure into an instrument of memory in the service of Asch's vision of Jewish-Christian reconciliation. *The Nazarene* serves this goal, which Asch hoped would bring aid to the Jewish people at a moment of unprecedented and catastrophic persecution. Like Fleg, Asch uses the Wandering Jew legend to reimagine the origins of Christianity at the time of Jesus. Asch frames his Jesus narrative within a tale of contemporary Warsaw and an encounter between two Polish scholars of classical antiquity.[3] The Catholic, Pan Viadomsky, is an older man of extraordinary erudition. He is also a notorious and vehement antisemite. Viadomsky engages a young Jewish scholar to translate a mysterious manuscript that turns out to be the lost Gospel of Judah (Judas).[4] Asch retells his own version of Jesus's story through this lost "Gospel," but also through the narrative voices of the two scholars, both of whom, it turns out, are reincarnations of men who lived at the time of the Passion. Their past lives intersected with the life of Jesus and those closest to him. At the time of the Second Temple, Pan Viadomsky was Hegemon Cornelius, serving under Pontius Pilate.[5] The young Jewish scholar in Warsaw, whose name is never given, is revealed (to the readers and to himself) to be Jochanan, a young student of the rabbi Nicodemus.

Instead of drawing on the traditional temporal device of the Wandering Jew's immortality, Asch creates a bridge between the Warsaw frame and

Jesus's time by using the kabbalistic concept of *gilgul*, the doctrine of transmigration of souls or metempsychosis. *Gilgul* refers to the "turning over or rolling of souls," which pass from one body and one lifetime to the next.[6] *Gilgul* allows Asch to deploy the complex temporality of the Wandering Jew legend and its implications for memory using a distinctly Jewish tradition that also bypasses the anti-Jewish "memory as vengeance" element that has so long adhered to the Wandering Jew legend. *The Nazarene* opens with a striking paragraph about the *gilgul* phenomenon:

> Not the power to remember, but its very opposite, the power to forget, is a necessary condition of our existence. If the lore of the transmigration of souls is a true one, then these, between their exchange of bodies, must pass through the sea of forgetfulness. According to the Jewish view we make the transition under the overlordship of the Angel of Forgetfulness. But it sometimes happens that the Angel of Forgetfulness himself forgets to remove from our memories the records of the former world; and then our senses are haunted by fragmentary recollections of another life. They drift like torn clouds above the hills and valleys of the mind, and weave themselves into the incidence of our current existence. They assert themselves, closed with reality, in the form of nightmares which visit our beds. Then the effect is exactly the same as when, listening to a concert broadcast through the air, we suddenly hear a strange voice breaking, carried from afar on another ether-wave and charged with another melody. (Asch 1939, 1)[7]

This haunting description calls attention to the importance of memory. Souls are usually cleansed of past-life memories before they assume new bodies. In *The Nazarene*, the failure by the Angel of Forgetfulness to perform this cleansing becomes woven into the curse of the Wandering Jew. Strikingly, Asch uses a topographic metaphor to convey how this otherworldly phenomenon enters the world of the living. The mind itself is a landscape into which memories can drift; these memories affect the topography of the soul. The Yiddish formulation of Asch's radio metaphor is striking in this regard as he describes it as a strange or foreign motif (*a fremder motiv*) swimming through the air from another land (*fun an ander land*). In this way the past itself becomes another country, mysteriously encountered. The title for the chapter, not included in the English-language translation, is "The Archaeologist" (Asch 1950, 9).[8] The excavation described in the chapter is textual, but it also refers to these realms of memory, as palimpsestic as Jerusalem itself.

In his past life, when he was stationed in Jerusalem during the Second Temple period, the Roman Cornelius was eager for promotion within the Roman power structure. While he frequently socialized with Jewish elites or disguised himself among the common Jewish people as they listened to the teachings of Jesus, he was always sure to keep himself apart from them, despite his attraction to them. Cornelius's thirst for advancement led him to become the man who captured Jesus; he also participated in his torture, for which Jesus laid on him "the curse of being" (Asch 1939, 694).[9] Despite this curse and in contradiction to the accusations of Asch's detractors, *The Nazarene* never attributes divine powers to Jesus. It is unclear whether the Angel of Forgetfulness "overlooks" the cleansing of Cornelius's memory because of his deeds. What is clear is that Cornelius, like the traditional Wandering Jew, cannot escape the memory of his actions, which he "broods" on "every waking moment of the day" (Asch 1939, 27). The young Jewish scholar initially regards Pan Viadomsky's Roman alter ego as a form of madness. Through their interactions, however, the younger man gains an awareness of his own past incarnation as Jochanan, a student of the prominent rabbi Nicodemus, whom the novel portrays as treating Jesus with fairness.

Asch's first draft of the novel included a long opening section on *gilgul*, providing examples of the phenomenon, such as a Jewish man who sometimes unaccountably began to march along with Russian soldiers, inspired by a previous life, and a man in Mandatory Palestine who publicly declared himself to be Pontius Pilate in an incident suppressed by the colonial authorities (Fischthal 1994b, 167). It is notable, I think, that Asch draws his examples of *gilgul* from environments of political contention, as he does when he portrays contemporary Warsaw in *The Nazarene*. Although Asch slimmed this section down to the novel's evocative opening paragraph and a few other references, *gilgul* plays a critical role in the novel's "transformation and appropriation" of the Jesus narrative; it is not, as Abraham Cahan of New York's *Forward* charged, a mere "technical device" (Weininger 2015, 375).[10] Asch's framing structure, with its multiple viewpoints on the Jesus story, revises and counters the centuries-old antisemitic accusation against the Jews as Christ killers. It does so by undermining the notion of the gospel truth through the "lost" Gospel of Judah and the personal memories that Cornelius and Jochanan share with each other and with the reader. The novel's hills and valleys of memory—memory both of ancient Jerusalem and of contemporary Warsaw—shape the narrative and serve Asch's ecumenical goals. As in Fleg's novel, Asch uses not just fictional content, but also formal elements to counter antisemitic traditions.

Prominent among these formal techniques is Asch's vivid rendering of the men's personal memories of the Second Temple through the rich descriptive style of the historical novel as pioneered by Sir Walter Scott. Even those critical of the themes and artistry of *The Nazarene* attest to the power of Asch's rendering of Jerusalem in the Second Temple period, a portrayal based on years of study (Siegel 1976, 138). Asch's well-researched, detailed, and lively descriptions create a "shared imagined experience" that, as Ann Rigney (2012, 48) has shown, can constitute a form of memory in their own right, rivaling memory "based in fact." The historical novel can also, I would add, shape and re-create the cultural memories created by cultural texts, in this case, by the Gospels of the New Testament. The novel itself hints at this type of narrative power. Called on by Viadomsky/Cornelius to answer a question about the time of Jesus, the young Jewish scholar recognizes that "something extraordinary was happening within me" (Asch 1939, 399).[11] He describes his recognition of his ancient identity as Jochanan in terms that evoke the experience of encountering a vivid historical narrative:

> How this thing came to pass I do not know. I do not understand the inner processes which accompanied it. I had long observed, of course, that when Pan Viadomsky recounted the incidents of what he called his former life in Jerusalem, there was a vivid evocation of the ancient world. But side by side with this there was something else, infinitely more mysterious; namely, an actual touching off of personal memories within me, a stirring of contacts, so that I was gradually drawn out of my present identity, which became weaker and weaker, until it abandoned me altogether, and another took its place, occupied my brain and body and nerves, and transformed me into a contemporary of his world of narrative. (Asch 1939, 399)

Here again, in these sections describing the young scholar's experiences with *gilgul*, Asch's Yiddish offers some striking formulations. Pan Viadomsky's descriptions of his former life, the younger man narrates, awaken old memories in the younger man.[12] Asch employs the term *tkhies-hameysim*, which refers to the resurrection of the dead, underscoring the eerie, supernatural form of this collision of lifetimes within one man (Asch 1950, 387).

The two men eventually come to create a narrative together, as the older asks the younger to write down his memories. As the young scholar explains,

> It is now in place for me to record that when Pan Viadomsky conjured back for me, through the wizardry of his own memory, the remote past

> of another life, we agreed between us that I should set down in writing my recollections of that world event, so that we might compare and complement our experiences. We decided further to publish this common fund of memories in a single book, so that our contemporaries might obtain a clear picture of the tragedy of which we had been witnesses. (Asch 1939, 613)

According to the younger scholar, his own memories (*zikhroynes*) are awakened (*oyfgevekt*) by Pan Viadomsky's "magic-memory" (*kishef-zikorn*) and the two determine together to write down what they have witnessed of that momentous time, and even to publish a book together that will share their knowledge with their contemporaries. The young narrator, interestingly, introduces this detail by explaining that he has "forgotten" to mention it (*ikh hob fargesn tsu fartseyln*), a formulation that resonates with the novel's opening assertion: that the power to forget is necessary to our existence (Asch 1950, 596). The coauthored book is, presumably, the very text before the reader. The young scholar's translation of the Book of Judah provides a new perspective on this reviled figure of betrayal, showing Judah to be motivated by a desire to hasten the Messiah, rather than wanting to destroy him for gain. So too the shared recollections of Cornelius and Jochanan provide another revision of traditional accounts of the "world event," or what we have been calling, using Jan Assmann's (1988) term, the fixed point, of the Passion. The Warsaw frame and the Jesus narrative it facilitates gain an equivalency that we could say illustrates the integral reciprocity of narrative and memory.

The primary purpose of the framing device is not, however, to provide insight into the literary creative process; it is to serve Asch's ecumenical goals. Asch's work had long treated Jewish-Christian relations, revealing not only conflict and persecution, but also parallels and cooperation. His well-received 1904 novella *The Town* (*Dos shtetl*), for example, represents the similarities between Jewish and Christian faith using sound imagery. Asch brings together the ringing of church bells and the singing of Jewish chant to reveal a core commonality in faith belied by difference in practices (Morgentaler 1988, 221). His character Madam Krasnetsova, a brothel owner with a heart of gold in his *Peterburg* (1933), hedges her spiritual bets by carrying out practices from both Christianity and Judaism. And scholars of the Jewish reclamation of Jesus frequently reference Asch's "In a karnival nakht" (In a Carnival Night, 1909). In this short story, Jesus descends from a church crucifix to join his persecuted fellow Jews in the early modern Roman ghetto's infamous "running of the Jews." Also frequently discussed is the much-beloved character of Yekhiel in Asch's novel *Salvation* (*Der tilim yid* [The Psalm Jew], 1934), which many critics read as a precursor to Asch's portrayal of Jesus in *The Nazarene*.

In 1938, the year that Chagall worked on *White Crucifixion* and that Asch began writing *The Nazarene*, the situation for European Jews was becoming increasingly desperate. Asch had already undertaken activist work against the Nazis and in support of Jewish refugees (Mazower 2004, 26–27). Asch had been pondering a novel about Jesus as early as 1906, but *The Nazarene* clearly reflects the troubled times in which he finally began to write it. We can discern somewhat oblique reference to current events through Asch's mentions of the brutality of Roman soldiers of German origin and in his descriptions of the increasingly troubling tenor of Polish antisemitism. The most significant indication of the relationship between Asch's novel and his activism, however, comes in his 1941 *What I Believe*, which he published despite outcry in the Yiddish-speaking community about his "missionizing" tendencies. The work is motivated by Asch's belief in the essential role of Jewish-Christian reconciliation in aiding persecuted European Jews. The foreword to *What I Believe*, dated January 20, 1941, speaks of "civilized peoples . . . reduced to the status of primitive tribes under the rule of a master-race." Asch (1941, vi) identifies himself as "one of many who feel upon their shoulders the crushing burden of the time" and writes that in response to this calamity, "I have taken it upon myself to awaken certain ancient memories, to point to ancient moral values which are charged with the power of salvation for us and for our days."[13] In this book (which did not appear in a published version in Yiddish, but only in Maurice Samuel's English-language translation) Asch asserts his determination to show connections between the Jewish and Christian faiths in order to help the Jews. During the Second World War, Asch shared such views in essays and in another tract, *One Destiny: An Epistle to the Christians* (1945).

A determination "to awaken certain ancient memories" for the sake of salvation could also be a description of *The Nazarene*'s Warsaw frame. The two scholars, one Christian and one Jewish, strike up an unlikely but important friendship, one that literally revives memories and leads to a form of redemption for Pan Viadomsky. After he confesses to the younger man what he had done to Jesus, Viadomsky is finally at peace and slips into death. His salvation through truth and reconciliation is symbolized by a neighborhood Jewish girl bringing him flowers from the Jewish cemetery, which Jochanan lays on the "calmed heart" of Viadomsky in his final rest (Asch 1939, 698). Why does the young scholar involve himself with the old antisemite in the first place? The novel explains at the outset that the younger man is driven by a thirst for knowledge and a passion for the history of the Second Temple period. He comes prepared passively to ignore Viadomsky's bigotry, but a bond quickly develops between the two men. Noting wryly that there is no small number of antisemites who savor Jewish food, the young scholar brings the older man small gifts of herring, challah, or pickles, which they share over tea. Their bond strengthens when Viadomsky falls ill, and the younger man feels anxious about leaving him. "There was something curious about it; we were like two fellow-countrymen who, in their old hometown, had always lived on the worst of terms, and who now found themselves thrown together on a wild and savage island at the other end of the world" (Asch 1939, 17). In this early phase of the novel this bond seems to be one shared by two scholars enraptured with the same epoch. In an echo of the topographical metaphors of the novel's opening, Asch describes the two men's shared scholarly passion—which is a kind of meeting of souls through intellect—as shared habitation of a remote locale, separated from the rest of the world.

This wild island reflects the complex temporality of the Wandering Jew tradition because it is located not only in place, but in time. The two scholars are expatriates of a shared moment, secret sharers in memory. Pan Viadomsky has recognized their bond early on, telling the younger man that they alone have managed to pass through the sea of forgetfulness without losing their memories. Because of this similar passage, Viadomsky declares that they are more to each other even than family. The younger man is Viadomsky's "companion soul" (*mit mentsh*) (Asch 1939, 28; 1950, 31). They are drawn together, Viadomsky asserts, in a kind of inexorable mystical bond, based on their shared memories. Uttered at this early stage of the novel, Viadomsky's strange claims sound like an invitation to a folie à deux, and, taking a cue from gothic literature deriving from the works of Ann Radcliffe, the events in the novel could be explained by rational means. Indeed, a rational explanation for the novel's conclusion would be the very type of Jewish-Christian rapprochement through mutual recognition of shared origins for which Asch advocated so passionately.

At the novel's end, after the two men have shared so many personal memories, Viadomsky/Cornelius asks Jochanan whether the rabbis persecuted the followers of Jesus after his death. The young man replies: "Persecute them? . . . What difference was there between us and them that we should persecute them?" (Asch 1939, 692-3).[14] Just as Fleg used the Wandering Jew to counter traditional anti-Jewish accusation, Asch provides a response to centuries-old accusations about Jews persecuting Christians by stressing that Jews and Christians are not really all that different. His rich rendering of an unlikely friendship gives this view vivid specificity grounded in the shared "ancient memories" of the two men. The younger man then asks his final question: what did Cornelius do to Jesus to merit his curse? Here Asch further alters the Wandering Jew legend. Cornelius is not simply a man who insults Jesus; he is responsible for the latter's capture and torture, and he himself lifts the vinegar-soaked sponge to Jesus's lips. Because of this dreadful action, Jesus turns on him, gripping him and saying, "from this day on let vinegar be your drink!" Cornelius's drink will not turn to water until one of Jesus's tears falls into it. Cornelius explains how he tried to laugh it off, but he was utterly within Jesus's power and doomed, he realized, to an eternity of suffering. "And so I pass from incarnation to incarnation [*gilgl tsu gilgl*], and in every incarnation I struggle against him. I tear myself from him, and cannot tear myself away. I cannot be with him and I cannot be without him" (Asch 1939, 696).[15] Viadomsky/Cornelius confesses these actions with tears streaming down his face. These tears mark his release into death.

Asch's original title for the novel was "The Man Who Was There" (*Der man vos iz geven derbay*), which shifts focus from Jesus to the man who remembers him, and which evokes not only time, but place (Fischthal 1994b, 171). As Fleg did in *Jésus: raconté par le Juif errant* (1933), Asch draws on that essential kernel of the Wandering Jew legend—that the Wandering Jew is the only living witness of Jesus's life and death—to reinvent the memory of that life and death. Like Chagall and Fleg, Asch used his experiences in the "there" (the time and place) of Jerusalem and Palestine to create artistic works and journalistic ones. In a 1928 work entitled *Der mizbeyekh* (Sacrificial Altar), Asch describes his relationship to the story of Jesus using bodily terms that recall Fleg's "shudder" or Chagall's desire for unmediated physical experience. Asch describes an archaeological controversy surrounding an old wall of Jerusalem, which appears to be the focus of the kind of aggressive "patrimonialization" that Vincent Lemire (2017, 54) observes in his account of Jerusalem in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The identification of this wall affects that of a possible site for Jesus's tomb, a memory site that interests Asch as well. Asch (1949, 214) confesses that "in Jerusalem I've become thoroughly infected with the Jesus legend. (I hope my '*frum*' [religiously observant] readers won't stone me for this)." In a passage steeped in evocative sensory detail, Asch then goes on to recount his own retracing of Jesus's steps, again in somatic terms: he is seized with a "religious trembling" and recounts that he could not help but think on the path of the Jewish victims of the Inquisition. He speaks of these Jewish experiences of pain—those of Jesus and the "martyrs" of the Inquisition—as deriving from the same spirit (*gayst*).

Although Warsaw did not fall to Hitler and the Germans until September 27, 1939, Asch wrote *The Nazarene* at a time when the Jewish community in the city where he had launched his writing career was clearly under grave threat, not only from Nazism, but also from the Polish antisemitic nationalists with whom Asch depicts Pan Viadomsky as aligned (see, e.g., Rudnicki 2011; Dobrowolska 2018). Because he was an internationally recognized Jewish writer, Asch was urged by many to write a novel about the German persecution of the Jews in the 1930s and 1940s, but he never did, perhaps, some speculate, because it was too painful (Siegel 1976, 141). I think we could, however, compare Asch's Warsaw frame for *The Nazarene* to Chagall's visual framing of Jesus's Crucifixion amid scenes of contemporary European violence against Jews. The only Warsaw scenes that take place outside the two scholars' homes are set at Passover time, a season, we learn, when Viadomsky/Cornelius is always inexplicably drawn to Jewish areas. The young scholar accompanies the older man to several Jewish shops, where Viadomsky is met by Jewish shopkeepers with a combination of irritation and fear. These scenes play into the novel's deployment of the *gilgul* plot element, as Viadomsky seems to encounter people he knew back in the time of the Second Temple. At the same time, they also convey Asch's own memories of Jewish Warsaw, which he brings to life through the same vivid mixture of detail and dialogue deployed in the novel's rendering of the Second Temple period.

Warsaw is the setting of the second of Asch's short stories that portray a Jesus figure on a crucifix coming to life and descending the cross to be among violently persecuted Jews.[16] In December 1943, "Christ in the Ghetto" appeared in English in *Tomorrow* magazine. It tells the tale of a group of elderly rabbis who are forced to enter the Church of All Saints on Grzybowski Square, Warsaw, by a Gestapo officer, who attempts to make them defile the church's enormous crucifix and other sacred objects (Asch 1943a).[17] When the rabbis refuse to do so the German shoots one of them, leaving the rabbi's bleeding body on the altar. This act awakens the Jesus on the crucifix. Jesus dons the murdered rabbi's clothing and goes out into the ghetto streets, walking amid a Polish Gentile mob that has gathered because of a rumor that Jews are defacing the church. The Gestapo officer attempts to turn the crowd on Jesus. The latter's extraordinary presence, however, and his plea to the crowd to remember their faith and the role of the Jews as "witness for Moses," turns the tide. The crowd disperses. The Gestapo officer is perplexed by the resemblance between the man before him and the rabbi he murdered in the church. Determined to kill again, he is stopped dead by a heart attack. Jesus, now referred to as "the rabbi," moves through the crowd, which parts as he passes. Recognizing his stigmata, the Polish Gentiles fall to their knees in reverence, faces to the ground. The story ends as the rabbi crosses Grzybowski Square and turns down "a narrow Jewish street" (Asch 1943a, 9).

Given the story's conclusion, it is easy to see why critics have dismissed it as a maudlin exercise in counterfactual wish fulfillment. For our purposes, however, the story resonates with other works we have examined in this chapter. Like Fleg's *Jésus*, Chagall's *White Crucifixion*, and Asch's own *The Nazarene*, this story "transforms and appropriates" Christian memory, to use Maurice Halbwachs's (1992, 219) formulation. But here, instead of Halbwachs's stained glass Jewish "saints," Asch uses another fixture of Catholic church interiors, the crucifix. He brings the crucifix to life to assert the connection between Jews and Christians that he stressed in works like *What I Believe*. The Gestapo officer specifically attempts to undermine the bonds between Jews and Christians. Pointing to the crucifix, he says to the rabbis, "That's your enemy, isn't it? He's our enemy, too. You can do as you like with him" (Asch 1943a, 6). The rabbis steadfastly refuse to attack another faith, even under threat of death. The Christian crowd as well, having glimpsed Jesus in the rabbi's garb, see through the attempted manipulation and refuse to harm him. The symbolic actions here are so heavy that they border on allegory. National Socialists, the story shows, are opposed to and utterly divorced from both Judaism and Christianity, whose true bond is with each other.

Asch's appropriation of Christian imagery is underscored by Lewis David's accompanying illustrations in the 1943 publication in *Tomorrow*. Asch describes Jesus on the cross awakening in a beam of light that streams down from a bombed-out hole in the roof unto him and the murdered rabbi. David's visualization of the scene recalls how Chagall uses images of gray-white light and smoke to connect the central figure of the crucified Jesus with the scenes of brutality all around him (see fig. 6). Another of David's images also appropriates and alters key elements in Christian Passion iconography, with Jesus draped in a tallit and marked by a star resembling the yellow star Jews were legally forced to wear under National Socialism (see fig. 7). David's depiction of the distorted faces of the threatening crowd circling Jesus inverts the traditional representation of Christ's tormentors in Passion iconography, which often included ugly, even monstrous faces meant to represent Jewish attackers (see Mellinkoff 1993, 1:122–31; Marrow 1979, 33–43).

"Christ in the Ghetto," like the other works we have examined, also specifically appropriates Christian instruments of memory. In describing the church's crucifix, Asch emphasizes that it is not old; all its ornamentation is of machine-age products, and the figure itself does not seem extraordinary

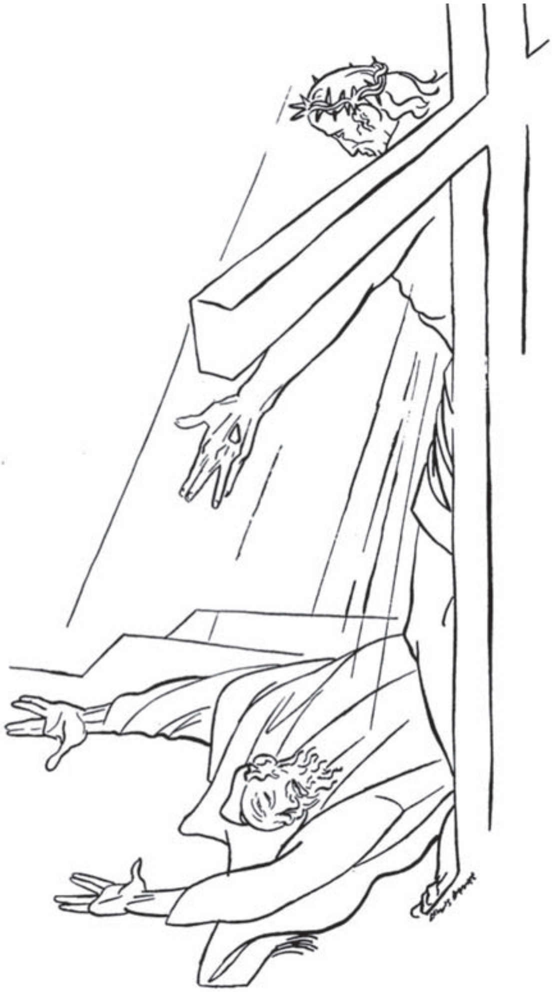


Fig. 6. Lewis David, illustration of Jesus on the cross, created for Sholem Asch, "Christ in the Ghetto," *Tomorrow*, December 1943.

in conception or execution. It is an ordinary Christ figure, nailed to the cross with arms outstretched and feet crossed (Asch 1943a, 4). In providing these details, Asch rules out any possibility that the crucifix has unique history or attributes from which the supernatural appearance of Jesus derives. Indeed, its extraordinary transformation is powered by its ordinariness, by its place among thousands of other such icons that commemorate the Passion and its meaning. This crucifix draws power—comes to life—through a faith kept alive through cultural memory.

Although the wooden crucifix in "Christ in the Ghetto" is not notewor-

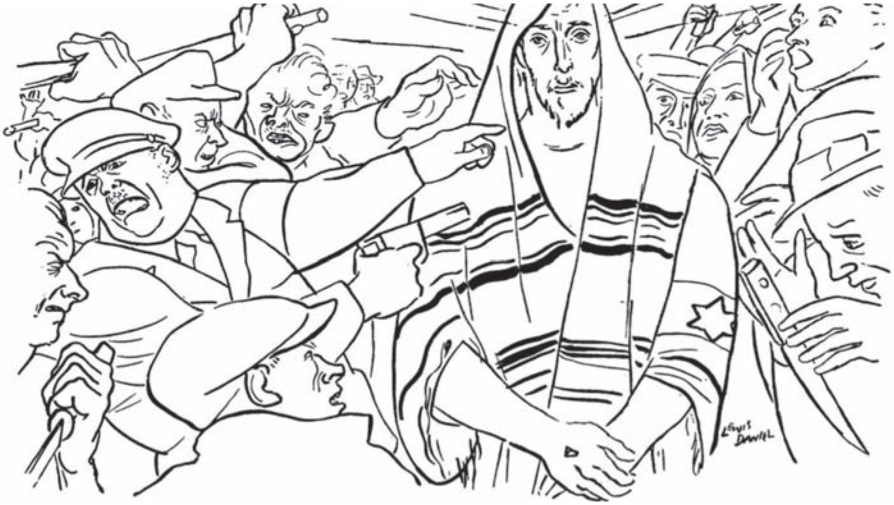


Fig. 7. Lewis David, illustration of Jesus draped in a tallit, created for Sholem Asch, “Christ in the Ghetto,” *Tomorrow*, December 1943.

thy, the church it hangs in is. The Church of All Saints, built in the nineteenth century, stands on Grzybowski Square and was known as a parish that served Jewish converts to Catholicism. Grzybowski Square stood within the Jewish quarter prior to the Second World War and was part of the ghetto during it (Noack 2017, 32). The story’s narrator notes that “pious Jews” avoided looking at the church’s “classic Greek columns,” an architectural detail that one must assume comes from Asch’s own memory as he composed the story (Asch 1943a, 4). Through his story, Asch makes this square a point of contact between Jewish and Christian communities before and during the war, into a site of supernatural reconciliation and redemption. The story’s final image is of Jesus making his way down a narrow ghetto street. Asch’s supernatural tale, as counterfactual as it is to the actual history of Warsaw during the Holocaust, marks the ghetto as a site of entangled Jewish and Christian memory.

Decades later, Grzybowski Square continues to be a site of memory for Warsaw Jewry in ways both celebratory and contested. The annual Singer Jewish music festival, named after Yiddish author Isaac Bashevis Singer, takes place on the square, which is also the site of a proposed monument to “righteous Gentiles,” Poles who aided Jews during the war (Fundacja Shalom, n.d.). Critics charge that this planned monument misrepresents how Polish Jews were treated by the majority of their Christian fellows during the Holocaust (Snyder 2014; see also Noack 2017). The stakes in this struggle over the topography of memory in Warsaw are not dissimilar to those Halbwachs describes in his account of the topography of the Holy Land. A prominent monument to "righteous Gentiles" at the square does seem another form of supersession that risks obscuring the Jewish victims of the events that took place there, a form that we could profitably compare to Halbwachs's stained glass window.

By examining the related works of Chagall, Greenberg, Fleg, and Asch in part III, we have seen the role that the Wandering Jew legend has played in "the Jewish reclamation of Jesus" in the first half of the twentieth century (M. Hoffman 2007, 1–12). The Christian Wandering Jew tradition, always related yet external to the canonical Gospels, provides a means for Jewish artists and writers to engage with the Jesus narrative in innovative ways. As we have seen, these innovations rely on the Wandering Jew as an instrument of memory. The memory of the Passion—accessed through Jewish traditions, Jewish mysticism, memory sites such as the Western Wall, and memory of anti-Jewish violence both ancient and modern—allowed these artists to reimagine traditions in ways that recognize and honor Jewish experience.

Part IV

Contemporary Encounters with the Wandering Jew

The Wandering Jew story begins in the ancient past, but as we have seen, retellings from Matthew Paris onward engage with contemporary events. This temporal bridge is an important source of the Wandering Jew's power as an instrument of memory. Below, I trace key imaginings of the Wandering Jew legend from the second half of the twentieth century into the early twenty-first. New iterations of the legend in this most recent era reflect the post–World War II nuclear age with a reinfusion of the future-oriented apocalypticism we saw animating the thirteenth-century *Chronica majora* and the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung*. Engagement with the Holocaust and with the founding of the State of Israel in 1948 also adds new levels of temporal complexity to the legend's anchoring in Jewish cultural memory.

The Holocaust and the founding of the Israeli state are the fixed points framing Elie Wiesel's 1966 short story "The Wandering Jew," set during the three-year period between these two events (see Wiesel 1966 [French]; 2011 [English]). The story depicts a young Jewish Holocaust survivor's encounter with an irascible old sage of incredible erudition. This Wandering Jew's wisdom and entire existence seem to transcend time. For the young narrator, who first encounters the Wandering Jew in a synagogue in the Marais, the mysterious man seems to offer him a structure of meaning for his experiences and for Jewish experience more generally. In one stunning exposition, the Wandering Jew provides a reading of important events in the literature of destruction frame that we have already seen shaping the legend. In this schema, the figures of Cain and Titus, the events of the Holocaust and the Akedah, all have meaning in relation to one another (Wiesel 2011, 100). Wiesel sets his Wandering Jew's appearance within a Christian landscape, using tools we can recognize from Uri Zvi Greenberg and Marc Chagall. In one scene, a group of Jewish refugees is housed in a castle in Taverny, on the outskirts of Paris. The Wandering Jew mesmerizes his listeners with his analysis as the village church bell tolls midnight, reminding the reader that the narrator, his students, and the Wandering Jew himself are all trying to find shelter in a Christian-dominated environment.

With his dazzling mastery of over thirty languages and knowledge that ranges from advanced mathematics to the most intricate details of talmudic disputation, Wiesel's Wandering Jew both inspires and troubles the narrator. The narrator knows, for example, that he has been changed by the war. The Wandering Jew, in contrast, seems incapable of change: "If, for him, the past is nothing, the future is nothing, then is death nothing either and the death of a million Jewish children? Perhaps God is dead, but he does not know it; and if he does know it, he acts as if it is of no concern to him at all . . ." (Wiesel 2011, 108). Wiesel's narrator has survived the nadir of human experience, an event of apocalyptic proportions. This at first transforms the temporal collapse we have seen in representations of the Wandering Jew legend into a kind of nihilistic atemporality. Yet while the story's Wandering Jew seems to symbolize this experience, he also seems to transcend it or, at least, to show that it can be survived. The narrator parts ways with the Wandering Jew around the time that the State of Israel is founded. Both end up joining the fight for the new nation, replacing atemporality with a future-oriented focus.

Wiesel's story endows the Wandering Jew with mystery, with agency, and with a knowledge rooted in Jewish cultural memory, even if this knowledge neither provides answers to the narrator's most urgent questions nor offers him true solace. Wiesel at first presents the Wandering Jew, with his prodigious knowledge and experience, as an instrument of memory, but then, through the parting of the narrator and the Wandering Jew, snatches away the possibility of such a use. Wiesel's story seems to show that Jewish cultural memory is by itself an insufficient solace after the atrocities of the Second World War. Wiesel's Wandering Jew reminds us that the Wandering Jew is, and has always been, a figure tied not only to memory and to the past, but also to the future, as he was within the apocalyptically charged cultural settings in which Matthew's *Chronica* and the *Kurtze Beschreibung* were created. Wiesel's conjuring of the legend also demonstrates the deep entanglement of

Jewish and Christian cultural memory as mediated through the institution of the nation-state, which can provide refuge or wreak destruction.

It is no accident, I think, that Wiesel uses the end of the Second World War and the founding of the State of Israel as the temporal boundaries of his short story. The founding of the State of Israel disrupts the narrative of endless diaspora that has informed the Wandering Jew legend since its beginnings. For example, Stefan Heym's 1981 novel *Ahasver* depicts the Wandering Jew as taking up residence in Jerusalem once again at a shoemaker's shop along the Via Dolorosa, a kind of re-habitation of a site that represents the merging of personal and collective memory in the Wandering Jew story. At the same time, Heym shows how the wanderer's movements are now curtailed by Soviet-backed East German antagonism toward the Israeli state, a new kind of curse.

The State of Israel also figures in Wandering Jew–inspired novels by Eshkol Nevo and Dara Horn, both of which use the fixed point of the destruction of the Second Temple as their memorial center. In Nevo's *Neuland* (2011), the Wandering Jew figure specifically refutes taking any part in the Passion, pointing to the violence of the fall of Jerusalem as the beginning of his story. In Horn's *Eternal Life* (2018) the ability of the main character, Rachel, to return to a Western Wall that after centuries is once again part of a Jewish state is an ambivalent mixture of homecoming and curse. For Rachel, the Western Wall becomes a different kind of personal and collective *lieu de mémoire*. Its state of ruin serves as a reminder that Rachel's immortality, the result of a vow taken at the temple before its destruction, can never be reversed.

Sarah Perry's *Melmoth*, published in fall 2018, is the most recent of the works we will consider. It draws inspiration from the Christian Wandering Jew tradition. Perry dedicates her work to Charles Maturin, whose 1820 *Melmoth the Wanderer* is often considered the last novel from the first wave of gothic fiction. Maturin's Melmoth is a tormented and tormenting figure who preys on the vulnerable and hopeless throughout a series of nested tales. He is clearly a Wandering Jew–like figure, but his curse appears to stem from an act that resembles the damning bargain that the legendary Faust makes with the devil. Like the Wandering Jew figure in William Godwin's *St. Leon: A Tale of the Sixteenth Century* (1799), Melmoth hopes to escape his fate by seducing another to take it up for him. Perry's reimagining of Melmoth retains the earlier novel's gothic character and its exploration of sin and despair, but Perry anchors her narrative much more firmly in the original memorial fixed point of the Christian Wandering Jew legend: the Passion. In Perry's *Melmoth*, the immortal figure is a woman cursed not for her actions during that time, but for a refusal to bear witness to Christ's resurrection, which she was privileged to see with her own eyes. For this refusal she is transformed into an eternal witness of others' despair and their infernal tormentor and companion. Despite the innovations of this rich work, however, it relies on some of the instrumentalization of Jewish figures that we saw in the works of Matthew Paris and Eugène Sue, demonstrating the enduring influence of the legend's early forms.

Nine

Stefan Heym's *Ahasver*

The proposed memorial at Grzybowski Square with which we concluded the previous chapter is controversial because it represents an attempt to shape cultural memory and to do so in a way that many see as whitewashing Polish complicity in the Holocaust, a project also seen as in keeping with other recent governmental forms of memorialization of the Second World War in Poland. A similar example of governmental intervention in shaping remembrance inspires and animates Stefan Heym's 1981 novel *Ahasver*. The year 1983 was the five hundredth anniversary of Martin Luther's birth, and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) declared it a year of honoring Luther. Planning for the "Luther Year" began in the late 1970s and involved prominent figures in the Socialist Unity Party, including Erich Honecker, who chaired the GDR's official Martin-Luther-Komitee (Peterson 1986, 78; Tait 2001, 108). The Luther Year involved extensive renovations in historically important areas such as Wittenberg, republication of Luther's work, and the commissioning of scholarly volumes and items such as commemorative stamps.[1]

The Luther Year was clearly designed to boost the international stature of the GDR and to bolster tourism to important Lutheran memory sites located in cities such as Eisenach, Erfurt, and Wittenberg (see Martin-Luther-Komitee der DDR 1982). This massive exercise in the development of state-fostered collective memory also linked the state to the Lutheran Church, the largest and most vibrant nonstate entity in the GDR, as well as a thorn in the government's side. Stewart Anderson (2012, 22, 24) has categorized the East German regime's approach for the Luther Year as "appropriative memory." It is in opposition to this appropriative strategy that Heym wrote *Ahasver*. Heym saw the Luther Year as a whitewashing of Luther's antisemitic and antipeasant stances (Tait 2000, 387). For Heym, the Luther

Year went beyond a false manipulation of cultural memory: it was the cultivation of cultural amnesia. In *Ahasver*, Heym uses the Wandering Jew legend and an innovative temporal structure that explores friction between personal and collective memories. The novel shows how those in power can attempt to manipulate social structures—the church, government archives, the police, the university—in order to shape memory.

Heym's political reaction to the Luther Year is completely unsurprising. Since his school days, such critiques had always been at the center of his writings (see Heym 1988, 767, cited in Pender 1991, 67). Heym, who was born Helmut Flieg in Chemnitz in 1913 into an assimilated German Jewish family, wrote his first published poem when he was eighteen. In it, he criticized the German government for trading arms with China. This poem got young Helmut expelled from school; he had to complete his studies in Berlin. Finally forced to flee Germany for Prague after the 1933 burning of the Reichstag, Flieg worked there on communist, antifascist newspapers, taking on the pen name Stefan Heym in order to protect his family (Heym 1988, 92–93). In 1935, he fled Europe for the United States, where the Jewish fraternity Phi Sigma Delta sponsored a fellowship that enabled him to earn a master's degree at the University of Chicago. He served in the US Army during World War II as part of the propaganda corps, married an American woman, and had significant success as a novelist in the United States. His early novels were written first in English, and Heym saw a career for himself in America until the rise of blacklisting led by Senator Joe McCarthy in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Given Heym's political beliefs, Heym realized that he could not pursue a career in the United States in such a political climate. After returning his Bronze Star to President Eisenhower, along with a letter detailing his reasons for leaving the United States, Heym returned to Europe (Hutchinson 1992).[2] Unable to settle in Prague, he ended up in East Berlin in 1953. Heym's life experiences, which include memories of his resistance to Nazism as an activist and a US soldier, shape his version of the Wandering Jew as instrument of memory.

Heym was a committed socialist and believed that socialism was the key to ending social inequalities, including those caused by antisemitism. When he came to the GDR in 1953, he saw it as a nation of possibilities. Even after disappointment and frustration with what he called "real existing Socialism," he still wanted to believe in socialism's potential or, at the very least, to hold on to a vision of social equality that included the eradication of racism and antisemitism (Heym 1998, 501). Very soon after returning to the GDR, however, he witnessed the June 17, 1953, uprising, which was sparked by a construction workers' strike and then spread more widely. He also witnessed its violent suppression. These events became the subject of a novel, *5 Tage im Juni* (Five Days in June), first published in 1974 in the West, where much of Heym's writing debuted because it was suppressed by the GDR authorities (Segel 2003, 216). We can see this novel as Heym's attempt to shape collective memory of the events of 1953 from a perspective that countered the official narrative. Other of Heym's novels, notably the 1972 *Der König David Bericht* (*The King David Report*), directly engage with questions of memory and history and the influence of those in power to shape both.

Ahasver/The Wandering Jew

In chapter 3, we saw how Eugène Sue used the Wandering Jew as an instrument of memory in order to shape collective memory of France in 1832. In *Ahasver*, Heym deploys the Wandering Jew as a means of contesting state-sponsored national memory-making in a postfascist, post-Holocaust Germany, an environment where Jewish voices were largely absent. He accomplishes this through innovative use of the formal elements of his novel. The novel tells the story of Ahasver and Lucifer, both fallen angels, and their encounters with two men: Paulus von Eitzen, the Lutheran leader said to have met the Wandering Jew in the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung*; and a Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Siegfried Beifuss of the Institute for Scientific Atheism in Berlin. Although Eitzen lives in Reformation Germany and Beifuss in the GDR, the two men are similar in their willingness to bow to the powers that be for the sake of their careers. Heym tells their stories through two parallel narrative strands. The novel also has two additional temporal levels. There is a kind of biblical time, which includes events such as the creation of Adam by God and the expulsion of the rebellious angels from heaven, among them Ahasver and Lucifer. The novel also has a more cosmic temporal mode, which includes an apocalyptic ending that draws on the Book of Revelation. These cosmic episodes are all narrated by Ahasver himself in the first person. Also narrated by Ahasver in the first person is the time of the Passion, when Ahasver encourages Jesus, with whom he has a close relationship, to stand up and resist.

Interwoven among these mythic/biblical temporal levels is a third-person omniscient narration of the time of the Lutheran Reformation. This section follows the life of Paulus von Eitzen from an early encounter with Lucifer to a meeting with Luther, continuing until the time of Eitzen's death. These sections of the work read much like a historical novel mixed with touches of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust* and Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*. Lucifer also appears prominently in the novel's fourth temporal frame, set in the GDR between December 1979 and January 1981 (see Fisher 1986). Heym presents this fourth temporal level in an epistolary form that includes a scholarly exchange between Lucifer, who has taken on the identity of a Jewish professor at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and Professor Beifuss.

All the novel's temporal levels frame and play off one another, each revealing in a different way the function of memory in the Wandering Jew legend. In the paired temporalities drawn from biblical sources, Heym revises events from what Aleida Assmann (1995) calls "cultural texts"—the biblical accounts of Genesis, the Gospels, and Revelation. Heym's treatment of these key sources of cultural memory reveal them to be, at their heart, about struggles for power. The sections of the novel that focus on Germany in the Reformation and in the GDR, presented in juxtaposition, show how readily institutions of church, state, and higher learning can be corrupted for the sake of power and control. The documents Heym creates for the novel also reveal in their details how memory sites in Berlin can themselves serve as sites of resistant memory.

Throughout all these temporal levels and through this variety of formal literary elements, Heym explores the interface between personal and collective memory, and the ways in which leaders of powerful institutions—politicians, clergy, academics (even perhaps God himself, with heaven as a kind of "institution")—attempt to control individuals, in part by molding memory. In *Ahasver*, both Ahasver and Lucifer, who each appear in all four of the novel's temporal levels, serve as instruments of memory. Their stories reveal how memory itself can be manipulated in the service of power; their very different interpretations of existence—from creation to apocalypse—also reveal the critical role of interpretation in creating and sustaining cultural memory and the reality it generates (Heym 1998, 500–501; see also Tait 2001, 108). This interest in interpretation is also reflected in the brief commentary/summary that begins each of the novel's twenty-nine chapters. These elements are presented in the style of Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen's classic picaresque novel *Simplicissimus* (1668). The chapter headings in *Ahasver* appear written as if to serve as an official commentary and guide to the work, although who authored them is unclear. The bias apparent in these summaries provides a satiric metacommentary on the manipulative potential of knowledge production and of "official" memory itself.

Creation, Passion, Revelation

"We are falling" (Heym 1984, 7).[3] Ahasver and Lucifer, expelled from heaven for disobeying God, are in free fall. The novel's opening line, while narrated in the present tense, is itself an act of memory, one that lays the groundwork for the struggle Ahasver faces throughout the text. To describe the rebellion of these two fallen angels, Heym draws on a Christian reimagining of the Genesis story: John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) (see E. Hoffman 1984). He also, I believe, entangles a key Protestant source with a Jewish one: the narrative from Genesis Rabbah 8:5, in which some of God's angels protest God's creation of man (see Freedman and Simon 1983). Ahasver and Lucifer, friends of a sort, will appear throughout the novel. Their conflicting beliefs form the core of the novel's exploration of power, freedom, and the role of memory in both. Heym's Lucifer is a champion of order. "To me," he says, "order is a most desirable state; the more orderly the manner in which the affairs of a country are run, the more I like it" (Heym 1984, 222). Continually fomenting oppressive regimes, Lucifer exploits human desires so as to lead humans into peril and ruin. Like Milton and the English Romantic poets, Heym recognizes the powerfully attractive rebellious quality of Satan. Heym's Lucifer has a kind of rakish appeal, but he is ultimately a force of conservatism. In contrast, Heym's Ahasver champions the weak. Ahasver, as supernatural witness and eternal revolutionary, is able to speak truth to power, even if this truth proves ineffectual. From the very beginning of the novel, it is clear that Ahasver seeks change (see Lauckner 1984). With his Ahasver, Heym transforms the Wandering Jew from a figure of Jewish victimhood, sin, and suffering into an embodiment of the spirit of change, into the desire to revolt not to seize power, but to distribute it.[4]

Like Edmond Fleg's 1933 *Jésus: raconté par le Juif errant* and Sholem Asch's 1939 *The Nazarene*, Heym's *Ahasver* also presents a revision to the Passion narrative as traditionally conveyed.[5] In Heym's novel, the figure of the Wandering Jew is not used to tell the story of Jesus; rather, the Jesus figure is used to tell Ahasver's story. Ahasver's relationship to Jesus, whom he calls Reb Joshua, is one of love. But the two are also in conflict. Reb Joshua continually refuses to heed Ahasver's call to resist oppression and instead chooses the path of passive sacrifice that leads to his Crucifixion.[6] By transforming Ahasver from a cursed mortal into a fallen angel and developing a new kind of relationship between Ahasver and Jesus, Heym elevates Ahasver's existential struggle from a curse into a principled choice. Ahasver is already immortal when he meets Jesus, and he does not heartlessly rebuff Jesus, as the legend goes, but instead exhorts him to fight. He calls on Jesus to be a revolutionary who fights for change, a model that would have resonated with East German Lutheran dissidents, who understood Jesus as a model for advocating change even in the face of an overwhelming power like the Roman Empire.[7]

In the novel's fifth chapter, Ahasver takes Jesus to a mountaintop, encouraging him to act boldly. Reb Joshua insists that his "kingdom is not of this world." Ahasver replies in a way that echoes his opening exchange with Lucifer, "But you might make an attempt at it . . . it would be a beginning at least." When Reb Joshua persists in his decision to be a sacrificial victim, Ahasver turns from him, but then stops and turns back to Reb Joshua, promising him, "I will comfort you when your hour has come. With me you shall find rest" (Heym 1984, 52–53). Here Heym fundamentally transforms the traditional Christian rendering of the encounter between Jesus and the Wandering Jew. Instead of depicting Jesus as turning back to rebuke the Wandering Jew, Heym has Ahasver react to Jesus's inaction. His Ahasver offers comfort despite a strongly principled rejection of Reb Joshua's decisions.

Heym's portrayal of Ahasver reveals his deep awareness of the traditional portrayal of the Wandering Jew's state as one of suffering and punishment, not just for an individual, but for Jews in general. Professor Beifuss writes to Leuchtentrager (Lucifer) that "Ahasverus symbolize[s] the homeless and hounded Jew who must wander from country to country and is welcomed nowhere and persecuted everywhere. Ahasverus is the personification of his people's fate" (Heym 1984, 219). But, for Heym, this fate is not and should not be simply one of passive suffering: Heym's Ahasver is a representation of the spirit for revolutionary change. In Heym's novel, furthermore, it is also Ahasver, not a representative of Christianity, who is truly merciful. And, indeed, it is ultimately Ahasver who takes on the role of sacrificial victim in the novel, running the gauntlet in Reformation Germany at the instigation of powerful men, including Paulus von Eitzen, who are engaged in fostering and strengthening an unholy alliance between church and state. Heym's Ahasver therefore takes on some of the sacrificial qualities associated with Christ in ways that show Eitzen (and the Lutheran Church, the establishment that he represents) to be the true oppressor. When Eitzen encourages Duke Adolph to force Ahasver to run the gauntlet, Eitzen recognizes the words of Pilate in the duke's reply to him. Heym's description of this scene of punishment seems straight out of a medieval painting of the unruly and unseemly crowds at the Passion. When the beaten and suffering Ahasver begs Eitzen for a bit of respite, Eitzen refuses. It is the Christian, Eitzen, motivated by jealousy and self-interest, who takes on the negative role of the Wandering Jew of legend by refusing Ahasver even a moment's relief (Heym 1984, 247, 250–51, 253).

A corrupt lust for power also instigates the novel's apocalyptic ending, which occurs in its cosmic temporal frame and which mirrors its opening scenes. Heym borrows heavily from the Book of Revelation in this section, but he presents destruction without redemption. Reb Joshua has proved utterly ineffectual in the face of the onslaught of a triumphant Lucifer, "champion of law and order." Ahasver and Jesus survive, "united in love," but their end is unsettling: "And as he and God were one, I too became one with God, one image, one great thought, one dream" (Heym 1984, 297). As in all the chapters set in the cosmic or biblical time frame, Ahasver narrates in the first person, but the purpose of his witness remains uncertain.

The Reformation and the GDR

The sections of *Ahasver* set in the Reformation use the rich and colorful description of the historical novel to present a memory of Luther as a form of countermemory to the celebratory collective memory-making of the GDR's Luther Year. Heym portrays Paulus von Eitzen as a small-minded, opportunistic man who can be easily manipulated through lust, greed, and desire for advancement. As we recall from the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung*, Eitzen was said to have encountered the Wandering Jew in Hamburg. Heym imagines Eitzen in Hamburg visiting a rich aunt. His mind is filled not with "highflying thoughts or beautiful reveries," but with "sober computation" of possible inheritance (Heym 1984, 11). Instead of Ahasver, Eitzen meets Lucifer, disguised as a man called Leuchtentrager. Lucifer and Luther each easily seduce Paul into taking part in the creation of a rigid and brutal Lutheran orthodoxy that includes a spiteful antisemitism. Eitzen revels in the power he feels as he delivers his first public sermon, which brims with the same hateful rhetoric as in Luther's *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen* (On the Jews and Their Lies, 1542), discussed in chapter 2. Heym draws directly on Luther's tract in his portrayal of Luther's words at a dinner party at which Eitzen and Lucifer are also present (Heym 1984, 86, 43). The words of the venomous tract become literary *Tischreden* (table talk), following the title given to Luther's words spoken at table to guests and gathered by his followers. These include statements of his championing of the powerful against the peasants. The revered wisdom dispensed through this "table talk" loses much of its luster in Heym's imagined meal. The gluttonous Luther may once have been an idealist, but he has lost his way. He has ended up creating "in God's name . . . the old dams and bulwarks for the old overlords" (Heym 1984, 48).[8] Lucifer recognizes in Luther a like-minded stalwart for power through order, who has constructed his church as “a firm new edifice . . . on a pile of manure” (Heym 1984, 81). Ultimately, Heym shows, Luther and Eitzen have created a Lutheran orthodoxy in cooperation with secular powers, perverting the message of Reb Joshua. Eitzen defends his actions until his dying day, even as he “senses that that poor man on the cross did not give his blood for the perpetuation of the power of the authorities, nor his body for the everlasting rule of the police” (Heym 1984, 288). For his sins, Eitzen is spirited off to hell in the company of Ahasver and Leuchtentrager.

Just as the novel’s cosmic/biblical temporal levels are paired, so too does Heym create continuities between the sections focused on the Reformation and those about the GDR. The GDR counterpart to Eitzen is Professor Beifuss, the director of the Institute for Scientific Atheism. His first name, Siegfried, an allusion to the hero of the *Nibelungenlied* (c. 1200) of medieval and Wagnerian renown, lends him the patina of a Germanic Everyman. His surname, Beifuss, sounds like *Bei Fuß*, the German version of the command for a dog to follow on a leash: “Heel!”[9] Beifuss is, indeed, easily led, both by his GDR superiors and by Lucifer/Leuchtentrager. The section of the novel set in contemporary East Germany is conveyed primarily through scholarly correspondence between Beifuss and Leuchtentrager debating the existence of the Wandering Jew. These letters reference not only the *Kurtze Beschreibung* and actual scholarship on it, but also the Dead Sea Scrolls, putting issues of history, memory, and witness center stage.

Leuchtentrager repeatedly asserts his own witness to Ahasver’s uncanny existence. His most potent example comes from his time with Ahasver during the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. “I happen to have been in the Warsaw ghetto, and I did live through the horror of 350,000 people being squeezed into a small number of streets and being starved and tortured and bombed to death. You may believe me, Professor Beifuss, no devil could have invented the methods used for this program of annihilation; it was humans who planned and executed it—to be precise, a number of your fellow countrymen, dear Colleague” (Heym 1984, 144–45). With this passage, Heym takes aim directly at the GDR’s failure to confront and reckon with German antisemitism as well as with German atrocities during the National Socialist period. These are actions that even Lucifer, the devil himself, finds to exceed imagination. Heym’s treatment of the Warsaw Ghetto is an important addition to the Wandering Jew legend; Heym’s Ahasver, unlike his Jesus, believes in standing up to oppression. Ahasver’s leadership role in the Ghetto uprising and his self-immolation emphasize this stance. At the same time, however, Heym’s description sears the results of German actions and of German brutality into the reader’s memory:

> Ahasver and I were walking through the few streets of the ghetto that were still part of it, for the ghetto area had been increasingly restricted and its survivors forced to huddle in an ever diminishing space. It's an awful feeling that overcomes you when suddenly you notice the bodies of children who have died of hunger, little skeleton dolls, clothed in rags, and no one left to bury them. We both of us thought we should etch this sight into our minds for all time to come, and some other sights as well, dear Professor, of which I'll spare you the details; if you're interested, you can check in the archives of your government to which, I'm certain, you have access; the Germans were always great photographers, and the ghetto offered motifs galore to camera fans. (Heym 1984, 145–46)

Both Ahasver and Lucifer believe that what they are witnessing must be etched into their memories for eternity. Heym makes clear that the East German regime is well aware of these atrocities but hides the evidence of them away in archives rather than using them to shape collective memory. This is, of course, the opposite of the sanitizing glorification of the past that Heym sees in the GDR's preparation for the Luther Year. In *Ahasver*, both immortal characters, Ahasver and Lucifer, serve as instruments of memory, with Heym's vivid flash of the hell of the ghetto preserving in public memory what his government seeks to obscure.

In addition to relating the past, the Beifuss/Leuchtentrager correspondence also provides a glimpse of the future. In a letter dated September 10, 1980, Beifuss ponders why he and his colleagues are experiencing increasing interest in Ahasver. An urgent letter from Leuchtentrager dated the same day hints at an answer: it reports that Reb Joshua—Jesus—has returned to earth bearing tidings of Armageddon in the form of a nuclear war (Heym 1984, 258, 262–63). This warning is identified as the fulfillment of the angels' fears at the creation of humankind, a warning emphasized in the next chapter, which depicts a confrontation between Jesus, Ahasver, and God in the novel's cosmic time frame. Jesus, finally rejecting his earlier passive approach to sacrifice, confronts God, figured as an old man. Jesus hurls the accusation that "all order and organization exist only for the purpose of destruction." This destruction seems realized in the novel's final chapter, in which Ahasver describes himself and Jesus as "falling" together (Heym 1984, 269, 297). This Armageddon heralds not the redemption prophesied in the Book of Revelation, but a new, unknown era.

Prior to the novel's apocalyptic ending, however, Heym provides closure of a sort for both the Reformation and the GDR plotlines. As part of his attempt to convince Beifuss that the Wandering Jew really does exist, Leuchtentrager brings Ahasver with him to the GDR, despite prior objections from East German officials (and, of course, without their permission or knowledge). The concerns of these government functionaries are clearly based in antisemitic and Soviet-influenced anti-Israel policies: even the Dead Sea Scrolls are interpreted by party functionaries as signs of Zionist imperialism (Heym 1984, 94–95). Despite their lack of visas, Leuchtentrager and Ahasver nevertheless appear at a rollicking New Year's Eve party in an East Berlin high-rise. After closeting with Beifuss in his study, Ahasver and Leuchtentrager blast with the professor up and out of the GDR, leaving behind only a large hole in the outer wall of his eighth-floor apartment and the lingering scent of sulfur. Where Beifuss has gone is not entirely clear, but his fate seems likely to be the same as Eitzen's. The latter's twisted corpse, depicted at the closing of the Reformation sequence, provides evidence of his passage to hell.

Heym satirically tells of Beifuss's supernatural escape through official East German reports, which characterize the mysterious incident as a brazen defection. Evidence of the disappearance is conveyed through a transcript of the call to a police precinct made by two guards on post at Checkpoint Charlie. Testimony from Beifuss's wife and from colleagues who were party guests is also included in the novel's "documentation" (Heym 1984, 279). Beifuss's apartment block, located at Leipziger Strasse 61, places Beifuss, his family and guests, and the "defection" itself at the very center of a geographic confrontation between Germany's East and the West. Leipziger Strasse 61 is part of a towering apartment complex said by some to have been erected by GDR authorities in reaction to the construction of a high-rise office building next to the Berlin Wall by conservative West German publisher Axel Springer.[10] While this East-West real estate rivalry is perhaps urban legend, the novel *Ahasver* is, of course, a fiction based on legend. Heym's staging of Beifuss's passage with Ahasver and Lucifer as a leap over the Berlin Wall—an action that was colloquially known in German as a *Mauersprung*—is part of the novel's satiric thrust.

Heym's satire extends as well to show that much has clearly been lost through the GDR's strict control over knowledge and learning. For example, the East German police demonstrate a striking biblical illiteracy. While investigating the "escape" of Beifuss from East Germany, the officers find a mysterious slip of paper, inscribed in an archaic hand:

> GIERSCH: On the table we found a piece of paper, with an ancient kind of writing on it, hard to read.

II B (13): You have got it there? Can you try to read it to me?
GIERSCH: By *my—God—have I leaped—over a wall* . . . And under it it says:

Psalm 18 colon 29.

II B (13): Looks like a case of escape from the Republic.
(Heym 1981, 240; 1984, 273 [original emphasis])

The impact of the GDR's policy of official atheism is such that not only does the guard not recognize the psalm quotation, but the very notation of the psalm itself is as foreign to him as the old-style handwriting in which it appears. Everything about the strange incident is filtered through the concerns of the police state. What the reader knows to be a supernatural event is misinterpreted as a case of flight from the GDR, an understanding rendered with a bit more satiric punch in the German: "Also doch Republikflucht" (Heym 1981, 240).

When the official report later notes that the quotation is biblical, this is also understood in relation not to any possible larger cosmic significance, but to GDR history and GDR concerns: "Our investigation has shown that the text on this note is actually a quote from the Bible, i.e. that it was written before the erection of the Antifascist Protective Wall of our Republic" (Heym 1984, 282). As part of its calculated control of language and timeline, the authoritarian state seeks to control cultural memory as well. In order to do so it creates a new fixed point of memory for the state and its citizens: the erection of the Berlin Wall. State-controlled institutions, including those of higher learning, are complicit in these activities of memory control. They are also the ones who regulate another form of memory—the archive—which Heym vividly evokes through his use of the epistolary form.

State complicity and manipulation is rendered subtly through details of locations included in the documents Heym creates for the GDR chapters. These details rely on the collective memory of his readers. Beifuss's Institute for Scientific Atheism has a precise location, Behrenstrasse 39a, as noted in the headers of Beifuss's letters to Lucifer. This address places the institute overlooking August-Bebel-Platz, known until 1947 as Opernplatz, the site of the infamous National Socialist book-burning ceremony of May 10, 1933.[11] At the instigation of National Socialist minister of propaganda Joseph Goebbels, books by Thomas Mann, Heinrich Heine, Karl Marx, and many others were destroyed at this event. The site is located in Berlin Mitte, an area where many university faculty members were and still are housed. Heym's precise location for the Institute for Scientific Atheism at the site of this infamous destruction of art and knowledge adds an additional layer of meaning that equates GDR censorship and control of knowledge with the book burning. This meaning is available to those who have memory of Berlin history. And, those among Heym's readers with personal memory of Berlin during the National Socialist era may well remember more about this location. According to records assembled for use in the Nuremberg trials, Behrenstrasse 39a also housed offices of the SS, again, knowledge likely held in the collective memory of many Berliners, including Heym (Chief Counsel for the Prosecution of Axis Criminality 1946, 195–98). The institute's placement at August-Bebel-Platz, along with general ignorance of party officials and functionaries to the textual (and within the context of the novel, actual) significance of Beifuss's "escape," satirically illustrates how the police state suppresses learning and thought and attempts coercively to shape cultural memory. In the GDR, the novel shows, this suppression of knowledge is carried out not by book-burning Nazis, but by the same academic institutions that supported the scholarly apparatus of the Luther Year.

Ahasver specifically targets the manipulative memory-making of the Luther Year, making reference to it through an admonitory letter from an East German official, who warns Professor Beifuss that attempts to delve into Luther's antisemitism would likely lead to quotation of Luther's calling the peasants "thieving, murderous gangs" who should be "smashed, choked and stabbed to death just as you kill mad dogs." Such references, the official concludes, must be part of an attempt to sabotage the efforts to make the Luther celebration a "resounding success." Including mention of these elements of Luther's legacy would place all who have worked toward the Luther Year in "a most awkward position" (Heym 1984, 228).

Heym emphasizes Luther's anti-peasant stance in another episode as well. As Paulus von Eitzen and Leuchtentrager first encounter each other at a Leipzig inn, they sit down to dine with men who are clearly victims of violent reprisal for political rebellion; one peasant has an arm that is a mere stub because he is one of them who "raised their hand against the authorities" (Heym 1984, 14). Leuchtentrager improvises for himself a biography that includes a father whose eyes are gouged out for rebelling. Through such details, Heym uses the features of the historical novel—a form that as we have seen, following the work of Ann Rigney (2012), can create a type of collective memory—to present a counternarrative to that of the Luther Year. The narrator's omniscient revelations about the inner thoughts of the early modern Lutheran leader Eitzen also propose another type of countermemory. Heym reveals the gap between the "official" memory of Eitzen and his interiority. Heym is, of course, creating this unflattering portrait of the inner life of a small-minded, selfish man, but his foray into an imagined mind raises for the reader additional questions about the gaps between the "official" and actual. As with the novel's official-sounding chapter summaries, Heym calls attention to the formation of history and of cultural memory.

We could, I think, consider these gaps between "authorized" and "actual" as another representation of that interface between personal memory and social structures that Maurice Halbwachs's ([1925] 1994) theory of collective memory explores. Heym's *Ahasver* deploys a new vision of the Wandering Jew as instrument of memory in order to counter GDR co-optation of collective memory. Heym's revision of the legend reflects his political values, as well as a perspective, shaped by his personal memory, as a German Jewish survivor of the National Socialist era. By actively shaping cultural memory through narratives, memorials, and rituals, rulers can attempt to control how the people that they rule perceive the world. This memory control could be accomplished through the burying of records of atrocities like the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto or through the erasure of the ability to understand and interpret previously important cultural texts, such as the Bible. Like his reimagined Ahasver, a revolutionary who dares to speak truth to power in order to foster change, Heym the author creates a work of countermemory, using the Wandering Jew as his instrument (see Heath 2008).

Ten

The Wandering Jew in the Twenty-First Century

Eshkol Nevo, Dara Horn, and Sarah Perry

Israeli novelist Eshkol Nevo's *Neuland* appeared in 2011. US author Dara Horn's *Eternal Life* was published at the beginning of 2018, and UK writer Sarah Perry's *Melmoth* appeared in the fall of that year.[1] Each of these novels engages with the Wandering Jew legend as a means to explore questions of memory. In *Neuland*, the Wandering Jew's voice injects the cultural memory of catastrophe into a polyphony of personal memories from four generations of Israelis. Nevo uses the Wandering Jew figure to calibrate the relationship of these personal stories to a larger narrative of Jewish cultural memory that reaches back to the destruction of the Second Temple. Nevo's memory-saturated novel is also concerned with the future, reminding us that the Wandering Jew legend has always been, since at least the time of Matthew Paris, about a longed-for end. Dara Horn's *Eternal Life* shares with *Neuland* the fixed point of the temple's destruction for the creation of her instrument of memory. The immortality of the novel's protagonist, Rachel, comes from a vow she took at the temple in order to save the life of her child. The collective catastrophe of the Second Temple's destruction is for Rachel a personal one as well: because the temple is destroyed there will never be a means for Rachel to find release from her immortal state. Perry's *Melmoth*, in contrast to the Nevo and Horn novels, draws on the Christian tradition of the Wandering Jew legend. The work pays homage to Charles Maturin's 1820 *Melmoth the Wanderer*, a novel of nested stories that feature the demonic immortal Melmoth. While drawing inspiration from *Melmoth the Wanderer* and its gothic depths, Perry also, however, reaches back to the fixed point of the Christian

Wandering Jew legend, the life of Christ. Perry innovates by focusing not on the Passion, but on the resurrection. Her Melmoth was present when Jesus emerged from his tomb; she is cursed for being afraid to share her witness.

Each of these contemporary novels uses the Wandering Jew as an instrument of memory. These works show that the legend, even after so many centuries, still retains its power to light creative fires. Examination of these recent works will also show, I think, that the Jewish and Christian traditions of the legend, while deeply intertwined, still retain some of the distinguishing features that we can see in the legend's much earlier versions. Nevo and Horn ground their works in the fixed point of the fall of the Second Temple. Their writings acknowledge a history of persecution and pain and allow their immortal characters to express the Jewish cultural memory of this past in voices that are themselves instruments through which to express humanity and agency. Perry's new interpretation of the Christian tradition of the legend innovates in locating its memorial fixed point in the resurrection. This is a moment centered not on pain and sacrifice, but on redemption and hope, even if Melmoth herself is tormented and tormenting because of her refusal to serve as witness of that miraculous promise. And yet, despite this innovation, Perry's novel also revisits the instrumentalization of Jewish figures that we have seen in works such as Matthew Paris's thirteenth-century *Chronica* and Eugène Sue's 1844 *Le Juif errant* (*The Wandering Jew*), raising questions about the representational limitations of the Christian strand of the Wandering Jew tradition.

Eshkol Nevo: *Neuland*

The novels of Eshkol Nevo (b. 1971) have topped bestseller charts in Israel and have been widely translated (Harris 2015, 36). In *Neuland*, the trail of the Wandering Jew emerges through the stories of two Israelis, Dori and Inbar. The year is 2006, and Dori is searching for his father, who is missing in South America. Inbar, feeling unable to return home after visiting her estranged mother in Berlin, meets Dori by chance in Peru and joins his search. Even before she encounters Dori, Inbar has found in her lodgings graffiti that consists of a drawing of a violin and a list of dates and locations presented as if on the souvenir T-shirt for a touring rock band: "Florence 1411, Toledo 1457, Munich 1606, Paris 1777, London 1934, Rio de Janeiro 2004, Lima 2006" (Nevo 2016, 285).[2] The markings, signed by "the Wandering Jew," spark the creative inspiration that Inbar has long been seeking. She creates a character, Nessia, who becomes another of the novel's polyphony of perspectives. These voices include the thoughts and memories of Inbar, Dori, Alfredo (the professional tracker whom Dori has employed), and Dori's father, Menny. Also included is the voice of Inbar's mother, Hana, who has emigrated to Berlin, and Inbar's grandmother Lily, originally an illegal immigrant into Mandatory Palestine at the outbreak of World War II. Dori and Inbar eventually find Menny, who has founded in Argentina a colony called Neuland for those suffering from trauma. Menny himself suffers from PTSD as the result of his military service during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. He founds his Neuland on the Argentine site of Baron Maurice de Hirsch's failed nineteenth-century Jewish relocation project.

Inbar discovers that one member of the Neuland colony, Jamili, is the Wandering Jew, whose graffiti she has encountered. She engages him in dialogue, and his voice takes over a single section of the multivoiced novel. In order to hear his story, Inbar provokes Jamili by scolding him for being cruel to Jesus. Jamili vehemently denies doing this:

> What does Jesus have to do with it? he burst out. Since when does Jesus put curses on people? Listen carefully: it was senseless violence, the destruction of the Second Temple, that's where it began. We're left with only the Western Wall. And good luck trying to live in a house that only has one wall. Even the guest huts in Neuland have three walls. So I started wandering. Appearing and disappearing. Changing cover names. What do you mean, how? Like in a time tunnel. Just without the tunnel. Tossed into a time period. Sometimes a good one and sometimes a shitty one. (Nevo 2016, 554)[3]

Jamili then describes the many situations in which he has found himself. These include memories of positive experiences, such as meeting inspiring figures as diverse in time and place as Theodor Herzl, Leonard Cohen, Thomas Edison, and Galileo Galilei. He also remembers time spent in Francisco Franco's torture cells, David Koresh's cult compound, and the Battle of Nablus. The time tunnel he describes could be likened to the collapse of time that Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi (1996, 17–18) identifies as a Jewish memory tradition. For this Wandering Jew, however, this collapse applies to moments not only of persecution, but also of discovery and creation, thus portraying the Jewish diaspora as not just a curse, but also a source of creativity and discovery.

The Wandering Jew explains that the Neuland commune is to be "not a new territory but a wandering shadow camp" to Israel (Nevo 2016, 557). Jamili's assertion explains the novel's title, which is not only the name of the colony, but an allusion to founding Zionist Herzl's 1902 novel *Altneuland* (The Old New Land), a utopian vision of a Zionist future. As Menny and the other Neuland commune members see it, Israel has fallen far short of Herzl's vision. Neuland is a place for them to heal from the trauma inflicted on them as individuals due to this failure of vision. It is also meant to realize a new countermodel, built symbolically on the land previously occupied by Baron Hirsch's project. Neuland thus represents a Robert Frost-inspired road not taken for the Zionist project of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (see Adivi-Shoshan 2013). Jamili, as the Wandering Jew, seems to represent the long shadow that the Jewish diaspora casts on the State of Israel. In *Neuland*, Nevo explores the psychic cost of the State of Israel for its Jewish citizens. This is a cost in lives—Inbar's younger brother committed suicide during his mandatory military service—as well as trauma, as represented by the aftereffects of Menny's war experiences and those of others at Neuland. It is also represented through the memories of Inbar's grandmother Lily, who sacrificed the chance to be with the love of her life (who just happens to also be Dori's grandfather Pima), not only to be with her baby daughter, Hana, but also to remain true to the Zionist project.

The novel is permeated with personal memory: Dori and Inbar's memories of difficult relationships with partners and parents, Lily's of her smuggled passage to Palestine, and Menny's of combat experiences. The intimate revelations of these memories are voiced primarily through sections devoted to each character that are narrated in third-person close. In contrast, the Wandering Jew's graffiti and his voiced section represent Jewish collective memory on a much larger scale, following a role for the Wandering Jew legend that we have seen used by others, beginning with Heinrich Heine. It also just so happens that Inbar's mother has long been at work on a dissertation on folklore that includes a chapter on the Wandering Jew. Even before Inbar discovers the Wandering Jew graffiti, we learn that Hana has been thinking about the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung* and Wagner's infamous reference to the *Untergang* (downfall) of Ahasver as a solution to the Jewish problem in his 1850 *Das Judenthum in der Musik* (Judaism in Music) (Nevo 2016, 191; see Bodenheimer 2013, 15).

In mulling over these sources, Hana is struck with the revelation that the "true difficulty" in reading the Wandering Jew legend comes in the twenty-first century (Nevo 2016, 191). She tells Inbar that sightings of the Wandering Jew have recently been on the rise, and that "it becomes clearer to the world that the State of Israel has failed in its mission: it hasn't solved the Jewish problem." This realization, Hana believes, has led to rising antisemitism, but it has also activated the "gene for wandering" that is embedded in "the DNA" of Israeli Jews (Nevo 2016, 285). In Hana's interpretation, the Wandering Jew serves as an instrument of countermemory to the memory of the diaspora as a curse. From this perspective, the Wandering Jew's very presence in Neuland proves that the founding of the State of Israel has not concluded the long suffering brought on by the destruction of the temple, as Jamili himself asserts. The novel implies that Jamili's belief that he is the Wandering Jew is the result of his troubled mental health, but the novel also does not eliminate the possibility that he could actually be who he says he is. This shadow of doubt is raised when Jamili reveals to Inbar that he knows about Nessia, the Wandering Jewess character/alter ego about whom Inbar has written in her private journal. It could be, of course, that Jamili has secretly sneaked into Inbar's quarters and read these entries. Nevo allows, however, for a moment of gothic doubt to intrude into a novel that is otherwise fundamentally grounded in realism, if also structured through coincidences so powerful that they take on a supernatural cast.

If Nevo's Wandering Jew is meant as a critique of the State of Israel and the toll that life in it can take on its Jewish residents, this critique is tempered by the novel's conclusion. The novel ends with a *lieu de mémoire* we have encountered before: the Western Wall. Because both Inbar and Dori have partners back in Israel—Dori even has a beloved young son—they never act on their ever-growing attraction to each other while abroad. They only exchange one long kiss, upon arrival at the airport in Israel (Harris 2015, 52), which they have hurried home to because of the outbreak of another conflict. They then exchange clandestine emails, finally agreeing to meet at the Western Wall. By this time, both have left their partners and will begin a new life together. At the wall, Dori hears the voice of a "young, alert-eyed rabbi chanting a very melodic description" of the story of Yochanan ben Zakkai, the legendary sage who escaped from Jerusalem just before Vespasian destroyed the temple. Yochanan set up a school at Yavneh, something he was able to ask for because, the story goes, he impressed Vespasian (Nevo 2016, 614). Upon hearing the chanted narrative, Dori ponders another road not taken: why didn't Yochanan save Jerusalem? At the heart of this question is the tension between a Jewish identity that must be connected to the site of Jerusalem and diasporic Jewish identity. This is the central tension of *Neuland*.

As Inbar and Dori move away from the wall, they join hands and she asks him to look at what she has called the "Sea of Jerusalem." It comes into view for him:

> An evening breeze begins to blow in the world, waves of wandering, waves of return, waves of alienation, waves of closeness—and the waves grow higher before his eyes, like shock waves after a very large explosion, rising one after the other from the depths of the Judaean Desert, reaching their zenith on the hills surrounding the city, breaking where Dori and Inbar's shoes meet the ground, leaving behind a thin foam of opportunity.
>
> Then they recede, folding back into one another, only to begin all over again. (Nevo 2016, 615–16)

This ending, which could be said to describe Jewish cultural memory itself, creates the sense that Dori and Inbar's homecoming, to Israel and to each other, is part of a much larger series of waves of cycles of life. Shifting from its focus on the past, the novel moves to the future-oriented perspective of the work to which its title alludes, Herzl's *Altneuland*. And yet, this very allusion is, of course, an engagement with cultural memory, one also executed by Herzl. Herzl (1860–1904) drew on Heine's 1851 "Hebrew Melodies," a collection filled with longing for Zion, when he described his protagonist, Friedrich, visiting the rebuilt temple in *Altneuland* (Herzl 1902, 287). Nevo's *Neuland* heightens the connection to *Altneuland* by concluding its acknowledgments with "Altneuland, 2008–2011." This inscription breathes a last breath of life into the idea of that "shadow" relationship of Neuland the fictional commune, and *Neuland* the novel, to the State of Israel itself. This final reference reminds us of the novel's deep engagement with Jewish cultural memory. Its titular allusion to Herzl's novel is not simply one of many throughout the text; it is an allusion to a vision for Israel that is itself a form of cultural memory. And while revealing the costs of the project of the Israeli state on Jewish Israelis, the novel also, finally, affirms its promise for those Jewish citizens. Just as the novel does not explore the cost of the Israeli state for Palestinians, for example, it does not detail what happens to the colony or to Jamili, focusing only on the potential that future holds for Dori and Inbar in "Altneuland."

Dara Horn: *Eternal Life*

Dara Horn's *Eternal Life* engages with the Wandering Jew legend's depiction of immortal memory through a gendered lens. The memory of the novel's main character, Rachel, is shaped by her experiences not only as a child, but also as a mother. These personal experiences are very much marked by the limitations that the social structures of family and of religion can place on women. As we already know from our examination of Sue's *Le Juif errant*, *Eternal Life* is not the first novel to represent an immortal Jewish woman, but Horn's novel is notable in its presenting Rachel's story almost entirely in her own voice, the voice of a daughter, mother, wife, and lover. More importantly, Rachel's is, as the novel puts it, the voice of a "free person" (Horn 2018, 47). The exploration of memory in *Eternal Life* is filtered through the central question of what allows a person, particularly a woman, to be a free individual. Rachel is unfree in the sense that she cannot die, but in other ways as well, including, or perhaps particularly, through the burden of the centuries of memory that she carries. Horn's narration of Rachel's life raises questions about the possibility of female autonomy and the expression of cultural memory from a female perspective. This issue could, of course, be explored through a protagonist with a normal life span, but Rachel's immortality also makes her a powerful voice of Jewish cultural memory, especially because her formative personal memories are of the Second Temple and its destruction. Beyond its allusive title, the novel makes no reference to the Passion-focused Christian tradition of the Wandering Jew. The novel's exploration of Jewish cultural memory through the voice of an immortal woman represents a break from the other works we have examined, such as those by Heine, Edmond Fleg, or Sholem Asch. In contrast to these literary portrayals of entangled memory, Horn's work is completely grounded in Jewish tradition and centered on the fixed point of the Hurban.

Using first-person close narration with a smattering of epistolary form through representation of digital and social media, Horn tells the story of Rachel, the daughter of a scribe in Roman-controlled Jerusalem. Like Asch's 1939 *The Nazarene* and Stefan Heym's 1981 *Ahasver*, the novel makes use of multiple temporalities. One narrative level takes place around the time of the destruction of the Second Temple, and the other is set in the United States in the twenty-first century. Rachel's life begins when the Second Temple still exists. The youngest in her family, she serves as her father's messenger. Through her father, Rachel gains a degree of literacy usually only available to elite men. The errands she runs also allow her free range in the city, which leads to the novel's central encounter between the teenage Rachel and young Elazar, the son of the temple high priest. Their clandestine and illicit love affair leads to the birth of Yochanan, who is taken to be the son of Rachel's husband, Zakkai. To save the life of the toddler Yochanan, who is dying of a mysterious ailment, Rachel and Elazar each make a vow at the temple: they will sacrifice their own ability to die so that their son may live.

This element of the novel's plot presents a fundamental alteration of the traditional Wandering Jew narrative. Rachel and Elazar will experience their immortality as a curse, but they are not punished for a wrong against another. They sacrifice willingly out of devotion. As the high priest informs Rachel before she takes the vow, "It means that your child will live, but you will never die" (Horn 2018, 69). Formulated in this way, the burden of the vow resembles the mechanism of cultural memory, which sustains ancestral memory through the generations. Rachel's vow both alters and literalizes this process. She lives to bear hundreds of children, each of whom she remembers and each of whom she has outlived. Rachel lives family life over and over again, "dying" and then finding herself renewed in her eighteen-year-old body as she begins again in a new place. The novel opens in the twenty-first century. Rachel has lingered with a family she loves for seventy years, longer than she ever has before. She fears that her beloved granddaughter Hannah, a biologist seeking a scientific means of immortality, will discover her secret. Soon after this potential crisis emerges, Elazar reappears and the novel begins to move back and forth between the twenty-first century and Rachel's memory of the time of the Second Temple. Horn uses dialogue between the two immortals, through which they share their personal memories, to fill in events during the centuries in between.

In the traditional Christian versions of the legend, as we have seen, the Wandering Jew's most significant personal memory is equivalent to Christian cultural memory of the Passion. In *Eternal Life*, Horn similarly expands the significance of Rachel's vow from the personal to the collective. Her personal memory is equivalent to Jewish cultural memory, not through knowledge of Jewish traditions—although she has that learning—but through her lived experience. Rachel's story serves as an instrument of memory through which to explore the survival of Jewish cultural memory in the diaspora. Through the story of Rachel and her firstborn son, Yochanan, the novel examines how this cultural memory has been preserved, a process based again not only on study and ritual, but on intimate human relationships, relationships that both support and limit individual freedoms.

The sage celebrated in song as Dori and Inbar visit the Western Wall in *Neuland* is the son for whom Rachel sacrifices herself: Yochanan ben Zakkai (A. Cohen 1939, 100–105). Horn's account of his legend emphasizes the belief that Yochanan's school at Yavneh created the basis for sustaining Judaism in the diaspora that followed. The novel depicts the destruction of the temple through Rachel's experience of it and also dramatizes Rachel's relationship with Yochanan. In a scene that echoes Nevo's association of Yochanan's legend with the road not taken, Rachel is initially furious with her son. She berates him for, in her view, choosing to save a book, rather than the temple itself. But Yochanan insists, as he has since childhood, on the absolute importance of "the story," and, as Rachel comes to realize, his choice does make possible the

> elaborate edifices of religious rituals and institutions and customs and laws that were nearly identical in every town or city they chose to live in, including women's baths and children's schools and prayer-houses and study-houses where people asked questions about the words her father copied, and homes full of people who said the same blessings and knew the same stories, each town or city an astonishing miniature portable Jerusalem, all thanks to Yochanan. (Horn 2018, 104)

This passage describes the process of preserving Jewish cultural memory, which it attributes to Yochanan, using a phrase, "portable Jerusalem," that echoes Heine's idea of the Jewish *portative Vaterland* (portable fatherland) (see Feierstein 2008). By the twenty-first century, Rachel herself has come to find that personal prayer is pointless (Horn 2018, 167). She still does not seem to respect her son's decision, which she sees as a choice "to replace the real with the virtual," as his choice has transformed "two thousand years of otherworldly power into a metaphor." "What it came down to," Rachel thinks to herself, "is that children were stupid. She had been stupid too, of course, once. But only once" (Horn 2018, 7). And yet, the novel presents both a stirring portrayal of the temple's supernatural power and equally potent evidence that Yochanan was, in his way, also correct.

It is unclear which of Rachel's early choices she thinks was stupid. Was it her vow at the temple or her relationship with Elazar? Description of Rachel and Elazar's immortal romance spans the novel, but Horn decenters its importance. Elazar is a continual element of Rachel's story, but he is by no means her whole story. Rachel thinks constantly of all her hundreds of children. It is her memory of them that is the truly difficult part of her immortal vow, but even they are not her whole life's story. Her story can be read as a struggle for a freedom typically denied to women. Listening to her granddaughter Hannah explain her biological research into the potential means to human immortality, Rachel reflects that "[I]t still astounded her, after all these years, how much more there still was left to learn, how it never ended." She recalls that she had often thought that she could become a scientist, an artist, a musician, "except then someone might notice her" (Horn 2018, 85). Throughout her long life, Rachel is insistent that her daughters become literate, so that they will be more than mere "slaves." She wants them to be "free persons." Yet Rachel herself has been unable to pursue intellectual and creative fulfillment. Instead she has had to live through descendants that she ironically (and painfully) outlives (Horn 2018, 33).

Rachel's struggle to hide her immortal state reflects the situation of women through the many centuries she has lived. Her choices have always been limited by her sex, "because no woman is ever alone; every woman has her own unchosen assortment of parents or children or siblings or nieces or nephews or cousins or uncles or aunts, her own babies or elders or someone else's, a clutch of needy people always hanging on her neck" (Horn 2018, 200–201). It is this reflection that leads to the novel's vivid description of the temple's destruction. Rachel's horrible memory of that moment is shaped by her subject position not only as a Jew, but as a mother and grandmother.

It is finally through her relationship with Hannah that Rachel breaks her pattern of self-denial. Through the centuries, Rachel has learned to leave her families when her lack of natural human aging can no longer be hidden. In her latest incarnation, Rachel has found herself unable to leave, but she finally does so in order to save her grandchild—Hannah's son—from a burning house. This sacrifice, a kind of reenactment both of her vow and of the burning of the temple itself, releases her into a new life. Renewed, she pursues a career in medicine and builds a new family with Nir, an Israeli who, "as young men now seemed to routinely do for their wives and children," takes part in household chores and in child-rearing (Horn 2018, 230). At the same time that Rachel pursues new experiences, she is struck, upon nursing their newborn child, by a "jolt of recognition." She thus embarks again on her age-old pattern of rearing a child, another Yochanan, to whom she says, as her own dying mother said to her, "I am watching" (Horn 2018, 180, 233). In Horn's new iteration of the Wandering Jew legend, watching and witnessing become intimate acts of passing cultural memory through generations. Recognition of the importance of this witness affects not only Rachel, but Hannah as well. Hannah abandons her research into immortality and devises a new medicine to treat dementia, a cure for memory loss. Hannah comes to understand that "one generation replacing another" is the true human path (Horn 2018, 232).

Horn's adaptation of the legend of the immortal Jew depicts memory on an intimate level that allows for nuanced examination of gendered, interpersonal dynamics. At the same time, because Rachel has personal memory of the destruction of the temple, her life takes on additional collective significance, just as the Wandering Jew's does in the Christian tradition of the legend. In this way, Rachel's life, although rendered through a wealth of details of feelings and experiences, is a personal memory that encompasses much of Jewish cultural memory, including memory of the history of Jerusalem. As we saw in part III, memory of Jerusalem is itself accretive and contested. When asked about the broader implications of her novel's settings and themes in an interview, Horn rejected the idea that the novel's setting in ancient Jerusalem was "political":

> It occurred to me as I was writing the novel that someone could read it and say this is a political book because it is about the Jewish people's ties to Jerusalem. But how is that political? It's just a historical reality. The idea that the Jewish people's historical reality is somehow political is really absurd if you think about it. There is something so tiring about the idea that historical facts are up for debate. I'm not a political person or writer. (Ghert-Zand 2018).[4]

Horn is not (at least for now) a political writer in the mold of Heym or even Sue, both of whom were literary activists who went on to hold legislative positions. I don't believe, however, that one can reduce *Eternal Life* to a presentation of "historical fact." We have looked at a variety of forms of narrative representation of historical events, from Matthew Paris's *Chronica* to the fiction of Heine and Asch. If we return to the quote we examined from Maurice Halbwachs's *Legendary Topography of the Holy Land* (1971; 1992, 219) we are reminded of how memory and, I would suggest, the representation of historical evidence, can be changed over time: "These memories slowly gain authority and a kind of consecration. But at the same time, and in the long run, the new community takes these traditions up in the current of its memories and detaches them from a past that has become increasingly obscure——from, so to speak, the dark times when these traditions had lost significance." Halbwachs writes of the development of Christian memory of the Holy Land, itself a type of supersession, as I argued. Horn, in contrast, explores memory from within the Jewish community as it develops over time.

Horn shows how this cultural memory is shaped by interpretation, even linking this interpretation and the development of collective memory to a major plot point in the novel. In *Eternal Life*, a friendly disagreement about history is the beginning of the relationship between Rachel and Elazar. Elazar, who is fascinated by Rachel, strikes up a conversation with her as she visits the temple on an errand for her father. She agrees to meet him in an underground tunnel because he says he can prove false her belief that this ancient water tunnel was built by Babylonian conquerors of Jerusalem. The tunnel was created, Elazar asserts, by King Hezekiah, as recorded in the Book of Kings. Driven as much by curiosity as attraction, Rachel braves the darkness and the forbidden act of meeting a man alone. She and Elazar examine together an inscription whose script clearly proves that Elazar is right. Their shared knowledge of the ancient script, an obscure form of cultural memory, is knowledge of a tradition that seems lost; it is one of the sparks that ignites their feelings for each other. Their meeting to determine a difference in opinion about the past is the first of many secret liaisons and becomes, within the novel, the beginning of the sustained cultural memory of Judaism in the diaspora: their vows make it possible for their child, Yochanan ben Zakkai, to create a "portable Jerusalem" for the Jews.

Rachel and Elazar's relationship and their shared memories of persecution also allow for the novel's other interpretive reflections on Jewish history. Horn subtly incorporates mention of what she has elsewhere called the "Eicha problem" into her account of Rachel and Elazar's time together. The Eicha problem is what Horn (2008) sees as the tendency among Jews to blame themselves for misfortunes that befall the Jewish people. In one scene, Elazar is speaking to two rabbis who attribute the destruction of the Second Temple to Jewish sinfulness. Elazar interjects: "Actually, the Temple was destroyed because of the enemy's superior weaponry" (Horn 2018, 105). He then proceeds to instruct the men in arcane details of temple ritual that he remembers from his own personal experience. This display of knowledge leads to his appointment as a rabbinical teacher. Horn thus uses her fictional character to demonstrate and counter the Eicha problem.

Reunited in the twenty-first century, Rachel and Elazar discuss the catastrophes that have shaped the Jewish Lamentations tradition, with the twist that they have personally experienced these events. Horn here also provides nuance. Elazar and Rachel have both faced suffering and loss, but they have reacted differently to their experiences. Through their conversations, the novel explores the individualized differences within personal memories, even if, as Halbwachs has asserted, personal memory is shaped through collective memory. Because Rachel's perspective is presented in third-person close throughout the novel, her perspective dominates. Centuries of persecution have made her extremely wary. She observes, for example, that many troubles from ancient to modern times have begun with angry protesters gathering in front of a store she runs, and she recalls twenty centuries of visits from spies, enforcers, and thugs (Horn 2018, 95, 163). Elazar, in contrast, is by nature transgressive and more eager to embrace the new than Rachel is.

He appears to have taken more active risks throughout his long life. He has even attempted revenge on Spanish Inquisitors, an act that led to the execution of his entire family at the time. Rachel learns that Elazar's last identity ended in Gaza, where he was serving as a reservist in the Israeli army. This fate creates a chain of connections between this site of conflict and Elazar's earlier fates during the Inquisition and the Holocaust, once again applying the unique temporality of the Wandering Jew legend to the novel's other Eternal Jew. Elazar's story also again highlights differences between the two characters. Elazar cannot understand how Rachel has not returned to dwell in the city of her birth, where he has spent the past forty years. Rachel has visited Jerusalem. She recalls that when she brought her family to Jerusalem in 1968, "She had seen the Western Wall and had crumpled into hysterical, gagging, wrenching sobs. To be so close, and to still be trapped!" (Horn 2018, 13). Here again, Horn combines the personal and the collective. For Rachel, the destruction of the temple means that there will never be a holy site where she might be released from her vow.

At the same time, this detail of a specific year—the only one mentioned in the entire novel—shows that Rachel has returned to the temple site just after the 1967 war that led to Israeli government control over Jerusalem. In an interview, Horn has spoken of an immortality that is not only personal, but "national": "In Judaism there is such a thing as immortality, but it's not necessarily a personal immortality. It's a national immortality. It's our [Jewish] story that lives on forever" (Ghert-Zand 2018). This immortality, I believe, can be viewed as cultural memory. In this regard, Horn's novel bears similarity to Fleg's 1933 *Jésus: raconté par le Juif errant*, which brings into dialogue his own personal relationship to Jerusalem and the cultural memory represented through the voice of the Wandering Jew, even down to representation of visceral reaction to the memory site of Jerusalem. Heym also uses the Wandering Jew legend to expose how a nation-state can attempt to manipulate memory. While Horn's self-description as an apolitical writer seems diametrically opposed to Heym's activism, her narrative shaping does have political implications, highlighting through the ancient water tunnel inscription the deep Jewish roots of Jerusalem. The narrator shares Rachel's thoughts when she observes protestors urging a boycott of Israel outside her store in the novel's opening pages: "It was odd, she thought. She wasn't Israeli, at least not the way these people thought. Or rather, she was, in exactly the way these people thought. In either case, it made no sense" (Horn 2018, 2). Horn here skirts the type of direct political discourse we see in Heym's satiric attacks on German antisemitism and GDR authoritarianism and in Fleg's calls for global peace, but Horn's novel nevertheless raises political issues, presenting a representation of imagined community just as we have seen in the work of other artists who engage the Wandering Jew legend.

Sarah Perry: *Melmoth*

Fleg's Wandering Jew represents himself as a "witness" (Fleg 1933b, 262; Fleg 1935, 273). The acts of watching and witnessing are also central to Sarah Perry's *Melmoth*, in which the narrator, who turns out at the novel's end to be the cursed Melmoth herself, several times exhorts the reader to "*Look*!" (see, e.g., Perry 2018, 5, 160, 247, 270). The main object of the narrator's attention in this novel is Helen Franklin, an Englishwoman who lives in Prague, the primary setting for the novel. The reason for Helen's self-imposed exile and self-punishing lifestyle only emerges later in the work: many years before, while living in Manila, Helen committed a mercy killing and allowed her lover, Arnel, to take the blame for her actions. Because of Helen, Arnel endures many years in horrendous conditions in prison. Helen's failure to take responsibility for her own action is the source of her guilt and the reason that Melmoth stalks her. Before revealing Helen's story, Perry uses epistolary form—notes, reports, lists—to tell the story of others that Melmoth has haunted and seduced. As in Maturin's original *Melmoth the Wanderer*, Melmoth targets individuals who are vulnerable or desperate, or who have done wrong. In one story in Perry's *Melmoth*, conveyed in the form of a preserved seventeenth-century letter, Alice Benet, a fictional sixteenth-century English Protestant persecuted under Queen Mary, is seduced by Melmoth to betray her beliefs and escape burning at the stake, only to endure horrible decades at Melmoth's side. The story of Nameless and Hassan, witnesses to the Armenian genocide, is revealed through the Cairo diary of a young Englishwoman. Another story of witness to the cruelty of UK immigration law is told through a letter from Karel, a Czech friend of Helen's.

The most extensive of the book's artifacts of witness is the Hoffman Document, which tells the story of another object of Melmoth's attention, Josef Hoffman. Hoffman was born in 1926 into a family that was affected by the great geopolitical shifts at the end of World War I. His father was a former Bohemian citizen who felt dispossessed in the new state of Czechoslovakia. During the Second World War, the Hoffman family welcomed the German occupation of Prague. Young Josef, influenced by his parents and the political atmosphere all around him, contributes to the deaths of Freddie and Franz Bayer, Jewish twins who have fled Germany with their family, and who are attempting to pass as non-Jews in order to survive. Although the twins have been friendly to Josef, his jealousy of them leads him to betray them to a local policeman. The Hoffman Document also recounts violence against German residents of Prague after the German defeat. This experience of trauma by his own family does not, however, expiate Josef's sin.

The Hoffman Document is a personal history recounted in the first person. It includes footnotes that explain things like etymologies and historical background (Perry 2018, 5, 160, 247, 270). In *Melmoth the Wanderer*, Maturin also employs footnotes, which lend an air of documentary facticity to his often-outlandish interlocking tales. Through these notes, Maturin, an Anglo-Irish Protestant minister, provides additional (not always accurate) information about historical events and also about Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, and even demonology. Maturin's footnotes guide the reader through unfamiliar references, but also at the same time emphasize the exotic and even alien nature of encounters with non-Christians. Their strangeness echoes and augments that of the mysterious Melmoth himself, although Maturin never does fully reveal Melmoth's origins or his final fate.

The first footnote in the Hoffman Document appears after mention of the River Eger. The note examples how Eger is the German name by which Josef knew the river as a child. This name has been replaced by the Czech name of Ohře. Hoffman includes a bit more documentary evidence by recounting an "old joke": "the Ohře must surely be the only warm river in the Czech lands, since *ohřát* means 'warm,' but when I swam there as a boy I always came out shivering. It runs to what is now called Terezin, but which I knew as Theresienstadt" (Perry 2018, 31). This footnote replays more than place name etymology and through it a fictionalized personal memory. The flow of its words, like the flow of the cold river Ohře, leads us to Theresienstadt. This name will trigger for many readers the memory that, during the Second World War, Theresienstadt was the site of a concentration camp. And, indeed, this camp is where the twins Franz and Freddie Bayer perish. The Hoffman Document describes how not long after Josef informs on the Bayers, he learns from his father that they have been sent to Theresienstadt. The combination of Josef's date of birth and the mention of Theresienstadt, a site of Holocaust memory, provide a first clue of the tragic story that the Hoffman Document will reveal. Perry conveys this sequence movingly through rich prose, amplified by her symphonically complex use of imagery. The sequence also, to my mind, uses the reference to the concentration camp as an instrument: the name Theresienstadt conjures up the memory of Jewish suffering. In Perry's *Melmoth*, the Holocaust comes to function as a kind of paradigmatic evil through which all the other acts of cruelty and betrayal portrayed—from early modern England to modern-day Manila—are filtered. Jewish experience, triggered by a single name, serves as an instrument of memory.

The reader learns of the final fate of the Bayer twins not through the Hoffman Document, but through a scene in which Helen and her companion Adaya come across a "stumbling stone" that memorializes a girl murdered on August 19, 1942, in Theresienstadt at age sixteen. This stumbling stone is a *Stolperstein*, one of thousands of memorials that can be found across Europe and worldwide. As the novel explains, *Stolpersteine* are "brass plates that mark places where men and women and children were taken from their homes to be murdered in the camps" (Perry 2018, 105). The *Stolpersteine* are a memorial art project begun by Gunter Demnig in Cologne in 1992. Each *Stolperstein* is placed where a victim of the Holocaust once lived. The inscription on each begins "Here lived" and then provides the details of the person's fate after displacement or flight. The combination of the details in the Hoffman document and the scene with this Stolperstein allow the reader to make their own connections about the fate of the twins.

These memorials are themselves of interest to us because, like the Wandering Jew, they can be "spotted," literally "stumbled upon," in a way that collapses the time between the last moment when an individual was able to lead their life freely and, typically (although not always), the time when they met their death. Like Perry's novel, the *Stolpersteine* provide a form of powerful witness, but in creating *lieux de mémoire*, they also transform the lives lost into objects of memory not unlike the Christian relics discussed in chapter 1. To me, the ritualized placement of each *Stolperstein* by Demnig himself, along with campaigns to polish and clean these memorials, echoes modes of relic veneration (see Apperly 2019). The *Stolpersteine* memorials have served as important tools for the recovery and preservation of individual and local histories and the memorialization of the persecuted. As works of memory they are also designed to discourage future hatred and violence (see Lampert-Weissig 2015). At the same time, these stumbling stones resemble Augustine's descriptions of Jews as "milestones," which stand as markers along the path that Christians must tread to find salvation.[5]

In my opinion, the question of perspective and of voice—and not the choice to focus on the life of Christ versus the temple's destruction—is what accounts for the most significant difference between Perry's approach to the Wandering Jew as an instrument of memory and those by Nevo and Horn. Engagement with the story of Jesus does not necessarily muffle the Jewish elements in the entangled Jewish and Christian cultural memories that inform the Wandering Jew tradition. Because, however, the story of Freddie and Franz is told in order to tell the story of Josef, these Jewish characters lack their own instruments of memory, their own voices, and they are thus less subject than object. Voicing and the representation of the interaction between personal and collective memory are what characterize the Wandering Jew tradition's most fully realized instruments of memory and what have created space for Jewish uses of the Wandering Jew as an instrument of Jewish cultural memory.

Conclusion

David Pinski's play *Der eybiker yid* (The Eternal Jew), which derives from a narrative in Lamentations Rabbah, depicts the arrival of a man dressed as a peddler in a small Jewish village outside Jerusalem (Pinski 1914 [Yiddish]; 1918 [English]). The stranger announces the Holy City's fall to the Romans and tells the villagers that a child was born on the day of Jerusalem's destruction. This child will become the messiah who will rebuild the temple and restore the city to the Jews (A. Cohen 1939, 136–38; see Hasan-Rokem 2000, 152–60). The man is in search of this child, and the villagers soon discover that his words are true. The child's mother is located, but the village learns that the child has been swept away by a whirlwind. This tragic event is due to the sin of the stranger, who, when he had first heard that Jerusalem was under siege, had failed to come to the city's aid, choosing instead to tend his fields (Hasan-Rokem 1986b, 193; Weik 2015, 194–97). Because of this failure, the stranger is forced to wander, ever in search of the messiah.

Pinski's one-act drama was a well-known work in its day. Written in Yiddish in 1906 and also translated into Hebrew, it was taken up by the director Konstantin Stanislavski and performed in 1919 by the landmark avant-garde theater troupe Habima in Moscow (Abeliovich 2019b, 209). Between 1919 and 1958 Habima gave over three hundred performances of *The Eternal Jew* all around the world, including in Palestine, where the troupe eventually located permanently. During his 1931 Palestine trip, Edmond Fleg saw a Habima performance (Fleg 1933, 136–37; see also Abeliovich 2019a, 24–25). He describes Habima as putting on a true "people's theater," as three or perhaps four thousand people gathered in a simple open-air theater to watch the performance; all still dressed in their work clothes. For Fleg (1933a, 137–38), the most arresting element of the event was that the play was performed in Hebrew:

> The curtain rises. The new and at the same time ancient language which they hear, which they understand—for they have all learned it so that they might live together here,—that language which they have chosen, to replace all the others in the community of daily contacts, not only unites them like *Esperanto*, in the moment of today, but unites them across the centuries with their ancestors, who spoke it three thousand years before them. It recreates them, by its sonorous vibrations, in flesh, in nerves, and in the soul of their race. And the characters of the drama, which they look upon, assume the proportions of those fabulous heroes, whose blood still runs in their veins.

Fleg's account of the revival of Hebrew as a spoken language portrays this revival not only as a tool for creating community, but as an act of memory. Hebrew's linguistic renewal fosters community through daily interactions, but also through the sonic and somatic connections of Hebrew speakers with Jewish cultural memory. Fleg (1933a, 139) writes of the Habima experience that "a very ancient people who thru its theatre is reborn to a consciousness of itself, thru it again learns of the ancient miracles, and thanks to it, creates new miracles." This act of rebirth is itself a type of temporal collapse as modern speakers are joined "across the centuries" with their ancestors of millennia before.

The Habima production that Fleg saw was Pinski's *The Eternal Jew*. Fleg (1933a, 138) connects the play's prophetic wanderer, who both proclaims and awaits the messiah, to the Wandering Jew of legend, referring to the wandering stranger as "Le Juif errant," the same name he uses for the Wandering Jew figure in his 1933 *Jésus: raconté par le Juif errant*. Fleg's attention to the language of the production and its effect highlights how the Habima production served as a vital instantiation of Jewish cultural memory. In Habima's production, the soundscape and the visual presentation displayed a world completely rooted in Jewish tradition and, as Ruthie Abeliovich (2019b, 218) shows, engaged in the transformative potential of "an emerging national community." Abeliovich (2019a, 26; 2019b, 219) has analyzed recordings of actress Hanna Rovina in Habima's 1923 production of the play, revealing how Rovina's portrayal of the messiah's grieving mother incorporated into her performance "sonic sediments" of the liturgies of Tisha b'Av and Yom Kippur as well as the kaddish prayer intoned in remembrance of the dead.[1] Abeliovich (2019b, 217) argues that "the synagogue's liturgical practices functioned for Rovina and her audience as soundscapes in which past sonic memories lingered and could be retrieved as an accessible esthetic resource."[2] The visuals of Habima's production, which also included sets and stage direction that evoked the traditions of the Western Wall, also further embed Pinski's *Eternal Jew* within Jewish cultural memory. The staging and sets reproduce the *lieu de mémoire* of the temple through sight and sound. Rovina's performance in the Habima production also presents an innovative shift in tradition by inverting the female role in lamentation, which typically occurs in the "open space" of the cemetery (Abeliovich 2019b, 212, 219; see also Hasan-Rokem 2014). Within the walls of the theater, Rovina's lamenting mother reverses the traditional lamentation of the synagogue, where male voices project to female ears. As Abeliovich (2019b, 219) so eloquently puts it, through her performance in "this conflict-charged border zone," Rovina

> enacts a vocal response to the first century's disastrous event in Jerusalem as well as to the recent pogroms in early twentieth-century Russia, the horrifying slaughter fields of the Great War that were still burning at the time, and to the Zionist longing for Jerusalem.

Rovina's haunting chant conveys collective experience and collective memory, illuminating and revealing its emotional core, all through the sound of a single female voice. Her voicing highlights a female perspective that emphasizes difference and embodiment.

Fleg does not address another kind of difference in the Habima performance, difference from the Christian versions of the Wandering Jew legend that he incorporated into his own creative work. In Pinski's play, as in Heinrich Heine's poems and in the novels we examined by Eshkol Nevo and Dara Horn, the destruction of the Second Temple serves as the fixed point of memory. Pinski's play makes no mention of Jesus; the relationship between the cursed wanderer and the messiah has its own autonomous trajectory. Fleg understands and accepts intuitively the symbiotic nature of the Wandering Jew tradition, which Galit Hasan-Rokem (2016, 159) has shown to be a Jewish-Christian "coproduction." In his *Legend of the Wandering Jew*, George K. Anderson (1965, 349), however, observes that Pinski's play "should be considered in any full study of the literary treatment of the [Wandering Jew] Legend, and yet, in spite of its occasional points of correspondence, it is an alien work." Anderson's use of the term *alien* is telling in its unwitting echo of Portia's judgment in *The Merchant of Venice*. Portia's "if it be proved against an alien" parses the law in a way that forces Shylock's forfeit of his fortune and his faith (Shakespeare 2010, 4.1.345). Shylock's Jewish identity places him both inside and outside of Venetian law. This inside-outside status is not unlike Anderson's treatment of Pinski's work. Anderson includes in his study of the legend Pinski's play *The Eternal Jew* because of its title and because of the roaming search of its main character, but he views it as alien presumably because the play's plot does not derive from a legendary encounter at the time of the Passion. Christian cultural memory is therefore not merely differently described and explained in Pinski's play, as it is, for example, in the works by Fleg and Sholem Asch. In Pinski's work, the critical encounter of the Christian legend and the cultural memory it conveys are superfluous to the play's meaning in all aspects except the choice of title. And, indeed, the play was also known as *Der fremder* (The Stranger).[3]

Shakespeare marks Shylock as an alien through his appearance and his speech, but, of course, what is alien depends on whom you ask. To Fleg and thousands of others who saw the Habima production of Pinski's play, these performances evoked realms of memory that were not alien, but familiar. Jewish writers and artists have long engaged Jewish cultural memory in order to reimagine and further develop the Wandering Jew tradition. A lack of awareness of this creative entanglement or a rejection of it could lead to a critical assessment of works like Pinski's as alien to the Wandering Jew tradition. It should be clear, however, that since at least Heine's treatment of the Wandering Jew, if not before, a significant, rich strand of representation of memorial entanglement has emerged. This entangled tradition of the Wandering Jew as instrument of memory, while engaging to varying degrees with the legend's Christian elements, is also rooted in Jewish cultural memory.[4]

I end this with mention of Pinski's play and Rovina's chant because, like the generation of men's voices in Heine's 1851 "Jehuda ben Halevy," they underscore how voice and representations of it can serve as instruments of memory. In the early sources of the legend that we explored, Matthew Paris's thirteenth-century *Chronica majora* and the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung*, the Wandering Jew's voice is conveyed through the accounts of others. The Wandering Jew's vast range of memories are muted, packed away beneath layers of retelling that filter and muffle his individual humanity. His personal memory of his Jewish life and community are entirely subsumed by the memory of the Passion. This stifling of memory is as much a type of conversion as is his fabled spiritual conversion from Jew to Christian. This same engulfing of personal memory continues in works like Eugène Sue's 1844 *Le Juif errant*, where, as we have seen, the novel's mortal Jewish characters, the Samuels, must put aside personal remembrance of their lost son in order to serve the memory of Marius Rennepont. Like Sue's Wandering Jew and Jewess, they are utterly bound by this commitment to a Christian family. Even in Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart's early lyric voicing of the Wandering Jew and the echoes of his work among Romantic poets, the Wandering Jew's created voice, his instrument of memory, still sounds alien. He is depicted as alienated from the rest of the human world not only through his *Weltschmerz* (world weariness). As a Jew, this Romantic Ahasverus is inherently alien to his non-Jewish creators.

Heine, however, while well aware of the dominant, Christian tradition of the Wandering Jew and of the specific pain of *Judenschmerz*, uses the Wandering Jew's voice to demonstrate entanglement, an entanglement not only of Christian and Jewish cultural memory, but of the individual with the collective. One of Maurice Halbwachs's most essential contributions to our understanding of memory is the observation that individual memories are shaped through the social. *How* this takes place is more challenging to explain. The Jewish artists that we have discussed intuited the Wandering Jew legend as a legend of entangled memory. Their reimaginings of it not only reveal the entanglement of Jewish and Christian cultural memory, but also—because of how they acknowledge and explore the Wandering Jew's humanity—reveal something of how this social shaping of personal memory plays out. Their insights into this process are perhaps all the richer because of their own lived experiences. As members of Jewish minority communities living within Christian-dominated societies, these artists were exposed to the effects of shaping from more than one collective. Uri Zvi Greenberg's 1923 "In the Kingdom of the Cross" presents a speaker whose personal memories are shaped by a vividly rendered Christian world, whose influence he ultimately repudiates. When those brief lines in the voice of Greenberg's Ahasver rip through his poem they convey resistance to the shaping of individual memory from what Greenberg shows to be oppressive and evenly deadly external pressures. Stefan Heym too portrays resistance in depicting his immortal Ahasver as continually waging a revolutionary struggle against the powers that seek not only to control land and bodies, but memories as well. The autobiographical narrator of Fleg's *Jésus* carries out a dialogue with the Wandering Jew, enacting the centrality of the encounter to this interface between personal and collective memory. Fleg's experience is also an encounter with the landscape of Jerusalem itself, a reckoning with the different meanings that place can hold for members of different groups. Marc Chagall, through his visual medium, enacts the interface between the social and the individual by transplanting Jesus on the cross, a memorial object for Christians and non-Christians as well, onto the landscape of Jewish experience. His work illustrates how social context, how the people and events that surround us, can reshape even the most familiar and seemingly stable of *lieux de mémoire*.

It is the ability to make the familiar strange *and* to recognize the familiar in the strange that makes works like those by Heine and Chagall, Greenberg, Fleg, Asch, and Heym so powerful. Their creations, which grow from an impulse to understand or even to identify with the Wandering Jew's humanity, lead to exploration of the dynamic interfaces between personal and collective memory as well as exploration of the entangled nature of Jewish and Christian cultural memory. The Wandering Jew tradition, with its central focus on memory, provides a wealth of examples through which artists have rendered this process, as captured so beautifully in the poem with which we began, Edwin Arlington Robinson's (1928, 456) "The Wandering Jew":

> I saw by looking in his eyes
> That they remembered everything.

The writers and artists who have interpreted the Wandering Jew legend over the centuries and who continue to interpret it in our own times bring to life Halbwachs's insights into how individual memory is shaped through social experience, through encounter. Because of this tradition of interpretation, the Wandering Jew serves as an important figure for the study of cultural memory. The legend and its many creative reimaginings provide meaningful sources through which to imagine and to explore this process. Let us finally note, however, how in Robinson's stanza, the Wandering Jew is the object of encounter: the speaker meets him. The Jewish writers and artists discussed in this book also encounter the Wandering Jew, and he is, of course, the object of their imaginations. They have, however, allowed him (or her) not only to be seen, but to see and to share a Jewish perspective. Their more complex renderings of the Wandering Jew recognize not only the entanglement of Jewish and Christian cultural memory, but also the impact of that entanglement on Jewish subjects, presented with complexity and sympathy through a more fully realized legend.

Notes

Introduction

1. The term *legend* itself is the subject of scholarly debate and inquiry, especially among folklorists, who have greatly contributed to the study of the Wandering Jew legend. I find useful Timothy R. Tangherlini's (1990: 379) observation that legends are "best characterized as *historicized* narrative." This working definition is compatible with this project's interest in the influence of the legend's medieval textual sources, especially through the work of Matthew Paris. For Matthew and other medieval Christians, the term *legend* would be related to the Latin *legenda*, a generic classification for the life of a saint. The Wandering Jew is no saint, but the two most influential textual sources for the Wandering Jew tradition, Matthew Paris's *Chronica majora* and the 1602 *Kurtze Beschreibung*, were created in cultural contexts in which the lives of the saints and their afterlives, through their relics, were of great importance. The equally debated term *tradition* also appears frequently in this book. When I refer to the "Wandering Jew tradition" I am speaking of the vast body of representations of the Wandering Jew across media, a body of works influenced by orally transmitted narrative. This project is animated by my interest in how individual artists engage with the Wandering Jew tradition, broadly conceived, and especially how they respond to the importance of memory within it.

2. Who do I mean by *we*? In writing this book I have imagined an audience who, like me, has a strong interest in the history of Jewish-Christian relations and in the representation of those relations through the arts, examined through a secular perspective.

3. Hasan-Rokem's approach is also in keeping with some of the most important recent scholarship on Jewish-Christian relations, which foregrounds the interrelationships that have existed between the two communities for centuries. See, for example, Boyarin (2006), Carlebach (2011), Marcus (2012), Nisse (2017), and Yuval (2006).

4. Marcello Massenzio (2018, 16) speaks of the two traditions as Christian and Jewish horizons: *orizzonte cristiano* and *orizzonte ebraico*. This orientation met-

aphor has some affinity to my conception of the Wandering Jew as an instrument calibrated by artists who depict him. The important work of Richard I. Cohen (1998 and 2008) has demonstrated the interrelationships between Christian and Jewish interpretations of the legend in the visual arts.

5. The Christian exegetical connection between Cain and the Jewish diaspora as an influence on the Wandering Jew tradition will be discussed further in part I.

6. Fisch (1980, 127) also suggests a parallel narrative from Genesis Rabbah 33, in which a rabbi is cursed with a toothache for thirteen years for harshly refusing to aid a calf on its way to slaughter, a parallel to the Wandering Jew encounter with Jesus on the Via Dolorosa.

7. Assmann also refers to such critical temporal "fixed points" (*Fixpunkte*) as "figures of memory" (*Erinnerungsfiguren*). I choose to use "fixed point," which better expresses in English the usage I intend.

8. Shelly Zer-Zion (2008, 141) also connects the legend to Nora's work.

9. Patrick Geary (1994b, 3–22) and Judith Pollmann (2017), historians of the medieval and early modern periods, respectively, provide excellent critique of the limiting effects of periodization boundaries within memory studies.

10. The idea of the figure of the Jew as "instrument" resonates with Anna Sapir Abulafia's (194–228, esp. 197) important analysis of medieval Christian instrumentalization of Jewish persons and Jewish beliefs as well as Christian anti-Jewish violence and the response of medieval Jews to this treatment.

11. The medieval "Vengeance of our Lord" tradition is discussed in chapter 1.

12. Anderson's study does not discuss Heine and Greenberg's representations.

13. The most notorious allusions to the legend come from the National Socialist regime. See Benz (2010).

14. I find illuminating Jeffrey Sammons's (1969, 349–58) discussion of Heine's relationship to Judaism in his last years.

Introduction to Part One

1. This is Augustine's translation from his *De Civitate Dei* [The City of God] 18.46, cited in Cohen 1999, 33. I follow Psalm numeration according to the Masoretic text. See discussion in Cohen 1999, 33n23.

Chapter 1

1. The beginning of the thirteenth century saw an unprecedented transfer of relics taken to western Europe due to the pillaging of Constantinople in the Fourth Crusade (1202–4) (Geary 1994a, 222).

2. Suzanne Lewis (1987, 379) contends that "the two Corpus Christi manuscripts were first finished as one volume as early as 1251." On the chronology of the manuscripts, particularly with regard to illustration, see S. Lewis (1987, 187). For a brief and accessible discussion of the textual history of the *Chronica* manuscripts, including CCCC MSS 16 and 26, see Vaughn (1993). Digitized scans of CCCC

MSS 16 and 26 can be accessed through the website Parker Library on the Web, hosted by Stanford University Libraries, https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/catalog/qt808nj0703

3. Modern scholars distinguish more strongly between the genres of chronicle and annals than medieval authors did, and it is therefore not unusual that Matthew's *Chronica* would contain generic elements of both chronicle and annal. See E. Coleman (2007, 3); see also J. Coleman (1992); Smalley (1975).

4. Wodan, interestingly, is connected with the Wandering Jew in folklore; see Blind (1986). In the opening to the novel *Der neue Ahasver*, about German Jewish identity, Fritz Mauthner (1882) pairs Ahasver and Wodan as allegorical representations of Jews and Germans.

5. Israel Jacob Yuval (2006) and Amnon Lindner (1996) both discuss the role that the fall of Jerusalem came to play in Christian liturgy, with connections to Easter and to Tisha b'Av.

6. Nicholas Vincent (2001, 151–53) recounts how the monks of Glastonbury borrowed from Grail romances in order to enhance the histories surrounding their abbey's relics, an indication of the intersection between the Grail romance and religious practice. The legend of Joseph of Arimathea, whom Robyn Malo (2013, 101) calls a "globe-trotting relic custodian," is interesting to consider in the broader context of thirteenth-century interpretations of the Wandering Jew legend.

7. Cynthia White (2009, 377, 380) records a similar, roughly contemporary reference to the eagle as a figure of rejuvenation in a version of the thirteenth-century Northumberland Bestiary.

8. The *Historia Anglorum* was copied and abridged from the two *Chronica* manuscripts now in the Parker Library (Vaughan 1958, 61–65). The manuscript of the *Historia Anglorum* is housed in the British Library, Royal MS 14 C VII and is viewable online through the British Library, http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Royal_MS_14_C_VII, f. 4v. Matthew's *Chronica* map can be accessed through Parker Library on the Web, https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/catalog/rb378fk5493, f. iiiv. The Armenia connection fades from the Wandering Jew tradition, with the notable exception of a connection to "the Armenian" in Schiller (1789). On early legends of the Eternal Jew that portray him as dwelling eternally in Jerusalem, see Shagrir (2018). On "history" and "fictionality" in medieval chronicle, see Otter (1996).

9. Original: "En Hermenie est l'arche noe. Vers cestes parties, co est a saver vers boire de Ierusalem a vint iurnees est armenie, ki est crestiene, u l'arche noe est, ki uncore dure. La meint Ioseph cartaphila ki vit u hon mena nostre seignur a crucifier; Ananie ki baptiza seint poil le baptiza" (S. Lewis 1987, 507n77). If, as some speculate, the *Historia Anglorum* manuscript, in which some of Matthew's sharper observations about the monarchy do not appear, was designed for use by those outside Saint Albans' walls (as opposed to the *Chronica*, designed for internal use), it is interesting that this reference to the Wandering Jew is written in Anglo-Norman, making it accessible to those who do not understand Latin.

10. In his sin and his redemption Joseph Cartaphilus can be seen as a figure

for all sinners. Scholars have scrutinized the name Cartaphilus and its possible meanings, agreeing that it can be broken down into *kartos* and *philos*, translating to "dearly loved," which could be a kind of referent to the individual sinner, loved despite his transgression. Scholars also link Cartaphilus to Christ's disciple John, but neither the name nor the description marks him as Jewish. See G. Anderson (1965, 19).

11. In the thirteenth century, there were two territories referred to as Armenia: Armenia Major and Armenia Minor, also known as Cicilia. Roger's account specifies that the visitors are from Armenia Major, which had experienced its first Mongol invasion in 1220 and would "become a no-man's land of conflicting Mongol and Turcoman groups when the Ilkhanid realm disintegrated ca. 1335" (Collette and Dimarco 2001, 319). See also Der Nersessian (1969) and Bedrosian (1981, 39, 103–4, 186) on the political makeup of Armenia Major.

12. If we accept Connolly's (1999, 606) fascinating thesis that Matthew's uniquely designed and folded maps provide "a sensate vehicle for imagined pilgrimage," this parallel takes on even more possible meaning for the monastic reader.

13. S. Lewis (1987, 303) transcribes the banners as "Vade Jhesu ad iudicium tibi preparatum" and "Vado sicut scriptum est de me. Tu vero expectabis donec veniam."

14. Along with this image from the *Chronica*, a nearly contemporary image from the *De Brailes Hours* also depicts the Wandering Jew as temporally static. See Lampert-Weissig (2017). There is also an image in a twelfth-century manuscript of Augustine, the *Tractatus in epistolam Iohannis*, dated to 1140, that some scholars believe is the Wandering Jew, although the identification is far less clear than in the thirteenth-century examples. See Wolfthal (1985, 221) and Schmitt (2001, 59–61).

15. Eszter Losonczi (2012, 40) argues that because Joseph Cartaphilus "is a tormenter of Christ, he automatically becomes a Jew." I am not convinced of this guilt-by-association reading, but I see Matthew's image as figuring Jewish identity. On Cain and the Jews, see Mellinkoff (1981), particularly p. 97, which cites a letter from Pope Innocent III to the Count of Nevers on the connection between Cain and the Jews, who "ought to remain" as earthly "wanderers." Full letter in translation in Chazan (1980, 174–76). See also Losonczi (2012, 38–41), Mellinkoff (1993, 1:130), and Bale (2010, 65–89).

16. In Matthew's illustrations, the True Cross is a deep green, just as it is in his illustration of Christ rebuking the Wandering Jew. This color may tie back to the idea of just vengeance. As Thomas N. Hall (1991, 297–99) has shown, there is a strand in the Latin *Vindicta Salvatoris* tradition that influences Old English texts that speaks of Christ hung on a *lignum viride*, a green tree, and also of the Jews being punished for this at the fall of Jerusalem by being hung on dry trees. This conjuncture echoes Luke 23:31.

17. Robert C. Stacey (1992, 264) notes that Jews were subject to "Christian militancy" and would likely frequently view Christian processions, given that they lived "check by jowl" with their Christian neighbors. In 1268, some Jews reacted to this provocation by attacking a processional cross (Cluse 1995).

18. S. Lewis (1987, 136) observes that reading Matthew's chronicles "reveals a remarkable sense of English identity and pride, often verging on xenophobia."

19. The narrative and testimonial quality of the *Chronica* accounts calls to mind for me the interesting folklore studies concept of the memorat, in which an individual recounts their personal memory of interaction with a legendary or supernatural being. The accounts given by the Armenian visitors resemble this form (Sydow 1934).

20. Cecil Roth (1941, 38) used a now widely cited metaphor of the Jews as the king's "milch cow." For a clearer picture on the economic status of medieval Anglo-Jewry, see Mell (2017, esp. chap. 5) and Bale and Rosenthal (2022).

21. Stacey (1997) meticulously details the political haste behind the expulsion decree. We lack solid evidence that Edward I knew that his decree was issued on Tisha b'Av. Nevertheless, we cannot rule out that he was aware of the significance of Av 9 to Jews, and one can well imagine that once the parliamentary negotiations were secured this coincidence of timing would have appealed to Edward if he was in fact aware of it. As Professor Stacey pointed out to me, there were enough Jews present around the court, both in the Jewish Exchequer and at work with Queen Eleanor of Castile in her dealings in Jewish debts, to make available information about this timing (pers. comm., June 28, 2022). I am grateful to Professor Stacey for his generous response to my query about this coincidence in dates. Whether intentional on the part of the English monarchy or not, the coincidence of dates became and remains part of Jewish memorial observance of Tisha b'Av. I have consulted with numerous historians to attempt to confirm the correlation between 9 Av 5050 and 18 July 1290 and consulted the Rosetta Calendar site: https://www.rosettacalendar.com. I thank these colleagues for their guidance. If this correlation is not, in fact, factual, the error is mine.

Chapter 2

1. G. Anderson (1965, 45–47) provides an almost complete translation of a version of the *Kurtze Beschreibung*, which he attributes to the "Leyden translation in the British Museum" (45). The English translation in this chapter is taken from Anderson with some modifications. I have also consulted a facsimile of the 1602 pamphlet in Körte and Stockhammer (1995, 1; 9–14).

2. In his detailing of the pamphlet's context, Anderson (1965, 38–52) draws on earlier pioneering work such as that of Leonhard Neubaur (1884). See also Băleanú (2011, 51–57) and Schaffer 1920.

3. The *Wunder*, or *miraculum* (miracle), was seen as "evidence of the purposeful presence of God," a formulation with strong echoes of Matthew Paris's description of the Wandering Jew (Hardon 1954, 250, cited in Merback 2012, 8). See also Bynum (1997) and Soergel (1989).

4. Melanchthon, like Luther, engaged in a vigorous critique of the cult of saints, which Melanchthon believed to be essentially pagan in nature. That Melanchthon's student discovered a supernatural figure whose emphasis on the word of God and whose status as reformed sinner necessitate a now continual confession God's word makes the Wandering Jew much closer to the Lutheran reevaluation of the term *saint*. On Melanchthon's views, see Kolb (1987, 14–27) and Wengert (2006).

5. The pulpit is also a place of potential cultural ferment and change, "a contested territory; for a still-oral culture, it was where opinions were publicly disseminated" (Koerner 2004, 256).

6. Joseph Leo Koerner (2004, 333, 281) argues for a Reformation emphasis on the word of God that makes preaching "primary" in the Lutheran Church and that creates a "linguistified" sacred. Susan Karant-Nunn (2003, 194) discusses "crowds of people . . . who surrounded the pulpits." See also Rüttgerodt-Riechmann (2001, 106–11) on pulpits in early modern Hamburg; Hamberg (2002, 17–20) on the space of the Lutheran Church and the altar; Teter (2011, esp. chap. 1 and 2) on medieval and early modern conceptions of holy space for Jews and for Christians of different confessions (including Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, and Eastern Orthodox); and Bartlett (2013, 252–53) on the connection between relics and church altars during the medieval period.

7. R. Po-chia Hsia (2009, 269) similarly writes of the "strong apocalyptic terror" that "seized the theological heirs of Luther."

8. This idea resonates with Galit Hasan-Rokem's (1986b, 190) trenchant observation that the "primary function" of the legend is to "clarify that Jews will be treated as human beings only if and when they convert to Christianity."

9. A tantalizing connection between Haman and Armenians presents a possible, if perhaps unlikely, link between Matthew Paris's *Chronica* and the 1602 pamphlet. Elliott S. Horowitz (2006, 10) notes "acts of enmity toward Armenian processions and clergymen [by Jews] . . . reaching back to the tenth century, whereby Armenians were referred to, not always in a hostile manner, as 'Amalekites.'"

10. Purim plays are sometimes seen as related to *Fastnachtspiele* (Schaffer 1920, 33). Frank Ardolino (2001) argues that Esther plays, including one by Hans Sachs, are also about virtuous Protestants. Eduard König (1986) mentions Purim plays and their invective against non-Jews. Israel Abrahams (1960) discusses the Purim play as a genre going back to the Middle Ages along with some translated sections of early versions. On the *Purimshpil* form, Rozik (1996).

11. Evi Butzer (2003, 11) points out that among medieval and early modern Jews, the name Ahasuerus could be associated with a fool. Even if that is so, I do not think that this takes away from the idea of the Wandering Jew as submissive to Christian truth. Ahasuerus was foolish in his treatment of Christ and is spending an unending life repenting for this deed. Instead of the triumph of an Esther or the determination of a Mordechai, we have only the Jew who has completely assimilated into the dominant culture.

12. The accusation that Jewish leaders recognized Jesus as divine but chose to nevertheless "poison" the minds of the Jewish people by maintaining that he was not and slandering him goes back to at least the twelfth century, in the writings of Christian theologians like Peter Comestor. See Turner (2007, 193, 195).

13. In fascinating work, Sarit Kattan Gribetz (2011) suggests that going back as far as the fourth or fifth centuries, Jewish accounts sometimes conflated the executions of Jesus (Yeshu) and Haman. See also Kogman-Appel (2005, 196).

Introduction to Part II

1. Schubart uses the word *Jude* only once, in line 27.

2. G. Anderson (1965, 174–227) has ably assembled a survey of the major works between the publication of Schubart's poem and the beginning of the First World War, which I like to think of as the Wandering Jew's long nineteenth century. See also Thorslev (1962, 92–107). On Shelley's Wandering Jew, see G. Anderson (1965, 183–87) and Tinker (2009).

3. Original: "Er ist der personifizierte Weltschmerz." While a fairly capacious literary and philosophical concept, the term *Weltschmerz*, which comes from the German *Welt* (world) and *Schmerz* (pain) can be defined as "a weary or pessimistic feeling about life; an apathetic or vaguely yearning attitude" (Sharpe and LaFlaur 2002, s.v. "Weltschmerz").

4. Börne introduces the term *Judenschmerz* in 1819. Like *Weltschmerz*, this is a difficult concept to define briefly. A play on *Weltschmerz*, it combines the words *Schmerz* (pain) and *Juden* (Jews) to describe the alienation experienced by German Jews, who suffered many forms of discrimination that endured, as we will see in the case of Heine, even if they converted to Christianity.

5. In letters to his brother Maximilian, Heine refers to Julius Campe by the code name of the Jesuit villain of *Le Juif errant*, Rodin, indicating familiarity with the novel. Heine (1970, 23:235, 23:245).

Chapter 3

1. Maria Adamowicz-Hariasz (2001, 48–51) provides a listing of the publication dates of the novel's parts. Digitized copies of the novel's original run in *Le Constitutionnel* can be found through Gallica, the digital library of the National Library of France, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb32747578p/date

2. I am using *imagined community* here in the sense meant by Benedict Anderson (2006), with his emphasis on the role of print media in shaping national consciousness. On Anderson's theory in relation to the role of the historical novel in shaping memory and community, see Rigney (2012, 11).

3. Toussenel was later used by Édouard Drumont (1844–1917) in his infamous and overtly antisemitic 1886 volume *La France juive*. See J. Kaplan (2015). On the Jew as a figure for a new economic modernity, see Nirenberg (2013, 424–30).

4. Elsewhere, I discuss the 1240 "trials" in relation to medieval Wandering Jew representation and offer an additional bibliography; see Lampert-Weissig (2017, 179–81).

5. Original: "Si l'air pouvait s'accaperer et se vendre, il y a aurait un juif pour l'accaparer demain." Cited in J. Kaplan (2015, 50).

6. Original: "La pensée sous l'inspiration de laquelle ce livre a été écrit n'est pas hostile aux Juifs."

7. Original: "Les Juifs sont-ils des hommes? Voilà toute la question." Hallez states in a footnote that he cannot pinpoint his citation of Sieyès, but that he is certain that he has read it somewhere.

8. Original: "La véritable question, la seule question qui pouvait s'agiter au sujet des Juifs, c'était donc de savoir s'ils étaient des Français; et ici nous ne prenons pas le mot dans le sens juridique seulement, mais dans le sens moral."

9. Original: "Complètement incompatibles avec les conditions de la société moderne."

10. Unlike the Wandering Jew, Herodias actually does appear in the canonical Gospels of the New Testament (Mark 6:17; Matthew 14:3). The ancient historian Josephus portrays her as manipulative (*Antiquities*, 18.243). Herodias is often conflated with her daughter, Salome, who asked Herod for John the Baptist's head in return for a dance. Sue's portrayal of Herodias emphasizes her fidelity and faith rather than the more salacious and sensual elements traditionally associated with her. See Knapp (1996).

11. Original: "la grande famille humaine." The 1940 Modern Library English-language edition of Sue's novel, for which no translator is credited, is a "giant edition" combining two volumes in one binding, with separate pagination for each. I indicate the volume followed by the page number for this 1940 translation. The 1845 illustrated edition of the original novel is organized into four volumes, for which I provide the volume and page number as well.

12. Rue Saint-François was an actual Paris street name. The name was changed to Rue Debelleyme in 1865. See Wikipedia (2022). I am grateful to Professor Maria Adamowicz-Hariasz for her generous assistance in researching this location.

13. Original: "Cette image d'isolement, de noirceur, de vétusté, d'ancienneté et de conservatisme reste jusqu'à nos jours."

14. Hoog (2001, 113) briefly remarks on the Orientalizing aspects of Sue's portrayal of the Samuels. See also the brief discussion in Savy (2010, 117–19). Other very interesting readings, such as those by Rouart (1988) and Knecht (1977) have little to say on the Samuels.

15. The adulterous liaison of biblical David and Bathsheba led to the murder of Bathsheba's husband, Uriah. With this allusion, Sue could be intimating the dangerous potential of this seemingly innocuous pair, as will be discussed below.

16. Sue draws on a tradition that includes Maturin's Adonijah in *Melmoth the Wanderer* as well as Scott's portrayal of Isaac of York. See Lampert-Weissig (2019).

17. The charge that Jews use Hebrew as a "secret code" to hide their conspiracies from Christians reaches back into the medieval period. Examples can be found in Matthew Paris's *Chronica*, in the treatment of the Red Jews in John Mandeville's fourteenth-century *The Book of Marvels and Travels* (2012, 105), and in other sources as well. For a discussion of this charge and anti-Jewish conspiracy theories, see Lampert-Weissig (2021, 118–22).

18. Rodin twice curtly uses Hebrew to signify the incomprehensible, a subtle irony that does not diminish the novel's reliance on the marginalizing gesture that gave rise to the idiomatic expression "c'est de l'hébreu pour moi," which dates to the mid-seventeenth century. On the idiom, which bears comparison to "it's Greek to me" in English, see Ullendorf (1968).

19. Contemporary reactions to Deutz's betrayal include a poem by Victor Hugo that attacks Deutz as a treacherous Jew, comparing him to Judas and dubbing him a new Wandering Jew; see Hugo (1972).

20. On the important question of universalism and difference, especially in French contexts, I have learned from, among others, Samuels (2016); Schor (2001); Scott (2007).

21. The map, which is inserted between pages 254 and 255 in Sue (1845, vol. 2), can be viewed through Gallica, the digital library of the National Library of France, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8600217h/f302.item#

22. Bénédicte Bauchau (1983, 184) sees an explicit connection between well-poisoning accusations against Jews during the Black Death pandemic, the resuscitation of such claims of poisoning during the 1832 cholera epidemic, and Sue's choice to show the Wandering Jew as a bringer of plague. On contemporary rumors about the cholera epidemic as a poisoning plot, see Salomé (2015). On the medieval background of conspiracy theories about the Jews, see Lampert-Weissig (2021).

23. John the Baptist's head has long been treated as a relic; see Bartlett (2013, 241–43).

24. Actual French Jews lived through the same tumultuous events as their non-Jewish fellows, but for them the challenges of the times were compounded by the precarity attached to their religious identity, even after emancipation.

25. Ben-Lévi was the pen name of Godchaux Baruch Weil (1806–78), a mainstay contributor to *Les Archives Israélites*. The most important exploration of his work is Samuels (2010, 74–82). Ben-Lévi's essay appears to have been published no later than August 1844. *Le Juif errant* first appeared on June 25, 1844. On other contemporary reactions to *Le Juif errant*, see Knecht (1977, 245–60).

26. Sue himself, who was noted for the correspondence that he held with readers, responded to the essay publicly and graciously in a letter to *Les Archives Israélites* dated November 14, 1844, in which he thanks Ben-Lévi. See Sue (1844); see also Prendergast (2003), on Sue's relationship with his readers. *Les Mystères de Paris* has no Jewish main characters and only briefly mentions Jews as moneylenders (Sue 2015, 822).

27. Ben-Lévi's piece relies, interestingly for us, on a form of memory. His essay works because he shares with his reader a collective memory of the fictional world of *Les Mystères de Paris*. Some of his points of critique, such as the distinctions between *juif*, *israélite*, and *citoyen*, have some effectiveness without knowledge of *Les Mystères*, but other sections require knowledge of the novel and its world.

28. Original: Chez vous, chaque illustration israélite est une conquête sur le préjugé et un argument contre la malveillance; de sorte que l'on peut dire qu'en Europe: "On naît juif, on devient israélite; chez nous on naît, on vit et l'on meurt citoyen, et le pays n'en est pas plus malheureux, je vous assure."

29. The satirical print "Moses Gorden or the Wandering Jew" is viewable online through the website of the British Museum, no. 1868,0808.5672, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1868-0808-5672

Chapter 4

1. Original: "Es ist aber ganz bestimmt daß es mich sehnlichst drängt dem deutschen Vaterlande Valet zu sagen. Minder die Lust des Wanderns als die Qual persönlicher Verhältnisse (z. B. der nie abzuwaschende Jude) treibt mich von hinnen."

2. As I noted earlier, Ludwig Börne (1964, 286) introduced *Judenschmerz* in 1819. The term combines the words *Schmerz* (pain) and *Juden* (Jews) to describe the alienation experienced by German Jews.

3. My translation created with reference to Prawer (1983, 207). Thanks to Todd Kontje for his advice on this passage and this chapter.

4. I discuss Jan Assmann's concept of cultural memory in the introduction.

5. Discussion of Heine's Wandering Jew sometimes also includes his portrayal of the immortal Flying Dutchman, "the Wandering Jew of the sea," in *The Memoirs of Schnabelewopski* (1833), a portrayal that George Prochnik (2020, 243) says was "snatched" by Richard Wagner for his opera on the myth. See also Prawer (1983, 238). Gunnar Och (2003, 104–5) also references the figure of Herodias in *Atta Troll* (1841) as well as some more oblique but interesting references in his explanation to his *Doktor Faust* (1851), the French edition of his *Elemantargeister* (1837), and an 1819/20 translation of Lord Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*.

6. Jonathan Skolnik (2014, 46) discusses Heine adopting "historical fiction as a form of cultural memory for Jews." While Walter Scott's historical novels inspired Heine, Heine's illumination of Jewish history is the opposite of Scott's occlusion of it. See Lampert-Weissig (2010, 56–64). For pathbreaking work on the historical novel and memory, see Rigney (2012).

7. The ruins of this church still stand. Werner's cult and festival were only formally abolished in 1963. See Merback (2012, 297n27).

8. We can see similar uses of memory in other representations of Jews, such as Moses Lump in "Die Bäder von Lukka" (The Baths of Lucca, 1830), a character who rejoices each Sabbath over Israel's survival and triumph over those who seek to destroy it. See discussion in M. Meyer (2020).

9. Original: "Dein Großvater war ein kleiner Jude und hatte einen großen Bart."

10. "Daughter of Babylon the despoiler, / happy who pays you back in kind, / for what you did to us. / Happy who seizes and smashes your infants against the rock." Translation from Alter (2019, 3:314).

11. *The Town of Lucca* was a follow-up to Heine's "The Baths of Lucca" in the 1830 *Reisebilder* (*Pictures of Travel*). See Prawer (1983, 155).

12. It should be noted that "discussing" here is closer to expounding, as the male narrator expounds to a female companion who acts primarily as foil/frame to his ideas. The narrator notes that in earlier times "religion was a precious tradition, sacred narratives, ceremonies of commemoration, and mysteries, [were] handed down from one's ancestors—a nation's family heirlooms, as it were" (trans. in Heine 1993, 169).

13. Original: "Sehen Sie, Mylady, dort jenen alten Mann, mit dem weißen

Barte, dessen Spitze sich wieder zu schwärzen scheint, und mit den geiserhaften Augen."

14. Heine misnames Jehuda ben Shmuel Halevy (Judah/Yehuda ben Shmuel Halevi) as Jehuda ben Halevy. Michael A. Meyer (2020, 214) asserts that Heine was likely conscious that he was inaccurate here and with other "errors" concerning Jewish tradition in *Romanzero*. See also notes to the poem in Heine (1970, 3 [suppl.]: 342).

15. Halevi's poetry seems to have become part of the Ashkenazic liturgy for Tisha b'Av during his lifetime; see Hollender (2017).

16. Wolfgang Preisendanz (1993) also notes the importance of the "I" voice to the poem's use of memory, although his reading and emphases differ significantly from mine.

17. The Western/European lyric tradition is also deeply rooted in Arabic poetry, a legacy that remains unacknowledged or is even denied through the poem's recounting of the legendary demise of Halevi at the hands of a "Saracen." On the role of Arabic poetry in the European tradition, see Menocal (2004).

18. This description is part of Heine's discussion of the medievalism of the German Romantics, a medievalism also deeply imbricated in a contemporary nationalism with exclusionist and even threatening attitudes toward Jews. See the excellent discussion in Warren (2020, 4).

19. This medieval poetic tradition has roots in the very location where the historical Halevi was born and raised, medieval Spain, and the medieval poetic traditions of troubadour and Minnesang have deep roots in the same Arabic tradition that inspired the great Jewish medieval poets of Spain. See Lampert-Weissig (2010, 31–40). On the poem's Orientalism and its depictions of Muslims, Islam, and Sephardic Jews, see Cooper (2020). On Heine's interest in medieval poetry such as that contained in the Manesse Codex see Warren (2020, 192).

20. In his reading of "Jehuda ben Halevy," Peter Routledge (2015, 68) refers to Psalm 137 as an "Urtext." Heine uses reference to Psalm 137 and its chanting to satirical effect much differently in his book about Ludwig Börne. There his use acknowledges the psalm's centrality to Jewish memory, but in a way that simultaneously excludes Heine from the Jewish community and satirizes it, as Jeffrey Sammons notes in his translation (Heine 2006, 13). On the poem as a "Spinozan" innovation of tradition, see Goetschel (2004, 266–76).

21. In a beautiful reading, S. S. Prawer (1983, 169) ties this speaker to Heine. Prawer links the withered limb and tongue of the psalm to Heine's own disabled body. See also Preisendanz (1993, 339).

22. Byron's *Hebrew Melodies* is a collection of lyric songs; it doesn't include any actual Hebrews voicing the poetry. Byron collaborated with composer Isaac Nathan on *Hebrew Melodies*, but this collaboration is not incorporated into the text and is often lost in the textual transmission. See Heinzelman (1988). Heine viewed Bryon positively. Perhaps we could say that Heine's work realizes a potential inherent in Byron's. Bluma Goldstein (1999, 52) argues that Heine's allusion to Byron may be a conscious attempt to connect with Byron's iconoclastic image. Willi Goetschel's

(1999, 271) interesting discussion of *shalshelet*, which means "chain," resonates strongly with the argument I make here.

23. Heine's reference to Moser's chant is followed by topics discussed by the Verein. Heine addresses Moser as a mirror to Heine's soul, a mirror like the one he faces with self-contempt during sleepless nights. Heine asks Moser to send his greetings to their mutual friend Gans, one of the founders of the Verein and a person with whom Heine had a challenging relationship. Heine tells Moser that he had been thinking that very night of Gans, wondering what the expression on Gans's face would be if Moses suddenly appeared before him. Strikingly, Heine writes out Moshe Rabbenu (Moses our teacher) using Hebrew script. To me, Heine's use of Hebrew letters, especially in the context of a letter to his friend, serves as a tangible sign of Heine's connection to Jewish identity and his experience of Jewish learning. It is perhaps even an act of memory that could stretch back as far as his attendance at a Jewish school as a very young child. On Heine and Gans, see Prochnik (2020, 122–49) and Prawer (1983, 377).

24. Abigail Gillman's (2018, 27) fascinating discussion of Moses Mendelssohn's translation of this poem may also help us account for the abundance of tears in this passage.

25. David G. Roskies (1989, 73) notes that Rabbi Meir of Rothenberg cites the opening of "Ode to Zion" as "a parodic point of departure for his own angry response to the public burning of the Talmud in Paris." We might compare this use of citation to Heine's own use of Psalm 137.

26. I discuss Schubart further in the introduction to part II.

27. Gunnar Och (2003) discusses Romantic *Weltschmerz* as well, although with different emphasis.

28. *Sud* is the liquid in which something is cooked. Here, again, there seems to be a capturing of process: the broth itself is created through the angry boiling process, which results in "spleen," associated through humoral theories of the body with ill-temper. Gabriel Cooper (2020, 71–72) reads this "Western-Eastern spleen," which also alludes to a poetry collection by Goethe (*West-östlicher Divan* [West-Eastern Divan], 1819), as characterizing the Orientalist melancholy that runs through the entirety of Heine's "Hebrew Melodies." Also perhaps in the mix here is one of Halevi's poems, "My Heart Is in the East," which begins: "My heart is in the East / But the rest of me far in the West / How can I savor this life, even taste what I eat?" (Halevi 2011, 21).

29. Gunnar Och (2003, 112) reads this voice as bringing together the "I" speaker, the Jewish collective, Job, Lazarus, the Schlemihl figure of section 4, and Halevi, a reading that I see as compatible with my own (if different in emphasis).

30. This figure of the golden Pegasus appears in Heine's memory-laden April 23, 1826, letter to Moser: "Ich möchte die goldnen Hufen meines Pegasus bey einem Juden versetzen, nur um Verstand zu borgen" (I'd pawn the golden hooves of my Pegasus to a Jew just to borrow wisdom) (Heine 1970, 20:239).

31. In his thorough exposition on relics and shrines, Robert Bartlett (2013, 264–65) notes that *memoria*, "a memory," was another term used for a saint's shrine,

the structure housing a saint's relics, dating back at least to the seventh century, and that "medieval terminology does not usually distinguish the large fixed shrines from smaller portable ones." For a different reading of Darius's casket as a memory box, see A. Assmann (2011, 107–14).

32. "Nothing but the roughhewn shell that / Holds the greater treasure in it" (Heine 1982, 667). "Das ist nur die rohe Schale, / Die den bessern Schatz verschließet" (Heine 1970, 3:125). This is a central metaphor of Christian hermeneutics, greatly influenced by Philo. See Boyarin (1997) and Lampert (2004).

33. Heine's description of his illness in the postscript to *Romanzero* has rich resonance for "Jehuda ben Halevy": "For . . . here in my mattress grave in Paris, where early and late I hear only the rattling of carriages, hammering, scolding, and strumming on the piano. A grave without repose; death without the privileges of the dead, who need not hand out money and write letters or even books—this is indeed a sad state of affairs. Long ago my measure was taken for a coffin, and also for an obituary notice, but I am dying so slowly that it is all gradually becoming as tiresome for me as for my friends. But patience—everything has an end. One fine morning you will find the booth closed where so often you were entertained by the puppet show of my humor" (Heine 1973–97, 3:1:177–78; 1982, 693; cited in Soros 2018, 120).

34. For a fascinating discussion of Heine himself as an enduring figure of memory in Israeli literature, see Rokem (2013).

Introduction to Part III

1. Jewish-Christian mutual acculturation and appropriation, of course, is not new to the modern historical moment, as is briefly acknowledged by Hoffman and others. On this longer history, see Introduction and see also Hasan-Rokem (1986b; 2000; 2001; 2009; 2011; 2015; 2021). On modern instances specifically centered on the figure of Jesus see Glaser (2020, 107-138), Mendelsohn (2017), Roskies (1984, 258–310), and Neta Stahl (2013). There were also intensive debates among early twentieth-century Jewish thinkers, writers, and artists about the appropriateness of using Christian imagery at all. An important locus of this debate occurred in a 1909 issue of the Yiddish socialist journal from New York *Dos naye lebn* (New Life), inspired by two stories, Sholem Asch's "In a karnival nakht" (In a Carnival Night) and Lamed Shapiro's "Der tseylem" (The Cross). On *di tseylem frage* (the crucifix question), see M. Hoffman (2002; 2007, 61–116).

2. This included work by David Friedrich Strauss, Abraham Geiger, Joseph Klausner, and Ernest Renan; see Ziolkowski (1972, 30–41).

3. "The Man Who Was There" was what Asch originally wished to title his controversial 1939 novel *The Nazarene*, examined in chapter 8 (Fischthal 1994b, 166).

4. It is interesting to consider these modern reimaginings of the life of Jesus in relation to medieval practice. If a medieval individual such as Margery Kempe could insert herself into a scene from the Passion in an imaginative and medita-

tive way, so too can creative writers such as Fleg insert themselves into (or imagine themselves in) the life of Jesus.

Chapter 5

1. Marc Chagall (1887–1985) was born in Vitebsk, Belarus (then part of the Russian Empire). He first attended a Jewish elementary school (*heder*) and then a local school, where the language of instruction was Russian. He traveled to the art capital of Paris in 1910 and remained until 1914, when, after he returned home to visit Vitebsk, the outbreak of war prevented his return to France. After the 1917 October Revolution he became the Vitebsk art commissar, but he eventually moved to Moscow, where he worked as art director for a theater. He returned to Paris in 1923, becoming a French citizen in 1937. He was, however, forced to flee France for the United States in 1941 and did not return until 1948 (Compton 1990, 9–34, and Goodman 2013, 14–87).

2. Benjamin Harshav (2006, 217) describes the Christian world as a "tangible reality" in Chagall's oeuvre.

3. This distinction of originating the modern Wandering Jew arguably belongs to Samuel Hirszenberg, whose powerful 1899 painting of the figure imagines a new and terrifying landscape. On Hirszenberg, see R. Cohen (1998, 223–36).

4. Harshav (2006, 122) dates the work as begun in 1918, with completion in 1922 in Berlin.

5. Chagall's first known representation of the Wandering Jew appears in an image called *Exile* from 1909, which interestingly draws on the Exodus, one of Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi's (1996, 43–44) important touchstones for traditional practices of Jewish memorialization. See also Weik (2015, 175–76).

6. Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass, occurred on November 9–10, 1938.

7. Lea Weik (2015, 204) sees a striking resemblance to the Doré image. On early representations of the Crucifixion see C. Hahn (2020). On the development of Passion imagery see Marrow (1979).

8. I see an interesting parallel here with Melissa Weininger's (2010, 72) observation that for Yiddish writers and poets such as Melekh Ravitsh, their use of Yiddish "marked them as Jewish but appropriating Jesus marked them as human."

9. Kruger (2006, 6–8), a medievalist, was the first to interpret *White Crucifixion* in relation to the dynamics of supersession. Drawing on Yerushalmi's (1996) analysis of the temporality of medieval Jewish crusade chronicles, Marcello Massenzio (2018, 135) speaks of a double temporal register that generates the painting's fascinating draw.

10. I detail this metaphor in the introduction to part III.

11. It is striking to consider this image in relation to Reuven Rubin's 1922 image of Jesus and the Wandering Jew seated on a bench, titled *The Encounter*. Chagall knew Rubin personally (Amishai-Maisels 1997–98, 515). On the development of images of the Wandering Jew as "encounters," see Nochlin (1967).

12. Amishai-Maisel (1991, 149–50) notes that "Like Chagall, Fleg fused the Crucifixion with the suffering of the Jews over the centuries, writing that the Jewish thieves who were crucified along with Jesus were more worthy of pity than he was" as these men and their Jewish descendants had been forced to suffer for centuries, rather than mere hours. On Chagall's early exposure to Christian iconographic tradition, see Rajner (2009).

13. This use of landscape could also be compared to Samuel Hirszenberg's 1899 painting *The Wandering Jew*, which alters Doré's widely known visualization by depicting the Wandering Jew as a nearly naked, hunted old man running directly toward the viewer through a forest of crosses (R. Cohen and Rajner 2011).

14. Chagall spoke of the site of Jerusalem literally taking his breath away (Amishai-Maisels 1997–98, 516).

Chapter 6

1. Hasan-Rokem (1986, 191) includes Greenberg in her important discussions of Ahasver. George K. Anderson (1965) may have missed Greenberg's works because much of them were not translated, although he also generally does not acknowledge the entangled nature of Jewish and Christian contributions to the Wandering Jew tradition. At various points during Greenberg's life, his works were hard to find even in the original, something he himself sometimes contributed to by declining to authorize reprintings. As I note throughout part III, the creators discussed had contact with one another. Glenda Abramson (2012, 186n37) asserts that "there is no doubt that Greenberg and [Marc] Chagall were aware of one another's work," as Chagall illustrated a project in which Greenberg was involved.

2. In 1923, Greenberg (1979, 2:475) described Europe as an "Etna" waiting to erupt under Jewish feet.

3. Rachel Seelig's (2016) chapters on Greenberg in *Strangers in Berlin* provide detailed dates and locations on his movements in the 1920s and 1930s. Tamar Wolf-Monzon (2014, 177) writes that "Red Apples from the Trees of Pain," a prose poem about World War I featured in the second issue of *Albatros*, was what alarmed the censors. Other critics point to "Uri Zvi before the Cross INRI," the visual appearance of which is a provocation in itself. On questions of when Greenberg composed and published his *Albatros* poems, see also Weininger (2010, 83n27).

4. Patterns of imagery and language fuse this tremendous output into an interconnected corpus that retains coherence even as Greenberg's political commitments change; see Wolf-Monson and Livnat (2005) and Wolf-Monzon (2020).

5. Melech Ravitch reports of Greenberg's ecstatic response to hearing Shumiatcher recite her poem "Albatross" in Warsaw; see Winther (1997, 139); see also Glaser (2020, 39–71). Baudelaire's "Le Voyage" also treats the Wandering Jew specifically; see Jacaret (2014, 8).

6. Original: Le Poète est semblable au prince des nuées / Qui hante la tempête et se rit de l'archer; / Exilé sur le sol au milieu des huées, / Ses ailes de géant l'empêchent de marcher."

7. With this reference to the "woe forest," Greenberg used fellow poet Peretz Markish's evocation of a similar space in "Veyland" (Woe-land), which appeared in the first issue of *Albatros*; see Elhanan (2017, 67).

8. Original: "Az men shrayt dort fun di veyen iz dos kol a shteyn in vaser un dos tfile-ton fun gufim iz a trernfal in opgrunt."

9. *Memorbücher*, or memorial books, which named prominent spiritual and community leaders and recorded persecutions and martyrdoms, were used at memorial services for the dead; see Yerushalmi (1996, 46).

10. These lines contain the word הולך (*hoylekh*, a word with no clear meaning) in both the collected edition and the facsimile edition of the original *Albatros* (p. 23), but it seems likely that the word that is meant is *helekh* (wanderer). Thanks to Amelia Glaser, Mira Balberg, and Daniel Kennedy for their help with this editorial question.

11. Greenberg's use of Ahasver here resonates with Leon Pinsker's in his 1882 call for Jewish autonomy, "Autoemancipation!" (see Pinsker 1903).

12. I follow here a translation by my colleague Mira Balberg, personal communication. See also A. Cohen (1939, 25).

13. Greenberg is aware of the slightly ridiculous appearance of this speaker, who sports an Orientalist mishmash of attire in contrast to the "beautiful, naked pioneers"; see Elhanan (2017, 71). On the adoption of the abaya as a form of collective identity and instrument of collective memory in the Yishuv, see Y. Zerubavel (2008, 321–22).

14. Further, the poem's final word—*Ahave*—is a homonym for the name of the river where Ezra gathers followers to return from exile in Babylon (Ezra 8:21). The word's spelling, however, is that of the Hebrew for love, "ahavah." Although these are two very different words, their function as homonyms could be a pun that foreshadows Greenberg's later Zionist work and his political development. Mira Balberg (personal communication) suggests that this final cry could also allude to *ahawa*, which can mean an enthusiastic "yes" in Yemeni Arabic, adding another Orientalized/ing layer of meaning to these final lines. I thank Mira Balberg and Tim DeBold for sharing their thoughts and expertise as I puzzled over these complex lines.

15. I thank Melissa Weininger for sharing her understanding of the complexities of Greenberg's poetry and pointing out this ambivalence.

16. Weininger (2010, 90–104) offers a fascinating reassessment of Greenberg's relationship to both languages over the course of his career. See also Band (1981).

17. I discuss Jan Assmann's concept of communicative memory in the introduction.

18. Original: "vegam 'anaḥnu, shvuyei titus haqadmonim: yehudei-khol-ha'olam, huvalnu kmo maḥanot shvuyim megudafim."

19. Original: "limhandesei-drakhim hayinu ve'emtsa' hazmanim: bishmenu uvshem kol hana'im-venadim ba'olam."

20. Original: " 'aḥim 'anaḥnu la'elu be'eretz yisrael."

21. In Greenberg's writings, this concept of malkhut (kingdom) includes a res-

toration of the glory of the First and Second Temple periods; see Winther (1996, 27, 34).

22. This collapsing of times is also in keeping with Greenberg's concept of "the depth of time"; see Miron (2010, 172, 292).

Chapter 7

1. I thank Professor Charnow for sharing her expertise on Fleg and for letting me read her 2021 book *Edmond Fleg and Jewish Minority Culture in Twentieth-Century France* prior to publication.

2. While Fleg's reference to "double love" presents this inner tension favorably, Ludwig Lewisohn, in the introduction to the 1933 English-language edition, seems to chide Fleg for his continued embrace of a dual identity. Lewisohn reminds the reader that while Jews may love Beethoven, Shakespeare, Racine, and the Cathedral of Chartes, that they are "*not* ours" (Fleg 1933, 17). This edition, interestingly, contains photographs and a map of Palestine and features a translation by Louise Waterman Wise, a philanthropist married to the prominent Reform rabbi Stephen S. Wise. The publication was subsidized by a long list of Jewish institutions, including the Jewish National Fund, which is credited with making possible the book's foldout map showing Jewish settlements, Arab villages, and landmarks, including those for transportation, in Western Palestine. The photographs and map do not appear in the 1932 French edition, which also differs by including as epigraph the first two verses of Psalm 137. The concept of double consciousness comes from W. E. B. Du Bois's 1903 *The Souls of Black Folk*. I do not know whether Fleg was familiar with this work.

3. Identification of the narrator is challenging here. In works such as *Why I Am a Jew*, Fleg is clearly using his own voice. In *Jésus: raconté par le Juif errant* (1933b) the narrator is a Fleg avatar, but the textual context, with the Wandering Jew as interlocutor, is clearly fictional. As a travel narrative, *Land of Promise* also claims an autobiographical voice, so I use "Fleg" to discuss the travel narrative and "Fleg-the-narrator" for discussion of *Jésus*.

4. Original: "le recommencement de la nation juive" (Fleg 1932, 53).

5. Original: "Ici, je me rappelle, ici les textes rejoignent mon souvenir" (Fleg 1932, 59).

6. Original: "Mais je ne pouvais pas: je pensais aux morts d'Hébron" (Fleg 1932, 59).

7. I discuss the Revisionist movement and Greenberg in the previous chapter.

8. Original: "Et moi, je sens mes vertèbres frissonner dans mon dos" (Fleg 1932, 91).

9. Original: "J'essayais de me remémorer" (Fleg 1932, 89).

10. Original: "Je serai le dernier à partir" (Fleg 1932, 88).

11. Original: "Pourquoi ai-je voulu, au lendemain de cette méditation, me faire conduire à Hébron?" (Fleg 1932, 97).

12. Given his work on an anthology of Jewish writings, it seems likely that Fleg

was aware of the contrasts made between Jerusalem and Athens in Lamentations Rabbah, but I don't see a strong influence of this midrash here.

13. Original: "double amour" (Fleg 1932, 290).

14. This epigraph appears only in the original French edition, not in the 1933 English-language translation.

15. Original: "*Derrière moi, une voix prononça*: Vous vous trompez, Monsieur; c'est ailleurs!" (Fleg 1933b, 10).

16. Original: "*C'est un fou, pensais-je. Cette ville détraque les nerfs*" (Fleg 1933b, 17 [original emphasis]).

17. Original: "*Mais le ton de cette voix, qui donnait, aux détails de l'archéologie, je ne sais quelle intimité de souvenirs personnels!*" (Fleg 1933b, 13 [original emphasis]).

18. Original: "*Quels mots inventer pour lui demander ces choses, qui duraient encore dans son tremblement? S'étaient-elles passées voilà dix-neuf siècles, -- ou bien la minute d'avant?*" (Fleg 1933b, 293 [original emphasis]).

19. The French version omits reference to Hitler; see Fleg (1933b, 259).

20. Original: "Il était juif, Monsieur, des chevilles aux cheveux!" (Fleg 1933b, 132).

21. I stumbled across an indication of this potential for controversy when I found a letter in a first-edition copy of the English-language version of *Jésus*. The letter, dated December 19, 1934, was addressed to Bishop William Manning at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City and sent by John Macrae, the president of E. P. Dutton, publisher of the English translation. In it, Macrae extols the virtue of Fleg's new work and also credits himself with commissioning it (something that does not appear to be based in fact). The letter provides other misinformation that may be due to genuine ignorance (mistakenly transposing the plot of Fleg's *L'enfant prophète* with his actual biographical details), or to an attempt to render this Jewish author more acceptable to a Christian readership. Fleg's wife, for example, was not Catholic, although Macrae claims she was. I read Macrae's letter as a savvy prepublication attempt to deter potential controversy by reaching out to an influential member of the New York Christian community. I thank Sally Charnow for her generous help in putting my accidental find into context.

22. Original: "La mode règne sur la chronologie comme sur la toilette!" (Fleg 1933b, 161).

23. French: "Alors, vous comprenez, beaucoup de ces choses que vous lisez, dans les Evangiles, je ne les sais, comme vous, que parce que je les ai lues. Je n'étais plus seulement son Témoin à lui, j'étais aussi le leur! . . . Quand Simon de Cyrène prenait sa croix, j'aidais Ruben ou Baruch à porter la sienne" (Fleg 1933b, 297–98).

24. Original: "Heureux ceux qui mourront pour la paix: ils verront Dieu!" (Fleg 1933b, 326).

Chapter 8

1. While not present in Palestine in 1931, when Chagall, Fleg, and likely Greenberg interacted, Asch is firmly connected to our group of artists through the

relationship between his family and the Chagalls. Chagall's first wife, Bella, was especially close with Asch's wife, Madzhe, even if the friendship between Chagall and Asch seemed less so (Mazower 2011). Chagall, as we know from his correspondence, was familiar with Asch's portrayal of Jesus in *The Nazarene* and saw it as very different from his own visualizations. In a letter dated April 18, 1940, Chagall wrote to a friend, the writer Yosef Opatoshu, about the Paris exhibition of *White Crucifixion*: "Was busy with my small-big exhibition where I exhibited Christ (but, I believe, not such as in Asch's work)" (Harshav 2003, 479). Chagall had likely not at this time read *The Nazarene*, which was published first in English in 1939 and only appeared in Yiddish four years later.

2. Asch originally submitted his novel as a Yiddish-language manuscript for serial publication to newspapers in New York and Warsaw. Both rejected the manuscript, but for different reasons. Abraham Cahan, the influential editor of the New York–based *Forward*, then the world's largest foreign-language daily, already had a complicated relationship with Asch. Cahan was repelled by the novel's focus on Jesus and believed that it would alienate his readership. Warsaw-based *Haynt* rejected the work due to fear that it would bring censorship or worse. When Asch's novel did appear—in English—it triggered extraordinary backlash, a situation caused by the novel's appearance at a time of ever-increasing antisemitic violence and persecution. Asch, the world's most widely read Yiddish author, had already been the target of professional and personal resentment for many years. In subsequent years, Asch's two additional novels with Christian themes—*The Apostle* (1943), which is about Paul, and *Mary* (1950)—his public justifications of these works, and an anti-Asch campaign led by Cahan destroyed Asch's reputation among his once-devoted Yiddish-speaking readership. In translation, however, Asch's "Christian trilogy" won wide readership, climbing bestseller lists in the United States. See Fischthal (1994b, 36–37); see also Fischthal (1994a), Morgentaler (1988), Norich (2004), and Siegel (1976).

3. Warsaw had special meaning to Asch. Born in Kutno, Poland, Asch launched a successful writing career in Warsaw, achieving early fame (and notoriety) with his play *God of Vengeance* (1918), which depicts a lesbian love affair in a brothel. At his fiftieth birthday, he was feted by notables in Warsaw and Vienna. On Asch's biography, see Mazower (2004) and Siegel (1976).

4. A Gospel of Judah document surfaced in the 1970s. Such a text was mentioned by Irenaeus around 180 CE (Ehrman 2006, 55).

5. Asch's depiction of the wanderer as a Roman harks back to the Saint Albans account of Cartaphilus, a porter in Pilate's court, as discussed in chapter 1.

6. The concept of *gilgul* first appeared, according to Gershom Scholem (1991, 197), in southern France in 1180 in the *Sefer ha-Bahir* and had roots in gnostic and Manichaean ideas about the relationship between body and soul. See also Blau (2001).

7. In my discussion of *The Nazarene*, I am using the 1939 English translation by Maurice Samuel as well as the 1950 Yiddish-language edition, titled *Der Man fun Natseres*.

8. Original: "Der arkheolog." Hannah Berliner Fischthal (1994b, 165–75) provides an analysis of the novel's early drafts from materials in the Sholem Asch collection at Yale's Beinecke Library and a comparison of the Yiddish and English versions, including a breakdown of all the Yiddish chapter titles.

9. Yiddish: "Er hot mikh farsholtn tsu zayn" (Asch 1950, 677).

10. Among scholars and critics of the novel, Melissa Weininger (2015, 367) stands out in her recognition of the importance of the novel's frame. She argues that it "challenges the very notion of historicity and a monolithic interpretation of the Gospel texts."

11. Yiddish: "Mit mir hot epes oysergeveyntlekhs pasirt" (Asch 1950, 388).

12. Yiddish: "Dervekt er in mir alte zikhroynes" (Asch 1950, 387).

13. This book does not have a Yiddish edition. It appeared in England and in the United States, translated into English by Maurice Samuel. There is a German edition from 1932. For an excellent bibliography of Asch in Yiddish and translation into a range of languages, see Sitarz (2013, 319–37).

14. Yiddish: "Geroydeft? Freg ikh iber, farvundert—farvos? Vos iz dos geven far a khilek tsvishn zey un undz, az mir zoln zey roydefn?" (Asch 1950, 676).

15. Yiddish: "Un azoy trog ikh fun gilgl tsu gilgl, un in ale gilgulim hob ikh zikh geranglt mit im" (Asch 1950, 679).

16. It is interesting to consider Asch's representations of Jesus on the crucifix come to life in relation to the medieval visual tradition of the Living Cross, which Katrin Kogman-Appel (2005, 190) has noted seemed specifically designed to promote anti-Jewish violence.

17. German occupiers forced Warsaw's Jewish population into the Warsaw Ghetto in 1940. Two years later, in summer 1942, over 250,000 inhabitants were deported to the Treblinka concentration camp. After the German suppression of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising of April/May 1943, the ghetto was demolished in May 1943. "Kristos in Geto," the Yiddish version of the story, appeared in Asch's 1946 short story collection *Der Brenendiker Dorn* (The Burning Bush).

Chapter 9

1. The decision to celebrate Luther related to trends in East German historiography and changing ideas of what was appropriate to consider the *Erbe* (heritage) of Germany within the GDR. *Erbe* involved a conscious act of (re)appropriation, as opposed to passive reception of a history or tradition (Peterson 1986, 82).

2. Heym's *The Crusaders* (1948) draws on his GI experience.

3. The German is *Wir stürzen*, which is actually closer to "We plunge" or "We are plunging" (Heym 1981, 5). Heym could have chosen "falling" for clarity, but it also has, of course, echoes of "the fall," which figures so importantly in John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, alluded to throughout the novel. My decision to highlight Heym's self-translated English version of the novel in this chapter is based on Heym's deep engagement with the English language. Heym's early novels were

written in English in the United States, and he continued to translate his own works into English throughout his career. Heym acknowledged that he honed much of his literary craft in the United States and even expressed a preference for writing in English early in his career because of what he saw as its requisite precision. See Pender (1991, 63), Heym (1965, 229), and R. Hahn (2003). Works such as *The Queen against Defoe* (1974) display not only a mastery of modern English, but an ability to imitate early English stylistics; these talents are also on display in *The Wandering Jew*.

4. In this way, Heym's Ahasver is also responds to the Romantic reimagining of the legend as a Promethean symbol of suffering humanity, a representation that simultaneously erased the wanderer's Jewishness. See P. Rose (1990).

5. Heym's first novel, *The Hostages* (1943), appeared with G. P. Putnam, which had published the English-language version of *The Nazarene* in 1939. I think it likely that Heym was aware of Asch's novel and the controversy around it, although whether Asch's novel is a source for Heym remains an open question.

6. The sections of the novel that deal with Paulus von Eitzen, the Lutheran clergyman who is in the *Kurtze Beschreibung* said to have encountered Ahasver, account for more than half the novel.

7. I thank Professor Kristin Rebien for sharing her insights into Heym and his milieu.

8. The German reads: "in Gottes Namen die alten Dämme und Schanzen wieder errichtet für die alten Herrn" (Heym 1981, 41). This line may allude to a joke circulating in the GDR at the time of the planning for the Luther Year: "Arbeiter aller Länder vereinigt euch—in Gottes Namen!" This joke translates as "Workers of the world unite—in God's name!" but has the additional punning meaning of "For God's sake," used as an expression of exasperation. Peterson (1986, 77).

9. The name Beifuss contains even more puns. In German it is the name of a plant, *Artemisia vulgaris* or mugwort, that Europeans have for centuries used medicinally. It is also a surname found in records of German Jewish families and has been identified with apotropaism, or the warding off of evil spirits (which, of course, does not work given the novel's storyline of Beifuss and Lucifer). On the name, see ANU Museum of the Jewish People (n.d.).

10. Journalist Ewald König describes the Axel Springer building as a "19-story provocation," to which the GDR reacted with the massive Leipziger Strasse housing complex, see https://www.euractiv.de/section/wahlen-und-macht/news/logenplatz-der-zeitgeschichte/. On the housing complex, constructed between 1969 and 1973, see also (*Bild Zeitung* 2009).

11. Heym had personal familiarity with Behrenstrasse 39. In the early 1930s, when he attended university in Berlin, it was the site of the Dresdner Bank, where he would eat lunch in the canteen. Heym (1988, 68). In 1995 a memorial by Micha Ullman to the 1933 book burning was installed on the square, officially designating it as a site of memory.

Chapter 10

1. I am not the first to read Horn's and Perry's novels together. See the review by Michael Weingrad (2019).

2. In the original Hebrew edition, "The Wandering Jew Tour" appears in English, also all in capital letters (Nevo 2011, 254).

3. In explaining the Wandering Jew's ability to move across vast distances, the Hebrew edition makes a humorous reference to Gabby and Debbie, characters from an Israeli children's television program that ran from 1965 to 1975, thus evoking another kind of collective memory for readers of Nevo's generation (Nevo 2011, 490).

4. Horn's 2021 book of essays, *People Love Dead Jews*, provides a clear example that her nonfiction, at least, displays deep political as well as ethical engagement.

5. "Facti sunt eis tamquam lapides ad milliaria: viatoribus ambulantibus aliquid ostenderunt, sed ipsi stolidi atque immobiles remanserunt" (They became, as it were, milestones to these strangers; they indicated the path to the travelers but they remained motionless and immovable) (Augustine 1959, 61).

Conclusion

1. Magic Notes, the international label of Columbia Records in London, released in 1931 a recording of an extract from Rovina's performance. It is titled *Bei'm Klages Mauer, Yerusholayim* (The Wailing Wall lamentation, Jerusalem). See Abeliovich (2019a, 22, 42) and Rovina (1923).

2. Abeliovich (2019b, 214) writes further that "the interjection *Alelai* parallels the *aykh* (How) rhyme that opens the Book of Lamentations and is repeated in it, but most significantly it resounds with the *kinah* (dirge) *Alelai-li* for the Ninth of Av by Eleazar Hakalir, which is included in the Ashkenazi prayer book. This poem addresses the horror of starving mothers eating their children (*Lamentations* 2, 20)."

3. The connection to the centuries-long visual tradition of representing the Wandering Jew is also clear in the costuming of Nachum Zemach as the Eternal Jew in the 1923 production. See Abeliovich (2019a, 40) and Hasan-Rokem (2021, 324n72).

4. This has long been established through the work of Hasan-Rokem as well as art historians Richard I. Cohen and Ziva Amishai-Maisels, although this scholarship appeared after Anderson's 1965 *Legend* and was therefore, of course, unavailable to him.

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