

Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism

NCLC

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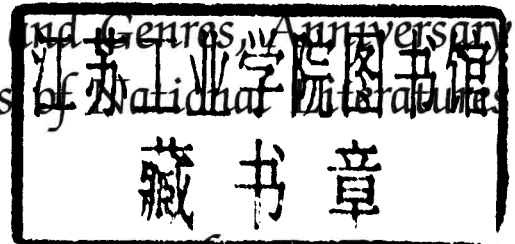
TOPICS VOLUME

Volume 176

Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism

Topics Volume

Criticism of Various
Topics in Nineteenth-Century Literature,
including Literary and Critical Movements,
Prominent Themes and Genres, Anniversary
Celebrations, and Surveys of National Literatures



Kathy D. Darrow

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Project Editors

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Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism, Vol. 176

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Preface

Since its inception in 1981, *Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism* (NCLC) has been a valuable resource for students and librarians seeking critical commentary on writers of this transitional period in world history. Designated an “Outstanding Reference Source” by the American Library Association with the publication of its first volume, NCLC has since been purchased by over 6,000 school, public, and university libraries. The series has covered more than 500 authors representing 38 nationalities and over 28,000 titles. No other reference source has surveyed the critical reaction to nineteenth-century authors and literature as thoroughly as NCLC.

Scope of the Series

NCLC is designed to introduce students and advanced readers to the authors of the nineteenth century and to the most significant interpretations of these authors’ works. The great poets, novelists, short story writers, playwrights, and philosophers of this period are frequently studied in high school and college literature courses. By organizing and reprinting commentary written on these authors, NCLC helps students develop valuable insight into literary history, promotes a better understanding of the texts, and sparks ideas for papers and assignments. Each entry in NCLC presents a comprehensive survey of an author’s career or an individual work of literature and provides the user with a multiplicity of interpretations and assessments. Such variety allows students to pursue their own interests; furthermore, it fosters an awareness that literature is dynamic and responsive to many different opinions.

Every fourth volume of NCLC is devoted to literary topics that cannot be covered under the author approach used in the rest of the series. Such topics include literary movements, prominent themes in nineteenth-century literature, literary reaction to political and historical events, significant eras in literary history, prominent literary anniversaries, and the literatures of cultures that are often overlooked by English-speaking readers.

NCLC continues the survey of criticism of world literature begun by Thomson Gale’s *Contemporary Literary Criticism* (CLC) and *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism* (TCLC).

Organization of the Book

An NCLC entry consists of the following elements:

- The **Author Heading** cites the name under which the author most commonly wrote, followed by birth and death dates. Also located here are any name variations under which an author wrote, including transliterated forms for authors whose native languages use nonroman alphabets. If the author wrote consistently under a pseudonym, the pseudonym will be listed in the author heading and the author’s actual name given in parenthesis on the first line of the biographical and critical information. Uncertain birth or death dates are indicated by question marks. Single-work entries are preceded by a heading that consists of the most common form of the title in English translation (if applicable) and the original date of composition.
- The **Introduction** contains background information that introduces the reader to the author, work, or topic that is the subject of the entry.
- The list of **Principal Works** is ordered chronologically by date of first publication and lists the most important works by the author. The genre and publication date of each work is given. In the case of foreign authors whose works have been translated into English, the list will focus primarily on twentieth-century translations, selecting those works most commonly considered the best by critics. Unless otherwise indicated, dramas are dated by first performance, not first publication. Lists of **Representative Works** by different authors appear with topic entries.

- Reprinted **Criticism** is arranged chronologically in each entry to provide a useful perspective on changes in critical evaluation over time. The critic's name and the date of composition or publication of the critical work are given at the beginning of each piece of criticism. Unsigned criticism is preceded by the title of the source in which it appeared. All titles by the author featured in the text are printed in boldface type. Footnotes are reprinted at the end of each essay or excerpt. In the case of excerpted criticism, only those footnotes that pertain to the excerpted texts are included. Criticism in topic entries is arranged chronologically under a variety of subheadings to facilitate the study of different aspects of the topic.
- A complete **Bibliographical Citation** of the original essay or book precedes each piece of criticism.
- Critical essays are prefaced by brief **Annotations** explicating each piece.
- An annotated bibliography of **Further Reading** appears at the end of each entry and suggests resources for additional study. In some cases, significant essays for which the editors could not obtain reprint rights are included here. Boxed material following the further reading list provides references to other biographical and critical sources on the author in series published by Thomson Gale.

Indexes

Each volume of *NCLC* contains a **Cumulative Author Index** listing all authors who have appeared in a wide variety of reference sources published by Thomson Gale, including *NCLC*. A complete list of these sources is found facing the first page of the Author Index. The index also includes birth and death dates and cross references between pseudonyms and actual names.

A **Cumulative Nationality Index** lists all authors featured in *NCLC* by nationality, followed by the number of the *NCLC* volume in which their entry appears.

A **Cumulative Topic Index** lists the literary themes and topics treated in the series as well as in *Classical and Medieval Literature Criticism*, *Literature Criticism from 1400 to 1800*, *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*, and the *Contemporary Literary Criticism Yearbook*, which was discontinued in 1998.

An alphabetical **Title Index** accompanies each volume of *NCLC*, with the exception of the Topics volumes. Listings of titles by authors covered in the given volume are followed by the author's name and the corresponding page numbers where the titles are discussed. English translations of foreign titles and variations of titles are cross-referenced to the title under which a work was originally published. Titles of novels, dramas, nonfiction books, and poetry, short story, or essay collections are printed in italics, while individual poems, short stories, and essays are printed in roman type within quotation marks.

In response to numerous suggestions from librarians, Thomson Gale also produces an annual paperbound edition of the *NCLC* cumulative title index. This annual cumulation, which alphabetically lists all titles reviewed in the series, is available to all customers. Additional copies of this index are available upon request. Librarians and patrons will welcome this separate index; it saves shelf space, is easy to use, and is recyclable upon receipt of the next edition.

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Franklin, J. Jeffrey. "The Victorian Discourse of Gambling: Speculations on *Middlemarch* and *The Duke's Children*." *ELH* 61, no. 4 (winter 1994): 899-921. Reprinted in *Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism*. Vol. 168, edited by Jessica Bomarito and Russel Whitaker, 39-51. Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2006.

Frank, Joseph. "The Gambler: A Study in Ethnopsychology." In *Freedom and Responsibility in Russian Literature: Essays in Honor of Robert Louis Jackson*, edited by Elizabeth Cheresch Allen and Gary Saul Morson, 69-85. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1995. Reprinted in *Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism*. Vol. 168, edited by Jessica Bomarito and Russel Whitaker, 75-84. Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2006.

The examples below follow recommendations for preparing a works cited list set forth in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6th ed. (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2003); the first example pertains to material drawn from periodicals, the second to material reprinted from books:

Franklin, J. Jeffrey. "The Victorian Discourse of Gambling: Speculations on *Middlemarch* and *The Duke's Children*." *ELH* 61.4 (Winter 1994): 899-921. Reprinted in *Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism*. Eds. Jessica Bomarito and Russel Whitaker. Vol. 168. Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2006. 39-51.

Frank, Joseph. "The Gambler: A Study in Ethnopsychology." *Freedom and Responsibility in Russian Literature: Essays in Honor of Robert Louis Jackson*. Eds. Elizabeth Cheresch Allen and Gary Saul Morson. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1995. 69-85. Reprinted in *Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism*. Eds. Jessica Bomarito and Russel Whitaker. Vol. 168. Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2006. 75-84.

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Contents

Preface vii

Acknowledgments xi

Literary Criticism Series Advisory Board xiii

Judaism in Nineteenth-Century Literature

<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Representative Works</i>	2
<i>Contemporary Commentary</i>	3
<i>Judaism in German Theory and Culture</i>	7
<i>Treatment of Zionism</i>	63
<i>Further Reading</i>	88

Major Cities in Nineteenth-Century Literature

<i>Introduction</i>	90
<i>Representative Works</i>	91
<i>London and Paris in Poetry</i>	93
<i>London</i>	99
<i>New York City</i>	122
<i>Paris</i>	165
<i>Rome</i>	194
<i>St. Petersburg</i>	217
<i>Further Reading</i>	232

Motherhood in Nineteenth-Century Literature

<i>Introduction</i>	234
<i>Representative Works</i>	234
<i>Overviews</i>	236
<i>Maternal Archetypes: Good, Bad, and Absent</i>	260
<i>Motherhood, Patriarchy, and the Social Order</i>	289
<i>Motherhood and Oppression</i>	316
<i>Further Reading</i>	338

Literary Criticism Series Cumulative Author Index 341

Literary Criticism Series Cumulative Topic Index 449

NCLC Cumulative Nationality Index 463

Judaism in Nineteenth-Century Literature

The following entry provides commentary on the treatment of Judaism in nineteenth-century literature. For further information on the portrayal of Jews in nineteenth-century English literature, see *NCLC*, Volume 72.

INTRODUCTION

Although Jewish characters were often stereotypically portrayed in nineteenth-century literature, the shifting ideals of the nineteenth century brought changes in the ways Jews were perceived and in the ways they interacted within society. During the eighteenth century the Enlightenment was pivotal in providing the impetus for a societal reappraisal of the treatment of Jews. Christians began to question the morality of segregating Jewish communities, and as they began to define themselves more as rational individuals, it became less acceptable to deny Jews certain rights.

During the mid-eighteenth century, anyone converting to Judaism or assisting someone in their conversion could face the death penalty. By the late eighteenth century, freedom of religion was allowed in principle. However, in practice, it was forbidden by anti-Semitic legislation. Converts were required to obtain a release from the Christian authorities, yet Christian leaders were not allowed to grant releases. In 1850, the constitution of the North German Confederation instituted freedom of religion. The commercial success of Wilhelm Herzberg's novel, *Jüdische Familienpapiere* (1868), reflected the increased public interest in Judaism that arose from the many debates surrounding the issues of conversion.

As Jews began assimilating into the larger community, the need to retain and defend their religious identity became a more widespread concern. Rabbi Elia Ben-amozegh wrote *Morale juive et morale chrétienne* (1867) in an effort to illustrate that because Christianity is derived from Judaism, the integrity of Jewish morality cannot be considered inferior to that of Christian morality. According to critic Katharina Gerstenberger, *Ich suchte Dich!* (1898), Nahida Ruth Lazarus's narrative autobiography, is not just a story of the author's conversion to Judaism, but of her personal emancipation as a woman through her declaration of her Jewish identity.

As part of their own Enlightenment, or Haskalah, Jews experienced a new economic and political security along with their rise in social status. Participation in many

fields in the arts and sciences became available to Jews, and while they were not universally welcomed, they began engaging in such mainstream pursuits. Immanuel Wolf outlines the importance of the study of Judaism in his "Über den Begriff einer Wissenschaft des Judentums," (1822; "On the Concepts of a Science of Judaism"), and Leopold Zunz asserts in his *Zur Geschichte und Literatur* (1845; *History and Literature*) that the achievements of Jewish scholars in the study of Judaism will lead to better quality of life for all Jews. In order to firmly establish their identity as a people, nineteenth-century Jewish scholars emphasized the importance of establishing and documenting a Jewish historical perspective, which is presented in several popular histories, including Heinrich Graetz's *Die Konstruktion der Jüdischen geschichte* (1936; *The Structure of Jewish History*), Abraham Geiger's *Das Judenthum und seine geschichte* (1864; *Judaism and Its History*), and Isak Marcus Jost's *Allegemeine geschichte des Israelitischen volkes* (1832). The study of Judaism expanded and the Jewish connection to Gnosticism became a hotly debated aspect of Jewish history. Graetz, in his *Gnosticismus und Judenthum* (1846), considers Gnosticism a tainting of the Jewish religion, while Moriz Friedländer in *Der vorchristliche jüdische Gnosticismus* (1898) welcomes the discussion of Gnostic ideas and Judaism, asserting that such debate is necessary and beneficial for the expansion of the Jewish religion and to offer an alternative to the Palestinian nationalistic perspective.

Critic Shirley M. Dettlaff examines Herman Melville's use of the dichotomy between Hebraism and Hellenism in his poem *Clarel* (1876). Dettlaff asserts that Melville explores this dichotomy because it mirrors that of the representations of humanity in Victorian interpretations of Greco-Roman versus Judeo-Christian traditions, as well as the concerns of human identity within the Romantic tradition. One German scholar whose commentary on Jews and Judaism has been widely regarded as anti-Semitic, or at best, negative, is Friedrich Nietzsche. Critic Jacob Golomb points out, however, that Nietzsche's views on Judaism and Jews correspond to his general philosophical and psychological tenets, including the Apollonian and Dionysian principles, and the struggle to control, or overcome, oneself. In the lyrics within his *Hebrew Melodies* (1815), Lord Byron utilizes biblical imagery and stories from the Old Testament both to support the cause of Jewish nationalism and offer Romantic commentary on the human condition. George Eliot began research for *Daniel Deronda*

(1876) in 1873, reading Jewish history and viewing firsthand Jewish communities and synagogues in Frankfurt, Germany, and elsewhere in Europe. The novel's eponymous protagonist learns of his Jewish heritage as an adult, and resolves to help realize his brother-in-law Mordecai's vision of a Zionist homeland. The novel concludes with Daniel's departure with his wife for Palestine. Eliot's contemporaries censured *Daniel Deronda* as disjointed and of uneven quality, and this assessment has been shared by modern commentators. While Eliot was disappointed by her audience's failure to accept the work as an organic whole, she was gratified by the praise lavished on her work by Jewish readers. Portions of the novel, including some eloquent affirmations of Zionist ideals and Eliot's warm tributes to Jewish culture, were widely known among Eastern European Jews, who read the novel in translation. Post-nineteenth-century critics have offered numerous analyses of the treatment of Jewish themes in *Daniel Deronda*, which have variously been described as allegorical, mythic, visionary, and symbolic. Critic Bernadette Waterman Ward has opined that Eliot's desire to support the Jewish cause was well intended, but it was ultimately unsuccessful because the Jewish cultural aspects and Zionist message are diluted by the uneven narrative and flat characterization.

Nineteenth-century writers of Jewish and non-Jewish backgrounds fought, through their work, to make countless political, economic, racial, and religious statements about Jewish life, the Jewish identity, and the role of the Jew in mainstream society. While their struggle for equality was not totally realized, the changing views and philosophies of the nineteenth century allowed Jews to achieve a measure of freedom that had previously eluded them.

REPRESENTATIVE WORKS

Matthew Arnold

Culture and Anarchy: An Essay in Political and Social Criticism (essay) 1869

Elia Benamozegh

Morale juive et morale chrétienne: examen comparatif suivi de quelques réflexions sur les principes de l'islamisme (essay) 1867

Lord Byron

Hebrew Melodies (poetry) 1815

George Eliot

Daniel Deronda (novel) 1876

Moriz Friedländer

Der vorchristliche jüdische Gnosticismus (essay) 1898

Abraham Geiger

Das Judenthum und seine geschichte [*Judaism and Its History*] (history) 1864

Heinrich Graetz

Gnosticismus und Judenthum (essay) 1846

**Die konstruktion der Jüdischen geschichte: eine skizze* [*The Structure of Jewish History*] (essay) 1936

Wilhelm Herzberg

Jüdische Familienpapiere [as Gustav Meinhardt] (novel) 1868

Theodor Herzl

Der Judenstaat [*The Jewish State*] (history) 1896

Isak Marcus Jost

Allgemeine geschichte des Israelitischen volkes (history) 1832

Nahida Ruth Lazarus

Ich suchte Dich! (autobiography) 1898

Herman Melville

Clarel: A Poem and Pilgrimage in the Holy Land (poetry) 1876

Friedrich Schiller

Über naive und sentimentalische dichtung [*On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*] (essays) 1795-96; published in the journal *Die Horen*

August Wilhelm von Schlegel

Über dramatische Kunst und Litteratur: Vorlesungen. 2 vols. [*A Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature*] (lectures) 1809-11

A. Schmiedl

Studien über jüdische, insonders jüdisch-arabische Religions-philosophie (history) 1869

Immanuel Wolf

"Über den Begriff einer Wissenschaft des Judentums" ["On the Concepts of a Science of Judaism"] (essay) 1822; published in the journal *Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*

Leopold Zunz

Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums [editor] (journal) 1822-23

Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden, historisch entwickelt. Ein beitrage zur alterthumskunde und Biblischen Kritik, zur Literatur-und Religionsgeschichte (history) 1832

Zur Geschichte und Literatur [History and Literature]
(history) 1845

*This work was written in 1886.

CONTEMPORARY COMMENTARY

The Saturday Review (review date 14 November 1868)

SOURCE: "A Rabbi's View of Jewish and Christian Morality." *The Saturday Review* 26, no. 681 (14 November 1868): 661-62.

[In the following review of *Morale juive et morale chrétienne: examen comparatif suivi de quelques réflexions sur les principes de l'islamisme* (1867) by Rabbi Elia Benamozegh, the reviewer expounds on Benamozegh's assertion that because Christianity is a branch of Judaism, it could not possess a superior morality with a divine origin.]

Despite the increased attention given in recent years to Semitic theology, few Christian scholars of repute have addressed themselves to the exploration of the Talmud, the Targums, and the other labyrinths of rabbinical learning. Although the language of these books is easier and more accessible than Sanskrit or Zend, for one student of the Zohar and Midraschims there are a dozen of the Vendidad and the Puranas. Semitic religious quibbles may be a less inviting field of research than Vedic or Zoroastrian philosophy, but many of them are intimately connected with the foundations of the Christian faith. So that, if, as M. Renan asserts, the Buxtorfs and Lightfoots have no worthy representatives now, we ought to be grateful to those learned Jews who from time to time enlighten our darkness on subjects like that which occupies the present volume [*Morale juive et morale chrétienne*, by Elia Benamozegh]. The Italian Rabbi's volume comparing Jewish and Christian morality is interesting, not only for its contents, but also because it has been sanctioned as orthodox by high Jewish theological authority. Some competent observers allege that scepticism on the one hand, and Christianity on the other, are gradually undermining the faith of the peculiar people. Be this as it may, our author does not regard Christianity with the passions of Annas and Caiaphas. To use his own illustration, he deplores that Joseph does not bow down before the white hairs of Jacob, and that Jacob does not embrace and bless Joseph. He calls Christianity a Jewish product of which Jews should be proud. Just as Englishmen may boast of the English origin of American civilization, so Jews may

say with pride that the splendid tree of Christianity is a branch from a humble Jewish stock grafted on a Gentile trunk. This branch still bears the mark of the patriarchs, the prophets, and the doctors of the law; if the hands are the hands of Esau, the voice is nevertheless the voice of Jacob.

The Italian Rabbi takes exception to the argument that the superior morality of the Christian code indicates a divine original. That Christianity has owed its triumph to its moral claims he does not deny, but he considers that the natural religious sentiment of man can produce, unaided, ethical systems not inferior in elevation to the doctrines of Christ, quoting in proof hereof the cases of Confucius, Menov, and the sages of antiquity. As compared with Paganism, Christian morals were, no doubt, an advance to a purer, surer, and more independent rule of life. But much of the Messianic moral creed is, in fact—so Mr. Benamozegh argues—a mere repetition of the teaching of the Synagogue. Nor could such fail to be the case. Christianity itself declares that God gave the patriarchs and Moses a moral code. That code must be admitted to have been good, perfect, and absolute, for the Deity could not have promulgated a scheme stamped with the attributes of the mutable and contingent. If this be granted, how, asks this writer, can it be alleged that the same Deity afterwards promulgated a second scheme superior to the first? Men are capable of progress, but progress cannot be predicated of the Absolute, nor can His law be called perfectible. This should be the language of logic, but Christians, according to our author, seem to consider that the divine word is as flexible as mere human doctrine. Moses spoke of man as created in the image of God, whereas Christianity, like Homer, makes God in the image of man. "Il a mis en Dieu," says our author, "la flexibilité de Paul, qui se fait *Juif aux Juifs, Gentil aux Gentils*, les ignobles condescendances des Jésuites aux idolâtres chinois." In the Christian view, he adds, crumbs of truth are scattered to men by degrees, suitable to their readiness to receive them. But this plan seems hard to reconcile with a faith in the permanence of the Messianic system. If by divine command Paul superseded Moses, may not Providence, stooping to man's wants, hereafter efface the doctrines of Paul by a new creed suited to new circumstances and times?

General readers are familiar with the stock objections to the moral code of the Pentateuch. Mr. F. W. Newman in our day, Bolingbroke in the last century, have repeated—the first with something of reverential regret, the second with spiteful glee—the views which St. Augustine combated with so much zeal in the person of Faustus. Whoever is aware that modern Biblical criticism was invented by the Gnostics, not by the Germans, will know that early heresy inferred from the moral imperfections of the Law of Moses that the Jewish legislator was not inspired from heaven. Some of

the Gnostics even maintained that only the principle of evil could have ordered the theft of the vases and precious garments of the Egyptians, the unsparing massacre of the nations of Canaan, the murders and executions by command which crowd the sacred annals. The Italian Rabbi, like St. Augustine, argues the points at issue without flying into a spiritual passion; and although his discussion partakes somewhat of the weakness always inherent in defence, his reasons, if not quite new, are stated with an ingenuity which makes them seem so. He says that comparisons of Christian and Jewish morality, to be accurate, should keep in view the distinction between politics and morals. The peculiar people were *Jews* as well as *Hebrews*—members, that is to say, of the Jewish civil commonwealth, and disciples of the monotheistic faith of their father Abraham. The Pentateuch is the political and rituary code of the Jews, ennobled, no doubt, by a spiritual breath from Sinai, but still a system of civil legislation. Politics are not morals; the “Imitation of Christ” does not supersede international law; Thomas à-Kempis is not a refutation of Grotius. The Gospel precepts of humility and patience cannot be applied to nations. What country could turn the cheek to the smiter, and repay injuries with benefits, without becoming the inevitable victim of invasion, conquest, and annihilation? This is the Rabbi’s question; he may be unaware that a numerous, perhaps an increasing, school of English politicians recommends this very plan to our Foreign Office. Moses, at any rate, cannot be quoted in support of such diplomatic policy. He saw that the Jews must, as a people, be governed by the rules of political wisdom. He prescribed for them—with what rare foresight the result shows—a system by which they fought their way against ignorance, injustice, and barbarism. In view of the end, the general rules of humanity and morality appeared to suffer some temporary restrictions:—“Sans ces mesures, toute la puissance de Dieu, j’ose le dire, n’aurait pu épargner au peuple d’Israël une prompte, une inévitable destruction.” These remarks, if not conclusive, are judicious; they are identical in direction with the line taken by the late Dean Milman where he discusses the war law of the Jews.

The distinction between the political and ethical sides of Old Testament dogmas, the antithesis of Hebrews and Jews, lies at the base of our author’s comparison of the morality of the basilica and the synagogue. He tries to show, always with abundance of apt citation, that the morality of the Gospel is, in fact, a copy of that preached by the Law—a copy, as he thinks, deteriorated and obscured. Here, again, we must avoid mistaking a part for the whole. The Old Testament is not the entire Hebrew system, which must necessarily be misunderstood by those who ignore the resources of tradition, of the Talmud, and the Cabbalists. Further, we must not attribute to the Pharisees, for instance, all the sentiments fixed on them by Palestinian prejudice. As a

sample of our Rabbi’s analysis, we may take the virtue of humility, which, he says, Christianity arrogates to itself as a doctrine of its own special teaching. The sentiment “Blessed are the poor in spirit” was by no means preached for the first time in the Sermon on the Mount. Ancient rabbinical teaching had constantly exalted the humble in spirit and place. Of Hillel the Ancient, who long preceded Christianity, this favourite maxim is recorded—“My lowness shall be my elevation, and my elevation my lowness.” In the Talmud we find—“The world to come is to those who bow the knee, the humble, and the bent:” and such sentences abound in the old Rabbinical texts. According to the Mischna, Joshua ben Perachia, the preceptor of Christ, taught thus:—“Judge every man favourably;” Hillel said, “Judge not thy neighbour as long as thou hast not been in his situation;” which maxims are equivalent to the Christian, “Judge not, lest ye be judged.” In like manner our author confronts the Hebrew and Christian teaching as to pride and anger, dwelling particularly on the command to love our neighbour as ourselves; trying to show, in these as in other cases, that the synagogue had long been familiar with the teaching which is claimed by Christianity as exclusively its own.

As our author always quotes chapter and verse, his arguments have at first sight an impregnable look. They must, however, in the main, stand or fall with the credibility of the Talmudists and the various Rabbinical texts. Now against such credibility the general *primâ facie* evidence is so overwhelming, that arguments in which it is taken as an essential postulate must be classed amongst conjectures rather than amongst proofs. The Talmuds, in their present shape, are hardly earlier than the age of Charlemagne. Of the standard Rabbinical authors some are mere names, concerning which the Jews have been able to do little else than guess. Hillel, for example, is an unknown quantity, who appears, like Zoroaster or Odin, in more incarnations than one, his personality, single, or multiple, being a profound puzzle. As witnesses to matters of fact, the Mischna, Gemara, Zohar, and so forth, must rank below such Sagas as *Burnt Njal*, and such poems as the *Sháh Náinah*. To find a parallel to the allegorical and cabbalistical nonsense of the Jewish doctors we must turn to Papias, or Philo, or to the modern chemical expositions of the Eddas and the Nibelungen Lied. As a specimen of the flights taken, be it noted that, according to the Talmudists, Moses caused *the entire Pentateuch to be engraved in seventy languages* on the twelve stones beyond Jordan! (Deut. xxvii.). Touching Genesis, some Cabbalists declare that Abraham wrote a work called *Séfer Tetsira*, or Creation, which work they have even edited and commented, adding complete lists of the angels who were the Masters of the Patriarchs. Very precise details are given about Razel, the Master of Adam. That intelligent and refined angel brought down from heaven, or elsewhere, a book of wisdom—the *Sifra de-Adam*

harischôn—whose contents are accurately described in the Zohar. No wonder if Luther said that the critics who went for light to the Rabbinical comments on the Bible reminded him of Solomon's captains who traded to India for precious cargoes, but came home laden with apes and peacocks. How far the modern Rabbi mistakes apes for gold may be gathered from the fact that, in a note to an Essay on Islamism which closes his volume, he speaks of the existence of the aforesaid books of Adam and Abraham as being authentically proved by their mention in the Talmud; although, as he says, the Talmud does not expound their contents.

***The Saturday Review* (review date 5 March 1870)**

SOURCE: "Judæo-Arabic Metaphysics." *The Saturday Review* 29, no. 749 (5 March 1870): 325-26.

[In the following review of *Studien über jüdische, insonders jüdisch-arabische Religions-philosophie* (1869) by A. Schmiedl, the reviewer offers a favorable assessment of Schmiedl's discussion of Judæo-Arabic metaphysical thought.]

Given that most complex and fragmentary body of literature, ranging from times beyond historic ken down to the fullness of Hellenic culture, which we call collectively the Old Testament; given further those mazes of legal enactments, gorgeous day-dreams, masked history, ill-disguised rationalism, and the rest, which form the Talmud and the Midrash; given also the Kabbalah, and, finally, Plato and Aristotle as developed by Jews and Mohammedans either on the basis of their fundamentally identical creed or independently—what was the attitude of the Synagogue towards all these elements, as far as they treated of the first problems of all religion and all philosophy? What was the process whereby the widely diverging statements and speculations on Creation, the Soul, the Hereafter, the nature of the Deity, contained in those authorities, were sought to be blended and harmonized so as to satisfy both Jewish faith and thought?—a faith fervent and passionate beyond measure, to which all visions and all transcendentalism and allegories were so many historical facts, for all of which death was sweet and holy—and a boldness of thought which, with all reverence, frankly said, as Socrates had said, "That divinely revealed wisdom of which you speak I deny not, inasmuch as I do not know it; I can only understand human reason." The everlasting battle between reason and blind belief in "that which is written" was fought with very grim seriousness in the early period of the middle ages within the bosom of the Jewish Church. And while we survey the history of that controversy as it was taken up and continued in the Christian Church, we blush to find, from the very days of Albertus Magnus, the Doctor Universalis, and Tho-

mas Aquinas, the Doctor Angelicus, down to our own, perfect nests of arguments both on the side of orthodoxy and of rationalism, unconsciously perhaps, but most unmistakably stolen from the mediæval successors of those same Rabbis to whom Jerome owed his Vulgate-lore. To write a history of Jewish metaphysics would indeed be an undertaking worthy to rank with the highest, most difficult, and most interesting and instructive tasks; especially if attempted as a contribution to the history of human rationalism. The religious development from, say, Hillel the "freethinker," who calmly compressed all the Law and the Prophets into the familiar "Be good, my dear," to Maimonides, the "Great Eagle," who more explicitly and scientifically lays down the supreme axiom that every word of the Bible must either be in accordance with rational conclusions or be explained "metaphorically," and who totally denies an "individual" working of Providence; and on to Baruch Spinoza, in whom Goethe—how much of this nineteenth century besides?—lives and moves and has his being—this would indeed be goodly work for a whole life-time.

Our author [A. Schmiedl, in *Studien über jüdisch-arabische Religions-philosophie*] has not attempted anything so ambitious. Very far from it. He is satisfied with gathering a few mosaics from the discussions on these metaphysical topics in the Judæo-Arabic schools; and we are duly grateful. In the circumscribed field which he has chosen he has worked conscientiously, and on the whole very successfully. But the curse of wishing to write "popularly" has been upon him, and consequently, being bereft of that very special gift of enthusiasm which is akin to poetry, and which at times is found to lend a strange charm even to the most abstruse subjects, he has so far failed. The mere discarding of learned notes is not always sufficient to make a book either striking or pleasant. Nor has Dr. Schmiedl always been happy in the methodical arrangement of his subjects; whence spring repetitions of a needless and very tedious kind. There is also a looseness of style and language which a little care would have obviated. Having delivered our soul of these slight objections, we shall give a brief glance at the varied contents of the volume itself.

The first disquisition or chapter—the subject of which is taken up again in the second—treats of the Deity as conceived by Jewish philosophy. The existence of God is of course presupposed; or it would no longer be Jewish philosophy. But what about His attributes? Has He any? Scripture, literally taken, seems to affirm this. Yet, taken in a higher sense, as understood by the Alexandrines, the Targum, and the Talmud, it denies it. Philosophy, on its part, found a *contradictio in adjecto* in an absolute Being or Supreme Cause, the sole essence of which is its Oneness and Uniqueness, being considered, either subjectively or objectively, as presenting

qualities or *accidences*. This contest between the "Attributists" and "Nonattributists" was indeed one of the fiercest and bitterest, and each camp boasted of brilliant champions. But the latter carried the day, led by no meaner authorities than Ibn Ezra, Jehuda Halevi, and Maimonides. The last of these goes the length of calling the view of his antagonists anti-Jewish. "As well might you say at once that 'He is One but rather Three, besides being Three but rather One.' If you give attributes to a thing, you define this thing; and defining a thing means to bring it under some head, to compare it with something like it. God is sole of His kind. Determine Him, circumscribe Him, and you bring Him down to the modes and categories of created things." The Talmud in its characteristic way relates the story of a precentor who heaped divine epithet upon epithet, and whom a master asked when he had finished—"And have you now quite exhausted God's good qualities?" The Psalms speak of "silence" as the best mode of praising God. Nor is the endeavour which goes through all post-exilic literature, of finding a kind of medium between the Inconceivable and the world of matter, foreign to this notion. "Word," or "Holy Ghost," or "Shechinah," are the forms under which Judaism at that early period tried in its speech and thought to approach that which itself, shrouded in the ineffable mystery of the Tetragrammaton, was beyond human thought or approach. Indeed, we should say that the whole Angelology, so strikingly simple before the exile, and so wonderfully complex after it, owes its quick development on Babylonian soil to the same awe-stricken desire which grows with growing culture, removing that inconceivable *Ens* further and further from human touch and ken. At the same time the Talmud protests against anything like the notion of angels interceding on behalf of man. They are nought but messengers, created for the purpose of their message. More clearly still does Maimonides call every natural law, every being, animated or other, so that it fulfils a certain behest, an "Angel." Thus, he says, a prophet is an angel; the elements are angels; the stars are angels; and so are the sea, the winds, and the human intellect. When the Talmud speaks of God as having consulted the angels ("the Circle or Family above") in the fashioning of every part of the human organism, this, he says, shows that everything in creation is done in accordance with the manifold laws of nature, each ruling over its own sphere, and all coming more or less into play in the complicated human frame. Again, when the Talmud reduces the number of angels whom Jacob saw in his dream at Bethel to four, two mounting upwards and two descending downwards, it merely hints at the wondrous weaving and working in the Cosmos by the four fundamental elements—fire and air which strive upwards, and water and earth which tend downwards. And, as if to leave no doubt, the Talmud had further called thinking man superior to the angels. This dictum, however, was fiercely contested in the mediæval

schools. Is man greater because he has a will and may struggle against evil, while the angel can only do what he is bidden? or because man is the centre of creation, even as the earth, according to the astronomy of the period, rests in the middle of the universe? And some schools unhesitatingly doubted and denied the very truth of this opinion enunciated by the Talmud. Is man greater than other creatures? And is he the aim and end of creation, or merely the most perfect organism on earth? Saadia holds the former, Ibn Ezra and Maimonides hold the latter, view. Scripture, argues the first, calls angels "divine beings," and the stars (which the "angels" are supposed to be moving) "sons of God." But remember, Ibn Ezra says, how infinitely larger certain stars are than the whole earth, and do you think that the inconceivably vast host of the heavens can be meant for, and inferior to, the small dust-born human being? Still more sharply does Maimonides ridicule the very notion of "stars or angels" being made for the sake of man, who by the side of these "intelligences" sinks into utter insignificance. The practical consequence of this discussion was that the "honourable mention," not to say "invocation," of angels—which had been stamped out by the Talmud, and which had grown up again by stealth under foreign influences—now received its death-blow. Even the minor masters call it rank idolatry. And the Kabbalists, to whom Angelology is almost the first condition of religious existence, are forced to plead that all those endless varieties of their holy names are but so many anagrams of divine and biblical epithets, and that it is God and not "Patrons" whom they invoke. To stretch the point to the utmost, it was distinctly denied that when Joshua prostrated himself before the angel, he intended to show the angel any reverence. He bowed down before Him who had deemed him worthy of a message—even as a man shows honour even to a dead piece of paper which comes from some one he reveres.

Among the many topics further touched upon in the book before us, such as prophecy, metempsychosis—the notion of which, we may passingly observe, Saadia calls "sheer insanity"—the resurrection, allegorism, & c., we would fain have dwelt somewhat more fully upon the Anthropomorphisms and Anthropopathisms in the Bible, with which Judaism, properly so called, had from the beginning dealt unsparingly. From the Targum, which scrupulously effaces every term which might lead to the thought of a corporeal existence of God, to the Midrash, whose most daring protest against the human similes used even by the prophets Maimonides approvingly quotes; from the broad axiom of the Mishnah, that these things are not to be taken literally—"the Torah speaking merely in a human way"—to the days when Yedaya Penini could say that at last this Anthropomorphic absurdity had been finally driven even from the obscurest brains—we find one endless series of attempts to get rid of all materialistic interpretation of undoubtedly materialistic terminology. Rough, indeed, is

the manner in which Maimonides disposes of the "Voice" on Sinai, or God's "descending thereon"—which the Talmud already declares to be but a figure of speech—and nothing can be more characteristic than the almost contemptuously good-natured manner in which he finally allows the hopelessly unthinking to do as they please about these things. "If some of the short-sighted will not rise to the step to which we endeavour to lift them, let them by all means imagine all such terms (Angels, & c.) to refer to something material—no great harm will come of it." It was indeed only the devotees of Cabbala and Karaism who still protested against these rationalizing Talmudistic views, and their end has been either petrification and death, or, worse still, coarse imposture and religious delirium.

We here take leave of our author, grateful for his suggestive and learned "Studies," and hoping soon to meet him again on the same field. But let him not be afraid of bringing with him his whole apparatus next time, however bulky it may be.

JUDAISM IN GERMAN THEORY AND CULTURE

Jacob Golomb (essay date 1985)

SOURCE: Golomb, Jacob. "Nietzsche on Jews and Judaism." *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 67, no. 2 (1985): 139-61.

[In the following essay, Golomb presents the main tenets of Nietzsche's psychology, Nietzsche's image of the Jew, and his attitude toward Judaism. The critic asserts that both Nietzsche's admiration and rejection of the Jews stem directly from his psychological doctrine.]

Several scholars have examined the intriguing issue of Nietzsche's attitude toward Jews and Judaism.¹ Most of these studies dealt with that subject in isolation from the rest of his philosophy. However a balanced understanding of his views on the Jewish question, (or any other topic in his thought) can only be attained from within Nietzsche's general philosophical framework. This applies not only to those who consider Nietzsche a proto-Nazi² but also to those of Nietzsche's apologists who, in their fight against the 'Nazi-ization' of Nietzsche, deal with the issue of Judaism in his writings from the narrow perspective of his theory of Races and his social attitudes.³ These commentators, despite good intentions, disregard the basic point—that Nietzsche's social and cultural attitudes were derived from the basic intuitions of his general philosophy.

This article attempts to show that Nietzsche's attitude toward Judaism is not arbitrary but derived from, and consistent with, the rest of his philosophical-psychological doctrine. His remarks on the Jews and Judaism are applications of this doctrine to the Jewish People taken as a case study. This serves both to corroborate Nietzsche's theory and foster his practical aspirations. From this perspective, Nietzsche's attitude towards Judaism and the Jewish people becomes important yardstick for determining the meaning and integrity of Nietzsche's thought.

Nietzsche's thought, despite its misleading external literary form, is a consistent and unified whole. Nietzsche's own words testify to the fact that there is one uniting theme running through his thought, one "common root" and "fundamental will of knowledge" from which his "philosophical tree" must have arisen and around which his earlier and later views are "entwined and interlaced".⁴

Considering Nietzsche's attitude toward Jews within the wider theoretical framework of his thought enables us to adopt a cooler and more objective tone and to avoid the emotional and apologetic preoccupations of previous expositions. Nietzsche sees the Jews from a philosophical-psychological perspective, not in an impulse or arbitrary way. His review of Jewish "characteristic features" is balanced. He finds a lot of "good" in them, but also a lot of "evil". These terms must be understood in accordance with his philosophical conceptions of "good" and "evil", which lie far beyond the common man's understanding of these concepts. His objective attitude towards the Jewish people is clearly seen in his discussion of the "negative" features of the Jews: he never fails to describe and explain the peculiar socio-economic and historical circumstances which caused the Jews to develop these features.

Nietzsche's statement that in his thought psychology is "the path to the fundamental problems" (*J. G. B.* 23) also applies to his treatment of Jews and Judaism. I try to show that both Nietzsche's rejection and his admiration of the Jews stem primarily from his psychological doctrine. Thus I shall begin with a concise presentation of the main tenets of Nietzschean psychology. After that, I describe the Nietzschean image of the Jew. Finally, I examine Nietzsche's attitude toward Judaism.

1. THE NIETZSCHEAN CONCEPT OF POWER

When Nietzsche speaks of the "fundamental problems" (*J. G. B.* 23) he is referring to the "moral intentions" which, for him constitute "the real germ of life . . . in every philosophy" (*ibid.*, 6).

In his attempt to determine the foundations of the germ of life, Nietzsche is in need of a special type of psychology. The main aim of this psychology is to entice