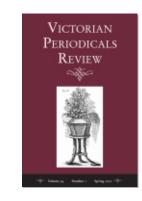


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RICHA DWOR

Amid the robust market in Jewish periodicals in London during the midnineteenth century, only two such ventures were edited by women. While writing by Jewish women appeared in both religious and secular English-language publications, it was extremely rare for women to originate and exert editorial control over Jewish periodicals. Women were becoming active contributors to periodicals just as periodicals themselves were becoming central to religious communities' processes of self-definition. We might therefore expect to find a greater number of Jewish periodicals edited by women during the nineteenth century. Of the two case studies discussed below, one project met with modest success while the other failed after just five months. The Cheap Jewish Library: Dedicated to the Working Classes, edited by Charlotte Montefiore, ran from 1841 to 1849. In 1855, Marion Hartog's Jewish Sabbath Journal: A Penny and Moral Magazine for the Young appeared for eleven numbers before failing due to lack of funds. Montefiore and Hartog had significantly different resources upon which to draw: one was wealthy, the other lower middle class; one was vigilant in protecting her anonymity, the other keen to trade on past success and claim recognition for her work; one capitalized on family ties to influential philanthropists and scholars, the other worked to forge her own networks; and one was Sephardic, the other Ashkenazi. Despite these differences of class and culture, both women designed their periodicals to bring about a spiritual renewal by providing a new approach to Jewish learning. That one succeeded and the other failed can therefore tell us something about the challenges of female editorship of Victorian religious periodicals. Moreover, the different fates of these periodicals help to clarify implicit Anglo-Jewish attitudes toward the parameters of Jewish identity.

Although British Jews participated in an international Jewish public sphere, they typically preferred to do so from a nationalist footing. And while Jewish women were leaders in resisting Christianization, they firmly embraced Anglicization. Intolerance of women's theological interventions and a preference for framing the identity of British Jews in nationalist terms would therefore determine the fortunes of these two woman-edited periodicals.

The centrality of periodical publishing to Jewish fortunes in Western Europe is a familiar story. Several European Jewish publications were founded in the 1830s and 1840s to represent communal affairs as well as to speak to an emergent international Jewry who felt that the treatment of their co-religionists elsewhere might affect their own status. Papers like the German-language Sulamith (founded 1806) and Allgemeine Zeitung des *Judentums* (1837) combined, as David Cesarani states, "emancipationist ideology [with] the demonstration of deep loyalty to the German states in which Jews lived and a love of German culture." In France, the Archives Israélites (1840) and the Univers Israélite (1844) "crystalised the ethnic solidarity of French Jews" while also positing a universal Jewry beyond the nation's borders.² As Abigail Green points out, the rise of the Jewish press in the 1840s signaled the internationalization of communal affairs as well as a new coherence in responding to the Jewish question.³ Using such publications to speak directly to an international Jewish public bypassed existing networks of communication and, in some cases, superseded the nation as a "primary frame of reference." Thus, in instances such as the 1840 Damascus affair, in which prominent members of the Damascene Jewish community were arrested and tortured on charges of blood libel, protests voiced in the international Jewish press led to the release of the survivors. Broadly speaking, then, the Jewish periodical press in Europe during the 1840s worked both within and beyond the idea of the nation, even as it focused intensely on local concerns and the impact of religious reform on established community structures.

This model also describes Jewish periodical publishing in Britain from the 1840s. Many new publications that arose during this decade similarly sought to bring about a Jewish renaissance of ideas and to strengthen readers' identification with their religious community. Despite this shared aim, the industry was marked by angry disputes regarding arrangements between editors, contributors, publishers, and printers.⁵ The founders of such publications discovered that despite initial plans for subscription drives within Jewish communities, they could not do without the services of a professional publisher to expand circulation. In addition, setting Hebrew type cost double what an English typesetter charged, meaning that such papers faced higher production costs and a relatively small potential readership when entering the crowded marketplace.⁶ Nonetheless, they were as important in elevating the status of the Jews in the public

sphere as they were in addressing issues internal to Britain's Jewish community. As Cesarani notes, "By founding a newspaper, a minority group enhanced its public status."7 This was certainly an aim of the Catholics who founded the Tablet in May 1841, the evangelical Protestant Dissenters who founded the Nonconformist a month earlier in April 1841, and the Unitarians who founded the *Inquirer* in July 1842. The Jewish press in Britain also flourished in this banner year for Nonconformist periodicals; 1841 saw the inauguration of the Voice of Jacob and the Jewish Chronicle (which has remained in print to this day). Two previous Jewish papers, the Hebrew Intelligencer (1823) and the Hebrew Review (1834-37), had already come and gone. London-based Jewish papers emerged just as the campaign for Jewish emancipation in Britain picked up steam and at a time when increasing geographic dispersal meant that community business could no longer be transacted solely in a small number of London synagogues.8 Accordingly, these papers touched on a wide range of matters, such as reporting on parliamentary and foreign affairs and engaging in advocacy and electoral lobbying, while also publishing didactic fiction, advertisements, and letters to the editor.

Like most periodicals, religious journals were typically edited by men. Of course, many voices make up a periodical, and the persona of the editor is not always visible. Still, as Beth Palmer points out, there was a powerful "cultural association of editorship with manliness" because the characteristics required of a successful editor—overweening professional ambition, adequate education, and deep familiarity with politics and foreign affairs—were generally discouraged in women.9 The small number of women who acted as editors often concealed their identities or else did the job silently while a man held the official position, as with Marian Evans's editorship of the Westminster Review from May 1851 to April 1854, a role nominally held by the periodical's new owner John Chapman. 10 From 1860, Isabella Beeton "became visible" as the "editress" of the Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine but was not actually named in that role (although one year later she was identified as the author of the immensely popular Book of Household Management). II A notable exception is Charlotte Yonge, who was for over forty years the named editor of the Monthly Packet (1851-99), a Tractarian magazine founded to represent the High Anglican Church to a young female readership. Yonge initially supplied the majority of the content—consisting of historical cameos, historical and didactic fiction, biographies, translations, and extracts from other books until she gradually built up a network of female contributors to whom, as June Sturrock argues, she "represented herself in a familial rather than a professional role."12 Other women drew on literary connections and their own substantial drive and talent to found periodicals that would showcase political as well as religious aims and to serve as vehicles for their literary

productions.¹³ Eliza Cook's eponymous *Eliza Cook's Journal* (1849–54) conveyed the editor's Chartist and feminist ideals as well as her poetry. Mary Elizabeth Braddon founded *Belgravia* in 1866 as a home for her prodigious output of sensation fiction and later edited the literary periodical *Temple Bar*. The popular author and Scottish nationalist Annie Shepherd Swan was editor of *Woman at Home* (1893–1917) and went on to found the *Annie Swan Annual* in 1924. This handful of examples highlights, however, the rarity of women acting as editors rather than any substantial increase, despite the enormous growth in female authorship in periodicals during the period.

Cheap Jewish Library: Dedicated to the Working Classes

Charlotte Montefiore's Cheap Jewish Library: Dedicated to the Working Classes was a project born of philanthropy, collaboration, and secrecy. Montefiore (1818-54) was a member of the so-called "cousinhood," a network of Jewish families tied by blood and marriage and made wealthy through international trade and the stock market.¹⁴ She was a niece of the well-known financier and philanthropist Sir Moses Montefiore and the daughter of Henrietta Rothschild, daughter of Mayer Amschel Rothschild of Frankfurt, head of the famous banking family. 15 Many members of these families were active in communal life and made broad philanthropic commitments to Jews as well as non-Jews. Like other women in this milieu, Montefiore worked to ameliorate poverty and encourage acculturation among the Jewish poor. 16 In Montefiore's view, women had a special role to play in this work. Beyond merely donating money, Jewish women owed "time, and trouble, and affectionate sympathy" to those in need. 17 Her sister Louisa (1821–1910), who married Sir Anthony de Rothschild, was also a part of this female philanthropic context as a founding member of the Union of Jewish Women as well as several other Jewish women's organizations. Charlotte Montefiore, meanwhile, took the unusual step of marrying her father's brother, with whom she had two children (and died in childbirth with the second). 18 Before their marriage, her uncle Horatio had broken with his prominent brother Sir Moses and left the Bevis Marks synagogue, which followed the Sephardic liturgy and an orthodox interpretation of Judaism, to join the newly formed West London Synagogue of British Jews (WLS), which had been established to implement new continental reformist ideas and to unite Ashkenazi and Sephardic communities in Britain.19

It is apparent from the works published in the *Cheap Jewish Library* and in her writing elsewhere that Montefiore sympathized with the religious reforms that led to both her husband's break from parts of their family and the wider schism in London's Jewish community. Benjamin Maria

Baader describes the new ideals propagated by German Jewish reformists as emphasizing cultural refinement and "emotionalized spirituality" over ritual observance and rabbinic study of Talmud. While Montefiore exemplified the bourgeois ideal of the feeling and cultivated reformist Jew, she nonetheless enlisted the support of Rabbi David Aaron De Sola (1796–1860), the prominent senior minister of Bevis Marks and an eminent scholar and translator, to initiate the *Cheap Jewish Library*. Given her husband's involvement with the WLS, this is perhaps an unexpected move. Beyond indicating Montefiore's preference for the orthodoxy of her upbringing, however, it likely displays her savvy sense that De Sola was the right man to assist her in the project she had in mind. While De Sola played a prominent role in running the periodical, all of the financing and much of the prose for the *Cheap Jewish Library* was contributed by Montefiore. Her authorship, as with her editorship, remained a closely guarded secret until well after her early death.

As its name implies, the Cheap Jewish Library was deliberately inexpensive. Over the course of its eight-year run, Montefiore and De Sola brought out eighteen numbers that were subsequently published together in two volumes. Although Montefiore later published a series of essays on Jewish life and theology, A Few Words to the Jews, by One of Themselves (1853), the emphasis in the Cheap Jewish Library was largely on didactic fiction, including ten serialized novels.²¹ Each number was offered for one penny, or two pence when it exceeded two sheets of paper. As De Sola noted in a letter, this low price was a form of philanthropy and a gambit for placing the stories with the desired audience: "It is not necessary to state to anyone acquainted with printing, that this was tantamount to giving them away. But these ladies wisely judged, that what was given away was either looked upon with suspicion or neglected; whereas, if the class for which it was intended were to make the sacrifice of even a penny to buy it, it would show that they appreciated it, and that they had a desire for useful literature." ²² In practice, while some copies were purchased directly by readers, many more were bought by members of the middle class and distributed at no cost to the poor.

In its financing, distribution, and ethos, the *Cheap Jewish Library* adopted strategies long since employed by religious tract publishers. Hannah More's *Cheap Repository Tracts*, begun in 1795, and the Religious Tract Society, an evangelical press founded in 1799, both used cheaply produced pamphlets containing didactic stories or essays on religion to spread a moral message among the poor and provide edification for those acting on their behalf.²³ The success of More's anti-radical and anti-revolutionary project was predicated on middle-class quietism, as the tracts were more often than not pressed on the poor by their employers, who were the real market for the publications.²⁴ Montefiore shared More's concern with the

moral state of England's poor and how this might affect their political ideas. As with More's efforts, which were conceived as a bulwark against the influence of the French Revolution, the *Cheap Jewish Library*'s morality hews closer to pious acceptance of one's place in the social order than to more dogmatic theological concerns. Montefiore's *Cheap Jewish Library* thus used the tools of the established evangelical press to model the benefits of acculturation and the risks of apostasy to poor Jews who might be tempted by the perils of conversion, Chartism, or anarchy.

Unlike More, who used her fame as a playwright and social reformer to assemble a subscription list of prominent supporters, Montefiore took extreme measures to protect her anonymity. De Sola acted as the public face of the Cheap Jewish Library and the only named contributor was Grace Aguilar (1816-47), who had already published several works of poetry and an ambitious translation of a Jewish apologia from French. Her novels, theological treatises, and other mature works came later, as did her international fame as an author. Aguilar's family was also active in the Bevis Marks synagogue, and it was this Sephardic nexus that drew these three figures together. De Sola brought Aguilar to write for the Cheap *Jewish Library* and, as Michal Shahaf has cogently outlined, mediated an exchange of letters between her and Montefiore.²⁵ But while both women acted as authors and editors, Montefiore's identity was never disclosed to Aguilar, even as for years the two read and commented on each other's manuscripts.²⁶ Montefiore obeyed the convention that women of her class ought not to publish under their own names due to the shame associated with working to earn money. Aguilar, a middle-class writer who struggled to support her mother after her father's early death, felt no such delicacy and was, on the contrary, keen to advance her literary reputation and earn a living by her pen. Her stories "The Perez Family" and "Adah" first appeared in the Cheap Jewish Library, and both helped to build her readership among non-Jewish as well as Jewish readers.

The asymmetry of this relationship parallels the class dynamics at play in many of the stories published in the *Cheap Jewish Library*. Montefiore viewed her project as philanthropic educational literature that would hasten a Jewish renaissance by providing religious and cultural knowledge to the poor. Her anonymity, meanwhile, gave her the leeway to attempt an empathetic account of the lives of the poor, as in "Caleb Asher" (1845) and "Rachel Levi" (1847), which I discuss below. None of these works, however, breaks free from the paternalistic attitude expressed in her essay "The Present Age and Judaism" (1853), in which she states that it is the duty of the rich to direct the "rough and uncultivated nature" of the poor, "for, if left to its own untutored guidance, it may stray into a wrong channel or overstep the boundaries of prudence." While Montefiore was aware that her background meant she was "exceedingly deficient" in realistically rep-

resenting working-class Jews, she went to the Bible and not to Whitechapel to find her material: "By an earnest study of the Bible I may learn all what the Jews *ought to be*." This approach was consonant with the attitudes of Reform Judaism, in which the Pentateuch replaces rabbinic literature as a subject for study, and such study adheres to middle-class notions of decorum and edification.

Montefiore's concern for the political affiliations of working-class Jews can furthermore be understood in the context of Chartism, a nationwide movement for workers' rights and the expansion of male suffrage that was ascendant from 1838 into the 1850s, just as the Cheap Jewish Library was in print. While the Chartists supported the campaign for Jewish emancipation, their rhetoric nonetheless presented Jews as symbols of exploitation and enemies of the working class.²⁹ Meanwhile, the Jewish elite, for whom emancipation was a pressing concern, tried to stoke enthusiasm among the poor for this cause while also steering them away from the "poisonous doctrines of socialism, communism, Chartism, and other utopian solutions."30 Voting as a Jew was one thing; voting rights and other privileges on the grounds of class was another.31 The Chartist movement, in common with evangelical conversionism, used domestic melodrama to mobilize adherents and persuade potential recruits. As Michael Galchinsky has shown, the romance genre, with its "improbable coincidences" and legitimation of individual desire over communal norms, was deployed to persuade an intended audience of Jewish women to embrace evangelical Christianity.³² Similarly, in Chartist periodicals such as the Poor Man's Guardian and Northern Star, serialized melodramas brought women into the movement and refigured domestic relations in light of political aims. As Anna Clark notes, this was achieved using the narrative shorthand of "domestic misery, a wicked villain, [and] rescue by heroic Christian manhood."33 In the fiction she wrote or published in the Cheap Jewish Library, Montefiore harnessed the narrative strategies of her religious and political opponents to direct Jewish working-class readers away from political agitation and toward affective pathways that would create a cohesive Jewish community.

In Montefiore's novella "Caleb Asher," the Jewish poor suffer their privations with stoicism and faith, but temptation beckons in the form of conversionist literature and missionaries. Young Caleb dallies with conversion to Christianity as a last-ditch hope for alleviating his family's grinding poverty, which was caused by his father's workplace accident and subsequent loss of earnings. Conversion is presented as the work of mercenary missionaries whose offers of employment, food, and even cash are tied to the world of capitalist exchange. By presenting conversion as a financial speculation, the novel reverses the anti-Semitic association of Jews with usury, and Caleb is ultimately reminded not to question the social order nor to cast aside communal and religious identities in the pursuit of

material improvements. Although the poor surely suffer—and Montefiore describes heart-rending circumstances of undeserved hunger and discomfort—so, too, do the shopkeepers and factory owners, for they must bear financial risk. If, indeed, "the rich are to be pitied," Caleb's first moral failing occurs when he does not "look below the surface of things" to understand that everyone suffers, even those outwardly displaying affluence.³⁴ Caleb's lesson in relations between workers and bosses is rendered in crystal-clear terms for the working-class readers of the Cheap Jewish Library: "This should be remembered by those they employ, and prevent . . . their rising up against a temporary but unavoidable diminution of their salaries. If, instead of turning against, they would rally round their masters, a common evil might be averted, and good-will and kindly feeling be forever established."35 These are strikingly reactionary words to be writing in the midst of the so-called "hungry forties" and three years after the second Chartist petition was presented to Parliament with more than three million signatures. The devastation caused by the European potato failure and the rejection of the 1842 petition led to serious social unrest in the form of repeated strikes and widespread arrests.³⁶ In this heated moment, Montefiore is keen to discourage working Jews from identifying with such political movements, even though many were experiencing hunger and poverty. Despite the Ashers' obvious suffering, the novel is profoundly wary of anything like a Jewish labour movement, preferring instead that the poor should willingly absorb a reduction in pay to maintain positive relations with the rich.³⁷

The solution to poverty, meanwhile, is modelled by women's piety within the Jewish home. Caleb's sister Sarah and the mother and sister of his apostate friend Reuben read the Bible and trust in God to bring better things. This trust, rather than other forms of social or economic striving, is ultimately rewarded in the form of a timely inheritance and an uptick in profitable work. During the extravagant pathos of Reuben's deathbed reconversion scene, he is afforded a reunion with his one-time fiancée, Sarah, who leads him in a recitation of Judaism's central profession of faith, Shema Israel. He is then revived from apparent death in time to receive his mother's and sister's forgiveness and to recant his conversion to Christianity while providing written testimony of his "dying a true Israelite." 38 With Sarah's guidance, Reuben articulates a model of reformed Judaism that is far from rabbinical orthodoxy: "Cling with all your heart and soul to the Divine religion, that proclaims THE UNITY OF GOD, which enjoins the worship of God alone, and whose practices are all in accordance with this belief: a religion which the simple may comprehend and follow, which enforces love to God, charity and good-will to all men—whose moral creed contains no exaggerated enthusiasm, but noble and pure precepts that can be fulfilled letter by letter, and whose accomplishment gives peace here, and peace hereafter."³⁹ This model, elaborated upon at length in Montefiore's later essays, reverses a number of anti-Semitic tropes: Jews here are spiritual, not avaricious; they worship "God alone," not the accumulated commentaries of rabbinic Judaism; and their religion foregrounds love and simplicity rather than rule-bound formalism.⁴⁰ In borrowing a Christian emphasis on love and the hereafter, Montefiore endorses her readers' aspiration to align themselves with the Protestant middle class. By advising the Jewish poor in a new iteration of unmediated religion, however, she seeks to effect a renewal of Jewish identity. Importantly, this renewal not only strengthens community affiliation but also forestalls social upheaval.

Elsewhere in the Cheap Jewish Library, Montefiore deploys the concept of the Sabbath to demonstrate that devout observance of Jewish ritual can serve political and social ends. The legislation of Sabbath observance was hotly contested throughout the nineteenth century. Sunday closure of museums and the prohibition of most forms of trade while public houses remained open for limited hours was a discrepancy much derided by temperance campaigners, and the occurrence of the Jewish Sabbath on Saturdays caused further controversy. 41 To keep their Sabbath, Jews necessarily sacrificed a day of trade while also facing penalties for attempting to compensate for this by trading on Sundays when the law, but not their religion, prevented them from doing so. "Rachel Levi; or the Young Orphan" dramatizes the bind in which this economic pressure placed observant Jews.⁴² Here the antagonists are not corrupting missionaries but rather Jews who are less religious and more acculturated than the pious orphan Rachel. By learning to manage her emotions rather than her surroundings, Rachel soon makes the most of having been unfairly let go by the irreligious Mrs. Davis, a Jewish woman who wants her to work on Saturdays. First, Rachel must learn to "combat her sorrow" by doing good deeds to benefit others, then, "thus occupied, there was no time for despondency, and the orphan's cheeks became round and rosy again, and her disposition as cheerful as ever."43 Rachel's greatest hour occurs when she nurses her erstwhile employer from her deathbed back to health and is rewarded both with the spectacle of her patient's renewed faith as well as a share in her business. As with the pious women in "Caleb Asher," Rachel's material well-being comes to her through service, expressions of humility, and mastery of her own sorrow and dismay. In her later essay "The Labourer's Sabbath," Montefiore promises that forbearance is the "purest worship" and frames the Sabbath as an opportunity for labourers to look beyond material deprivations to their "spiritual greatness" and "feel that [they] are the noblest work of God's creation."44 Here, too, Jewish religious observance is reinterpreted as a spiritualized practice of feeling that quashes any hint of social critique.

Ultimately, Montefiore's project implied that the poor could ascend to middle-class respectability but no farther. This is apparent in her decision to run the periodical at a loss for the benefit of working-class Jews and to publish adapted versions of conversion stories and social problem novels. Although Montefiore's family networks and connection to the West London Synagogue gave her access to European ideas about new approaches to Jewish learning, she adopted these reforms for a distinctly British context in which organizations such as the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews and political movements like Chartism challenged the internal hegemony of the Jewish community. Her anonymity as editor and author gave her free reign to imagine poverty while occluding her own wealth and avoiding notoriety. The *Cheap Jewish Library* thus entered the marketplace of religious periodicals with a didactic message of spiritual renewal in the service of social conservatism, and it thrived for a time because the editor's private wealth allowed her and her project to evade scrutiny.

Jewish Sabbath Journal: A Penny and Moral Magazine for the Young

When Montefiore's project came to an end in 1849, it departed from a scene that was increasingly crowded with new Jewish publications, many of them authored by women. Judith Montefiore, the aunt of Charlotte and wife of Sir Moses, had upheld the family's preference for anonymity when she privately printed two travel diaries in 1836 and 1844 and anonymously published a cookbook called *The Jewish Manual* in 1846.45 In contrast, her cousin Abigail Lindo was identified closely with her family on the publication of her ground-breaking Hebrew-English lexicon in 1846, attributed on the title page to "Abigail, third daughter of David Abarbanel Lindo, Esq." (a connection emphasized by an accompanying portrait of her father, who had played no part in producing the volume).46 Montefiore's Cheap Jewish Library had far outlasted Sabbath Leaves, a periodical founded in 1845 by Haim Guadalla for the publication of sermons, which folded after five numbers due to "extreme apathy of the people." 47 Miriam Belisario's 1853 volume, Sabbath Evenings at Home, fared better and was undoubtedly aided by the patronage of Rabbi De Sola. These projects, created by an interconnected Sephardic group centred around the Bevis Marks synagogue, all had access to Jewish texts and learning, the support of prominent community members, and, in some cases, funds to meet the costs of publishing and distribution. These works were also by and large directed toward a predominantly Jewish readership, often in the cause of spiritual renewal.

Other Jews, meanwhile, operated outside of this network. As Karen Weisman has shown, in the early nineteenth century Jewish writers used English literary forms as a means of exploring their cultural and religious difference while also staking their claim to a national literary tradition.

Alongside her investigation of Romantic tropes in Anglo-Jewish poetry, Weisman argues that Jewish authors' translations—of, for example, Hebrew hymns into English or English poetry into Hebrew—were important assertions of cultural authority, particularly over the meanings of sacred texts.⁴⁸ Marion Moss (1821–1907) and her sister Celia (1819–73) were two such authors who used poetry, prose, and translation to assert their right to self-representation as British Jews.

The Moss sisters were two of twelve siblings born to Joseph and Amelia Moss in Portsea, near Portsmouth. More than just an important provincial community, the Jewish congregation of Portsmouth was likely the oldest in England outside of London, and the Mosses were related through their mother to its founding rabbi.⁴⁹ Its members were largely of German origin and many had come to the region via London, drawn to the trades that serviced the Royal Navy. The Jewish congregation put down roots during the latter half of the eighteenth century as the population of Portsmouth, by then England's principal naval base, grew tenfold. 50 Alongside the mercantile concerns of most Jews in the area, there was also considerable Hebrew learning, including an engraver who printed Hebrew text and a mason who supplied gravestones for the Jewish burial ground. Indeed, the Portsmouth community was so closely connected to the world of London synagogues that it underwent a congregational dispute in parallel with those shaking the capital, in which Torah scrolls were removed from one house of worship to another under cover of night.⁵¹ According to the historian Cecil Roth, influence did not merely flow from the metropolis to the provincial congregation. Instead, he notes, Portsmouth Jewry played a "notable share . . . in the nineteenth century in civic life and in the movement for Jewish emancipation."52

The Moss sisters were part of an important lineage of Jewish thought and advocacy as the inheritors of their rabbinic antecedents, through their own ground-breaking writing, and later in the distinguished accomplishments of their children during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As young adults, Marion and Celia collaborated on a volume of poetry, Early Efforts (1839), which was followed by narrative accounts of episodes from the Hebrew Bible and antiquity in The Romance of Jewish History (1840) and Tales of Jewish History (1843). The poetry, published over their father's objections, was justified as a money-making enterprise, and the sisters sought notice for all their works through dedications to important authors and politicians.⁵³ The Mosses were scrupulous in documenting their sources. Each of the tales from the histories is prefaced by a lengthy historical summary that itemizes its biblical and secular sources. Although their collaborative works name the sisters as joint authors, the tables of contents make it clear who wrote which chapters. Attribution mattered to both, as did reputation and the hope of a wide readership. It is important to note, then, that while they were hardly cut off from the world of London Jewry and from Jewish learning, they were not personally connected to great families or key cultural institutions. Their family was not wealthy, and the sisters' bold claims on the attention of powerful writers indicate that they did not have a personal circle of advantageous contacts upon whom to draw. The conditions in which they published thus differed considerably from the world of Charlotte Montefiore. These differences appeared all the more starkly in 1855 when Marion, by then running a school in Whitechapel and married to her one-time French teacher Alphonse Hartog, established an ambitious new weekly periodical, *Jewish Sabbath Journal: A Penny and Moral Magazine for the Young*.

The title indicates some of the journal's preoccupations and the cultural currents it was tapping into. In proposing a Sabbath journal, Hartog aimed to provide reading material in an accessible vernacular to delineate sacred time. This is a typical strategy of Jewish renewal, as it assumes a population of Jews who lack the religious education and communal attachments to uphold the Sabbath in strict observance of Jewish law, and it bridges that gap by providing moral forms of entertainment. This aim was further advanced by the journal's low price, named in its very title, which put it within reach of children and the poor. Hartog's emphasis on young readers responds to contemporary debates on Jewish education, particularly the responsibility of mothers to instill a robust Jewish identity in their children.⁵⁴ Given her role in running a school, Hartog was no stranger to the argument that Jewish children ought not to receive their secular and religious education from Christians. The Jewish Sabbath Journal, then, sought to supplement what Jewish education was available in institutions like the Jews' Free School (founded in 1732 and run from a dedicated building in the East End from 1822) with didactic entertainment that emphasized Jewish identity. Despite engaging these topical issues, the periodical ran for just eleven weekly numbers before failing later in 1855. This unhappy end was due in part to a scathing review and subsequent falling off in subscriptions.55

From the preliminary advertisements placed in the Jewish press to the journal's masthead, Hartog foregrounded both her maiden and married names so that readers might draw a link between her new venture and the popular publications of her youth. Monthly advertisements placed in the *Jewish Chronicle* named the "editress" as "Mrs. Hartog, late Miss Marion Moss," and each issue duly announced the same directly beneath the title. ⁵⁶ Not for her the deliberate obfuscation of her role as the journal's founder and chief contributor, particularly when her reputation as an established author might attract the subscriptions that were sorely needed to finance the project. All advertisements and nearly every issue included payment reminders ("those who have not paid are respectfully requested to for-

ward their Donations to the Editress before the appearance of the First Number") and "earnest" requests that readers promote the journal to their friends, "in order that it may become self-supporting." Despite the bravado implied by using her name, Hartog admitted to "mingled feelings of hope and fear" in her opening editorial. 8 But the journal remained committed to attribution throughout its run by providing a named or pseudonymous author for every contribution. This was an unusual policy given that anonymous publication was still the norm in many periodicals and, in most cases, it could have little bearing on sales. Beyond trading on her name for publicity, then, Hartog apparently wanted to ensure that she and her contributors received recognition for their creative work.

Nonetheless, the Jewish Sabbath Journal had some points in common with Montefiore's Cheap Jewish Library and was even connected to that periodical in important ways. 59 Both, for instance, foregrounded the work of Grace Aguilar. Montefiore had provided Aguilar with an early publishing opportunity, and Hartog commemorated the writer posthumously. After Aguilar's death in 1847, the Jewish Sabbath Journal published a two-part obituary called "The Grave of Grace Aguilar" by Mrs. S. C. Hall (Anna Maria Hall, the Irish novelist and poet). Hall frames her account of a pilgrimage to Aguilar's grave in Frankfort with personal reminiscences of the author and a strong plea for toleration of the Jews in Britain, a point which is emphasized in the final installment through juxtaposition to Hartog's poem "Our Redemption: A Plea For Religious Tolerance." Hartog also published Aguilar's poem "Dialogue Stanzas: Composed for, and Repeated by, Two Dear Little Animated Girls, at a Family Celebration of the Festival of Purim," which had first been published in the Philadelphiabased Occident and American Jewish Advocate in 1845. The appearance of this poem, topical for the Purim issue, shows Aguilar's ongoing popularity among Jewish readers. Her influence is also apparent in new work by Hartog and others that is clearly responsive to, or derivative of, Aguilar's publications. Hartog's family drama "Milcah: A Tale of the Spanish Jews in the Fifteenth Century"—a surprising topic for an Ashkenazi author owes much to Aguilar's 1850 novel The Vale of Cedars and her other fictions of the Spanish Inquisition. In this sense, then, Hartog maintained her strategy of publishing established authors and tropes to attract readers. Indeed, she reinforced the tie to Rabbi David Aaron De Sola by serializing a sermon preached by his son, Rev. Abraham De Sola, who was minister of Shearith Israel Synagogue in Montreal from 1847.60

While the *Jewish Sabbath Journal* was indebted to earlier models to some degree, it was far more wide-ranging and formally diverse than the *Cheap Jewish Library*. In addition to stalwart literary forms like didactic fiction, Hartog published original poetry and non-fiction such as sermons

and Bible stories for children. The latter went beyond narrative retellings and instead offered mothers pedagogical strategies for engaging their children in analytical discussions of the texts. This strategy developed over time: in the first issue, Hartog advises mothers to respond to "such comments as may be suggested by the questions which children of even moderate intellect are sure to put."61 By the third issue, however, the matter is no longer left to chance and the regular feature "For Our Little Friends" is followed by ten questions to prompt further discussion. 62 Hartog's metaeditorial voice is apparent throughout the journal, particularly in "To Our Correspondents," a recurring section that addresses readers and contributors directly. The note to Rev. A. De Sola ("Received") presumably alerts De Sola to the safe arrival of the sermon that would be printed in the next number while also displaying to readers Hartog's correspondence with a noted rabbi.⁶³ Later, a submission from "OLEPH" is declined on the grounds that the journal is for "leading the minds of our readers to love Judaism. . . . We should be sorry to give our journal a character for Sectarianism."64 As with her earlier tales from Jewish history, Hartog's mission is to be educative but not sectarian. By presenting a composite of voices and forms filtered through a plainly didactic lens, the *Jewish Sab*bath Journal encouraged readers to learn, feel, and discuss sacred texts and episodes from Jewish history without invoking the fault lines between orthodoxy and reform, and between Sephardic and Ashkenazi liturgy, that had become entrenched in Britain.

Furthermore, by surpassing these parochial conflicts, Hartog's journal offered an innovative link to the Jewish public sphere beyond Britain. Each issue featured original translation from French and, in some cases, German Jewish periodicals. Many of the translations were done by Hartog herself and those whose sources are given are from Archives Israélites, a Jewish periodical founded in France in 1840. Hartog's selections for translation included melodramatic stories of Jewish encounters with non-Jews (generally resulting in amity between Jews and Catholics), as well as biographical sketches of noted French Jews. Her husband Alphonse Hartog translated a biography of Moses Mendelssohn from French. Her sister Celia—by now Mrs. Levetus, although also identified as "late Miss Celia Moss" to remind readers of her earlier works—wrote a poem in English inspired by one published by Ben Levi (the pseudonym of G. Weil, an early contributor to Archives Israélites) in Les Matinées du Samedi, a series of books on Jewish history designed to provide moral and religious Sabbath reading for children. Levetus wrote another poem, "The Jewish Martyrs," in response to "an incident copied from a German paper by the Jewish Chronicle." 65 It is clear, then, that this family was deeply influenced by and responsive to Continental Jewish culture, taking its publications as their models and using translation to bring its contents to an Anglo-Jewish readership. Alongside

its passionate support of Jewish emancipation in Britain—a cause that, at the time of the journal's founding, was just three years from succeeding with the passage of the Jews Relief Act in 1858—Hartog's Jewish Sabbath Journal conceived of a far broader Jewish polity that was not determined by national identity or fixed relations to non-Jews. Translations of French stories like "The Friend of the Prefect" present Catholicism in a generally positive light. Jewish writing in England during the same period tended to demonize Catholics and to present equivalence between Jews and Protestants as part of a wider strategy for seeking expanded civil liberties. During its short run, then, Hartog's Jewish Sabbath Journal looked beyond the nation as its primary frame of reference to imagine an international Jewish world that, for her, stretched from Western Europe to North America and the Caribbean.

It was only a short time later that the hammer fell. In the "To Our Correspondents" section on March 15, 1855, Hartog responded to "numerous" inquiries as to why the journal had not been reviewed in the *Hebrew* Observer (which had the year before been incorporated into the Jewish Chronicle), including one from a Christian friend who asked if she had neglected to submit it for review.⁶⁶ To these concerned readers, Hartog issued a wounded and defiant response: "We can but answer that we have been duly attentive to the courtesies usually bestowed on the press . . . but the Editor, for some reason unknown to us, has not even shown the common civility of acknowledging the receipt of the 'Sabbath Journal.' Is it forgetfulness on his part, or is it willful? We know not, and we care not to inquire. We shall ever strive to discharge our duties faithfully, and leave the rest in the hands of a generous public."67 Clearly piqued by his silence, Hartog felt that a review was her due. This note finally attracted the attention of the editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*, Abraham Benisch, who published his review eight days later.

Given Benisch's background and interests, Hartog may have been justified in expecting a positive reception. Despite his legacy as "a great editor among great editors," Benisch was above all a Hebraist whose life's work was to promote the return of the Jews to Palestine. Born in Bohemia in 1811, he was nearly thirty when he settled in England, believing that Britain was the Western power most likely to organize Jewish colonisation of the Holy Land. On arrival, he turned to newspapers as a route to gaining influence and shaping opinion. In local affairs, Benisch supported the campaign for Jewish emancipation in Britain and, through his many community involvements, worked to improve Jewish education for children and to institute the Association for the Promotion of Jewish Literature. Meanwhile, he expressed concern for the condition of the Jews in all countries and was an enthusiastic supporter of the Anglo-Jewish Association and Alliance Israélite Universelle. Benisch was also a translator who pro-

duced one of the first translations of the Hebrew Bible into English, the *Jewish School and Family Bible* (1851–61). In the preface to this work, he acknowledges that creating vernacular editions of sacred texts "was the endeavour of every portion of the Jewish community wherever they were established."⁷⁰ Despite this commitment to making the Bible available to all readers, his Jewish universalism was underpinned by religious orthodoxy and a sarcastic attitude toward the practices of Reform Judaism. Given the priorities shared by Hartog and Benisch, one might expect that he would look favourably upon a venture like the *Jewish Sabbath Journal*. But he did not.

Benisch begins his review of the journal by drawing attention to elements of three stories that he considers theologically at odds with orthodoxy. In "The Blessed: Founded of Fact," Hartog depicts the act of blessing the sick as an "old custom," but Benisch sees it as a folk activity not condoned by rabbis because its justification comes from "Josephus, and not Moses" (in other words, from Jewish history rather than the Bible).71 He refutes another story's suggestion that children ought not to play with toys on the Sabbath, claiming that such a view "may be puritan, but certainly is not Jewish."72 Finally, he parses a third story's claim that Eve's fall brought death into the world as one that "leads from the Synagogue to the Church" because it implies the necessity of an atoning saviour.⁷³ Rather than treating these works as meaningful interventions into theological debates or even offering to advise Hartog on religious complexities (as Montefiore had hired De Sola to do), Benisch warns others off: "But we do say that a publication conducted by parties so little conversant with the principles of religion which it is designed to inculcate, cannot be safely and conscientiously recommended to the community, whatever merits the publication may possess in other respects."74 As a relatively recent immigrant to Britain from central Europe, Benisch's understanding of Judaism was different from Hartog's, and little in his earlier life had prepared him to engage with a woman writer on Jewish topics. In a review written one year later, he enthused about the "wonderful phenomenon" of women as the "principal stars" of Anglo-Jewish literature.75 Despite this later recognition of the importance of women's writing, his dismissal of Hartog's journal suggests a sexist disdain as well as a critique. In any case, he was influential, and his scathing review does appear to have tipped the fledgling project into insolvency. The Jewish Sabbath Journal limped along for another few issues, but subscriptions had dried up. Subsequent advertisements mentioned delays due to "pecuniary loss," and then it was gone.76 Hartog published a poem called "On the Death of My Beloved Child" and then barely published again.77

The world of Jewish periodicals during the 1840s and 1850s was intensely competitive, and Benisch had a reputation as an irascible fig-

ure.⁷⁸ Still, his condemnation of this periodical seems unduly harsh. Hartog's interweaving of biblical and secular sources as well as orthodox and vernacular practices was customary for those without a formal religious education, which was the case for most Jewish women. Indeed, it is doubly ironic that she was rebuked for this tendency, given that the *Jewish Sabbath Journal* was founded precisely to address the Jewish community's failure to provide women with religious education and that Benisch himself would descry this failing six years later when he referred to Jewish women as "the weakness in our camp."⁷⁹ Despite her proven expertise in Jewish history and the use of storytelling to engage readers, Hartog was granted no leeway. Just as her wide reading in Jewish history and culture became a liability rather than a strength, her willingness to engage in the promotion strategies generally employed by other periodical publications told against her. With no financial margin, any loss of support proved fatal.

Conclusion

Although the periodicals founded by Montefiore and Hartog both provided Jewish learning in the service of building community, they differed in their ideas of the communities that they were building. Montefiore's Cheap Jewish Library was a philanthropic project modelled on English religious tracts to educate the poor. It relied on her anonymity and financing as well as the support of a prominent (male) rabbi to stay afloat, but the periodical was clearly popular. In addition to sustaining an eight-year run, it successfully republished its serialized fiction in book form and helped to launch the literary career of Grace Aguilar. Its readership thus responded favourably to stories set within a middle-class framework of thrift and decorum that depicted a Jewish community under threat by conversionists and progressive politics such as Chartism. Despite Montefiore's international family ties, the concerns that loomed large on the pages of her journal were specific to the British context. Hartog's Jewish Sabbath Journal, by contrast, was modelled on French Jewish periodicals and set out to strengthen readers' identification with global Jewry through translations from French and German. Far from reinforcing internal forms of community organization, Hartog openly worked to avoid social and doctrinal fault lines. In foregrounding her own name and voice, she exposed herself to criticism and became both personally and financially vulnerable when negative publicity affected subscription numbers.

Nevertheless, both editors faced pressures inherent to the volatile market for religious periodicals, with the additional challenge of doing so as women. As it happens, Montefiore and Hartog were well read in Jewish history and theology, and both were invested in religious reform. By

remaining anonymous, Montefiore evaded the difficulty that Hartog and, indeed, all Jewish women faced in asserting theological interpretations of any kind; the absence of any organized religious education for women made it easy to criticize and so to dismiss them for lack of knowledge. If the woman in question was also an editor, as with Hartog, then the entire publication became suspect. Finally, these two case studies bring to the surface the Anglo-Jewish preference for national ties over religious cosmopolitanism. British Jews were by and large converted to the nation, if not to Christianity. Montefiore judged this correctly when she maintained a tight focus on local problems of class, politics, and relations with non-Jews. Hartog's vision of a decentred, European Jewish identity did not conform to the trends of contemporary Anglo-Jewish life, particularly as emancipation in England was on the horizon. Hartog's failure seems paradigmatic of a nationalist turn in Jewish identity, and it is for this reason that her otherwise obscure journal is interesting to us now. This short-lived venture is, in a sense, more instructive than Montefiore's success, as it shows all too vividly the narrowing rather than widening cultural horizons of British Jews in the nineteenth century.

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NOTES

- 1. Cesarani, Jewish Chronicle, 3.
- 2 Ibid
- 3. Green, "Old Networks, New Connections," 57-60.
- 4. Ibid., 55.
- 5. Cantor, "Anglo-Jewish Periodicals," 16.
- 6. Ibid., 15.
- 7. Cesarani, Jewish Chronicle, 2.
- 8. Jewish political emancipation took place in 1858 with the passage of the Jews Relief Act. For an overview of this event and the debates preceding it, see Endelman, *Jews of Britain*, 102–12.
- 9. Palmer, Women's Authorship and Editorship, 3.
- 10. Gray, "George Eliot and the Westminster Review," 213.
- 11. Van Remoortel, "Women Editors' Transnational Networks," 47.
- 12. Sturrock, "Establishing Identity," 268.
- 13. See Rodgers, "Editor of the Period."
- 14. Bermant, Cousinhood, 39-50.
- 15. Green, Moses Montefiore, 428.
- 16. Atkins points out that evangelical banking families similarly combined commerce with philanthropy, often mediated by female members of such networks "whose business alliances and social connections pulsed with serious religion." Converting Britannia, 79.

- 17. Charlotte Montefiore, A Few Words to the Jews, 165.
- 18. Hartog's poem on Montefiore's death, "Stanzas Addressed to the Infant Child of the Late Mrs. H. Montefiore," was published in the *Jewish Chronicle* shortly after the event.
- 19. Green, *Moses Montefiore*, 166. Green describes the WLS as "designed to make Judaism as convenient, respectable, and English and possible, with a view to fusing more completely with Christian society and hastening the pace of emancipation." Ibid., 164.
- 20. Baader, Gender, Judaism, and Bourgeois Culture in Germany, 20.
- 21. Montefiore's novella "Caleb Asher," which was first serialized in the *Cheap Jewish Library*, was reissued by the Jewish Publication Society in Philadelphia in 1845.
- 22. David Aaron De Sola, quoted in De Sola, *Biography*, 29. The "ladies" referred to here are Charlotte Montefiore and her sister, Louisa de Rothschild.
- 23. Stubenrauch, "Silent Preachers," 551.
- 24. Stott, Hannah More, 175.
- 25. De Sola, Biography, 33; Shahaf, "Charlotte Montefiore's Secret."
- 26. Shahaf, "Charlotte Montefiore's Secret," 54.
- 27. Charlotte Montefiore, A Few Words to the Jews, 5.
- 28. Quoted in De Sola, *Biography*, 30; emphasis in the original.
- 29. Brustein and Roberts, Socialism of Fools?, 144.
- 30. Hebrew Observer, October 20, 1854, quoted in Finestein, "Anglo-Jewish Opinion," 129.
- 31. Galchinsky argues that Jewish women supported political emancipation as an analogue to their "internal emancipation" from Judaism's oppressive laws and customs regulating their lives. *Romance and Reform*, 30.
- 32. Ibid., 44.
- 33. Clark, "Rhetoric of Chartist Domesticity," 65.
- 34. Charlotte Montefiore, "Caleb Asher," 11, 19.
- 35. Ibid., 20.
- 36. Chase, Chartism, 226.
- 37. Montefiore's anxiety about class relations anticipates attitudes that would develop thirty years later, when the rapid influx into Britain of impoverished Jews fleeing pogroms and conscription in Eastern Europe placed new pressures on the established Anglo-Jewish community of which Montefiore had been a part. The formation of the Hebrew Socialist Union in 1876, along with the proliferation of radical Yiddish-language periodicals such as *Poilishe Yidl* (founded in 1884) and *Arbeter Fraint* (founded in 1885) and the atheism of socialist agitators like Morris Winchevsky, realized the twin specters of economic upheaval and apostasy which Montefiore had hinted at in the 1840s. Fishman, *East End Jewish Radicals*, 138.
- 38. Charlotte Montefiore, "Caleb Asher," 92.

- 39. Ibid., 93.
- 40. See, for example, "God's Truth and Man's Truth" in Charlotte Montefiore, *A Few Words to the Jews*, 44–71.
- 41. Harrison, "Sunday Trading Riots of 1855," 220.
- 42. Although "Rachel Levi" was published anonymously, Abraham De Sola records a letter to his father from Montefiore in which she confirms her authorship and her pleasure in its warm reception: "In the approval of Mrs. De Sola and your daughters of 'Rachel Levi,' I have a most agreeable guarantee of success, which, as you may suppose, has been a matter of great doubt and anxiety to me. Will you be good enough to say to them that the author heard with the greatest pleasure that they took some interest in the story of the orphan, and that the writer hopes their good wishes will attend Rachel's interest into the world." De Sola, *Biography*, 30.
- 43. Charlotte Montefiore, "Rachel Levi," 27.
- 44. Charlotte Montefiore, A Few Words to the Jews, 74, 83-84.
- 45. See Judith Montefiore, *Private Journal of a Visit to Egypt and Palestine* and *Notes from a Journal of a Visit to Palestine by Way of Italy and the Mediterranean*. While Judith Montefiore is not named as the author of her journals, their provenance was never in any doubt given the specificity of other named individuals and places in their pages. All the same, these volumes were printed for private circulation rather than published for sale, so they retain the delicacy of anonymity even while their authorship was known to an elite group of readers.
- 46. Lindo, Hebrew and English and English and Hebrew Dictionary, i.
- 47. De Sola, Biography, 32.
- 48. For Weisman's summary of the debates surrounding biblical translation, see *Singing in a Foreign Land*, 13–14.
- 49. Roth, "Portsmouth Community," 158.
- 50. The land for a burial ground was purchased in 1749, and construction of a dedicated synagogue was completed in 1780. Ibid., 163, 176.
- 51. The schism was eventually resolved in favour of the Ashkenazi Great Synagogue in London, which oversaw marriages and other ritual observances. Ibid., 170.
- 52. Ibid., 179.
- 53. Early Efforts is dedicated to the orientalist Sir George Staunton, The Romance of Jewish History to the author and politician Edward Bulwer-Lytton, and Tales of Jewish History to the poet Samuel Rogers.
- 54. Grace Aguilar also wrote about the role of domestic maternal education in The Spirit of Judaism (1843). See Dwor, "Grace Aguilar's Defence of Jewish Difference."
- 55. I am so grateful to Eric Dillalogue of the Kislak Center for Special Collections at the University of Pennsylvania, who scanned numbers 1 to 8 of the

Jewish Sabbath Journal for me. The pages of the remaining numbers are uncut and, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, conservators were not on hand to open them. It is likely that these copies were originally sent to Rabbi Isaac Leeser, as they form part of the Leeser collection, and it is thus quite telling that he apparently stopped reading the journal after the eighth number.

- 56. Hartog, "Cheap Jewish Literature," February 23, 1855, 73.
- 57. Hartog, "Cheap Jewish Literature," March 9, 1855, 92; Hartog, "To Our Correspondents," 32.
- 58. Hartog, "To the Reader," 1.
- 59. Charlotte Montefiore's *A Few Words to the Jews* is advertised along with other Jewish titles on the back page of several issues. It is a paid advertisement but a striking intertextual tie nonetheless.
- 60. See De Sola, "A Kingdom of Priests and a Holy Nation!" The sermon was first preached in Montreal in May 1849.
- 61. Hartog, "For Our Little Friends," February 22, 1855, 14.
- 62. Hartog, "For Our Little Friends," March 1, 1855, 32.
- 63. Hartog, "To Our Correspondents," 16.
- 64. Ibid.
- 65. Levetus, "Jewish Martyrs," 24.
- 66. Hartog, "To Our Correspondents," 64.
- 67. Ibid.
- 68. Shaftesley, "Dr. Abraham Benisch as Newspaper Editor," 216.
- 69. Ibid., 220.
- 70. Benisch, translator's preface, vi.
- 71. Benisch, "Jewish Sabbath Journal," 109. See also Hartog, "The Blessed," 3.
- 72. Benisch, "Jewish Sabbath Journal," 109.
- 73. Ibid.
- 74. Ibid.
- 75. Benisch, review of Imrei Lev, 369.
- 76. Hartog, "Jewish Sabbath Journal," 209.
- 77. Galchinsky, "Marion Hartog."
- 78. Cantor points out numerous instances of rivalries between papers and bad blood resulting from the replacement of editors to try and cover financial losses. "Anglo-Jewish Periodicals," 23.
- 79. Benisch, "Our Women," 387.

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