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Explaining the Expulsion: A Historiographical Survey of *Gerush Sepharad* and the Question of Causality

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of the requirements for Ordination

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Thus men relate in chronicles and histories their own opinions rather than actual events, so that one and the same event is so differently related by two men of different opinions, that it seems like two separate occurrences; and, further, it is very easy from historical chronicles to gather the personal opinions of the historian.

--Baruch Spinoza,

A Theologico-Political Treatise

DEDICATION

To my mother and father, who have given me the strength, wisdom, and love which enabled me to reach this day.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis has truly been a labor of love, and I am deeply grateful to all who have provided aid and inspiration along the way. My friends and family supported me even in those moments when, overwhelmed by work, I seemed to have fallen off the face of the earth. They are too many to single out, but they reminded me that there indeed was "life beyond the thesis."

Special thanks go to my advisor, Dr. Michael A. Meyer. He provided me with invaluable insights, obscure source materials, and a model for my own scholarly endeavors. All of this, and stories of his rafting and canoeing experiences, too!

Marilyn Schwiers put in hours above and beyond the call of duty to type this work, and never lost her smile, even late at night and on weekends when she could have been doing something much more entertaining. Lucy Dinner also deserves my gratitude for letting me type the Hebrew sections on her computer. She facilitated my surrender to technology.

I cannot help but think of my father and grandfather, and all of the eleven generations of rabbis who have preceded me in my family. Their influence has been profound, and I hope to live up their legacy as I prepare to join this shalshelet ha-Kabbalah.

Finally, to Laura: I could not have done it without you. You cheered me up when I was glum, and showed me the love which will endure long after this work is forgotten. As I have studied attempts to explain the past, you have promised to share the future. For you, the words of Proverbs 17:17:

"A friend is one who is a loving companion at all times."

11 Adar 5748

CONTENTS

DIGEST

As a people bound by the commandment, "Remember the days of old!" Jews have often attempted to understand the meaning of their past and in so doing come to terms with the present. Particularly in times of catastrophe, they have wondered what could be the causes of the often-tragic events which shaped their destiny.

The expulsion from Spain in 1492 was one of those events which deeply shook the Jewish people and led generations of Jewish historians to inquire why such tribulations had befallen their nation. The exiles themselves and their immediate descendants tend to view it within the context of messianism, generally identifying their suffering as the birth pangs of the messiah. Even the most radical sixteenth-century thinker, Solomon Ibn Verga, left some room for God's providence in his account.

Nineteenth-century historians offer more secular explanations of the expulsion. Most, however, were influenced by the Idealist school of history which still allowed for the presence of "providence" in some sense of the word. They do not refer to God's mighty hand and outstretched arm like their sixteenth-century predecessors, but they do speak of the "retributive justice in history" and they revel in Spain's fall from power during the century following the expulsion.

By the twentieth century even this vestige of providential history largely vanished from accounts of the expulsion. For most modern historians, God became irrelevant to an understanding of the Jewish past. Like all other events, the Spanish expulsion was explicable as the result of natural causes rather than divine intervention. For Rabbi Leo Baeck, however, this was not the case A survivor of the Shoah, he returns to the earlier view and insists that the Spanish expulsion, and every other event in Jewish history, is to some degree a manifestation of God's presence in history.

The range of explanations offered for the expulsion over the centuries and even within a single century is extraordinary. This diversity shows that much of history is still "story," the product of each thinker's creative understanding of the past. An overview of accounts of the Spanish expulsion confirms Salo Baron's insightful observation that every generation of Jewish historians writes its own history of past generations.

Introduction

"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations." For over two thousand years, this commandment has called the Jewish people to ponder the meaning of their collective past. Throughout the centuries Jews have responded to its demands, believing memory to be one of the precious gifts that has sustained us on our journey through so many different lands and ages.

Yet if the obligation to remember has remained constant, the memories, and even the means of remembering, have not. When the haggadah speaks of the need for all Jews to see themselves as if they, too, went out from Egypt, it certainly recognizes that not all individuals will relive the experience in the same manner. Each person is the product of a different time and place, and all sorts of present circumstances will affect the way they perceive the "days of old."

In the more tightly structured, modern study of the past which we call history, the dynamic is not so different. While historians may strive for objectivity, the changes evident in the body of historiography over time clearly show that they, too, are at least partially products of their age. By studying their accounts one can learn a great deal about how they (and to some extent their contemporaries) viewed the world and its workings.

In this thesis, I shall examine the way Jewish historians and, by way of comparison, some Gentile historians concerned with Jewish subject

matter have described the past. I will concentrate on the changes which occur in their accounts over time and attempt to grasp what sorts of phenomena underlie those changes. The purpose is essentially to study the process of history through historiography, to gain an understanding of what history in general and Jewish history in particular is by studying how others have understood it.

In order to do this, I shall focus on the question of causality as it occurs in a wide range of accounts dealing with a single event, the expulsion of the Jews from Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492. This event lends itself to such an analysis because for many years it was perceived by Jews as perhaps the most catastrophic occurrence to befall them since the dissolution of the Second Commonwealth. Indeed, as we shall see in the following chapter, it was in response to this tragedy that Jews turned to historiography for the first time since Josephus.

The vast majority of the texts relating the details of this tragedy come from the late fifteenth and sixteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. I have therefore arranged my chapters according to these periods. My main concern lies with the accounts themselves, but I shall also explore secondary sources which shed light on either the biography of the authors of those accounts or important trends at work within the authors' respective environments which may have influenced their historiography. Because of my own limited capacity in languages, this work is bound to sources written in either Hebrew or English. Knowledge of Spanish, especially, would have been beneficial, but I have happily found that the spectrum of materials available to me is still more than

wide enough to provide a sense of the great variety of ways that the expulsion has been understood.

It would not be fitting for me to present much background material on the events surrounding the expulsion, for to do so would be to create my own historiography, and in a sense beg the question I am asking by entangling myself in issues of objectivity and the like which I shall raise in discussing the accounts of others. My hope--which I believe is well-founded--is that the reader will pick up the basic "facts" as s/he reads those accounts in the body of my text. Therefore I shall state here only that in 1492 Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile expelled the Jews from their kingdoms, thereby bringing to an unhappy conclusion a century of nearly continuous persecution which began with massacres and mass conversions in 1391 and included a religious disputation and anti-Jewish riots in 1413-14, the establishment of the Inquisition in 1480, and the fall of Granada (the Moors' last bastion on the Iberian peninsula) to Christian Spain, ending the Reconquista in the winter of 1491/92.

The sovereigns issued the edict of expulsion on March 31, 1492. The decree, which may be found in English translation in the appendix to this work, gave the Jews three months in which they had either to leave the country or convert to Catholicism. Much of the text, however, is dedicated to justifying this forced expulsion, which is explained forthrightly as a measure required to put an end to heresy. It asserts that the Jews were influencing their kin who had been forcibly converted to Christianity earlier in the century (the New Christians or

conversos), helping them to maintain Jewish rites in secret even as they professed to be good Catholics. Therefore, in order to preserve the integrity of the Church, the monarchs chose to uproot the source of the problem--the Jews.

Even from the start, however, many chroniclers did not completely accept this reasoning given in the edict itself. They preferred to look elsewhere, seeking alternative explanations for the true motivation behind the expulsion. We turn now to the vast body of accounts of this event, beginning with those works composed in its immediate aftermath.

Chapter I

Explaining the Catastrophe: The Late Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries

In the years following their expulsion from Spain and throughout the sixteenth century, a number of Iberian Jews attempted to explain why this disaster had befallen themselves and their people. Some of the exiles wrote chronicles of their tribulations, and a couple of the poets among them wove their experiences into moving elegies, or kinot. A few decades later, Jewish thinkers began to explore the causes of the expulsion in works of historiography, rekindling an interest in their people's past which had largely remained dormant since the days of Josephus. Others wrote accounts of the tragedy which attribute it to the overt workings of God's messianic plan. There were also opponents of philosophy who composed tracts placing the blame for the expulsion firmly on the shoulders of rationalistic philosophers, who they claim encouraged ritual laxity and assimilation. Finally, as the sixteenth century came to an end, Lurianic kabbalah emerged as a new response to the trials of exile.

In this chapter, I shall examine many of these accounts, focusing on the question of causality. Ideally, one would also look at the writings of the many Spanish Christians who described the expulsion in their own chronicles. My lack of comprehension of the Spanish language unfortunately precludes this possibility, however, since none are available in translation. Therefore this discussion of late

fifteenth- and sixteenth-century views will be limited to works by Jews. We begin by turning to the first accounts of the event, those found in contemporary chronicles and kinot.

A. Contemporary Chronicles and Kinot

Spanish Jews probably began to ponder the causes of their troubles almost immediately after that dark day in the spring of 1492 when Ferdinand and Isabella issued their infamous and unexpected expulsion decree. Suddenly cut off from their past and facing an uncertain future, each of the many Jews who chose to take up the wanderer's staff rather than forsake their ancestral faith must have wondered why this awful burden had fallen upon them. Perhaps only a few articulated their thoughts and fewer still wrote them down, but the accounts which remain from that troubled time speak for a generation sentenced to bitter exile in the "wilderness of the nations."[1]

Most of our sources on the expulsion come from considerably after the event. Among them are the well-known historiographical writings of the sixteenth century, and many fragmentary accounts embedded in biblical commentaries, sermon collections, and philosophical and theological works. However, we do possess several contemporary descriptions of the expulsion period. These include four short chronicles and two kinot (elegies) on the destruction of the Jewish communities in Spain and the travails of the exiles. Written

without the luxury of historical perspective, they provide a sense of how the events were understood even as they unfolded.

Two of these chronicles were published in an article by Alexander Marx for the Jewish Quarterly Review.[2] The second is of only a limited interest. It consists of a brief autobiography written by the Spanish exile Isaac Ibn Faradj in Salonica between 1508 and 1513. In it, Faradj traces his family's history from France to Spain to Portugal, and finally to Salonica. His account is extremely unreliable in its chronology. He states that his family left Spain for Portugal in 5251/1491 amidst bitter oppression, mass conversions, and expulsions. There is no other evidence of such persecutions in the year before the general expulsion, and it is quite possible that Faradj merely misdates the events of 5252/1492. Furthermore, his account provides no real insight on the question of causality. Although Faradj was probably an eyewitness to the expulsion, he makes no effort to explain it. Unlike other chroniclers, he cites no scriptural verses and he does not refer to any motives--divine or otherwise--for the events which he describes.

The first chronicle is far more pertinent on the issue of causality. Almost nothing is known of its author, but Marx surmises that he was an Italian who did not personally suffer the effects of the expulsion. On the basis of substantial internal evidence, Marx argues that he wrote the text in April or May of

1495 from information which he gathered from Spanish exiles seeking refuge on Italian shores.[3]

If the author's identity remains far from certain, his intention does not: he is writing a pious record of his people's sufferings, similar to the medieval martyrologies of the Crusades. Thus the bulk of the narrative depicts the exiles' endless tribulations and several times it refers to ancient prophecies which these trials are supposed to fulfill. The final paragraph is a plea for God to end the torment and quickly bring his salvation.

The emphasis on God as the primary mover of history is equally evident in the chronicler's account of the expulsion itself. This account considers the mass persecution of Spanish Jewry in 1391 to be the first of God's decrees against his people and begins by describing the expulsion of 1492 as the second of God's visitations:

4.

> **And in the year 5252 (1492) the Lord intervened against the remnant of his people a second time, and exiled them in the days of King Ferdinand. After the king had captured the city of Granada from the Ishmaelites, and it had surrendered to him on the 8th of January of the year just mentioned, he ordered the expulsion of the Jews from all parts of his kingdom. . . . The king gave them three months' time to leave. It was announced in public in every city on the first of May, which happened to be the 19th day of the Omer, and the term ended on the day before the 9th of Ab.**[5]

Several observations may be made regarding this opening paragraph. First, although the author clearly stresses God's role in causing the crisis, he does not offer any explanation for why God sent forth his hand against Israel. Perhaps he simply assumes the traditional deuteronomic doctrine of exile as punishment for the people's sins, but in the case of Spanish Jewry he does not enumerate any such transgressions. Indeed, just the opposite is the case: later in the narrative he notes the impressive number of sages and academies in Spain before the expulsion. He castigates the anusim, but it seems that in his eyes most of the exiles were righteous.

Second, it is interesting to note that immediately after establishing the primacy of divine causality, the chronicler moves without transition into the realm of natural causes. Despite his divinely-determined conception of history, he does seem to hold Ferdinand at least partially responsible for the expulsion. This is not an expression of pure occasionalism which attributes causal efficacy to deity alone and considers all other agents to be mere instruments for God's direct causality. The chronicler speaks critically of Ferdinand, thereby implying that he is to some degree capable of acting out of his own free will. Yet it is unclear from this account how the king can be both the rod of God's wrath and a responsible moral agent. No effort is made to explain this inherent tension between the divine and determined aspect of causality and the realm of causes which are natural and spring from the practice of human free will. This "gap," evident even in the

earliest chronicles of the expulsion, will continue to be a problem in the more elaborate sixteenth-century accounts.

At any rate, once he has entered the natural realm the author links the expulsion with the conquest of Granada. Historians tend to follow this precedent to this very day, although they often disagree on exactly what connects the two events. Some argue the successful conclusion of the Reconquista impelled pious Catholic monarchs to convert or expel the Jews in an effort to obtain complete religious unity; others emphasize sociopolitical or economic motives underlying the linkage. Our author is silent on this question. He seems to tie the events together without telling us why. Perhaps one can read too much into this. There is a distinct possibility that he simply links the two occurrences out of chronological proximity, without claiming any causal connections.

Finally, there is the matter of the account's chronology. The expulsion edict was signed on March 31 and gave the Jews exactly three months to leave the country. Therefore the date of departure should have been July 31, which in 1492 fell on the seventh day of Av. The chronicler, however, claims the grace period ended on the eighth--the day before Tisha B'Av.

Marx attributes this discrepancy to leniency by some Spanish officials who agreed to let the Jews stay an extra day or two in return for substantial bribes.[6] I find this explanation extremely implausible: given a term of three months, why would any of the Jews deplete their holdings to raise bribe money in exchange for a

paltry additional day or two? Instead, I believe our author and many of the historians who followed him either changed the date of the deadline or, more likely, accepted the later date which was already established in the people's collective memory for obvious theological reasons. The actual expulsion date, the seventh of Av, fell so close to Tisha B'Av that it could be easily linked and, for all intents and purposes, transferred to this mournful day commemorating previous tragedies in Jewish history.

The account continues with a description of the Jewish effort to persuade the king to repeal the decree. The chronicler claims that the leading Jewish courtiers--Abraham Seneor, Meir Melammed, and Isaac Abrabanel--nearly succeeded in this endeavor but were frustrated when a prominent official reminded the queen of the crucifixion story (many other accounts, probably beginning with Posevino's Apparatus Sacer and Luis de Paramo's De Sancta Inquisition, offer variations of this narrative and all name Torquemada as the "official"). Upon hearing his words, Isabella replied to the representatives of the Jews, "Do you believe that this comes upon you from us? The Lord hath put this thing into the heart of the king."[7]

This story touches on the much-debated issue of medieval Jewish attitudes towards royalty in general and the Catholic monarchs in particular. The majority of historical accounts, as well as popular legend, tend to portray Isabella as a narrow-minded religious zealot whose influence over her greedy and bumbling husband make her the true villain behind the expulsion edict. This account largely corroborates that

position: Ferdinand is willing to be "bought off" until his wife and Torquemada nullify the impious bargain. Nonetheless, the writer does not totally relieve Ferdinand of responsibility for the evil decree. The account of events leading up to the expulsion ends with the Jewish leaders leaving the royal court without hope, convinced that "there was evil determined against them by the king. . . ."[8] Perhaps Isabella is the true antagonist in this narrative, but Ferdinand is far from blameless.

The first of two chronicles published in Zion by Y. Hacker sheds new light on this issue of Ferdinand and Isabella's attitudes toward the expulsion. The text was found in the British Museum, bound with a commentary on Psalms by R. Menahem ben R. Shlomo ha-Meiri. Probably written immediately after the Jews left Spain, its anonymous author appears to be a member of the powerful de la Cavalleria family. Hacker raises the possibility that he was a converso since this clan was known for its apostasy. The text is primarily a sort of family chronicle, but it also strives to recount the reasons for the expulsion and destruction of Spanish Jewry.[9]

Of all the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century accounts, this one goes the furthest in blaming Ferdinand and his advisors for the catastrophe. Unlike most of its counterparts, this chronicle makes no effort to underplay the king's role. It does not mention any pressure from the Catholic masses, the clerics, or even Isabella.

Ferdinand is responsible. Everything was done "on his advice and the counsel of the haters of Israel close to him."[10]

The beginning of the text is modelled after the book of Esther, with Ferdinand cast in the role of King Ahaseurus:

ויהי בימי המלך דון פראנדו הוא המולך מקאשטיליא ואראגון בימים כשבת
המלך וכל חילו בבקעת גראנדה אחר אשר כבש מאלאקה ואלהאמה. . . ויהי
כי גבה והתנשא אמר בלבו אתדמה לעליוני מלכי פראנביא ואנגלאטירה
ובאשר גרשו והוציאוהו (!) מארצם ממשלתם היהודים אעשה כן גם אני
כי לא נופל אני מהם . . . .[11]

> In the days of the King Don Ferdinand, who ruled in Castile and Aragon, when the King and all his forces dwelt in the valley of Granada after conquering Malaga and Alhama . . . he (Ferdinand) grew haughty and proud. Thus he thought to himself, "I should be like the mighty Kings of France and England. Just as they expelled the Jews, throwing them out from the lands of their realm, so, too, will I do, For I am not less than they are. . . ."

Like the previous chronicle, this one opens with the successful conclusion of the Reconquista. Here, however, the causal link between the fall of Granada and the expulsion is explicit: boosted by victory, Ferdinand is free to emulate his European peers. As Hacker points out in his introduction, this account is unique in its effort to see the expulsion in the context of European history as a whole. Aside from a messianic conclusion, the narrator makes little reference to God's role in the historical process. It is not as traditional as most pre-modern chronicles with its more worldly perspective and predominantly natural causality. If Hacker is correct in attributing its authorship to one of the de la Cavalleria family, this should not be surprising:

the New Christian Alfonso de la Cavalleria was an Averroist and one of the preeminent Humanists in fifteenth-century Spain.

It is, therefore, interesting to note that the chronicler is unsparing in his condemnation of Alfonso de la Cavalleria and other prominent New Christians who he believes conspired with Ferdinand to expel the Jews. They were "with the king in his works," secretly plotting "to wipe out the name of Israel from the land."[12] Hacker argues convincingly that this criticism is at least partially due to the pro-Jewish author's shame over the treachery of his kin or perhaps even guilt over an earlier betrayal of his own. The author takes the same attitude toward the Jewish leaders Abraham Seneor and Meir Melammed whose bad example of apostasy on the eve of the expulsion unfortunately influenced many others to "walk in their counsel."[13] This enmity against the Jews from Ferdinand's advisors combined with the king's excessive pride and the vicissitudes of contemporary European history to cause the general expulsion of the Jews from Spain.

While the first chronicle in Hacker's article posits a somewhat nontraditional concept of causality for the expulsion, the second is almost more theistic than the Bible itself. It is full of biblical quotations which explain all suffering as the will of a just God. Probably written as the introduction to a kinah or a longer chronicle, it was found in manuscript form at the Jewish Theological Seminary. The text is fragmentary, breaking off in mid-line, and we know nothing of its author save that he was probably from the generation of the exiles. The piety pervading the remaining fragments of his

account tends to overwhelm any historiographical concerns: the persecution is explained so generally as an expression of deity's anger that little attention is paid to specific details unique to Spain in 1492. At the end of our text the writer refers to Ferdinand as Nebuchadnezzar and Sennacherib, but even he is ultimately nothing more than the rod of God's wrath.[14]

Yet herein lies a dilemma. Because of his allegiance to the traditional theological framework, the author is certain that Israel's suffering must be a chastisement for its sins, but as an exile himself he does not seem to see the sufferers as sinful. He laments that "the Lord has departed from me and he has become my enemy," but cannot understand why. Like the writer of Marx's first chronicle, he does not enumerate sins; instead he describes in detail the glory of Iberian Jewry and refers to the once-numerous Spanish communities as "holy" (קהילות קדושות).

I believe this fragmentary text reflects the anguish of the majority of the exiles. In the second and third generations, their descendants would offer various enumerations of Iberian Jewry's transgressions. Rationalists would point to mystic tendencies among the Spanish Jews as their chief sin while mystics would see fifteenth-century "Averroism" as the primary evil in God's eyes. But all of this came later. In the years immediately following the expulsion, most of the exiles probably saw themselves as righteous. After all, they were the ones who chose to suffer exile rather than convert. But they were also heirs of a tradition whose liturgy for Tisha B'Av--a day they associated with the expulsion--

includes the words, ". מפני חטאינו גלינו מארצנו " Much of their literature linked suffering with sin. Now they were suffering and did not know why; they were caught in a tension which told them that either their doctrine or their positive self-image had to be wrong.

Christian polemics made this tension even worse. As H. H. Ben-Sasson has pointed out, the identification of exile with punishment played right into the church's claims that God had rejected the Jewish people because of their transgressions.[15] Taking these claims into account together with the dichotomy between traditional theology and the exiles' insistence on their righteousness, it is easy to understand the angst and despair which permeates most of these early chronicles.

This despondency is also apparent in the two surviving kinot (elegies) on the Spanish expulsion. The first of these was composed by Rabbi Abraham ben Shlomo Halevi Bakrat some time before the Jews were expelled from Portugal in 1497. Bakrat gropes for a religious understanding of the events he has experienced, but along the way presents many naturalistic details of those events.

Like Hacker's first chronicle, the prose introduction to this kinah imitates the opening of the book of Esther. It, too, starts with the Catholic monarchs' victory over the Moors in Granada. Its emphasis, however, is more theistic than that chronicle. Bakrat attributes the Christians' triumph to divine intervention and he

does not discuss the connection--if he sees one--between the Reconquista and the expulsion:

ויהי בימי מלך דון פראנדו [כך] ואשתו איזבל המולכים בכל מלכות קסתאלה [כך] אראגון, צקליה אל אנדלוס: בהניח השם להם מאויביהם ויסטור בידם כל מלכות אל אנדלוס ויכבשוה. ויצורו באחרונה על מדינת נראנטה וילכדוה בתבו שטנה על כל היהודים שובני בתי מלכותם ויסבימו לגרשם מכל מדינות מלכותם [16]

It came to pass in the days of the King Don Ferdinand and his wife Isabella, who ruled over all the kingdom of Castile and Aragon, Sicily, and Andalusia, that God released them from their enemies and set in their hands the entire kingdom of Andalusia, and they conquered it. In the end they also set siege to the state of Granada and captured it. [Then] they wrote an indictment of the Jews living in their kingdom and agreed to expel them from all the provinces of their realm.

Later in this introduction and in the body of the kinah, Bakrat describes the declaration of the expulsion edict. He lays the blame for the Jews' demise on the shoulders of both monarchs. In writing Isabella's name, he uses the Hebrew spelling איזבל, which identifies her as a latter-day Jezebel, the paradigmatic evil queen. She is perhaps the greater villain, the initiator of the anti-Jewish policy. Yet Ferdinand seems more than willing to go along with her, and he personally rejects bribes from the Jews out of his desire to "uproot the sapling" (Israel). It is also worthwhile to note that this is one of the very few sources which states the correct Hebrew date--the seventh of Av--for the expulsion edict's three month deadline.[17]

Such historical accuracy notwithstanding, Bakrat's primary concerns are religious ones. His kinah exemplifies the aforementioned problem of the exiles, torn between their concept of suffering as divine punishment and their belief in themselves as

upright Jews. There are many lines depicting the splendor of Spanish Jewry. He describes the numerous yeshivot and synagogues, full of men and boys "busy studying Mishnah and Gemarah." Bakrat does not understand why God destroyed a community that was the apple of his eye. Christian claims that God has rejected Israel weigh upon him heavily when he asks, "Am I still the first born, the treasured?"[18] Clinging to faith in his people's righteousness, he awaits an answer.

The second kinah, whose author is unknown, expresses many of the same ideas. It, too, parallels the book of Esther and saves its harshest condemnation for the queen's treachery. The poet does make a nice multilingual pun, referring to Ferdinand as ב׳ר׳ז׳ל ("Ferto" being the Spanish word for iron) but Isabella bears the brunt of responsibility for the expulsion.[19] After the defeat of the Moors in Granada, she and her clerical allies ask Ferdinand to rid his realm of all aliens; the expulsion of Spanish Jewry is thus tied to the persecution of Moslems and conversos as part of a general xenophobic policy. Finally the king agrees to implement "all of Isabella's plotting / to destroy the name of Israel / and the converso and the Moslem / of each of whom it is said, 'He is not a man of God.'"[20] The queen and her allies here are motivated by their desire to unify Spain under the banner of the Catholic church. This explanation of the expulsion is the closest to the reasoning given in the expulsion edict itself.

Nonetheless, like its counterpart, this Kinah is most concerned with finding a theological understanding of the expulsion. The poet expresses the despair of his generation, mourning the lost communities as if they were Zion itself:

איך מעומקה של הלכה
עברו בעמק הבכא
מעוף צוקה וחשכה
נסים היום מן המערכה

איה סופר איה שוקל מקרא
איה דקדוק מאיר אורה
איה פלפול בגמרה
כי מספרד תצא תורה[21]

How from the profundity of halachah
They passed into the vale of tears
Darkness and distress with no daybreak
Today they flee from the battle lines.

Where is the scribe? The one weighing over Scripture?
Where the grammarians illuminating it?
Where is the study of Gemarah?
That from Spain might [yet] go forth Torah?

These words conjure up the now-familiar predicament: if Spain had truly been such a center of Jewish learning, why would God wish to exile his people from that land? Again the deuteronomic concept of exile as divine punishment conflicted with the poet's conviction that Spanish Jewry was praiseworthy.

At the end of both kinot we find a response to this dilemma--messianism. Those exiles who refused to see sin as the root of their suffering turned to another traditional view, one which

identified intense suffering with the birth-pangs of the messiah. This explanation allowed them to maintain their righteousness and gave them an enormous amount of consolation: if the Spanish expulsion marked the beginning of the messianic era, then God would soon redeem them and take vengeance on their enemies. Thus Bakrat's kinah concludes with a messianic נמחתא :

ותחזיר נרושה/לביאה חדשה/ורב לה היות עוד/באשה עצורה
וקצי משיחך/תגלה תברר/ויבא אליה/ותחיש דרורה
ולוי מקונן/בביתך ירנן/וישוב לקנן בדוכן ובירה [22]

Take back the divorcee (Israel) / in a new marriage
long enough has she been like a chained woman.
Reveal clearly / the time of your messiah
may he come to her / and hasten her freedom.
Then Levi (the author) the elegist / will sing in your house
returning to dwell / in your exalted citadel.

The poet identifies himself with the Levites of old, who sang in the Temple which he hopes will quickly be rebuilt. Then the despair of the poet and his contemporaries will pass away as they return from exile to Zion restored.

The second kinah ends on a similar note, with the Temple rebuilt and Isabella and her allies suffering the wrath of God's vengeance:

פקדו עליה דקרים
דמך זבחו לשעירים
חילו במהסבת זרים

קרב האל לדרורים
מבשר קול על ההרים
על מזבחך טרים [23]

Slayings are in store for her
They have sacrificed your blood to goats
Their might shall be as overturned by strangers.

God is close to the sparrows (Israel)
A voice sounds upon the mountains
Bullocks shall be upon your altar.

It is this messianic hope of imminent redemption which gives the poets strength to mourn the lost communities and look forward to the future from amidst the depths of exile.

To summarize, the contemporary chronicles and kinot generally portray the Spanish expulsion as an act of divine will. When they refer to the expulsion's natural causes they connect the exile with the conclusion of the Reconquista. They consider both monarchs reprehensible but tend to lay the greater part of the blame on Isabella, whom they view as an antagonistic Catholic zealot.

Even she, however, is ultimately an instrument of God's volition. These accounts are grounded in the traditional concept of deity as the primary mover of history. This led to an internal conflict for their authors, since the deuteronomic doctrine of suffering as punishment for the nation's sins clashed with their assurance that they were righteous. Christian arguments that the exile proved God's rejection of the Jewish people exacerbated their predicament.

Messianism proved to be the way out of the dilemma. By reviving this traditional vein of Jewish religious thought, the post-expulsion writers replaced or augmented the conception of

suffering as retribution with the more consoling view that Israel's ongoing persecution represents the birth-pangs of the messiah. Fortified by this belief, they began to give the desperate exiles an explanation for the expulsion which promised a more hopeful future. The contemporary chronicles and kinot represent the messianic response in its infancy. A more sophisticated version of this same response is found in the products of sixteenth-century historiography, to which we now turn.

B. Sixteenth-Century Historiography

The sudden flowering of historiography in the sixteenth century represents the rebirth of a discipline almost completely lost among the Jews since Josephus. Jewish historical writing in the Middle Ages consisted of "chains of tradition" tracing the transmission of the Oral Law, the Yosippon (a medieval account of ancient events erroneously attributed to Josephus), apocalyptic literature, and four Hebrew chronicles of the Crusades. Yet within the sixteenth century alone Jewish historians composed ten full-blown works.[24]

Scholarly consensus points to the Spanish expulsion as the main impetus behind this renaissance of Jewish historical writing. The majority of the authors of these works were either exiles themselves or descendants of exiles. Faced with a tragedy of unprecedented proportions--the decimation of the most powerful Jewish community in Western Europe--they turned to history in their quest to understand the meaning of the turmoil going on around them.[25]

The expulsion was not only the primary cause of the renewed interest in history; it was also grist for the historiographical mill. The Jewish historians attempted to make sense of events leading up to the catastrophe. Underlying most of their accounts is the old concept of divine causality, which sometimes lies in uneasy equilibrium with traces of a more naturalistic approach. In the first of these historical works, however, natural causality occupies center stage while theology is relegated to the background. This most radical response to the expulsion is Solomon Ibn Verga's Shevet Yehudah.

1. Solomon Ibn Verga

The Shevet Yehudah is actually a product of three generations of the Ibn Verga family. In his introduction to the book, Solomon claims to have copied a list of persecutions composed by Judah Ibn Verga, a man about whom we know almost nothing. It is likely the book was named after him. Later Solomon's son Joseph added notes and edited his father's book for publication.

The credit for the brilliant novelty of the work, however, belongs to Solomon Ibn Verga. He, too, is almost unknown save for this, his magnum opus. We can surmise that he was born and grew up in Spain where he gained the rabbinic and secular knowledge he incorporates in his text. As a result of the expulsion he fled to

Portugal, where he may have lived outwardly as a Christian from 1497 until 1506.[26]

After this our knowledge of his life grows increasingly tenuous. Yitzhak Baer argues that he went to Italy, where he came under the influence of Renaissance thinkers such as Guicciardini and Machiavelli. According to Baer,he wrote the Shevet Yehudah at the end of his life (around thirty years after the expulsion), and included in it stories which he borrowed from Italian novelle.[27] Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi disputes Baer's assertion of Renaissance influence, claiming recent research shows that Ibn Verga died in Flanders without ever spending time in Italy.[28]

Ibn Verga's book is almost as enigmatic as his life. Drawn from sources in Hebrew, Latin, Spanish, and Arabic, it contains sixty-four numbered chapters describing an array of blood libels, expulsions, religious disputations, and other "persecutions" directed at the Jews. The nature of these varies. Some are accurate historical records, others are based on historical events but contain major inaccuracies, and many are primarily products of the author's imagination.[29]

Because of this mix of fact and fancy, many writers have criticized Ibn Verga's skill as an historian. Such a critique (offered by Graetz, among others) assumes that he aimed to write an accurate chronicle. This, however, is probably not the case. Many scholars such as A. A. Neumann maintain that Ibn Verga wrote his book with a very different purpose in mind: "He collated these stories as a scientist collects data for analytic study and cumulative evidence, by means of

which it might be possible to reach rational conclusions, or at least to attain clearer insight into the nature of the social problem. . . . The Shevet Yehudah is the earliest sociological study of the Jewish question."[30] In short, for Ibn Verga history is a means, and not an end in itself. It provides a framework for his probe into the causes of Jewish suffering, but he selects and alters historical events to suit his own purposes. Often he invents Christian kings, popes, and counselors and sets them in fictional debates over the nature and status of the Jews. These characters discuss the causes of Jewish suffering and offer various prescriptions to correct them.[31]

Ibn Verga probably decided to employ fictional Christian characters to express his own positions in order to protect himself. The radical nature of those positions would have provoked quite an outcry if stated openly. He is the first to suggest that the Jews are partially responsible for the hatred directed against them, behaving so as to raise the ire of the impoverished Christian masses. The fictional kings and counselors are mouthpieces through whom he can criticize his people for their greed and ostentatiousness, which he sees as a major cause of antisemitism.

Ibn Verga's hope is that the Jews will learn from his critique. He hints at this didactic philosophy of history early in the book when he praises the Gentiles, "because they seek to know about past events so as to take counsel from them, and this is their great wisdom and enlightenment

(כי יבקשו לדעת הדברים הקדומים לקחת עצה מהם וזה מחשיבותם והשכלתם הטובה . . .).[32]

He walks the fine line between prophetic criticism and self-hatred, exposing the faults most Jews would rather overlook so that they might be ameliorated in the future.

Yet unlike more recent historians--and this marks a critical difference between the Middle Ages and modernity--Ibn Verga carefully disguises his faultfinding. In its outward form the Shevet Yehudah is identical to traditional martyrologies, and as previously noted its harshest criticism comes from Christian characters whom the average Jewish reader would not take seriously. Furthermore, Ibn Verga writes with veiled satire. As Martin Kohn observes in his unpublished doctoral dissertation, "Every line has to be read with caution and the question asked: did the writer mean this or did he mean the exact opposite?"[33]

All of this background on the Shevet Yehudah is essential if we wish to understand its author's treatment of the Spanish expulsion. It is, at least at first glance, surprising when upon opening the book we find that Ibn Verga appears to have written nothing on this watershed event. In the relevant chapter (number fifty) he notes that he has heard and seen a great deal about the expulsion and originally intended to discuss it here but refrained from doing so when he saw that Judah Abrabanel had already written about it. In fact there is no record of any such work; Azriel Shochet claims Ibn Verga refers to the account of Judah's father,

Don Isaac Abrabanel, which Joseph Ibn Verga has inserted into the following chapter.[34]

If, however, the Shevet Yehudah is ripe with irony and double meaning, then we would be wise to consider this question of Ibn Verga's coverage of the expulsion more carefully. I believe that in fact it is the implicit subject of the entire book and that when the author probes the causes of antisemitism in general, his inquiry never strays very far from the specific events leading up to 1492. The dialogues may be fact or fiction, the setting in England or France, but they almost always echo the Jewish experience in Spain. Thus Yitzhak Baer writes, "Much in it concerns the Spanish expulsion and the life of the Jews before the expulsion. One might even say the entire concern of the book is to discuss the reasons for this momentous historical event."[35]

Why doesn't Ibn Verga consider the expulsion more explicitly? Again, part of the answer probably lies in his need to avoid arousing popular wrath. Open application of his controversial method to the exploration of a catastrophe still so close to his contemporaries would have provoked a strong reaction. Therefore in good Maimonidean fashion (Ibn Verga clearly knew and admired Maimonides' work) he scattered his discussion of the expulsion's causes throughout the narrative. This technique may well be derived from the Guide of the Perplexed wherein, "Sometimes the subject intended to be taught to him who was to be instructed was divided--although it was one and the same subject--among many parables remote from one another."[36]

Ibn Verga lays out his agenda in chapter seven, the longest and one of the most important in the book. In this fictional dialogue between King Alfonso of Spain and his wise Christian counselor Thomas (whose knowledge of Jewish philosophy and customs perhaps suggests Thomas Aquinas), the author touches on all the major themes which are developed in other narratives. The story is set in the royal court as the king faces pressure from his people to expel the Jews, whom they accuse of ritual murder. He does not want to send his Jewish subjects into exile and he places little credence in the blood libel charges but wishes to consult the learned Thomas before taking any action.[37]

From the beginning King Alfonso is sympathetic to the Jews. Throughout the Shevet Yehudah, Ibn Verga portrays European kings as noble rulers with a strong desire to protect the Jews under their reign. In this dialogue Alfonso sets the tone for those to come. He assumes the Jews are innocent of the trumped-up charge and focuses the debate on why they are so hated that their enemies constantly accuse them of such atrocities.

Alfonso opens the discussion by denying that the downfall of the Jews can be explained as the result of divine retribution. He declares it makes no sense to understand their plight as a sign of God's wrath, "for we have seen and heard of many nations who sinned and transgressed worse than they did and were not punished; just the opposite, they prospered and were very successful" (כי ראינו ושמענו עמים רבים ששטעו וחטאו ולא נענשו, אבל להפך כי הצליחו הצלחה גדולה . . .).[38] Thus Ibn Verga uses the king to ground his account firmly in the

realm of natural causes. As we shall see later, he does not completely eliminate God's role in Jewish history, but the bulk of the narrative that follows operates on naturalistic assumptions.

If, however, divine disfavor does not account for the sad state of the Jews, what does? This is the subject of the second day's discussion, when Alfonso asks Thomas to explain the reasons why people show such scorn for the Jews.

Thomas replies that no intelligent person dislikes the Jews, but the common masses hate them for a variety of reasons. The first of these is the Jews' excessive pride and ostentatiousness. No murmuring was heard against them until they began to dress in fancy silk garments and act like royalty rather than the wandering exiles they are. This aroused the jealousy of their impoverished neighbors.

This was exacerbated by the second cause of antisemitism, Jewish wealth--especially that obtained through high-interest loans. When the Jews arrived in Spain, they were poor and the Christians rich. Now just the opposite is the case and the natives' economic decline at the Jew's expense has raised their ire.

Finally there is the social estrangement of the Jews, typified by their dietary laws. This is a source of added antagonism, for the masses have little sympathy for a people that refuses to eat or drink with them and won't even consume wine touched by Christian hands.[39]

Thomas--speaking for Ibn Verga--believes that Jewish assimilation aggravates antisemitism. Therefore he advises Alfonso to defuse the masses' anger with a series of restrictive measures which would require the Jews to return all the money they gained through usury to its original owners, forbid them from dressing in silk garments, and insist they wear a red badge identifying themselves as Jews. The king agrees to take such measures, and when the people hear of this they admit that the ritual murder charge is a fraud. They return home appeased, thus showing the veracity of Thomas's explanation for why the Jews are hated.[40]

All of these causes of popular antisemitism cited by Thomas point to Jewish shortcomings. There is, however, one more reason why the Christians constantly threaten Jews with blood libel and other false accusations: their own religious fanaticism. The age-old charge of deicide and centuries of malice have poisoned the Catholic clergy and their followers against the Jews. Ibn Verga recognizes the ill-effects of the Church's intolerance and places a modern-sounding argument for religious pluralism in the mouth of King Alfonso:

ומוסכם לכל כי הדתות אינן מתקיימות כי עם אם הדמיון. היהודי יחשוב בבח המדמה אשר לו כי אין דת אחרת ולא אמונה כי אם אמונתו, והמאמין בדבר אחר הוא בעיניו בדמות בהמה. . . והנוצרי מדמה, כי היהודי אינו אלא בהמה בצורת אדם ונפשו במדור התחתון של גהינם. ואם תשאל לישמעאל, יאמר על שנינו כי הניחנם מלא ממנו.[41]

All agree that the religions are sustained only by the imagination. The Jew imagines that there is no true religion or faith other than his own. In his opinion anyone believing in something else is like a beast. . . . And the Christian

believes that the Jew is a beast in human form whose soul will dwell in the deepest part of hell. And if you ask the Moslem, he will tell you that hell is full of both of us.

It is significant that the king, rather than Thomas, expresses this attitude of religious relativism. In using Alfonso as his spokesman on this issue, Ibn Verga implies that even the most enlightened Christian thinkers such as Thomas are not immune to over zealousness. At any rate, religious intolerance is the final cause of Jew-hatred which Thomas and the king discuss in chapter seven and it is the only one which lies beyond the power of the Jews to change.

In the remaining sections of the Shevet Yehudah, Ibn Verga gives accounts of real and imaginary blood libels, disputations, expulsions and other persecutions which illustrate the causes of antisemitism laid out in the previous dialogue. When we recall the implicit purpose of the book, it becomes clear that he sees Jewish pride, ostentatiousness, usurious wealth, and social estrangement--as well as Christian intolerance--as the primary causes of the Spanish expulsion. He elaborates on them in the body of the work with the hope that the Jews will learn from their mistakes and correct these faults so as to avoid meeting up with tragedy again in the future.

Throughout the chapters which follow he reiterates that it is the common people and clergy who make trouble for the Jews while the kings of Europe stand as their defenders. When these kings do decide to expel their Jews, it is in order to rescue them from a worse fate. Thus in his account of the eighteenth persecution, Ibn

Verga claims the king of England exiled the Jews from his land in order to save them from pogroms and forced conversions. He knew that the commoners' accusations of Jewish coin-clipping were fraudulent, but he was forced to send the Jews away when he recognized he could no longer protect them from the people's wrath.[42]

If we assume that much of the Shevet Yehudah is a veiled discussion of the causes of the Spanish expulsion, then this defense of European kings implies that Ibn Verga does not hold Ferdinand responsible for the catastrophe. He therefore represents the antithesis of the first Hacker chronicle, which places the burden of blame on the king. A member of the uppercrust of Spanish Jewry, Ibn Verga refused to let go of the benevolent attitude towards the monarchy typical of his peers, even after the expulsion. Traces of this view remain even today, embedded in popular conceptions of Jewish history and legend which portray Isabella as the wily villain urging on her well-intentioned but naive, bumbling husband.

Ironically, Ibn Verga is far more critical of his own people than the king. The forty-second persecution is set in Babylon, but the writer's intention is to indict Spanish Jewry for their ostentatiousness, which he sees as a major reason for their downfall. The account begins with a lengthy description of the exilarchate. Ibn Verga provides accurate details of its wealth and power, and notes that the king of Babylon would receive the exilarch with a great deal of pomp.

Then he adds a story of how the exilarchate ended, which is invented to condemn Jewish arrogance. He asserts that when the Babylonians saw the splendor of the exilarchate, they worried that Israel would soon rise up and rule over them. They assassinated an exilarch and plotted to kill other Jews until the Jewish community wisely toned down their pretentiousness and abolished the exilarchate. The implications of this tale for the Spanish exiles are obvious.[43]

Ibn Verga also uses historical fiction to condemn the intolerance and fanaticism of the Catholic clergy, another cause of the expulsion. The forty-fourth persecution is a fictional account which parallels events in Spain in 1492. The queen's confessor (a character strongly reminiscent of Torquemada) hates the Jews. He influences her to ask her husband to offer the Jews a choice: convert or die. The reluctant king finally consents to do her will, with the important exception that he eases the choice to apostasy or exile. Once again the good king does all he can to protect his Jews from the more hostile elements in his kingdom.

Of course even this choice is not particularly appealing to the Jews. Facing opposition from the impoverished masses and the priests who "preach bitter words" against them, the Jews turn to their traditional allies, the educated aristocracy. They offer to help the Jews bribe the queen, but before the payoff is made, the confessor is hanged for courting her. When its instigator is executed, the expulsion decree is revoked, and tolerance triumphs.[44]

The Shevet Yehudah includes many other accounts denouncing the evils of religious fanaticism. Ibn Verga ridicules those Christians who accuse the Jews of ritual murder and tampering with the host. Chapter thirty-two contains his most famous argument for religious tolerance, delivered by a character whose very name--Ephraim Ibn Sancho--symbolizes pluralism. The king asks him which religion is better: Judaism or Christianity? Ibn Sancho's brilliant response to this no-win question comes from a piece of folklore which Lessing later formed into his story of the three rings.

He tells the king a tale of how his dying neighbor left a precious stone to each of his two sons. Somewhat later the two boys quarrelled and came to Ibn Sancho wishing to know the difference in value between the gems, but he responded that only the stone merchant (לפידאריו) knows.[45]

The king agrees that Ibn Sancho answered well; now Ibn Sancho delivers the נמשל :

הנה עשו ויעקב אחים היו, ונתן לכל אחד אבן אחת.
ואדוננו שואל: איזו יותר טובה? ישלח מלכנו ציר לאבינו
שבשמים, כי הוא הלפידאריו והוא יאמר הבדל האבנים.[46]

Behold Jacob and Essau were brothers, and each received a precious stone. Now our lord asks: Which one is better? Let our king send a messenger to our Father in heaven, for he is the great stone merchant and (only) he can tell the difference between the stones.

The king concludes by praising Ibn Sancho for his wisdom.

The climax of the Shevet Yehudah comes in the sixty-third chapter, when Ibn Verga drops his veil of historical fiction and responds to the question, "Why this great divine wrath?" in his own name. Here he concisely repeats the causes that have occupied his attention up to this point: religious hatred grounded on the ancient charge of deicide, Jewish arrogance and ostentatiousness, social estrangement exacerbated by the dietary laws, and the economic success of the Jews which Gentiles believe comes at their expense. He also adds a few previously unmentioned natural causes: the ruler's desire for religious unity in his realm, the jealousy aroused when Jewish men cast their eyes upon the Christian women, and the fact that the Jews commonly swore false oaths. He never mentions the accusation of religious propagandizing, which constitutes the cause of expulsion given in the edict itself.[47]

It was noted earlier that despite his emphasis on such natural causes, Ibn Verga does not rule out divine intervention in history. The beginning of this chapter asserts that all of Israel's suffering (including the Spanish expulsion) is partially explicable as a measure of God's punishment:

אמר שלמה: כי יעבור אדם במחשבתו המכות הגדולות האלה, ופלא בעיניו ויאמר: מה חרי האף הגדול הזה? לא עשה כן לכל גוי עם היותם עמוסים מפשעים יותר מהיהודים, ובל השאלות האלה וביוצא תשובתו בפסוק אחד לבד, והוא אומרו: "רק אתכם ידעתי" וכו'.[48]

> Said Solomon: If a man will reflect upon these great afflictions, he will be dumbfounded and ask, "Why this great divine anger? He has not done likewise to any of the other nations, despite their being burdened with sins more than the Jews!" All these questions and others like them have as their answer a single verse which says: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities" (Amos 3:2).[49]

While other nations transgress more than Israel, her special relationship with God places a greater burden of punishment on her when she is iniquitous. Furthermore, Ibn Verga notes in the next line, the Jews still bear the sin of their ancestors who built the golden calf.

Yet Ibn Verga's conception of suffering as divine retribution is an unusual one. Unlike previous thinkers who conceived of both reward and punishment as a sign of God's providence, he suggests that Israel's travails are not the workings of providence but the result of its removal. This is the second cause of Jewish suffering: "When there is not great merit, the exile continues on account of natural causes (כי כשאין הזכות גדול הגלות נמשך בטבע)."[50]

This brilliant theory provides Ibn Verga with a bridge between the realms of divine and natural causality. It enables him to avoid the chasm separating history and metahistory in the work of his colleagues and it lets him focus on the natural causes which are his primary interest. If the exile continues on account of natural causes, then once these are identified, steps can be taken to alleviate them. The goal of the Shevet Yehudah is to identify the factors prolonging the exile (as typified by the expulsion) with the hope that the Jews will use this knowledge to ameliorate

their status--even if this entails certain painful austerity measures.

This is an entirely non-messianic stance. Ibn Verga criticizes the messianic spirit of his age, pointing to the great harm false messiahs bring to Israel.[51] As Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi and others have noted, Ibn Verga does not totally deny a divine role in human history but he chooses to de-emphasize that aspect of causality. He also pays a price for his view that providence ceases to function when Israel is not meritorious.

The cost of this notion that God abandons Israel to the natural course of events is its legacy of despair which made it untenable to most of Ibn Verga's fellow Jews. Other philosophies found favor because they made sense of suffering. Messianism offered immediate hope for the future, but even the older view expressed in the words מפני חטאינו גלינו מארצנו promised that as soon as they stopped sinning, the Jews would also stop suffering. Ibn Verga's "realism" did not offer even this much consolation. The only hope implicit in the Shevet Yehudah is that by learning from their mistakes of the past (ostentatiousness, arrogance, etc.), the Jews might face a brighter future--hardly a promising vision when the "remedy" seems to include restrictions on Jewish dress and commerce and perhaps other areas as well.

Furthermore, Ibn Verga's theory played straight into the hands of Christian polemics. His argument that God forsakes Israel when they lack merit is exactly what the Christians claim occurred after the Jews refused to recognize Jesus as the messiah. In a time of

fierce religious rivalry, the Jews could not afford to furnish their rivals with his kind of ammunition.

It is ironic, then, that Shevet Yehudah became the most read historical work of the sixteenth century. Its popularity makes sense, however, when we recall the author's Maimonidean style. People read it without understanding Ibn Verga's true intentions; by century's end, popular perception pegged it as a collection of moralistic folktales. Indeed, even the author's own son Joseph, the book's editor, considered his father's work a kind of pious martyrology.[52]

To the modern reader Shevet Yehudah stands as an anomaly among sixteenth-century accounts of the expulsion. The historians who followed Ibn Verga espouse much more traditional concepts of causality, insisting on the continued presence of divine providence even when Israel sins. Many years would pass before the Jews were ready for a view of history which excluded God's presence even temporarily.

2. Elijah Capsali

Elijah Capsali was born on the island of Crete in 1489. We know little about his life, save that he did his talmudic studies in Padua before returning to serve as Crete's chief rabbi in 1524. He was the first Jew to write about his people within the context of a history of the gentile nations; he is the author of both דברי הימים לסלבות ונציה, a history of Venice and Italian Jewry, and

סדר אליהו זוטא on the Ottoman Empire and the Jews of Spain. Our concern is with the latter, which he finished in 1523.[53]

Capsali used many sources to compile his chronicle, though he leaves many unidentified. He was well-read in rabbinic and kabbalistic literature and familiar with historical works such as Yosippon and Ibn Daud's Sefer ha-Kabbalah. He shows some grasp of secular materials, though he uses them almost apologetically. Undoubtedly he knew of Isaac Abrabanel's writings, and he refers to at least one written source from the time of expulsion, a Hebrew version of the expulsion edict. However, his most important source of information on the expulsion is the stories he heard from the exiles who took refuge in Crete. Thus he notes that ". . . we gave them room and board and light when they came our way and they told me all about the great and terrible Spanish expulsion."[54]

In his introduction, Capsali expresses his concern over historical accuracy, promising to verify everything he writes. Nonetheless, this is no modern "scientific" history. When he announces his motivation for writing the book, he shows himself to be a steadfast traditionalist, who hopes his stories of Gentile kings will teach his readers some musar. He also wishes to show his gratitude to the Turks for taking in the troubled refugees and treating them favorably.[55]

Yet all of these intentions are secondary. Capsali's primary goal in Seder Eliyahu Zuta is to show the saving power of God's hand in history and the promise that redemption is on the horizon. It is a blatantly messianic book, composed almost entirely of verses

taken from the Bible and rearranged to tell the story of Turkey and Spanish Jewry. The Turks serve as the instrument of God's salvation in the worldwide apocalyptic drama which Capsali sees playing itself out even as he writes.[56]

This messianic vision does not require that Capsali completely ignore the natural causes of events he describes. Even messianic history works through humans who, by Jewish tradition, hold some control over their own destinies. In fact, much of Seder Eliyahu Zuta inhabits the realm of natural causality. The question at hand is one of emphasis. Granted that Capsali (like all of his cohorts except Ibn Verga) fails to explain the relationship between divine and natural causality, we can still debate which side he chooses to emphasize.

Martin Kohn argues that Capsali pays lip service to the tradition, but his true interest lies in a more modern concept of history. Thus he claims Seder Eliyahu Zuta seems to portray the world ". . . as acting out of a divine drama, but this framework is quickly left behind and the actual mechanics of history are found in natural causes and realistic development."[57] Most historians disagree with this position, myself among them. Writers such as Charles Berlin and Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi maintain that for Capsali history is the handmaiden of theology, not vice versa.

It is worthwhile to keep this debate in mind and weigh the evidence as we turn to Capsali's account of events leading up to the Spanish expulsion. This can be found in the section of his

book subtitled " ספורי ספרד," wherein he proclaims ". . . we shall tell the reason or reasons why we were sent out in the expulsion. . . . (נספר הסבה או הסבות אשר למענם שולחנו בגירוש)."[58]

For Capsali, the unification of Spain is the most important of these reasons. Relatively early in his account he notes that although the Christians persecuted Spanish Jews long before 1492, they could not enforce a general expulsion because of their internal division. One king might expel the Jews from his realm, but they would not have to travel far before arriving in a neighboring kingdom which accepted them. Eventually the first king would revoke his decree and the Jews would all return to their homes.[59] As long as Spain remained divided, the Jews enjoyed relative security.

Therefore the majority of " ספורי ספרד " traces the slow process of Spanish unification which came to fruition with the marriage of the Catholic monarchs and the successful conclusion of the Reconquista in Granada. This explains Capsali's otherwise inexplicable interest in the war of succession between Isabella and her niece Joanna, since Isabella's victory opened the door for the consolidation of Castile and Aragon.

This milestone is achieved when Isabella marries Ferdinand of Aragon. The marriage is a major source of interest to Capsali. He repeats in detail the popular myth that Abraham Seneor and Meir Melammed arranged this union, thus unwittingly dooming the Jews. Capsali, however, adds a twist to this story: he claims (probably on the basis of oral accounts he heard from exiles) that the Jewish

statesmen agreed to facilitate this match because Ferdinand had Jewish blood. He traces the king's genealogy back to the son of a Jewish woman and a minister of state. The boy was raised by his father in the castle, which he inherited. He, in turn, had four daughters, the youngest of whom married King John II and bore Ferdinand. Thus when presented with the opportunity to act as Isabella's marriage brokers, Seneor and Melammed reasoned, "He is our flesh and blood. Let us choose him for her, for he is upright and will have mercy on us, and on account of him, the Lord will make us prosperous and fruitful in the land."[60]

Seneor and Melammed's reasoning backfired, and Capsali points to this political blunder as a major cause of the expulsion. It is an oft-stated maxim that some of the worst antisemites are assimilated Jews. Vulnerable to attack themselves, they feel compelled to show the Gentiles that they have no sympathy for their kin. So it was with Ferdinand: when the common people heard the rumors and began to taunt him, his only recourse was to go along with his wife's hard-line policy towards the Jews. Capsali is well-aware of the irony: a partially Jewish king is not good for the Jews.[61]

Nonetheless, the Jews might have survived Ferdinand's betrayal had it not been for his wife, the strong-minded Isabella. Capsali notes that she is the real power behind the throne and describes her as a zealous Christian who "was devoted to her religion and clung to her faith. . . ."[62] The Inquisition was established upon her request in order to halt the spread of Jewish practices among

the New Christians.[63] Isabella envisioned this as part of a broader policy to unify Spain under the banner of her beloved Catholic church.

The war with Granada occupied a central place in this policy. For centuries this stubborn outpost stood as the final Islamic obstacle to the Reconquista; now the Catholic monarchs wanted it defeated. In 1486 they launched their attack. Capsali states that the battle seemed a stalemate until Isabella made a vow to her God:

ותאמר: אם נתון תתן את העם הזה בידי והחרמתי את ישראל
היושבים במלכותי ואגרשם ממנוחתי יקומו ויצאו מתוך עמי
ולא יוסיפון לעמוד. והדבר הזה עשתה איזבי"ל המרשעת
על פי בומר א' עובר ישראל. וידו היתה בכל זאת
והוא היה בעוברנו [64]

> . . . She said: "If you will deliver this people into my hand I will devote Israel, who dwell in my kingdom, to destruction. I will expel them from my resting place; they shall depart from my nation and endure no more." And Isabella the wicked did this thing through a priest, the enemy of Israel, who is the source of our troubles and whose hand was in these matters [Torquemada].

Shortly thereafter, Granada fell to the Spaniards.

This vow provides an explicit link between the war on Granada and the expulsion. In Capsali's history, the latter is a religiously-motivated event, the conclusion of the pious Isabella's campaign to consolidate all of Spain under Catholic rule. The policy began with her marriage to Ferdinand, continued with the

establishment of the Inquisition to ensure the Church's purity, and now had succeeded in toppling the remnant of Moorish rule. The next step was obvious: Isabella would fulfill her vow and rid her realm of Jews. At first Ferdinand resisted, but when she taunted him about his origins he conceded, thinking to himself, "I will gratify the queen's wish, lest she exalt herself over me, saying that I am of Jewish seed."[65] In the spring of 1492 the monarchs issued their edict and three months later (according to Capsali on Tisha B'Av) the last of the Jews who chose to uphold their faith departed from Spain.

If this constituted the entirety of Capsali's account, it would be obvious that Kohn is correct in claiming him as a nontraditional thinker. There is, however, one more factor involved in the writer's understanding of the aforementioned events: divine volition. God's hand sets the causal chain in motion, subtly moving history towards a predetermined end. In this case, that entails the unification of Spain and the expulsion of her Jews. Thus Capsali claims that Ferdinand's forces could not have conquered Granada without God's help: "The Lord gave him all the land because the measure [of guilt or sin] of the Israelites dwelling in Spain was full and [therefore] God desired a general expulsion from that entire land . . ."

(ויתן ה' לו את כל הארץ כי נתמלא סאת בני ישראל היושבים בספרד ורצה השי"ת להיות גרוש בולל בבל הארץ ההיא).[66]

Capsali here refers to a passage in Sotah 9b which states that God does not exact punishment of a man "until his measure [of

guilt] is filled" (עד שתתמלא סאתו). The implication is that the Spanish Jews deserved the harsh fate meted out to them. The expulsion was, to some degree, divine retribution for their transgressions. God used Ferdinand to punish the aljamas when their sins had become too bountiful to be forgiven.

Yet Capsali does not view the tragedy as entirely a matter of just retribution. Like other chroniclers whose works we have already discussed, he often glorifies the exiles and their lost, lamented culture. Not infrequently does he imply that they were righteous, as evidenced by their willingness to leave their long-established homes to uphold God's holy name. It is not clear why justice would punish just those Jews who chose to go into exile rather than apostatize.[67]

For Capsali, the primary meaning of the expulsion is found in its aftermath. His complete explanation of the event becomes obvious only when he describes the exiles' arrival in Turkey and the warm welcome they receive from Sultan Bayezit: God expelled the Jews from Spain and brought them to Turkey in order to begin the ingathering of the exiles, the first step in a rapidly unfolding messianic drama. Israel's suffering represents the birth pangs of the messiah. Soon it will end and the Jews will return to rebuild a resplendent Jerusalem while God takes vengeance on their enemies. At the end of " סמורי סמרד" he cites a bit of gematria from the fifteenth-century commentary Sefer ha-Kanah proving that the קץ will begin in 5250 (1492). He concludes with a series of messianic prophecies which the expulsion fulfills:

ואנחנו חשבנו הגרוש לרעה אל״ים חשבו לטובה. . . .
ומן היום ההוא והלאה החל ה׳ לקבץ נדחי עמו למען יהיו
סובנים ומעותדי׳ אל מקום אחד בביאת הגואל, והצרות שעברו
על היהודים בעתים ההם הוא מאמר הנביא ע״ה:
והיתה עת צרה אשר לא נהיתה מהיות גוי עד העת ההיא וכו׳.
אשרי המחכה ויגיע עד עת קץ קץ בא בא קץ וקרוב
לבוא הגואל וימיו לא ימשכו [68].

We thought the expulsion was evil but God intended it for good. . . . From that day on the Lord began to gather together the dispersed of his people, that they may be ready and prepared in one place for the coming of the Redeemer; and the troubles that afflicted the Jews in those times are [according to] the word of the prophet (Daniel 12:1): "and there shall be a time of troubles such as there never was since there was a nation until that time." Happy is he that waiteth and he will attend the time of the end; "An end is come, the end is come" (Ezek. 9:6); The coming of the Redeemer is near, and his days shall not be prolonged (cf. Isa. 13:22).[69]

It seems to me that in light of such apocalyptic fervor, it is difficult to argue that Capsali's interest in history took precedence over his messianism. I find it far more likely that Capsali embraced historiography as a tool, through which he hoped to show the workings of God's will on earth. Like the "historical" sections of the Bible, Seder Eliyahu Zuta does not shy away from examining human motivations, but God's hand always lies just below the surface, moving events even when it remains unseen.

Capsali saw that divine hand as usually active in his own time, bringing history to an imminent end. To us this may seem

much more simplistic and naive than Ibn Verga's almost-modern work, but Seder Eliyahu Zuta met a despairing people's needs in a way the Shevet Yehudah could not: it provided them with solace and hope. The rest of the sixteenth-century historians would follow the path chosen by Capsali.

3. Samuel Usque

Samuel Usque was born into a family of Portuguese anusim early in the sixteenth century. His parents probably came to Portugal from Spain in 1492 after the expulsion, then were forcibly converted five years later. They raised Samuel as a secret Jew, educating him in both secular and Jewish pursuits. He mastered Hebrew, Latin, Spanish, and Italian as well as Portuguese.[70]

Around 1531 Usque left Portugal, perhaps in order to live an openly Jewish life. He spent some time in Naples where he befriended the Abrabanel family, whom he encountered again in Ferrara, Italy. It was in the latter town that he made the acquaintance of Dona Gracia Nasi. She may have supported him, as he dedicated his book to her. At this time Ferrara was also the location of Abraham Usque's printing press, which published Bible and prayerbook translations for the conversos. Samuel may have worked on some of those translations.[71]

The end of Usque's life remains enshrouded in mystery. Some claim that after he embraced his Judaism freely he decided to move to Palestine and joined a circle of kabbalists in Safed. This,

however, may be more myth than fact. We really do not know when or even where Samuel Usque died.[72]

It is likely that Usque would have remained in complete obscurity were it not for his book Consolaçam as tribulacoens de Israel (Consolation for the Tribulations of Israel). Although I am considering it here in this chapter on works of historiography, in many respects it bears little resemblance to the other Jewish chronicles of the sixteenth century. It consists of three pastoral dialogues between symbolic characters dressed in Portuguese shepherds' garb: Ycabo (Jacob, the people Israel), Zicareo (Zechariah, the remembrancer), and Numeo (Nahum, the comforter). Zicareo and Numeo, who are prophets in disguise, come upon a despairing Ycabo. They ask him to pour out his grief and they promise to console him. He agrees, and over the next three days he issues his complaints in the form of a long martyrology. The dialogues establish Usque's periodization: the first day Ycabo describes the tragedies of the biblical period, the second day focuses on the Second Commonwealth, and the final dialogue includes all of Israel's suffering from the destruction of the Second Temple to the author's time.[73]

Usque culls the historical material in these dialogues from many different sources. While the first day's discussion is essentially a reformulation of historical sections of the Bible, the second dialogue is garnered from Roman chronicles, patristic literature, the Yosippon, and rabbinic works. The third dialogue--which is our primary concern--is mainly based on two sources: the

Fortalitum Fidei (Alfonso de Spina's anti-Jewish polemic, which Usque changes to suit his own purposes) and a mysterious text which Usque refers to as the L.I.E.B. Martin Cohen argues that this L.I.E.B. is Isaac Abrabanel's unfinished, lost history ימות עולם, which Usque erroneously attributes to his son Judah Leon Abrabanel (Judah went by the Christian name L[eon] I[ehuda] Eb[reo]). While Cohen is not completely convincing in his claim that the acronym L.E.I.B. is a fallacious reference to Judah Abrabanel, he does establish that in all likelihood this vital source for the Consolaçam is ימות עולם.[74]

The Consolaçam is the only work of sixteenth-century historiography which is not written in Hebrew. Usque is well-aware that his Portuguese prose severely limits his readership, but notes in his prologue, ". . . I believe that I have done the right thing. My primary intention was to speak to the Portuguese [New Christians]. . . . It would therefore have been inappropriate for me to shun my mother tongue and to seek a borrowed language in which to speak to my countrymen."[75]

A repentant converso himself, Usque's goal in the Consolaçam is to console the anusim and thereby urge them to follow in his footsteps. Like Ibn Verga and Capsali, he is not overly concerned with the accuracy of his history. He seeks the meaning of his people's suffering, especially in the recent expulsions and forced conversions. He looks to the past not for its own sake, but to provide hope for the future. Indeed, he believes the mere remembrance of persecutions past eases the pain of the present. As

he notes in his prologue, "For troubled spirits the recollection of past misfortunes will somewhat diminish the suffering from present ones, especially if those gone by have been more intense."[76]

The past also provides the grist for Usque's imminent messianism. Like Capsali, he believes the horrible suffering inflicted by Spain and Portugal represents the birth pangs of the messiah. At the end of each section in his book, he cites prophetic verses which he believes are fulfilled by the aforementioned events. He even alters the biblical text to emphasize its present significance. He is convinced that with the suffering of the Iberian Jews, the last of these doom prophecies has been met and redemption soon awaits.[77]

In my discussion of Capsali's chronicle, I briefly noted the presence of both this sort of messianism and the doctrine of suffering as divine retribution. Usque also combines these two views in his work, proving that they are not mutually exclusive. Unlike Capsali, however, he does not make any claims implying that the exiles were just. He emphasizes again and again that no suffering is undeserved.

Throughout the Consolaçam he expresses the outlook that Israel's sufferings constitute divine punishment for numerous sins. Perhaps the fact that he was of the second generation made it easier for him to view the exiles as transgressors. His converso background also undoubtedly played an important role here. Usque must have been troubled by his own sense of complicity and that of those around him. Having experienced subterfuge in his own life,

he had a strong feeling about sin and projected it into the concept of causality which underlies his magnum opus. Thus Zicareo replies to Ycabo's complaints, "Your healthy flesh was not cut off, nor was any creature punished with death or exile who had not first, with his own hands, made the sword that cut him and prepared the snare into which he fell."[78]

Usque knows this theology leaves him open to the Christian charge that God has abandoned Israel for their sins. As one who seeks to convince conversos to return to Judaism, he is particularly sensitive to such claims. Therefore he is compelled to demonstrate that although exile and expulsion are punishments, they represent the chastisements of love reserved for a people still dear to God's heart. When Ycabo cries that God has rejected him, Numeo reassures him that no other nation is more worthy of divine favor. Usque is diametrically opposed to Ibn Verga's view that God leaves Israel to the whims of nature. Thus Ycabo learns to see God's vengeance on his enemies as a sign of Israel's continued grace: foes rise and fall while out of God's compassion the people Israel endures.[79]

But if all suffering is due to sin, what is Israel's transgression? In the first two dialogues Usque points to assimilation as the root of his people's iniquity. Beginning with their entry into Canaan, Israel's desire to be "like all the other nations" has led to intermarriage and idolatry. Usque is not the first to espouse this position; indeed, he draws it from the biblical literature which he quotes. Yet he subtly continues to

uphold this doctrine in the third dialogue's account of the events of his own age and undoubtedly even his biblical references are designed to strike a special chord with the conversos. Who among them would not recognize Usque's implicit indictment of their lifestyles when he writes: "This was the life of my children, who preferred the hunt, the cruel and heathen custom in which they imitated their brethren Esau and Ishmael, the hunters, to the pastoral way of life which my Creator favored and which I had chosen. . . ."[80]

Even the powerful combination of this view of suffering as punishment for sin and apocalyptic messianism does not blind Usque to aspects of natural causality. In the third dialogue he notes some economic reasons for the persecution of the Jews. He knows as well as Ibn Verga that "envy follows wealth" and popular resentment over Jewish money-lending underlies the many charges of blood libel and host-desecration.

Yet unlike Ibn Verga, he considers such causes of persecution to be secondary. As Ycabo notes, "In truth these misfortunes come to me from a much higher source, for it seems that little fear of God's punishment had settled in the heart of some of my children. . . ."[81]

Usque says little about the natural causes of the Spanish expulsion. Those which he does identify conform with his view of assimilation as the source of Israel's troubles. The theological and natural realms overlap here. Usque believes the seeds of the expulsion were planted a century earlier in the days of Vincent

Ferrer. The persecutions of 1391 and mass conversions which followed created the converso problem. Men and women of Jewish blood began to intermarry with the Spanish aristocracy and enjoyed its extravagant material benefits. Their assimilation into such powerful circles aroused the jealousy of those whom Usque calls "the enemies of my good fortune." He probably refers to declining Old Christians who must have been appalled at the thought of being surpassed by people they considered Jews. They found Isabella eager to listen to their complaints and persuaded her to institute the Spanish Inquisition.[82]

Although this body had no authority over the Jews, it is closely linked with their downfall in Usque's work. Usque considers the conversos part of the Jewish people. He insists it is therefore fitting for all of Israel to be punished for their sins. On the natural level, he asserts a position which the Zionists would reiterate 350 years later: Jewish efforts to assimilate inevitably end in failure and incur the wrath of the very people they seek to imitate. The conversos' guilt on this account leads not only to the Inquisition but the expulsion as well, for when the former fails to root out all traces of Judaizing, Ferdinand and Isabella decide upon the latter course. Usque does not question the reasoning given in the expulsion edict, for it confirms his notion that Jews and conversos are one people and points to the fruitlessness of efforts to assimilate.[83]

Ultimately, however, it is God who brought about both the Inquisition and expulsion as retribution for Israel's iniquitous

desire to be like the nations around her. The entire affair was foreseen by the prophets long ago:

> How many of your judgements, O Lord, were fulfilled, which you pronounced against me through the lips of Your prophets. . . . I shall bring it about that "what comes into your mind shall not be at all, in that you say: 'Let us be like the nations and like the families of the countries to worship wood and stone.'" As I live, says the Lord, surely with a mighty hand and outstretched arm and poured out fury will I be king over you (Ezek. 20:32-3). . . . Because "they who depart from me shall be written in the earth for they have forsaken the well of living waters, who is the Lord" (Jer. 17:13). "At the time of their afflictions they will say to me, 'Rise up, save us,' and I shall answer them, 'Where then are your gods now whom you worshipped? Let them arise and save you in the time of your affliction'" (Jer. 2:27-8).[84]

It hardly seems consoling to attribute the cause of the expulsion and the Inquisition to assimilationist tendencies foreseen by Ezekiel and Jeremiah! At first this appears to conjure up the vision of a people doomed to suffer indefinitely for their hapless attempts to emulate their idolatrous neighbors. But this is not the case in the Consolaçam. Usque consoles his readers with the reminder that if such catastrophes were preordained, then so was the redemption. He believes the traumatic events of his age fulfill the last of God's judgements and pave the way for the messiah. The expulsion was due to God's punishment, but it also points to a brighter future just on the horizon. Like Capsali, he seeks the Turks as protagonists in the ongoing messianic drama and notes with encouragement that the Jews are already beginning to return to the promised land.[85]

At the book's end, Numeo and Zicareo reveal themselves as prophets. They refuse to tell Ycabo exactly when the קץ will

come--Usque has experienced enough failed messianism to know not to give such a date--but they promise it will be soon. Ycabo is convinced of the truth of their words because "the effects of the prophecy have been so precisely fulfilled in our hardships in Spain and Portugal." Purified by his suffering and fortified with new hope, he returns home singing an adaptation of Psalm 126, a song of ascents. The scene portrays the author's vision at its most acute: suffering and sin transformed into faith renewed through the medium of a powerful messianism.

4. Joseph ha-Kohen

In his book Emek ha-Bakha, Joseph ha-Kohen provides his readers with a wealth of autobiographical information. His parents were Spanish exiles who settled in Avignon, where Joseph was born in 1496. Four years later the family moved to Genoa, and Joseph ha-Kohen remained in that Italian territory for most of his life. He earned his living as a physician and wrote in his free time until his death around 1575.[86]

Of his literary works, the best known are the דברי הימים לסלכי צרפת ולסלכי בית אוטומן התורג (Chronicles of the Kings of France and the House of Ottoman) and עמק הבכא (The Vale of Tears). The former describes the battles between the French and the Turks (particularly during the Crusades) and occasionally intersperses bits of tangentially related Jewish history. Our primary concern, however, is with the Emek ha-Bakha, a chronicle of

Jewish suffering since Bar Kokhba's defeat. It borrows generously from earlier martyrologies, including Usque's Consolaçam, which it refers to as ספר הפורטוגיז.[87]

In places ha-Kohen also echoes Usque's and Capsali's messianism. His history of the Crusades implicitly pits France and Turkey as the paradigms of Christendom and Islam, locked in a global confrontation. This hints at the apocalyptic wars of God and Magog. Like most of his generation, he placed great importance upon the Turkish conquest of Constantinople in 1453, considering it the fulfillment of a prophecy.[88]

There are clear messianic impulses in the Emek ha-Bakha as well. In his introduction to this work, Joseph ha-Kohen indicates that he hopes the pathos it is intended to stir in its readers will encourage God to end the suffering in the near future:

ובל הקורא בו ישום וישאף יחד ועמעפיו יזלו מים. וישים ידיו על חלציו לאמר עד מתי ה' אל אלהי אתחנן יתמו ימי אבלנו וישלח משיח צדקנו וינאלנו בסהרה למען רחמיו אמן ואמן[89]

> Everyone who reads it will be astonished and gasp, with tears flowing from his eyes; and putting his hands to his loins, he will ask: "How long, O God?" God, my God, I beseech you, may the days of our mourning come to an end and may He send us the just messiah, and he will redeem us, soon, for his mercy's sake. Amen, Amen.[90]

In his accounts of the various persecutions, the author consistently emphasizes God's vengeance on Israel's enemies. He seeks to reassure his people of the Lord's concern for them by demonstrating that all of their oppressors eventually pay for their misdeeds. This

includes Ferdinand and Isabella, who are left without an heir to the throne after their daughter is thrown from a horse and their son expires from a dreadful disease. Finally Isabella dies after a long bout with cancer, moving ha-Kohen to declare: "The Lord is just!"[91]

Nonetheless, even the worst tyrants are ultimately God's instruments. Ha-Kohen believes that "the heart of a king is in God's hand." This leaves him with the now familiar gap between natural and supernatural causes: if Ferdinand is God's tool, why is he held responsible and punished for the expulsion? The answer to this metaphysical question does not appear in ha-Kohen's historiographical work.

Divine influence also figures in the account of the expulsion, which appears almost identically in both Emek ha-Bakha and Divrei ha-Yamim. After he describes the travails of the exiles, ha-Kohen claims that the catastrophe was foreseen in the gematria of Isaiah 54:1: "O God, all this came upon us in the year alluded to in כי רבים בני שוממה (= 252 = 5252 = 1492) after five thousand years had taken their course, in the month of Av." Convinced that divine will lay behind the expulsion, ha-Kohen hastens to add a plea for God's redemption: "hurry to our aid, God our Redeemer: champion our cause and save us for your name's sake."[92]

Finally, at the end of the section on the expulsion in both his histories, ha-Kohen declares:

גרוש' צרפת והגרוש המר והנמהר הזה
העירוני לחבר הספר הזה למען ידעו בני
ישראל את אשר עשו לנו בארצותם בחצריהם
ובטירותם, כי הנה ימים באים 93

> The expulsions from France and this terrible, bitter expulsion roused me to compose this book, so that the children of Israel may know what they did to us in their lands, their courts, and their castles, far beyond the days approach.[94]

Here ha-Kohen seems to express a messianic understanding of the expulsion. He claims this event inspired him to write both of his books, so that he might herald the end of days which he hints at in the well-known messianic phrase ". כי הנה ימים באים "

Yet, as Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi notes, neither book really jibes with this stated intention.[95] Divrei ha-Yamim says very little about "what they did to us in their lands," for it is primarily a history of the foreign nations, not the Jews who lived in them. Emek ha-Bakha recounts many persecutions, but its account of the expulsion--supposedly the inspiration for the entire work--is surprisingly sparse: it devotes a few paragraphs to this subject, which in Capsali's history covers over thirty chapters.

Furthermore, while there are messianic elements in ha-Kohen's work, they are far less dominant than they are in Usque's and Capsali's books. In fact, the account in Emek ha-Bakha emphasizes the natural chain of events leading to the expulsion. The explanation closely parallels the reasoning given in the expulsion edict itself.

The roots of the disaster lie in the mass apostasy of 1391, which created the converso problem. This went unchecked until Isabella became queen and "on account of those who had been traduced into conversion on account of Fra Vicenza--may his name be blotted out--the Inquisition was reinstated, and many were burned."[96]

For all of its horrors, the Inquisition failed to stop many New Christians from secretly practicing Judaism. Therefore Ferdinand and Isabella took the only step which they believed might secure the conversos for Christianity: they expelled the Jews from Spain. Ha-Kohen places the responsibility for the event on both monarchs, whose motivation is primarily religious:

ויראו שני המלכים כי נספחו רבים אל בית ישראל ויגרשו
את היהודים מעל אדמתם, פן ילכו עוד האנוסים באחרותם
באשר עשו רבים עד היום הזה [97].

> And when the two monarchs saw that many [anusim] adhered to the House of Israel, they expelled the Jews from their land, so that the anusim would not follow in their paths, as many had unto that day.[98]

This account is not far-reaching in its insights. Ha-Kohen is an annalist, not an analyst. Yet it is considerably less theistic than either the Consolaçam or Seder Eliyahu Zuta. Ha-Kohen makes only an occasional messianic reference, and not once does he refer to the expulsion as punishment for sin.

Yerushalmi argues that ha-Kohen's work reveals a gradual shift in focus from apocalyptic to historiography. He claims the

messianic hints (like the phrase " כי הנה ימים באים ") are remnants from ha-Kohen's younger days, when the apocalyptic fervor of the early sixteenth century first inspired him to write about France and Turkey as Gog and Magog. Not long thereafter ha-Kohen's messianic hopes began to fade as the years went by and the קץ did not come on any of the abundant dates predicted for it.

Yet having first turned to history for religious reasons, ha-Kohen developed an intrinsic interest in the subject which continued long after his original motivation waned. He finished Divrei ha-Yamim, leaving in a few portions which reflect its origins, but rewriting most to create a predominantly historical work.[99]

This explanation does not completely apply in the case of Emek ha-Bakha. Ha-Kohen did not begin to compile it until he had completed Divrei ha-Yamim, and it was still unfinished at his death (an anonymous editor completed it). Nonetheless, it, too, includes the line " כי הנה ימים באים " and messianic supplications in the introduction and epilogue. This does not disprove Yerushalmi's argument; it merely requires we modify it to say that although ha-Kohen largely rejected his youthful messianic fervor, he never went so far as to completely renounce it.

Thus ha-Kohen's depiction of the expulsion stands somewhere between Ibn Verga's daring naturalistic account of the event and Usque's and Capsali's openly messianic renditions. It is the least interesting of the four, for it lacks the boldness of the former and the powerful sense of comfort in the latter two. Without either Ibn Verga's brilliance or

the messianists' hope, he never finds a framework to provide the expulsion--or any other event--with much meaning. His books are little more than chronicles, which do not offer much causal analysis. They reflect the Sitz-im-Leben of the second half of the sixteenth century, by which time it was clear that the earlier messianic expectations surrounding the expulsion would not materialize. Only a work of genius could have broken the doldrums and infused historiography with new purpose. Joseph ha-Kohen was not up to the task. Neither were his successors, Gedaliah Ibn Yahya and David Gans.

5. Gedaliah Ibn Yahya and David Gans

Gedaliah Ibn Yahya was born and raised in Italy, where he studied Talmud and kabbalah as well as some secular subjects. During his lifetime he wandered through various Italian communities, delivering lectures. He also spent time in Salonika and died in Alexandria in 1587, when he was seventy-two years old.[100]

He wrote his most famous work, Shalshelet ha-Kabbalah, in his old age. In the introduction to the book he cites several factors which moved him to undertake this task: among them are the need to show God's providence and his wish to "arouse desire for the creator of the world." The primary purpose of the work, however, is to continue the account of the "chain of tradition" which no one

had updated since the time of Maimonides (in his introduction to the Mishneh Torah) and Ibn Daud.

He augments this traditional chronicle in the third section of Shalshelet ha-Kabbalah, where he describes some of the recent decrees against Israel, including the Spanish expulsion. Yet, as Martin Kohn noted in his dissertation, Ibn Yahya is a totally uninspired historian who offers no analysis of the events he depicts. He draws names and dates from his predecessors (including Usque and ha-Kohen) but leaves out any hints of causality. He "never does any original historical research; he does not really know what it is."[101]

Thus his description of the expulsion consists of a single line:

> ובשנת רנ"ב מלך פרדינדו ואזבלה אשתו עשו מלחמה עם
> הישמעאלים שבגרנטה ויתפשוה ובשובם צוו ליהודים שבכל מלכותו
> שבמשך זמן קצר יצאו מארצות שהם . . .[102]
>
> In 1492 King Ferdinand and his wife Isabella went to war with the Moors in Granada and took it, and upon their return commanded the Jews throughout their kingdom to leave their lands within a short time. . . .

The account is completely superficial. Ibn Yahya does not make the slightest effort to understand the significance of the event.

One would expect more from David Gans. Born in Westphalia in 1541, he spent most of his life in Prague, a major center for both Jewish and secular studies. As a result, Gans had more exposure to

Renaissance culture than any other sixteenth-century Jewish historian (except for dei Rossi, who did not write anything about the Spanish expulsion). He was a competent mathematician and astronomer, who met important members of Europe's growing scientific community such as Tycho Brahe and Johannes Kepler.[103]

Gans's book on Jewish and Gentile history, however, shows little more depth than Ibn Yahya's work. Indeed, in his introduction to Zemah David, Gans admits that he has no desire to analyze those events which his predecessors have already discussed. He insists his purpose is to abbreviate and adds that "one who wishes to know the details may quench his thirst with the earlier books. . . ."[104]

Thus Zemah David--like Shalshelet ha-Kabbalah--remains a chronicle. In his account of the expulsion, Gans, too, shuns any effort to identify its causes, natural or divine. The one bit of gematria which he includes is not quoted in a messianic context, and he probably cites it because it occurs in ha-Kohen's chronicle (which Gans used as a source):

הגרוש הגדול אשר בספרד היה בשנ"ת רנ"ב והסימן רִבִּים בני שוממה
וגלו משם עם גדול ורב לאלפים ולרבבות, גם רבים לאין מספר
מפירים דתם. והצרות והתלאות אשר מצאו היהודים עצמו
מספר עיין בספר שבט יהודה בדף ל"ח ל"ט ומ"[105]

The great expulsion from Spain was in the year 5252, and the sign was "רִבִּים בני שוממה" (Isa. 54:1). A great nation was expelled from there, thousands and tens of thousands; also many beyond counting apostasized. And for the stories of the

troubles and misfortunes of the Jews themselves, see the book Shevet Yehudah, pages 38 and 39ff.

There is a certain irony when the last of the sixteenth- century Jewish historians refers his readers to the first of his predecessors. It comes from the fact that Gans obviously does not understand the true implications of Ibn Verga's vastly more sophisticated work. During the intervening years, Jewish historiography had lost its cutting edge. The expulsion faded from living memory and ceased to arouse the intense response it once had. Any new outbursts of messianism would have to center around some more immediate event.

Thus Ibn Yahya and Gans do not depict the Spanish expulsion as either punishment for the people's sins or messianic birthpangs. They also fail to analyze its natural causes. In short, they were too pious to go as far as Ibn Verga, and too distant from the apocalyptic fervor to interpret it messianically like Usque and Capsali. Therefore they did not interpret it at all.

This is the way a century of Jewish historiography ended--not with a bang, but a whimper. Almost two hundred and fifty years would pass before the effort was renewed.

C. Other Accounts

The aforementioned writers were not the only men to leave accounts of the Spanish expulsion. Several other thinkers offered their interpretations of this watershed event, often in bits and pieces scattered throughout biblical commentaries, sermon collections,

philosophical treatises, and other manuscripts. There are probably many such sources which mention the expulsion in passing or respond to it implicitly; undoubtedly there are some still waiting to be discovered. But I have chosen to look at some of the more interesting and important ones, which I have divided into three categories based on their approach to the question of causality.

1. Messianists

This category includes all those thinkers who conceived of the expulsion as part of a divine plan moving towards imminent redemption. I have noted that messianism played a central role in the histories of Capsali and Usque, and in the early work of ha-Kohen. In fact, it was probably the most common response in the immediate aftermath of the expulsion, for it allowed the exiles and their descendants to view themselves as righteous and it filled them with desperately needed hope for the future.

The kabbalis Abraham ben Eliezer HaLevi believed that Obadiah 1:20 offered conclusive proof the redemptive process had begun with the expulsion and the קץ would come within the lifetime of the exiles. His exegesis of the verse:

" וגלות החל הזה לבני ישראל אשר כנענים עד צרפת וגלות ירושלים אשר בספרד ירשו את ערי הנגב "

appears in his commentary on the book of Daniel. He claims the terms " עד צרפת " imply that this prophecy will be fulfilled at a time when there are no Jews in France (which was the case in 1492), for if it were meant otherwise, it would have said "מצרפת." Yet regarding Spain it says,

" בספרד " implying that redemption will arrive within the lifetime of the exiles who at one time actually lived in Spain. Thus he sets the year 1540 as his terminus ad quem for the coming of the messiah, since after that nearly all the exiles will be dead.[106]

The unknown author of genizah fragments recently edited by Isaiah Tishby also used biblical texts to invest the Spanish expulsion with apocalyptic meaning. He refers to the gematriz of Job 38:13: " לאחוז בכנפות הארץ ויינערו רשעים ממנה " (It squeezes the corners of the earth and shakes the wicked from it.) The numerical value of " לאחוז " is fifty-two--as in the year 5252/1492--which signifies that all the world will suffer on account of the expulsion, a portent of the approaching eschaton.[107]

The most famous of the messianists is Don Isaac Abrabanel. Born into a wealthy Portuguese family in 1437, he excelled as a student of both Jewish and classical texts. His intellect helped him rise to great power as a statesman: he served in the courts of six Gentile rulers, including Ferdinand and Isabella. As a tax farmer for the Catholic monarchs he amassed a large fortune of his own and soon became the queen's personal fiscal representative. Therefore, when the Jews heard of the expulsion edict, they selected Abrabanel as their chief spokesman. His experience in this position makes the accounts of the expulsion he composed during his years in exile particularly valuable.[108]

Yet Abrabanel was far more than a statesman. He also wrote prolifically on a wide range of concerns. He was a master of philosophy

who admired Maimonides, but in general he preferred the mystic's approach. Like Judah HaLevi he despised Aristotelian rationalism and looked to history for evidence of divine will and power. He insisted that God moves history in accordance with a pre-ordained design.[109]

It should not be surprising, then, that he responded to the expulsion with messianic fervor. He saw the suffering as the birthpangs of the messiah, who he believed would arrive in 1503. This and other predictions may be found in the messianic trilogy of משמיע ישועה, ישועות משיחו, and מעיני ישועה which Abrabanel completed in 1498. It almost single-handedly revived Jewish messianism and provided the Iberian exiles with a badly needed reason to believe in a brighter future. When the messiah did not come on the appointed day, he changed his prediction to 1531. Abrabanel did not live to see the failure of his second target date; he died in Venice in the winter of 1508.[110]

One can follow the development of Abrabanel's messianism in his successive accounts of the Spanish expulsion. The first of these may be found in the introduction to his commentary on the book of Kings, which he completed only a year after the expulsion. It is a description by a man whose painful memories of the catastrophe are not yet dulled by the healing effects of time. The emphasis is almost entirely on natural causes; the writer obviously lacks even the small bit of perspective required before events can be easily reinterpreted on a messianic scale:

ובשנת התשיעית שנת מזרה ישראל לבד המלך ספרד כל מלכות גרנטה והעיר גרנט"ה רבתי עם שרתי במדינות. . . ויאמר עשו בלבו במה אתרצה לאלקי המאזרני חיל למלחמה? במה אקדם לקוני אשר נתן את העיר הזאת בידי? אם לא בהבנים תחת בנסיו העם ההולכים בחשך שה מזורה ישראל ולהשיב לדתו ואמונתו הבת השובבה או להשליכם אל ארץ אחרת מעל פני לא ישבו עוד בארצי ולא יכונו לנגד עיני.[111]

> In the ninth year [of Ferdinand's reign], "מזרה ישראל" (gematria for 252, from Jer. 31:10) the king of Spain captured the whole kingdom of Granada and the city of Granada which was full of people, a princess among the provinces (Lamentations 1:1).
>
> . . Then Essau said to himself: "How shall I thank the god who gave me strength in the war? How shall I show gratitude to my creator who set this city in my hands? Should I not bring under his wings the people that walks in darkness, the wandering lamb Israel? Should I not return the errant daughter to his religion and faith--or [if they do not convert] cast them out from before me to another land, so that they no longer dwell in my land or make their encampment in my presence?"

This account is somewhat similar to Capsali's section on Queen Isabella's vow. In both, the Granadan war effort rouses the monarch to an act of misguided Catholic piety. This time it appears to be Ferdinand whose intention to convert the Jews to Christianity leaves them with the unpleasant choice of exile or apostasy. The edict is proclaimed and the Jews prepare to leave Spain within three months.

Abrabanel states that he spoke to the king three times during that period, beseeching him and offering bribes. Nothing works, however, for Isabella suddenly emerges as the true antagonist, standing by her husband's side to "act the adversary." Ferdinand responds to her urging and finalizes the decree. At last the Jews admit they have lost the battle and abandon their homes to set out for wherever the winds of fate will take them.[112]

Abrabanel refers to the expulsion again three years later in his commentary on Deuteronomy. This is a short account, and hardly worth noting except for one line: "God decided to exile . . . all the Jews dwelling in every district of Spain, young and old alike."[113] The contrast here with the opening of the earlier account is striking. It is easy to see Abrabanel's messianism

taking shape as he shifts the responsibility for the event from Ferdinand to God.

After gaining yet another year of historical perspective, his messianic tendencies appear even more mature in Zevah Pesah, his 1497 commentary on the Passover haggadah. He draws parallels between the redemption from Egyptian exile and events of his own age. He considers the former the paradigm for another great act of God's deliverance which will occur in the near future. He comforts Israel with the reassurance that God's mighty hand and outstretched arm are at work on their behalf and will release them from their bondage to the Gentile nations.[114]

The full-grown fruits of Abrabanel's messianism finally appear in his commentary on Isaiah, which he completed in 1498. Six years after the expulsion he succeeds in completely subsuming the human events evident in his first account into a grand divine plan to gather in the exiles. The context is an exegesis of Isaiah 43:5-6, "Fear not; for I am with you: I will bring your folk from the East, will gather you out of the West; I will say to the North, 'Give back!' and to the South, 'Do not withhold!' Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth."

Abrabanel believes that the ingathering prophesied here actually began with the expulsion of the Jews from England in 5020 (his chronology is erroneous; this expulsion actually occurred thirty years later). The process continued through a long series of expulsions--from France, Savoy, Lombardy, Tuscany, Germany, and Asia--which forced the Jews to move steadily eastward. All of this

is God's doing and the Spanish expulsion marks the departure of the last and greatest Jewish community in Western Europe. Surely the קץ cannot be long in coming, for Isaiah's prophecy is nearly fulfilled:

ובשנת מאתים וחמישים ושנים העיר השם את רוח מלכי ספרד לגרש
מארצם את כל היהודים כשלש מאות אלף נפשות באופן שכולם
יצאו מכל צדדי המערב וכולם עברו בנגד ארץ ישראל....
ועל זה אמר ממזרח אביא זרעך וממערב אקבצך אומר לצפון
תני ולתימן אל תכלאי כלומר שנתן בלב המלכים שברוחו השם
שישלחום מאתם עד שילכו לארץ ישראל.[115]

> In the year 5252, God stirred the spirit of the Spanish monarchs to expel all the Jews from their land--about 300,000 people--so that they would leave all parts of the West and all head towards the land of Israel.
> . . . Therefore it says, "I will bring your folk from the East, will gather you from the West; I will say to the North, 'Give back!' and to the South, 'Do not withhold!' for he set it in the hearts of the monarchs, that had the spirit of God [in them] to send them (the Jews) forth until they reach the land of Israel.

The problem with this and every other messianic account is the inevitable frustration when the predicted dates all pass and the redeemer does not arrive. Abrabanel and the other messianists succeeded in providing hope during the first desperate years after the expulsion. Yet, as we saw in the case of the historians, messianic interpretations of events are by their very nature timebound. Most of the exiles themselves saw the occurrences of 1492 as signs of the apocalypse; to their grandchildren, the same events just constituted one more memory of distant suffering, a

single persecution in the history of the world's most persecuted people. By the time Abrabanel's second suggested deadline for the קץ went by in 1531, fewer and fewer Jews continued to attribute messianic meaning to the expulsion.

2. Anti-rationalists

By this point it should be clear that most of the Spanish exiles saw themselves as righteous and therefore had profound difficulties with the traditional notion of suffering as God's punishment for their sins. There were, however, some among the exiles who lambasted Spanish Jewry and explained the expulsion as divine retribution for one overriding and inexcusable transgression: the excessive rationalism of the Spanish Jewish elite.

Such anti-rationalism was hardly a new phenomenon. Jews have argued over the relationship between reason and revelation since hellenistic times, and there have always been some pietists who put almost all of their faith in the latter. The anti-rationalists who left Spain in 1492 saw themselves in the line of earlier critics of neo-Aristotelian philosophy such as Hasdai Crescas and Judah HaLevi.

Yet Abraham Ardutiel and Joseph Jabez are of special interest here because they considered the expulsion to be evidence of God's displeasure over Averroistic philosophy and its advocates. Contrasting the simple piety of the poor with the upper class's

"enlightenment," they claim that the latter led to ritual laxity, apostasy, and finally the expulsion of the entire Jewish community.

Little is known of Abraham Ardutiel (sometimes referred to as Abraham of Torrutiel). He was born in Spain in 1482 and went with his family to Fez after the expulsion. He did his Talmud study there and remained until the end of his long life.[116]

We know him through a chronicle he composed not long after the expulsion. Its stated purpose is the same as that of the Shalshelet ha-Kabbalah: to update Ibn Daud's record of the "chain of tradition." The second half of its final section, however, contains a brief account of Israel's recent suffering, up to and including the Spanish expulsion and the travails of the exiles. Here he writes:

...בי לולי רחמיו וברית אבות אשר זכר כמעט כסדום היינו לפי הרעות והפשעים והגאוה הגדולה שהיתה בכל מלכות ספרד... ונדולה מזאת כמעט נשתחכה תורה בישראל בחכמת [כך] חיצוניות... ולא היו מחזיקים בתורה שבע"פ כי אם העניים והאביונים. ויחר אף ה' ונורשו מפדינת קאשטיליא המלך דון היראנדו [כך] ועצת אשתו הארורה היא איזבל הרשעה ומאמר יועציה.[117]

Were it not for God's mercy and covenant with the patriarchs which he remembered, we would have been [destroyed] almost like Sodom because of the wickedness, transgression, and great pride throughout the kingdom of Spain. But worse than this, Torah was almost forgotten in Israel on account of secular knowledge . . . and no one held fast to the Oral Law except the humble poor. Thus God grew angry and expelled them from the province of Castile, via King Ferdinand and the advice of his cursed wife the wicked Jezebel and the word of her advisors.

Like the elegist R. Abraham ben Shlomo HaLevi Bakrat, Ardutiel refers to Isabella as Jezebel (איזבל), the biblical exemplar of the evil queen. He calls her "cursed" and certainly implies that she is culpable for the expulsion. Yet he does not consider her to be its final cause. Ultimately this event came from God, who sought to punish the Jews for the impious pursuit of foreign knowledge at the expense of Torah.

Joseph Jabez is even more critical of Spanish Jewry's "enlightenment." He was born in Spain and was much older than Ardutiel when he left that land as an exile in 1492. Eventually he came to Mantua, where he preached about the significance of Spanish Jewry's fate. Those sermons fill his best known book, אור החיים, which opens with the question, "Why was the Spanish diaspora lost?"[118]

Jabez's answer is easily summarized: God punished them for their disastrous infatuation with "Greek wisdom." He notes that Spain was never more full of yeshivas than at the time of the expulsion, but the prevalence of secular studies at those same academies led the students to embrace the books of Jewish and Gentile philosophers over the Talmud and other more traditional texts.

For Jabez, the gist of the trouble with the rationalist works is that they inevitably lead to ritual laxity. This explains why God brought on the expulsion. When Spanish Jews found no natural reason to wear tefilin or eat only kosher food, they ceased to follow these mitzvot. Once besmirched by the philosophers' knowledge, they could not be fully cleansed.[119]

Like Ardutiel, Jabez contrasts the piety of the common people with the apostasy of their leaders; he pleads with powerful Jews everywhere to heed the lesson of their Spanish counterparts:

> אלי׳כם אישים אקרא מגלות ספרד אני אשר גורשנו בעונותינו הרבים והעצומים ורוב המתפארים בחכמה ובמ״ט בלם המירו את כבודם ביום מר. והאנשים ועמי הארץ מסרו גופם וממונם על קדושת בוראם.[120]

> To you the prominent I call out from the Spanish exile: I am among those who were exiled for our many and great sins. For the majority of those who bragged of their wisdom and good deeds apostatizted on the bitter day, while the common people gave their lives and their fortunes to sanctify their Creator.

For all of its passion, Jabez's plea demonstrates a fatal weakness in both his and Ardutiel's work. Lessons are not generally learned except through direct experience. A few lone exiles' voices warning of philosophy's dangers probably did little or nothing to shake the confidence of prominent and enlightened Jews elsewhere. Yet Jabez and Ardutiel offer no solace for the common people whom they praise. Indeed, the poor are the ones who suffered most in the expulsion, which hardly seems fair if their wealthier kinsmen's deeds brought it on. With little appeal, therefore, to either of these two groups, the anti-rationalist view of the expulsion could not have found many supporters.

3. Echoes of Ibn Verga: Joseph Ibn Yahya

Although none of the historians who followed Solomon Ibn Verga carried on his legacy, some characteristics of his explanation of the expulsion's natural causes may be found in a section of Joseph Ibn Yahya's commentary on the book of Esther. A child of Spanish refugees, Joseph grew up in Florence and Imola, where he probably fell under the influence of the Italian Renaissance. This influence is much more apparent in his commentary on the Five Scrolls (published after Joseph's death in 1534) than it is in his son Gedaliah's more famous Shalshelet ha-Kabbalah.[121]

Like Ibn Verga, Joseph makes no explicit reference to the causes of the Spanish expulsion. He does not refer specifically to the event at all, for he is an exegete, not an historian. His commentary on Esther, however, often reminds the reader of events in Castile more than those in the original storyline set in Shushan. Thus when he elaborates on Haman's request that Ahasuerus destroy the Jews (Esther 3:8), he places words in the villain's mouth which sound quite a bit like those of Ibn Verga's Thomas:

ולבן אם מישיבתם בארצך יולד נזק...
בי דתיהם שונות מכל [?] בי כל אומות מלכותך אף בי הם שונים זה מזה
יתאחדו לאבול ולשתות ולהתחתן ולהיות לעם אחד בדי לעשות רצונך.
מה שאלו אינם אוכלים מאכלי זולתם ואינם אוהבים זולתם. ותמיד מרמים
לזולתם ונושבים אותם בנשך ובמרבית.[122]

> If they continue to dwell in your land, harm will be done . . . for their religion is different from all [? the others?]. While all the nations in your realm differ from one another, they join together to eat and drink and intermarry, and act as a single people to do your will. But these people do not eat the food of others, and love only themselves. They exalt themselves over others and draw interest from them through usury.

Before drawing too many parallels to the Shevet Yehudah, however, it is important to recall that the speaker here is Haman. Therefore while it is clear that Thomas often serves as Ibn Verga's spokesman, it is highly questionable whether Haman fills the same function for Ibn Yahya. This is an important difference. Ibn Verga uses his character's words to express his own critique of Spanish Jewry, which he offers as a grounds for future reform. Ibn Yahya's Haman offers many of the same criticisms--social estrangement, arrogance, and usurious money-lending--but in this case the commentator does not necessarily share his character's views. Indeed, I believe that Ibn Yahya did not place much credence in those views or he would have selected at least a slightly more sympathetic mouthpiece and/or forum through which to voice them.

Ibn Verga's radicalism lies in the fact that he accepts the truth of some of the Christians' complaints against the Jews of Spain. Ibn Yahya is a more conservative thinker. He is sensitive enough to recognize the source of those same complaints, but he does not seem to accept them as legitimate criticisms of his people. Thus they remain a few interesting lines in a commentary

on the book of Esther, not the central message in an elaborate Maimonidean endeavor like the Shevet Yehudah.

By the middle of the sixteenth century it was becoming increasingly clear that all of these non-historiographical efforts to explain the expulsion would fail to satisfy the body of the Jewish people for the same reason their historiographical counterparts were failing: they could not provide a reason for the suffering and exile which gave them lasting meaning. The messianists could offer the second part of this combination--meaning--but the passing of time made their explanations obsolete. Ibn Yahya and the anti-rationalists did not have even this much success; their accounts quickly entered into obscurity. But one approach did emerge at just about this time which gave world Jewry a meaningful understanding of the Spanish expulsion and much more. We turn now to that phenomenon, which will conclude this chapter: the rise of Lurianic kabbalah.

D. Epilogue: The Rise of Lurianic Kabbalah

The great modern scholar of Jewish mysticism Gershom Scholem argues in several of his works that the rise of Lurianic kabbalah constitutes a response to the Spanish expulsion. Most of his successors have accepted this pioneering claim without much questioning, and within just a few decades it has become the standard, authoritative position on the subject. I believe

Scholem's analysis could stand to be amended, however, and after offering a brief summation of his discussions on this matter, I shall raise what I consider to be the primary critique of his thesis.

Scholem notes that the brilliant new kabbalistic response to the exile did not emerge immediately after the expulsion. During the last years of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth, kabbalists expressed the same impending messianism as Abrabanel, Capsali, and Usque. The aforementioned messianist Abraham ben Eliezer HaLevi used zoharic references to make his apocalyptic predictions, as did the author of Tishby's genizah fragments. The anonymous Kaf ha-Kethoreth employed kabbalistic hermeneutics to infuse verses of scripture with imminent messianic meaning.[123]

Where kabbalism differed was in its capacity to respond when the messianism waned. As we have seen, without the impetus of messianism, historiography faded. But, insists Scholem, the small group of kabbalists in Safed led by Isaac Luria responded to the need for a more enduring explanation of exile in general, and the expulsion in particular. In the latter half of the sixteenth century they formulated their answer, which succeeded by moving from the world of history into the realm of mythology. As Scholem states, "They managed to elaborate a system which transformed the exile of the people of Israel into an exile of the whole world, and the redemption of their people into a universal, cosmic redemption."[124]

First they added the notion of tzimtzum to the older view of creation via divine emanations. Through this claim that God had to withdraw inward, limiting himself, to make room for the universe, they introduced a sort of divine exile into the world even before it was created. This shows the genius of the Lurianic myth: it comforted the exiles by projecting their existential situation back into the nature of the entire universe.[125]

The most important feature of the new creation myth is its account of the breaking of the vessels (שבירת הכלים). Some time after the act of tzimtzum, God stored up some of his attributes in vessels, which he filled with divine light. The vessels, however, could not contain this primordial light and they shattered, filling the world with a combination of shards (קליפות) and a few holy sparks. Since the jarring effects of that catastrophe, nothing has been in its proper place; or, again quoting Scholem, "all being is in Galut."[126] This includes both the Shekhina and human souls, which wander from one body to the next through the process of reincarnation/transmigration which the kabbalists call gilgul.

This cosmogony explained the origin of the exiles' suffering; the attendant doctrine of tikkun gave it meaning. It assigned to the Jews the task of collecting the divine sparks still loose in the world and returning them to their source by following God's mitzvot. To fulfill this mission, they had to be scattered all over the globe. Thus Hayyim Vital expressed the kabbalistic response to a question Jewish exiles had been asking for centuries: "And this is the secret why Israel is fated to be enslaved by all

the Gentiles of the world: In order that it may uplift those sparks which have also fallen among them. . . . And therefore it was necessary that Israel should be scattered to the four winds in order to lift everything up."[127]

Scholem is unquestionably correct in describing this elaborate myth as a metaphysical explanation of the general trials and tribulations of life in galut. He fails to demonstrate, however, why it should be considered a response to the Spanish expulsion in particular. Nearly a century separates Isaac Luria and his followers from that infamous decree, and, as we have seen, the pain associated with the event had been fading from the collective consciousness. None of the literature of Lurianic kabbalah makes specific reference to the expulsion, and while that does not necessarily disprove Scholem's position, it certainly provides room for skepticism.

Many trying circumstances befell the sephardim in the years following the Spanish expulsion. It seems likely that the Lurianic myth emerged out of the sum total of all of their sufferings in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It provided an enduring explanation of the expulsion in particular only insofar as it gave universal meaning to every exile which had ever befallen the Jewish people. The very universality of this metahistorical myth which captured the essence of the experience of galut enabled it to succeed where almost a century's effort to find meaning through history had

failed.[128] The vast portion of world Jewry embraced some variant of Lurianic Kabbalah for the next two hundred years, until a few of the newly-emancipated Jews began to follow their Christian colleagues back into the arena of history.

Notes to Chapter One

[1] Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson, " גלות וגאולה בעיניו של דור גולי ספרד " in Yitzhak Baer Jubilee Volume (Jerusalem, 1960), 219.

[2] Alexander Marx, "The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain: Two New Accounts," Jewish Quarterly Review, OS 20 (1907-8): 240-71.

[3] Ibid., 244.

[4] Ibid., 249-50.

[5] Ibid., 253.

[6] Ibid., 249.

[7] Ibid., 250, 254.

[8] Ibid., 254.

[9] Yosef Hacker, " ברוניקות חדשות על גרוש היהודים מספרד סבותיו ותוצאותיו " Zion, XLV (1980): 206-8, 216.

[10] Ibid., 210-11.

[11] Ibid., 219-20.

[12] Ibid., 221.

[13] Ibid., 222.

[14] Ibid., 206-8, 228-9.

[15] H. H. Ben-Sasson, "Galut u-ge'ulah," 216-27.

[16] Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson, "קינה על גרוש ספרד" Tarbitz, 31:1 (1961): 62-3.

[17] Ibid., 63, 67.

[18] Ibid., 69, 66.

[19] Aaron Freimann, " קינה על גרוש ספרד " in Abhandlungen zur Errinerung an Hirsch Perez Chajes (Vienna, 1933), 237.

[20] Ibid., 245.

[21] Ibid., 240.

[22] Ben-Sasson, "Qinah al gerush Safarad," 71.

[23] Freimann, "Qinah al gerush Sefarad," 247.

[24] Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory (Seattle, Wash., 1982), 31-52, 57.

[25] Ibid., 58-60.

[26] Yitzhak F. Baer, Galut, Robert Warshow, trans. (New York, 1947), 77.

[27] Solomon Ibn Verga, Shevet Yehudah (Jerusalem, 1947) from Y. Baer's introd., 14-5.

[28] Yerushalmi, Zakhor, 60.

[29] Abraham A. Neuman, "The Shebet Yehudah and Sixteenth Century Jewish Historiography," in Louis Ginzberg Jubilee Volume (New York, 1945), 253-4.

[30] Ibid., 260.

[31] Larry J. Halpern, "A Comparative and Critical Study of Some Sixteenth Century Jewish Historians" (Rabbinic thesis, Hebrew Union College, 1967), 33.

[32] Solomon Ibn Verga, Shevet Yehudah, A. Shochet, ed. (Jerusalem, 1947), 21.

[33] Martin Kohn, "Jewish Historiography and Jewish Self-Understanding in the Period of Renaissance and Reformation" (Ph. D. dissertation, UCLA, 1978), 23.

[34] Solomon Ibn Verga, Shevet Yehudah, 120, 207 (note #15).

[35] Ibid., 7 (Y. Baer's introd.).

[36] Moses Maimonides, The Guide of the Perplexed, trans. and introd. Shlomo Pines (Chicago, 1963), 8.

[37] Solomon Ibn Verga, Shevet Yehudah, 26.

[38] Ibid., 26.

[39] Ibid., 30-32.

[40] Ibid., 32-3.

[41] Ibid., 36.

[42] Ibid., 66.

[43] Ibid., 115-17.

[44] Ibid., 117-18.

[45] Ibid., 79-80.

[46] Ibid., 80.

[47] Ibid., 127-8.

[48] Ibid., 127.

[49] Michael A. Meyer, ed., Ideas of Jewish History (New York, 1974), 113.

[50] Solomon Ibn Verga, Shevet Yehuda, 127.

[51] Ibid., 77.

[52] Yerushalmi, Zakhor, 68-9.

[53] Israel Zinberg, A History of Jewish Literature, trans. Bernard Martin, 4 (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1974): 79-80.

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[55] Ibid., 3: 15, 17.

[56] Kohn, "Jewish Historiography," 10-11.

[57] Ibid., 22.

[58] Capsali, Seder Eliyahu Zuta, 1: 143.

[59] Ibid., 1: 171.

[60] Ibid., 1: 182-3.

[61] Ibid., 1: 187.

[62] Ibid., 1: 188.

[63] Ibid., 1: 188.

[64] Ibid., 1: 202.

[65] Ibid., 1: 205-6.

[66] Ibid., 1: 187.

[67] Ibid., 1: 229.

[68] Ibid., 1: 240-41.

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[70] Samuel Usque, Samuel Usque's Consolation for the Tribulations of Israel, trans. and introd. Martin A. Cohen (Philadelphia, 1965), 12-16.

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[72] Usque, Consolation, 17.

[73] Neuman, "Samuel Usque," 118.

[74] Usque, Consolation, 275-86.

[75] Ibid., 40.

[76] Ibid., 38.

[77] Ibid., 38-9.

[78] Ibid., 104.

[79] Ibid., 163.

[80] Ibid., 171, 177.

[81] Ibid., 178.

[82] Ibid., 198.

[83] Ibid., 199.

[84] Ibid., 199-200.

[85] Ibid., 231, 236.

[86] Joseph ha-Kohen, The Vale of Tears, trans. and introd. Harry S. May (The Hague, 1971), 73, viii.

[87] Ibid., viii-xi.

[88] Yosef Haim Yerushalmi, "Messianic Impulses in Joseph ha-Kohen," in Bernard Cooperman, ed., Jewish Thought in the Sixteenth Century (Cambridge, Mass., 1983), 465-8, 473.

[89] Joseph ha-Kohen, Emek ha-Bakha (Cracow, 1895), 10.

[90] Ha-Kohen, The Vale of Tears, 1.

[91] Ha-Kohen, The Vale of Tears, 68; Emek ha-Bakha, 102.

[92] Ha-Kohen, The Vale of Tears, 67; Emek ha-Bakha, 101.

[93] Joseph ha-Kohen, דברי הימים למלכי צרפת ואוטאמאן התונר (?, 1967), 36b.; Emek ha-Bakha, 103.

[94] Ha-Kohen, The Vale of Tears, 68.

[95] Yerushalmi, "Messianic Impulses in Joseph ha-Kohen," 470.

[96] Ha-Kohen, The Vale of Tears, 64; Emek ha-Bakha, 97.

[97] Ha-Kohen, Emek ha-Bakha, 100.

[98] Ha-Kohen, The Vale of Tears, 65-6.

[99] Yerushalmi, "Messianic Impulses in Joseph ha-Kohen," 479-81.

[100] A History of Jewish Literature, 82.

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[103] Mordechai Breuer, "Modernism and Traditionalism in Sixteenth-Century Jewish Historiography: A Study of David Gans' Tzemah David," in Cooperman, Jewish Thought in the Sixteenth Century, 50-4.

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[113] Isaac Abrabanel, פירוש התורה (Jerusalem, no date appears), section on Deuteronomy, 1a.

[114] Isaac Abrabanel, זבח פסח in Y. Wieder, ed., הגדה של פסח (Brooklyn, 1978), 68.

[115] Isaac Abrabanel, פירוש על נביאים אחרונים (Tel Aviv, 1956), 206-7.

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[119] Joseph Jabez, אור החיים (New York, 1958), 20a, 13a.

[120] Ibid., 13b.

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[124] Gershom Scholem, The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality (New York, 1971), 42-3.

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[128] Yerushalmi, Zakhor, 74.

Chapter II

Scientific Scholarship and Romanticism: Nineteenth Century Views of the Expulsion

Introduction

When Jewish historiography began to reassert itself early in the nineteenth century, it bore little resemblance to the messianic, explicitly providential work of the sixteenth-century Jewish historians. During the intervening two hundred and fifty years intellectually self-contained Jewish communities took refuge in their traditional texts and largely ignored the study of history, much as they had for centuries before 1492. Thus it is clear that the new historiographical thought which suddenly appeared in the European Jewish world had not grown slowly from a seed planted by previous generations; rather it burst on the scene almost de novo, as a result of the process of Jewish emancipation.[1]

As the Jews of Western Europe emerged from the ghetto and attempted to enter the mainstream of their societies, they became subject to the influence of the general Gentile culture. In their quest for acceptance and integration, they were often eager to adopt the prevailing social mores and ideologies. Of course there were many Jews who did not consciously choose to imitate the beliefs and behavior of their non-Jewish countrymen, but every Jew who opted to live outside the ghetto walls was at least subconsciously affected by the Zeitgeist.

In nineteenth-century Germany, and increasingly throughout Western Europe, this meant a heightened sense of the importance of history. In short, Jews returned to historiography after a two-and-a-half century hiatus because, having recently entered the realm of European intellectual thought by the 1820s, they found themselves in a world where history reigned supreme. In order to understand the revival of Jewish historiography (and its new explanations of the Spanish expulsion), it is therefore necessary to briefly examine some broad trends in the general historiography of the period.

By the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, revolutionary thinkers such as Descartes and Vico had begun to shake off the medieval legacy which identified history as the handmaiden of theology--a view which obviously also permeated the work of Jews like Usque, Capsali, Abrabanel, and most of the Jewish "historians" who followed in the wake of the Spanish expulsion. While most Jews still clung closely to the traditional tenets of their faith, these Christian advocates of Enlightenment paved the way for a more critical historiography which diminished the role of providence in human events and employed proto-scientific analysis to recover long forgotten facts about the past.[2]

In general, however, Enlightenment thinkers showed little interest in history. Their aim in secularizing human thought was to free themselves from the shackles of the past, which they viewed as a barbarous dearth of reason, unworthy of serious study. Only these few

periods which seemed consistent with their own rationalism (such as the zenith of classical Greek and Roman civilization) were deemed acceptable for investigation, as paradigms for their vision of a future grounded on human reason.[3] History could not emerge as a full-blown, dominant discipline until scholars overcame this reluctance to examine every area of human civilization, whether "rational" or not.

The breakthrough came with the shift from the Enlightenment's static conception of human nature to the Romantic view, which held that human nature was itself the object of historical development. Romantic thinkers felt the obligation to study all ages of human history, since they saw that history as the record of the development of reason through a universal, progressive plan. Herder, Fichte, Schiller, Schelling, and finally Hegel established the Idealist philosophy which proposed that history's essence is not the empirical actions and events recorded in chronicles, but the ideas which underlie those phenomena and which form a logical sequence, each leading to its successor through the dialectic process. All history became, in a sense, the history of thought.[4]

The Idealists' notion of a progressive universal history was, in many ways, very new. Its dynamic concept of human nature and optimistic faith in the steady march of reason were markedly different from the view shared by medieval Jewish and Christian "histories." Yet Idealism did share one important feature with these four older traditions: the belief that history is by nature teleological.[5] This insistence that the course of human events is not random, but moves towards a definite goal bears an obvious similarity to a religious faith in providence.

Hegel even spoke of this in such terms when he claimed, "God lets man direct their particular passions and interests as they please; but the result is the accomplishment of His plans, and these differ from the ends sought by those whom he employs."[6]

If the strength of Idealist history lay in its capacity to unify seemingly diverse events and infuse them with meaning by subsuming them under an overarching philosophical framework, then its weakness soon became apparent as a by-product of that same capacity: the tendency to blur subtle distinctions between individual events, and even to "fudge" on the empirical facts in order to fit them into the pre-established meta-historical framework. As the nineteenth century wore on, the backlash against the speculative nature of Idealism grew stronger. Historians rebelled against teleological superstructures and philosophical systems, and determined that their task was to give a full and accurate account of historical events.[7]

This view became known as historicism. It succeeded in recapturing the uniqueness of individual events, but not surprisingly it faltered precisely where Idealism had been advantageous: historicism failed to infuse the past with meaning or even to give it intelligibility as a coherent whole. History became a more amalgamation of unconnected events, or, in the words of Hans Meyerhoff, a "multiplicity of individual manifestations at different ages and in different cultures."[8] For some historians this was satisfactory. But for others, this tendency, which continues into the historiography of our own time, was deeply troubling.

Another important trend in nineteenth-century historiography was the emergence of scientific history--history as Wissenschaft. New philological methods were developed to help the historian obtain a fuller, more objective account of past events than ever before possible. Sources were divided into component parts to determine their reliability, and it became desirable to pinpoint how an ancient author/chronicler's personal viewpoint distorted his presentation of the facts. This was vital, since history was becoming increasingly preoccupied with those "facts," and no longer concerned itself with the "thought" (in the Idealist sense) behind them.

Historicism posed special problems for Jewish historians seeking to explore their people's past, for the denial of any transcendent meaning in Jewish history is paramount to the rejection of the Jewish nation's raison d'etre. Therefore Jewish scholars, who first became interested in history under the powerful influence of Idealism in its heyday (early nineteenth century), tended to remain in the Idealist camp long after others had left it for historicism. From Immanuel Wolf's ground breaking essay "On the Concept of a Science of Judaism" to the works of Krochmal and Graetz, Jews favored some form of Idealist framework for their histories. Such a framework allowed them to maintain some connection with the traditional, providential view of the Jewish past, although they couched their teleological superstructure in very different terms. As Lionel Kochan has pointed out, they transformed classical Judaism's messianic idea into the messiah as the "spirit of

history."[9] Reformers found this position particularly attractive, for its portrayal of Judaism as a dynamic tradition seemed to them to offer a mandate for contemporary changes. Thus while history no longer served theology as it had for Judah HaLevi or the sixteenth-century historians, the two disciplines were linked by both the more radical reformers like Abraham Geiger and the conservatives such as Graetz. Orthodox thinkers like S. R. Hirsch tended to avoid the subject of history altogether.

Yet Jewish Idealists ran into the same sort of difficulties which their Gentile counterparts faced. Their teleological schemes of history were highly impressive as a whole but problems arose on the level of the actual historical events which their systems subsumed. For Jewish historians, this meant coming to terms with the question of providence, for although it was not hard to point to the "spirit of history" on the level of meta-history, it became extremely difficult to identify its presence in the empirical data of history. God could be identified with Absolute Spirit, but was this reconcilable with the traditional notion of a Deity whose mighty hand and outstretched arm intervene directly, in specific human events? Or, to look explicitly at our subject, how did the workings of deity manifest themselves--if at all--in the Spanish expulsion?

As we turn to some nineteenth-century accounts of that event--composed by both Jewish and Gentile historians--it will be worthwhile to bear this question in mind. The century reflects a transition from medieval theism to modern secularism and so do the historical writings which it produced. This is especially true in those which concern the history of the Jews, a people whose past possesses a stubborn power to

resist complete secularization. The old and the new can be seen to co-exist in odd and interesting ways.

Finally, it should be noted that not all of the history written in this period was "scientific" or even professional. As one might expect, the age's infatuation with the past filtered down to the mass level, and led to the variety of popular histories, lectures, and historical fiction which are still so bountiful in our own time. Thus in addition to the highly scholarly works of "Wissenschaft," we will explore some of the popular, romantic accounts of the expulsion. Both are reflective of their age.

A. Precursors: Early General Histories of the Jews

1. Jacques Christian Basnage

The first modern general history of the Jewish people was not written by a Jew, but by a Gentile, Jacques Christian Basnage, in the early eighteenth century. Born in Rouen, France in 1653, Basnage became a Huguenot minister and took refuge from religious persecution in Rotterdam and the Hague. His five volume work, L'histore et la religion des Juifs depuis Jesus Christ jusqu'a present appeared between 1706 and 1711, and a partial English translation was published in 1708. Basnage knew little Hebrew, and relied largely upon Latin translations of Jewish texts. He did little or no real archival research, and assumed that ultimately all the Jews would be converted to Christendom. Nonetheless,

despite all these weaknesses, his work was the first of its time, and it remained the basis of many later histories, by Jews as well as Gentiles.[10]

In the few paragraphs which Basnage devotes to the Spanish expulsion, he describes Ferdinand and Isabella as the "Accomplishers" of the event, which follows naturally on the heels of the successful conclusion of the Reconquista. But unlike the majority of sixteenth-century Jewish chroniclers, Basnage denies that the Catholic monarchs were motivated by religious fanaticism. This French Huguenot had firsthand experience of persecution under a Catholic realm, yet he insists that the Spanish king and queen were moved by ambition rather than zeal for the church. His depiction of their decision to expel the Jews is decidedly Machiavellian:

> Religion seem'd only a Veil to cover the conduct of Ferdinand, who was infinitely Ambitious . . . . Ferdinand and Isabella thought to buy off their sins by this useful sacrifice to the Church. They computed the Wealth which this Dessertion would give 'em, which did not prove so considerable as they were made to believe. They imagin'd they should open a vast and spacious Career for the Praises of a flattering clergy; and they were not mistaken in this last particular.[11]

This account does not deny the existence of religious fanaticism in Spain. Basnage recognizes that Catholic zealousness for the faith impelled the clergy to urge the monarchs to rid the land of Jews as well as Moors. This is particularly true of Torquemada, who the historian dubs the "soul of the persecution." When Ferdinand and Isabella feign a similar sort of piety in their expulsion edict, it is in order to win over the ecclesiastics and fill the royal treasury with Jewish wealth.

Basnage shows a sophisticated sense of political intrigue here, perhaps attributing to the Catholic monarchs the guile of ambitious sovereigns he has witnessed in his own more secular time.

For all their cunning, however, Basnage believes that Ferdinand and Isabella committed a political blunder when they expelled their Jews. He admits that it is inconceivable to him how such a masterful ruler as Ferdinand could have erred so greatly, for ". . . he run [sic] the risk of a Rebellion, since eight hundred thousand people, driven to Despair, were capable of making a dangerous Insurrection."[12]

In raising the possibility that Ferdinand and Isabella risked civil war, Basnage's account differs sharply from those of earlier writers such as Usque, Ha-Kohen, Capsali, and Abrabanel. For such writers, martyrdom had long been established as the Jewish ideal, and the very possibility that the entire Jewish population of Spain would rise up in armed rebellion against their persecutors would have been dismissed as absurd. They might have criticized Ferdinand for many things, but certainly not for failing to adequately consider the possibility of an insurrection.

By the eighteenth century, however, European society had become accustomed to civil war. Battles had been fought out over the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, and Cromwell had established his commonwealth in England. Basnage projected the influence of his own environment back into the Jewish past, naturally assuming that eight hundred thousand Jews (an exceedingly high estimate, taken from Mariana's history of Spain) posed a major military threat to the Spanish nation.

The fact that such an action would have completely contradicted the medieval Jewish mindset fashioned by centuries in galut never occurred to him. But here Basnage was not alone. In the following two hundred years, quite a few historians would raise the issue of a Jewish insurrection in Spain at the time of the expulsion.

2. Hannah Adams

Born in Boston in 1755, Hannah Adams was the first American and the first woman to write a history of the Jews. Her History of the Jews from the Destruction of Jerusalem to the Present Time, first published in 1812, is generally sympathetic to their suffering but her attitude toward them is ultimately conversionist; in her preface she proclaims their uniqueness as an enduring people without a state, then adds that their history is most interesting when considered as a "standing monument of the truth of the Christian religion." Her chapter on the decline of Spanish Jewry is taken almost entirely from Basnage, whom she acknowledges as her principal authority. This is, perhaps, an understatement: Adams did no archival work at all and she uses very few other secondary sources.[13]

It is not surprising, then, when she follows Basnage and attributes the expulsion primarily to Ferdinand's greed. After noting that the Catholic monarchs issued the edict jointly after the fall of Granada, she goes on to focus on the king's role. Here, too, her explanation is similar to Basnage's. She implies that Ferdinand was above all else

motivated by the desire to expropriate the wealth of the departing Jewish exiles, and she adds that he did not succeed in acquiring as much as he had hoped to obtain.[14]

There are, however, two differences between her view of the expulsion and that of her French predecessor. First, she makes no mention of Basnage's claim that in expelling the Jews, Ferdinand and Isabella risked civil war. Her discussion of the edict's consequences is extremely brief: she merely asserts, "The Spanish nobility complained that their cities and towns were disinhabited." This bit of displeasure among nobles which she described is a far cry from the danger which Basnage refers to when he speaks of the threat of a Jewish insurrection.[15]

The second divergence between the two accounts is over their views on Ferdinand's attitude toward his religion. Basnage considers the king's religiosity a clever facade, which he masterfully used to gain the support of the Church and mask his true avaricious intentions. While Adams agrees that Ferdinand was first and foremost a creature of rapacity, she does not go so far as to say that his religiosity was nothing more than a Machiavellian cloak to cover his conduct. Instead, she writes, "The tyrannical manner, in which the bigotry and avarice of King Ferdinand had induced him to treat the Jews, was highly condemned by all judicious Christians."[16] In referring to him as a bigot, Adams at least leaves open the possibility that he was partly moved by a misguided, fanatical sort of faith which he nonetheless sincerely believed in. If this was the case, however, Ferdinand's wrongdoing

would still not be diminished in her eyes. She, too, was a "judicious Christian" who was strongly critical of the cruel nature of his policy, even if it was conducted in the Church's name. In short, Basnage claims the king's deeds provide the evidence that he was not a truly religious man at heart. Adams simply states that in addition to his greediness, he was a bigot. Whether this means that he acted out of what she considers to be a skewed version of Christianity or instead implies he disregarded religion completely, she does not say. Perhaps she thinks he believed in a harsh, over zealous sort of Catholicism, perhaps she thinks he did not believe at all. Hannah Adams's account is unclear on this issue; maybe she herself simply did not know.

3. Henry Hart Milman

The third popular history of the Jews written by a Gentile was that of the English clergyman Henry Hart Milman. Born in 1791, this Oxford-educated pastor wrote poetry, essays, and drama, including a dramatic poem called "The Fall of Jerusalem" about the clash between traditional Jewish communal values and new truth. He also edited Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire and in 1849 became the dean of St. Paul's Cathedral. He had a reputation as a liberal, tolerant cleric, which is evident in the stance against fanaticism which permeates much of his work.[17]

His most famous book was his History of the Jews, published in 1830. It is largely based on Basnage's history, but he also cites the

writings of Abrabanel, Ibn Verga, ha-Kohen and the German-Jewish historian I. M. Jost, whom he considers to be "usually reliable."

In this book, Milman is highly critical of the decision to expel the Jews, and blames it on the religious intolerance of the Catholic clergy and the populace, who were all too ready to obey their spiritual leaders. But he does not single out Spain as a special case of over zealousness for the faith. He is aware of the antisemitic history of the rest of Western Europe, and sees the expulsion in its broader context. Thus he notes that ". . . two centuries after their expulsion from England, one after that from France--Spain, disdaining to be outdone in religious persecution, made up the long arrears of her dormant intolerance, and asserted again her evil pre-eminence in bigotry."[18]

Despite the constant urgings of the fanatic clergy, Milman holds Ferdinand and Isabella responsible for the final decree, which he condemns as both evil and impolitic. He claims that in the wake of their victory at Granada, the Catholic monarchs decided to heed the words of the churchmen and rid Spain of the last of its non-Catholic residents (here Milman seems to forget about the Moors, who were not expelled until 1610). Ferdinand pondered the option, hesitated, then agreed, eyeing it as primarily a political move. But Isabella was even more reluctant, assenting to the policy only when she became convinced that it was a proper act of religious piety. Milman's description of the queen is very interesting:

> Isabella was endowed with every virtue save that of humanity to those of another creed. And even the want of that (no doubt deemed by her subjects, perhaps by herself, to be her crowning excellence)

> was mitigated by her natural womanly benignity. Ferdinand, therefore, hesitated from worldly wisdom; Isabella from gentleness of heart.[19]

What is the source of this portrait of Isabella? It is not found in Basnage, and it certainly does not appear in any of the sixteenth-century works of Jewish historiography cited by the author. Indeed, Isabella is usually portrayed as the arch-villain in those accounts, akin to the utterly evil Jezebel. There is no basis for such a positive characterization of the queen in Jost's history either.

If this sort of idealization of Isabella occurred only once or twice, in Milman's book and perhaps one other account, it would be easy to dismiss it as an anomalous bit of writing. This, however, is not the case. As we shall see, it is this portrayal of the queen as a gentle, lovely woman which dominates the work of nineteenth-century historians, particularly those of English and American descent. This shift could be due to the discovery of new source materials which point to the queen's tender nature. While I did not find any reference to such sources, this does not mean much, since they would almost certainly be in Spanish and therefore inaccessible to me. Even the existence of such sources, however, would not completely solve the problem. To begin with, none of the twentieth-century accounts of the expulsion (which are the subject of the next chapter) espouse this idealized view of Isabella, even though their authors presumably had access to the relevant materials. Furthermore, the intensity of the nineteenth-century writers' defense of Isabella--indeed, their praise for her--seems to me to reflect something more than access to previously-unexamined sources. I therefore believe

that the phenomenon should be examined in light of environmental influences on the historians.

Once we make this assumption, a primary reason for the idealization of the queen becomes quite clear: it is a product of the prevailing image of women in Victorian society. Throughout the nineteenth century, the English sustained a notion of the "perfect lady" as sexually innocent, totally dependent, and increasingly devoted to home and family. She was taught to be submissive to authority and to nurture her material instincts.[20]

Yet if women were viewed as weaker than men, they were also seen as purer, and morally superior. Women were idealized as almost entirely spiritual beings. They were, in short, put on a pedestal. Eliza Linton enumerated the distinctive characterization of male and female virtues in The Girl of the Period:

> She [the ideal woman] has taken it to heart that patience, self-sacrifice, tenderness, quietness, with some others, of which modesty is one, are the virtues more especially feminine; just as courage, justice, fortitude, and the like, belong to men.
>
> Passionate ambition, virile energy, the love of strong excitement, self-assertion, fierceness, an undisciplined temper, are all qualities which detract from her ideal of womanliness, and which make her less beautiful than she was meant to be.[21]

In America, the parallel to this idealization of the "perfect lady" was what Barbara Welter has called the "Cult of True Womanhood." It offered essentially the same portrait of the woman as a pious, pure, and domestic creature high upon a pedestal.[22]

Part of the ideal woman's role was to promote religion. As the more "spiritual" sex, women were expected to bring pious faith into the

naughtier world of their men. Religion also served to encourage their domesticity. Therefore a woman could commit no greater sin than irreligion.[23]

To be a "true woman" meant to be submissive, consenting to all of a husband's desires. As Caroline Gilman urged young brides, "reverence his wishes even when you do not his opinions."[24] Only then could women find real satisfaction, which consisted of a cheerful home, happy family, and a pure and humble heart.

Viewed within the context of this cultural phenomenon, Milman's description of Queen Isabella makes perfect sense, as will other similar accounts in later histories. The historic Isabella is transfigured into the Victorian "perfect lady" or "true woman." She is pious, sensitive, and caring enough to resist the clergy's cries to expel the Jews. But when her husband becomes firm in his resolve to carry out this action, she submits to his decree, especially when the matter is presented to her in a religious light. If she must have a flaw, then it is her over zealousness in religious matters, which is not really much of a fault in an age which held religion to be the woman's proper domain.

This image of Isabella became so prevalent that it infused the historical writings of both Jews and Gentiles, Americans and Englishmen. In fact, it even became a feature of some Spanish accounts of the expulsion. It is to these works from the Iberian peninsula that we now turn our attention.

B. Spanish Historians

Spanish Catholic writers have always expressed an interest in their country's expulsion of its Jews, and have written accounts of it in national chronicles, works on the Inquisition, and even histories of Spain's Jewish communities. Unfortunately, my discussion will be limited to those few writings which have been rendered into English translations. Therefore, important books by Andreas Bernaldez (late sixteenth century) and Jose Amador de los Rios (nineteenth century) remain outside the realm of my consideration. There are, however, three nineteenth-century Spanish historians whose works are available in English, and whose varying interpretations of the expulsion give some indication of the spectrum of meanings attributed to this event by Spaniards, ranging from reformist to reactionary. They are Juan Antonio Llorente, Adolfo de Castro y Ruiz, and Manuel Perez Villamil.

1. Juan Antonio Llorente

Born in Castile in 1756, Juan Antonio Llorente proved to be a brilliant student, and was ordained as a priest in 1779. He quickly rose through the ranks of the church, and in 1789 he was named Secretary-General of the Inquisition of Madrid, a post he held for three years. During his tenure in Madrid, he learned a great deal about the history of the institution which he served.[25]

His experience made him a fierce opponent of the Inquisition, and put him in the vanguard of the enlightened, reformist wing of the Spanish clergy. Thus in 1808 he supported Joseph Bonaparte, believing that only the Frenchman could successfully dismantle the tribunals. Joseph did indeed disband the Inquisition, and he put Llorente in charge of sifting through the newly defunct institution's massive archives. The fruit of his labor was Histoire critique de l'Inquisition d' Espagne, published in four volumes from 1817-1818 and in an English translation in 1823. It was also rendered into a Spanish version, which received a large readership in Llorente's native land.[26]

In this book, the liberal priest Llorente criticizes the decision to expel the Jews. He places most of the blame for it on the shoulders of his fanatic predecessor as chief of the tribunal, Tomas Torquemada. He claims the Catholic monarchs were ambivalent about the expulsion edict, and even inclined toward revoking it in exchange for a large bribe offered by Jewish statesmen until Torquemada burst into the royal court, threw a crucifix upon the table in front of the sovereigns and exclaimed, "Judas sold the Savior for thirty pieces of silver. Do you now sell him for 300,000?"[27]

Llorente does not cite the source for this story. It is often quoted in nineteenth-century accounts, but is also found in works as old as the first chronicle published by Alexander Marx in the Jewish Quarterly Review. Another Spanish historian, Adolfo de Castro y Ruiz refers to two early Latin works which record this dramatic scene: Posevino's Apparatus Sacer, and Luis de Paramo's De Sancta

Inquisitione.[28] Yet for all these citations, it is quite likely that this is an apocryphal tale, or at least an exaggeration of an actual historic event which grew to mythic proportions when it spread among the populace as a bit of folk literature.

Whatever the source of the story, Llorente offers it as an example of Torquemada's fanatic posture. As a reform-minded clergyman and life-long enemy of the tribunal's excesses, he must have met up with several latter-day Torquemadas. It is not surprising, then, that Llorente condemns the Dominican as the primary villain in the saga of the Jews' forced exit from Spain. He is, however, wise enough to recognize that even Torquemada could not have accomplished his goal without the support of the king and queen. In Llorente's final assessment, they share a large portion of the culpability:

> These cruelties [the suffering of the exiles] can only be attributed to the fanaticism of Torquemada, to the avarice and superstition of Ferdinand, and to the inconsiderate zeal of Isabella, who, nevertheless, possessed great gentleness of character and an enlightened mind.[29]

Yet if both monarchs bear some responsibility for the expulsion, it is important to note the differences in degree and motivation. Llorente's description of Isabella jibes fully with the idealization of women which we have seen in the context of Milman's depiction. Her slight fault of religious intolerance pales in comparison with her great sensitivity and enlightenment. Overall, she comes off as a highly admirable character, in stark contrast to Ferdinand, who is again the crafty ruler cloaking himself in a veil of religion in order to expedite the filling of his coffers. The trend seems to be clear: in an age in

which the queen, as a woman, was idealized, the king was viewed in increasingly Machiavellian terms.

2. Adolfo de Castro y Ruiz

A member of the Academia de la Historia of Madrid, Adolfo de Castro y Ruiz was the first Spaniard to compose a history of the Jews in Spain. Like Llorente, he was a liberal reformer, who strongly condemned religious intolerance of any kind. His Historia de los Judios en Espãna (Cadiz, 1847; English translation, 1851) reflects careful study and a generally favorable attitude toward the Jews; in fact Castro worried that its impartiality would lead his readers to suspect his own origins, so he wrote in his preface, "I write this history dispassionately and impartially-- passion and partially belong not to me. I neither am a Jew nor a descendent from Judaizers. My sole aim is to stand up for the truth. . . ."[30]

Actually, Castro is not nearly so dispassionate as he claims to be--he is merely passionate on behalf of rationalism and enlightenment rather than the zealous Catholicism of many of his countrymen. He exalts reason as the crowning glory of humanity and lashes out against his fellow historians who defend the expulsion edict as an act of faith. He also insists that those who deny the importance of Jewish contributions to Spanish medicine, philosophy, and mathematics blatantly ignore the truth. Needless to say, he dismisses charges of ritual murder and host-desecration as contemptible fictions.

Despite all of his rationalism, Castro follows the Romantic tendency to idealize Isabella. Like Milman and Llorente, he describes her as a perfect lady, ". . . an illustrious matron, worthy to have lived in an age in which barbarous fanaticism--that secret foe to God, to the cultivation of the intellects, and to the happiness of mankind, did not influence the greater part of the human race."[31] She agrees to sign the expulsion edict only after she is pressed by her husband and the intolerant Torquemada-- thereby acting in accordance with the demand that women be, above all else, submissive.

The Dominican chief inquisitor bears some of the blame for the expulsion, and Castro includes the story in which he bursts upon the scene with his crucifix, urging the monarchs to stand behind the edict. Nonetheless, in Castro's account, the true antagonist is Ferdinand. Even more than Basnage and Llorente, he depicts the king as an avaricious ruler who masterfully threw a mask of Christian religiosity over his personal ambition, ". . . deceiving by these means a large portion of the human race." He mocks those Spanish historians who believe that Ferdinand acted out of Catholic zeal, time and again insisting that the king had absolutely no concern for the religious unity of Spain.[32]

According to Castro, Ferdinand expelled the Jews from his realm for only one reason: to avoid repaying his war debts. Thus he summarizes the events leading up to the expulsion:

> As soon as the sovereigns gained possession of this city [Granada] . . . they found themselves under the necessity of paying their debts to their Jewish creditors, as they had promised to do; but, owing to the exhausted state of their treasury, they were unable to fulfill their word . . . and while they were in this dilemma,

> Ferdinand the Fifth, as the best plan he could think of to get rid of the debt, issued a decree, on the 31st of March, 1492, that all the Jews who had dwelt in the vicinity of the Aljamas of his kingdom, should turn Christians within the space of four months, or be banished from it.[33]

Given the insistence of both Llorente and Castro that Ferdinand acted out of avarice or economic desperation, one might wonder whether their views fit into a general pattern. Are there identifiable factors which propelled Spanish liberals to ascribe such motives to the king? Although it is difficult to speculate on the basis of only two accounts, it seems to me quite possible that such reformers believed that to grant that Ferdinand acted out of true religious belief--however over zealous--would be to make a concession to Spanish reactionaries and conservatives. Such right-wing thinkers tended to defend the monarch's action as a true and justifiable act of faith; left-wing reformers may have sought to distance themselves from such a view as much as possible by stressing a materialistic motivation for the royal decree. This hypothesis becomes clearer in the light of an example of the conservative line--the work of Manuel Perez Villamil.

3. Manuel Perez Villamil

Like Adolfo de Castro, Manuel Perez Villamil was a member of the Royal Academy of History in Madrid. Unlike his predecessor, however, Villamil was no advocate of religious reform and enlightened policies toward the Jews. In an article written for Catholic World (a publication of the Paulist Fathers of America) entitled "Expulsion of the Jews from Spain in the Fifteenth Century," he defends the expulsion

as a just, meritorious act. The essay, which was published on the four-hundredth anniversary of the edict's promulgation (1892), propagates blatantly antisemitic stereotypes in its effort to defend the actions of the author's beloved Catholic monarchs.

Villamil's strong anti-Jewish bias is evident from the beginning, where he states, "We are about to witness the ruin and annihilation of the Hebrew population in Spain, brought about by their own vices and errors."[34] The work is, like many antisemitic tracts, blatantly self-contradictory, as its author sacrifices scholarship for polemics. On the one hand, he describes the power and prosperity of the covertly Jewish conversos and their unconverted brethren as a source of envy among Spanish Catholics. He accuses the Jews of aspiring to dominate even the monarchs and insists they made their fortunes through usury and deception. Yet within these same pages he maintains that by the time of the expulsion, few learned men or powerful capitalists remained among the Jewish community. Villamil criticizes those historians who condemn the expulsion as a fatal drain on Spanish population, capital, and other resources which only the Jews could provide. Thus he asserts, "The Jewish population of Spain, which at the close of the fifteenth century, came under the decree of the Catholic sovereigns was scanty, of very humble social condition, and of trifling or no influence on Spanish culture."[35] Like those antisemites who claim that Jews are both the capitalists who control the world and the revolutionaries seeking to overthrow it, Villamil seems completely unaware of the absurd contradictions in his thesis.

Villamil also accepts stories of Jews desecrating the host and murdering Christian children for their blood, claiming that the truth of such incidents has been well established by history. These alleged atrocities added to the mounting pressure to expel the Jews. He believes the final incentive to take this action did not come, however, until the king got word of a Jewish conspiracy which threatened Spain's national security.[36]

Here Villamil refers to what he claims was a concerted effort of Iberian Jews to purchase Gibraltar from the Spanish crown. He ponders the motivation for such a transaction (which the monarchs refused to approve) and determines that ". . . the proposition of the Hebrews was made with the connivance of the African Mohemmedan princes, with a view to recover possession of Spain."[37]

This charge echoes the classical antisemitic accusations of Jewish plots and conspiracies. Needless to say, there is absolutely no historical evidence for such inflammatory claims. But this is consistent with the entire tenor of Villamil's article. For a recognized historian, he is extraordinarily loose with the facts, distorting some and ignoring others in order to attack the Jews and defend the Catholic sovereigns. His work still serves to point up the danger inherent in the view that history is, and should be largely the creation of the historian. While the enormous latitude among the various accounts of the expulsion may rightly lead to a skepticism over the possibility of obtaining a single "objective" record of events as they really happened, Villamil's essay should dissuade us from taking

the position that all accounts are subjective and therefore equally valid. I do not know of any universally-applicable criteria that enable us to make infallible distinctions between legitimate and spurious claims about the past. Nonetheless, I believe that some descriptions of past events deserve to be firmly dismissed. Here I believe that the nature of the claim and the author's intent are vital. If he/she is clearly and consciously manipulating history in order to fulfill their own ideological whim, then I believe that their views do not generally merit serious consideration. This is particularly true if their intentions are hateful and malicious. I am, admittedly, turning to psychological/sociological more than historical or philosophical criteria here, when I insist that we reject as invalid those accounts which, in the face of all reason, still espouse inflammatory claims that would deny the rights and welfare of those otherwise considered to be innocent people. Villamil, for example, asserts that the Jews crucified Christian children. He condemns the entire people for this crime, yet he fails to prove that even a single Jew ever committed such an act. His persistence in making this claim without anything of substance with which to back it and our knowledge of the motivations behind other blood libel cases lead us to believe that this part of his history serves primarily as a platform for his antisemitism. The dramatic harmful ramifications of this sort of accusation should put the burden of proof on the accuser, in this case Villamil. Unless there is incontrovertible evidence for such positions, I believe that it is legitimate to rule that they are outside the bounds of acceptable historiography even

though they are not necessarily more false than some other, less antagonistic claims which may be considered valid, though tenuous. In other words, an account's validity may be based on its potential for bringing harm and its author's desire to do so as much or more than its "truth," which may or may not be determinable.

C. Non-Jewish English and American Historians

When liberal Spanish Catholics like Llorente and Castro condemned the intolerance of the clergy as a major cause of the expulsion, they criticized the Church from within. Both were reformers, urging a more enlightened policy. As English and American historians began to direct their attention to that same event, they, too, pointed to the fanaticism of Spanish clerics as one of its major causes. Coming from their pens, however, this constituted an external criticism--a Protestant jab at the excesses of Catholicism. In turning to their accounts now, it might be wise to bear in mind the question: How much is each writer's condemnation of the expulsion an expression of genuine indignation, and how much is it a veiled contemporary polemic against the Catholic church which merely uses its ill-treatment of the Jews as ammunition in the continuing religious skirmish between Catholics and Protestants?

1. James Finn

Born in 1806, James Finn was an English diplomat and a devoted Anglican. From 1845 to 1862, he served as British consul in Jerusalem,

where he became known as an ally of the Jews, dedicated to resettling them in Palestine and protecting them from the Ottomans. Upon his retirement, the Jewish population sent a letter of appreciation to the British government praising his work.[38]

Yet Finn was also involved in missionary work, and for all his friendliness toward the Jews, he was dedicated to achieving their ultimate conversion. While in Palestine he tried to settle some Jewish converts to Christianity in the area around Bethlehem, but the project failed. This attitude regarding the Jews--a desire to bring them into the Church through love instead of coercion--fills the pages of his book, Sephardim.[39]

Published in 1841, this book is a history of Spanish Jewry. It is based on the work of Basnage and Hebrew chronicles, including the Shevet Yehuda, Shalshelet ha-Kabbalah, and Abrabanel's commentary on the book of Kings. It is not clear from the author's citations whether he used the original texts or Latin translations. He also refers to several works in Spanish such as Mariana's history of Spain and Llorente's history of the Inquisition.

Finn's anti-Catholic bias is evident from the outset. In his preface, he claims his narrative will show that "the boasted Catholicity of Spain will not from its visible fruits demonstrate the national Christianity to be the Christianity of the New Testament."[40]

The account of the expulsion in Sephardim follows this agenda, placing the full burden of blame for the event upon the shoulders of the church hierarchy. Finn rejects the view that Ferdinand and Isabella

acted out of avarice or self-interest; in fact he says very little about the character of either of the two monarchs. He insists they merely conceded to the interests of the powerful Spanish priesthood: "The Inquisition prevailed on the two sovereigns to sweep out from the Spanish territory the whole profession of Jewish faith, regardless of the national interest and heedless of the ruin to be incurred by countless families, possessing loves and attachments which Romish ecclesiastics cannot value."[41]

Finn continues his analysis of the expulsion with a brief discussion of what might have happened had the Jews chosen to resist the edict rather than accept it passively. This paragraph is probably inspired by Basnage's claim that in deciding to expel the Jews, Ferdinand ran the risk of possibly provoking a civil war. Unlike the French Huguenot, however, Finn is fairly realistic in his assessment of the Jews' chances of success in such a conflict. He, too, fails to understand the mindset of medieval Jewry when he takes the possibility of a full-scale insurrection seriously, but at least he is not deluded enough to believe a rebellion could have succeeded against the powerful forces of Christian Spain. Thus he concludes that although the threat of war might have made Ferdinand pause briefly before issuing the edict, ". . . there is no doubt of his eventual success, aided by allies, had such extremities arrived."[42]

Throughout this account, Finn appears genuinely sympathetic to the Jewish plight. He describes the sufferings of the exiles, and seems to empathize with their pain. On almost every page he rebukes the Church

for its malicious role in the expulsion of these poor refugees. Yet though he may truly object to such mistreatment as cruel and inhumane, Finn also reveals an ulterior motive that underlies his apparent humanism. He is just as eager to convert the Jews as Torquemada and the Catholic clerics whom he despises; he differs from them only in respect to the proper method by which to bring Jews into the true faith, and in his insistence that that faith is Anglicanism rather than Catholicism. Therefore when he assesses the evils of the expulsion and the Inquisition, he asserts:

> . . . The Romish Church has done its utmost in this cause [converting the Jews] and no more will she ever perform till her corruptions are cast "to the moles and to the bats," and the Jews shall see a Catholic Christianity without idols or saint-worship. . . . We trust that better days are now dawning . . . that by advancing liberality and open friendliness, together with diffusion of Christian literature suited for the purpose, all under God's especial blessing; Israel may yet be gathered, not in crowds by violence, but by progressive inroads of Scripture and its Holy Author, and so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written.[43]

For all of his condemnation, it is clear from this that Finn's account of the expulsion edict calls into question only its procedure and not what he considers to have been its ultimate goal. He is not the only English historian of his century to hold such a view; a similar vantage point is evident in the writing of William Harris Rule.

2. William Harris Rule

William Harris Rule was born in 1802. Raised as an Anglican, he became a Methodist in 1822 and was ordained as a Wesleyan preacher in

1826. He was well-versed in classical literature, and studied both Arabic and Italian while doing missionary work in Malta. Between 1831 and 1842 he served as a pastor in Gibraltar, where he preached in both English and Spanish. Afterwards he returned to England, where he continued to do ministerial duty, and turned his hand to writing scholarly works.[44]

The most famous of these was his History of the Inquisition from the Twelfth Century, published in 1868. Among the sources he consulted in writing this book he cites the Spanish histories of Llorente and Andreas Bernaldez, and E. H. Lindo's History of the Jews of Spain and Portugal (1848), the first modern full-length treatment of the subject by a Jew.

Rule devotes only a few pages to the expulsion, but his analysis of its causes is quite interesting, combining the positions of Castro and Finn. Like the former, he portrays King Ferdinand as a greedy ruler who is eager to expel the Jews in order to avoid repaying the war debts which he owes them. Like the latter, he points to the ill-advised fanaticism of Torquemada and the Catholic clergy as a primary factor in the Jews' demise. When these two interests converged, the Jewish fate was sealed: "The zeal of the Inquisitor and the dishonesty of the king most opportunely harmonized; and it only remained for them to contrive some scheme whereby both passions might be satisfied. Such a scheme could be had by wishing."[45] Isabella is not even mentioned in connection with these events, perhaps because the author does not wish to besmirch her womanly reputation.

Up until this point, the narrative has fairly well lived up to the writer's promise in his preface to present a dispassionate and objective account of events. When Rule summarizes the contents of the expulsion edict this ceases to be the case. In the text itself, he is quite succinct, noting that Jews were given a choice of exile or apostasy. His bias comes through, however, in a footnote, wherein he comments on the use of the term "apostasy":

> If Romanism were Christianity, and not idolatry, and if the transition to it from the synagogue were voluntary, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, that change would be conversion, causing joy in the presence of the angels of God. But in the contrary case before us, the renunciation of Judaism would deserve no better name than that given to it in the text.[46]

From this telling note, it is evident that Rule shares Finn's anti-Catholicism and his desire to convert the Jews through gentle persuasion rather than coercion. These beliefs shaped both men's views of the expulsion, causing them to condemn it not so much out of love for the Jews as out of disgust over the cruelty and ineffectiveness of the Spanish policy. This outlook was probably popular in England, where the national sentiment had been solidly in opposition to Catholicism since the formation of the Anglican church. In America, however, the greater allowance for religious freedom provided the background for William Hickling Prescott's more ecumenical account.

3. William Hickling Prescott

The first world-renowned American historian, William Prescott, was born in Salem, Massachusetts in 1796. Educated at Harvard, he made his

decision to study history after an accident which left him partially blind turned him away from his original interest in practicing law. As an historian, he showed little interest in the sort of Idealist philosophy which his colleagues in Germany at the time espoused; his books are primarily narratives of events, but he was scrupulous in his efforts to distinguish fact from fiction. His references are both plentiful and accurate.[47]

His first book, which merits our concern here, was History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic, published in 1838. Based on sixteenth-century Spanish manuscripts, as well as the histories of Llorente, Bernaldez, and Mariana, it contains a chapter on the expulsion which avoids the stridently anti-Catholic tone of Finn and Rule. Like those writers, he condemns the Church's policy, but his criticism stems from a general disapproval of religious intolerance rather than partisan polemics.

The chapter opens with a discussion of the sources of animosity toward the Jews in late fifteenth-century Spain. It bears a strong resemblance to the Shevet Yehudah. Like Ibn Verga, Prescott points to envy over Jewish wealth, furor over intermarriages between Old Christians and conversos, and the incendiary preaching of fanatical priests as the roots of discontent. Because the Jews were commonly regarded as aliens in Spanish society, it was not difficult to gain popular support for the decision to expel them.[48]

The final impetus for this decision came in the wake of the Spanish victory at Granada. This success filled both monarchs with the desire to finish the task of purifying Spain and uniting all of her people

under the banner of the Catholic church. Prescott criticizes those historians who attribute the expulsion of the Jews to the avarice of the government. He insists that the act detracted from the revenues of the Crown, depriving Spain of its most productive class of citizens. Therefore it can only be understood as an expression of religious bigotry similar to earlier expulsions from England, France, and other parts of Europe.[49]

While the king and queen proved willing enough to conduct their policy in accord with this prevailing spirit, Prescott asserts that the primary impulse came from Torquemada. He maintains that the monarchs must have been somewhat reluctant to issue an edict which they knew to be in conflict with the national interest. Thus he writes:

> Neither Ferdinand nor Isabella, had they been left to the unbiased dictates of their own reason, could have sanctioned for a moment so impolitic a measure, which involved the loss of the most industrious and skillful portion of their subjects. Its extreme injustice and cruelty rendered it especially repugnant to the naturally humane disposition of the queen. But she had been early schooled to distrust her own reason, and indeed the natural suggestions of humanity, in cases of conscience. Among the revered counsellors, on whom she relied most in these matters was the Dominican Torquemada. . . . Without further resistance to the representations, so emphatically expressed, of the holy persons in whom she most confided, Isabella, at length, silenced her own scruples, and consented to the fatal measure of proscription.[50]

This narrative, like most of Prescott's work, expresses the spirit of the Enlightenment much more than that of the Romantic movement which was gathering force in Europe at the time. The contrast which the author draws between the virtues of unbiased reason and the vices of intolerant religion echoes the outlook of eighteenth-century deism. Like the deists, Prescott condemns irrational faith as a source of

discord and inhumanity, and professes a universal religion of reason. Ferdinand and Isabella err in his account when they abandon their rationalist tendencies and succumb to the fanaticism of Tomas Torquemada.

Perhaps Prescott's position here is the result of his training at early nineteenth-century Harvard. While the Romantic backlash to the Aufklärung had already begun in Germany in the wake of the Napoleonic wars, life in Madisonian America still reflected the older ideals of the Enlightenment. Social and intellectual trends took quite a while to reach the shores of the New World in those days before the advent of rapid communications networks. Thus when Hegel began to lecture to German university students on the history of the Spirit, young Americans like William Prescott continued to be schooled in the older rationalist tradition.

Prescott's analysis of the expulsion does, however, share one important feature with the works of his European counterparts: the idealization of Queen Isabella. By the time of his book's publication in 1838, the Cult of True Womanhood had firmly taken root in American culture. As a result, Prescott's Isabella is the embodiment of womanly virtue: pious and humane, she is also properly submissive, surrendering her own judgment to the will of powerful men like Torquemada. In the end, "her solicitude to discharge her duty, at whatever cost of personal inclination, greatly enforced the precepts of education. In this way, her very virtues became the source of her errors."[51]

The idealization of Isabella, speculation over the possibility of an insurrection by the exiles, and polemics directed at either traditional religion in general (Prescott and the Spanish reformers) or the Catholic church (Finn and Rule) all demonstrate the influence of the environment upon those non-Jews of the nineteenth century who wrote about the expulsion. Their histories reflect the conflicts and culture of their own time and place as much as the "objective facts" culled from primary source materials. Like their subjects, these historians do not stand outside of history. They, too, are swayed by the Zeitgeist, which manifests itself subtly but surely in their work. Salo Baron recognized the obvious truth of this when he declared, "Every generation writes its own history of past generations."[52]

We turn now to those explanations of the expulsion proffered by Jewish scholars and historians of the nineteenth century. They were also children of their age. We shall attempt to trace its influence as we examine their accounts, comparing them with those of both the sixteenth-century Jewish chroniclers who preceded them and their contemporary Gentile counterparts. We begin with works from the cradle of modern Jewish historiography--Germany.

D. Early Nineteenth-Century German-Jewish Historians

It is not surprising that the first efflorescence of Jewish historiography since the late sixteenth century began in Germany. German universities stood in the vanguard of the intellectual world of nineteenth-century Europe, especially in the relevant fields of history

and philosophy. Men like Fichte and Hegel had a profound effect on Germany's rising young scholars, Jew and non-Jew alike. The spirit of history was in the air.

German Jews were also among the first to be emancipated from the policies of medieval Europe which isolated the Jewish population from the Christian mainstream. As they emerged from the ghetto, Jews scurried to secure a position in the modern German world. They adopted and adapted many of its cultural mores and ideas. Among the most important of these was the idea of history. Thus it was that "enlightened" Jews like Shalom Cohen, I. M. Jost, and Phoebus Philippson turned to the Jewish past and considered, among other things, the causes of the Spanish expulsion.

1. Shalom Cohen

The Hebrew writer, poet, and editor Shalom Cohen was born in Mezhirech, Poland in 1772. Early in his youth he fell under the influence of the haskalah, and began to study German and Hebrew literature. In 1789 he moved to Berlin, where he eventually secured a job as a school teacher. Twenty years later he helped revive the Hebrew journal of the Maskilim, Ha-Measef. He edited this publication from 1809 to 1811, leading it away from the radical bent which it had taken in the 1790s. Cohen's conservatism is evident in his insistence that the journal return to its more traditional roots.[53]

Yet Cohen was no reactionary traditionalist. Like his model, Moses Mendelssohn, he ardently believed in enlightenment, differing only with

the master's more radical disciples like David Friedlander in regard to the movement's limits. The combination of the old and the new which he advocated is quite evident in his article, "גרוש ספרד" which appears in the pages of Ha-Measef in 1809.

This account is clearly written for a popular audience rather than a scholarly one. It assumes practically no prior knowledge of Iberian Jewish history, and the Hebrew is full of לועזית . He does, however, want to offer some new insights. He claims that many people know the general story of the expulsion, but few are familiar with the details. Therefore he promises to elaborate upon the causes of the event.[54]

The preface also takes a modern-sounding posture of universalism and tolerance which is atypical of all previous accounts, save that of the Shevet Yehudah with its story of the two precious stones. Cohen expresses the Enlightenment's spirit of tolerance when he proclaims the time has come for all the people of Spain to open their eyes and see that we are all children of one father, the living God of all humanity.[55]

In the body of his article, Cohen describes some of the long-standing sources of prejudice against the Jews. He argues that the Christians persecuted Jews primarily out of anger fostered by the ancient charge of deicide and envy of Jewish wealth. This analysis also echoes Ibn Verga's work, but Cohen is considerably less critical of his people than his sixteenth-century counterpart. In speaking of the

enmity roused by Jewish fortunes, he makes no reference to usurious practices or ostentatiousness.[56]

Cohen believes that envy and old religious prejudices turned the Spanish populace against the Jews. This was a necessary prerequisite for their ouster. That act, however, could only have been taken by the reigning monarchs,who had their own reasons for expelling the Jewish people from their realm. In describing the events which led to the expulsion edict, Cohen focuses on the role of the Catholic sovereigns:

ויהי באשר הוכן המלך לעלות למלחמה בנגד יתר פליטת עם מוירען, ותסיתהו אישתו אשתו לנדור נדר להשמיד כל היהודים מארצו או להכריחם לקבל אמונת ישי ואז יצלח ואז ישכיל. ובכלות המלחמה, ואנשי שפאניא הכו והחריסו כל שריד מהמוירען אז בלו המלך והמלכה את מחשבתם הרעה, ונזרו על כל היהודים לעזוב את ארצם מסך ארבעה חדשים מיום צאת המקודה (בחודש מערץ 1492 למספרם, או חדש ה' רנ"ב) [57]

As the king prepared to go up to war against the remainder of the Moorish people, Isabella his wife persuaded him to make a vow to eliminate all the Jews in his land, or force them to accept the faith of Jesus, so that he would succeed [in the war] and do wisely. After the war, in which the Spanish struck and destroyed all the remaining Moors, the king and queen brought their evil plot to completion, and declared that all the Jews must leave their land within four months from the day the edict went out (March 1492 by their reckoning, the fifth month of 5252 A.M.).

This account bears a strong similarity to that of Elijah Capsali in the Seder Eliyahu Zuta, which Cohen probably used. In the latter, Isabella vows to her God, "If you will deliver this people into my hand, I will devote Israel, who dwell in my kingdom, to destruction."[58] Here it is Ferdinand who actually makes the vow to expel the Jews so that he might succeed in the final battle of the Reconquista.

Yet Isabella is hardly blameless in Cohen's narrative. He portrays her as the persuasive force behind Ferdinand's vow and as a full partner in the actual enactment of the edict once victory is achieved. She is

not the idealized Victorian woman found in the works of Milman, Castro, and Prescott; Cohen's Isabella is easily recognizable as the villain of sixteenth-century Jewish chronicles like Capsali's.

There is, however, another important difference between Cohen's and Capsali's versions of events surrounding the expulsion. In Capsali's account, the queen's vow is explicitly theistic, addressed directly to her God. Cohen's version, perhaps reflecting the more secular atmosphere of its age, is more ambiguous. It leaves open the possibility that Ferdinand's vow was religious in nature, but this is not explicitly spelled out in the narrative. Cohen states merely that the queen assured her husband that a vow would help him prevail in battle and would be a wise act.

Cohen's ambiguity here reflects his general skepticism over the historian's capacity to determine the true causes of the expulsion. While Capsali attributes the event to the religious fanaticism of monarchs and clergy (at least on the natural level, since he also sees it as an expression of providence), Cohen is not so confident about the possibility of discovering the sovereigns' motivation. He, too, maintains that Torquemada and the Spanish clerics acted out of misplaced zeal for the faith, but he admits that he is uncertain whether the king was moved by a similar religious motive or a simple love of riches which he sought to gain by expelling his Jews. Cohen offers no analysis of Isabella's inner motives either.[59]

The blend of modern and medieval tendencies which characterizes Cohen's article comes to a climax in his summary of the edict's impact.

On the one hand, he breaks with the past here, for like Basnage, Cohen insists that the expulsion edict put Spanish Christians in grave danger, almost provoking a major insurrection by the Jews. This serious assertion of Jewish military prowess reflects the nineteenth century, and not the sixteenth. None of the exiles themselves claimed to have the ability, or even the desire to "strike a death blow against their enemies." They left the vengeance to God.[60]

On the other hand, Cohen shares the medievals' belief in the power of divine providence. Indeed, he has the benefit of historical perspective which his predecessors lacked, and this points to the continuous decline of Spain as a major power in the world. Cohen views the steady fall of the Spanish empire since the expulsion as an expression of God's punishment for that evil deed. Nations who have shown favor to their Jews prosper, while Spain and others like her suffer. But it is not too late. Cohen concludes his article with a plea for Spain to reform her ways, and in so doing, once again secure God's blessing:

> אך פקח עיניך וראה כי לא יטוש ה' את עמו. עמו הוא בצרה וגן עליו בכל ארץ ומדינה ומשלם בשונאיהם עד אלף דור. הסר נא כעסך והעבר שנאה מלבך והיה באשר ינוח לך, ושב שלום ומנוחה לרחובותיך[61]

> Open your eyes, check and see, for the Lord will not abandon his people. They are his people even in time of suffering, and he protects them in every land and province, taking retribution on those who hate them until the thousandth generation. Turn aside your anger, remove the hatred from your heart, and all will be well for you, peace and comfort will return to your streets . . .

It is this stress on God's avenging presence in history which more than any other feature sets Cohen's account apart from those of the

nineteenth century Gentile historians. His reluctance to abandon a providential scheme of history reflects a trend which continues in the work of Jewish historians who followed in his footsteps. Most of them are far less explicit in their assertions of providence's influence. But upon scratching the surface of their works, we shall often find this influence buried beneath the veneer of scientific scholarship. Usually it is masked--perhaps even unconsciously--as an insistence upon the justice of history being borne out by the steady decline of Spain after the expulsion. Yet however couched in such modern terms this emphasis may be, it essentially amounts to a reformulation of the old rabbinic dictum, " מדה כנגד מדה " (measure for measure). It tacitly expresses the belief that God somehow takes vengeance on Israel's enemies, punishing them in accordance with their misdeeds. As we turn to the rest of these nineteenth-century Jewish accounts of the expulsion, we should be alert for this lingering vestige of the providential view of history, and identify how it manifests itself.

2. I. M. Jost

Isaac Marcus Jost was born in Bernberg, Germany in 1793. He was educated in a Jewish school there, until he entered the Samson Free School at the age of ten. In 1811 he began to attend the Brunswick Gymnasium, and two years later he went to Göttingen, where he studied history, philology, theology, and philosophy. It was in that city that he met the wealthy Jewish reformer Israel Jacobson, who helped support

him as a student at the University of Berlin. Upon his graduation he became an educator, working first in Berlin, and then from 1835 to his death (in 1860) as the headmaster of a liberal Jewish school in Frankfurt.[62]

Jost broke with tradition early in his lifetime, and he advocated the Wissenschaft des Judentums (the scientific study of the Jewish past) which characterized the young reformers' scholarly endeavors. In addition to his work in education, he co-edited the Hebrew periodical Zion from 1840 to 1841, and founded the Israelitische Annalen in an effort to encourage Jewish historical research.[63]

Jost is best remembered, however, as the first modern Jew to write a comprehensive history of the Jewish people, Geschichte der Israeliten seit der Zeit der Maccabaer bis auf unsere Tage (History of the Israelites from the Time of the Maccabees until Our Day). Published in nine volumes between 1820 and 1829, this was an unprecedented work. In confronting the vastness of the Jewish past, Jost got little help from predecessors. Forced to rely on Christian secondary sources and the few extent Jewish chronicles, his volumes contain many errors. Furthermore, Jost was neither a philosopher nor a religious Jew, and as a result he never found a unifying superstructure which could give shape to the whole of Jewish history and make it more than a confusing amalgam of various personalities and events.[64]

Yet for all its flaws, Jost's history was a pioneering study which set new standards and paved the way for later works of Wissenschaft. He used his philological training to examine his sources critically and

sought to present to his readers a Jewish past free of religious biases. He limited himself to the task of describing the course of natural events, shunning miracles and unjustified conjectures about the causes of things. Thus the work reflects the spirit of the Enlightenment much more than the teleological Romanticism of Jost's contemporary, G. W. F. Hegel. In fact, one of the chief criticisms of Jost's work was that its impartiality made it exceedingly dry.[65]

Jost's account of the Spanish expulsion may be found in the seventh volume of his history. He describes the edict as a sudden and unexpected blow to the Jews which came in the immediate wake of the victory at Granada. He states that it was issued on March 31, and that it ordered all those Jews who refused to convert to leave the country by July 31, 1492. He does not give the dates according to the Jewish calendar, nor does he make any reference to the expulsion's proximity to Tisha B'Av.

Jost begins his discussion of the causes of the event with the assertion that it was "justified" in various ways. The "justifications" which he goes on to cite constitute what he considers to be the underlying reasons why the Jews were expelled from Spain.

The first cause he refers to is the anti-Jewish sentiment created by the rampant rumors of host-desecration and ritual murder. Evidently most Spaniards believed these stories to be true, and therefore would have offered no resistance to an edict ousting the offending population. In the eyes of the Christians, "justice was against the Jews. . . ."[66]

The expulsion was also "justified" as an effort to separate the Jews from the New Christians. In Jost's words, "Religion confirmed this unprecedented proscription because the Jews hindered the multiplication of Christians in that they lured the apostates back."[67] Evidently Jost believed the conversos did indeed practice Judaism secretly and that the unconverted Jews aided their baptized brethren in their covert efforts to observe the mitzvot. This claim follows the reason given for the expulsion in the edict itself: after various other measures had failed, it was seen as the only way to put an end to a century of Judaizing.

Yet Jost goes on to claim that most of the clergy supported the edict for political rather than the aforementioned religious reasons. He portrays the clerics as calculating Machiavellians, eager to eliminate any threats to the Church's worldly strength and fortune. Jews and conversos were rising to the upper ranks of influence in Spain, and they paid no heed to the clergy's influence. Therefore, the latter supported the measure to oust the Jews, since after their removal, "the wielders of power would have no further support other than the ever wealthier church."[68]

Others clamored for the measure as an act of national security. Victory over the Moors had finally been achieved, but the last internal threat to Christian Spain would not be eliminated until the Jews were gone. Although the Jews were not natural allies of the Muslims, many Spaniards believed that they might link up with their Islamic counterparts still in Spain and in the remaining Berber Kingdoms. Perhaps to counter this specter of disloyalty which still hung over Jews

everywhere--and which German Jews like Jost were particularly eager to disprove in order to secure their political status--Jost asserts the Spanish Jews could easily have launched a major civil war but "refrained from any agitation or stirring up of emotions." He refers to this loyal attitude of passivity as "doubly praiseworthy," emphasizing the fact that Spanish Jews were good Spaniards--just as the German Jews of his time would, upon receiving full equality, prove to be among the most devoted of Germans.[69]

Jost concludes this section on the causes of the expulsion with a consideration of Ferdinand's motives. Interestingly, he hardly mentions Isabella's role in these events, either for good or for ill. He does claim that the king's advisors opposed the measure, but in the end the sovereign overruled them: "The vote of conscience of the pious king, finally, decided the issue against the privy council--if it is true--by his contention that he had praised the Holy One by celebrating the decisive victory over Granada with the expulsion of those Jews who would not prefer to accept the Christian religion."[70]

Unlike Basnage, Llorente, and Castro, Jost maintains the possibility that Ferdinand was genuinely pious, and that his religiosity influenced him to expel the Jews. Much of Jost's account of Ferdinand's decision is probably derived from Abrabanel's narrative in the introduction to his commentary on the book of Kings, in which the sovereign reasons, "How shall I show gratitude to my creator who set this city in my hands? Should I not bring under his wings the people that walks in darkness, the wandering lamb Israel?"[71] For Abrabanel and

perhaps for Jost (who adds the caveat "if it is true" to conjectures about Ferdinand's religious motivation), the expulsion came as a religious response to the triumph over the Moors.

Yet on the very next page, Jost recounts the story of how the king nearly accepted a bribe from the Jews and was prepared to revoke the decree until Torquemada burst in with his crucifix and delivered the famous exhortation which dissuaded him. Ferdinand hardly appears as a model of piety in this tale, which depicts him as an avaricious ruler who is willing to take bribes from Jews in order to enlarge the royal treasury.

This incongruity is not atypical of Jost's account. As we noted earlier, his history lacks the unifying superstructure which would provide consistency. In his effort to be an impartial chronicler, he included various explanations of events and was not troubled by the fact that sometimes they conflicted. Thus he points to the expulsion as potentially both a religiously motivated attempt to stop Judaizing and a power play by clerics schooled in realpolitik. In one paragraph of the narrative, Ferdinand seems to act out of deep piety, in the next he is motivated by greed.

It is clear, then, that Jost's work constitutes a beginning, not an end. His analysis of the expulsion's causes is far more comprehensive than that of his predecessors. Still, consistency would only come later, when Wissenschaft acquired a more sophisticated philosophical underpinning, as in the work of Heinrich Graetz, the next Jew to write a comprehensive narrative of his people's past. But now we are getting

ahead of ourselves, for a good bit of historical research on the expulsion was done between the time of Jost and Graetz.

3. Phoebus Philippson

Born into a prominent German Jewish family of scholars in 1807, Phoebus Philippson never gained the renown of his brother, the Reform rabbi Ludwig Philippson. Phoebus became a doctor, and published a number of medical studies during his lifetime. Nonetheless, he shared his brother's keen interest in modern Jewish scholarship, and translated the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings for his German Bible. He also write a few essays which appeared in Ludwig's Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums.[72]

One of these, "Die Vertreibung der Juden aus Spanien und Portugal" was published in 1834, then translated into English as "Expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal" in the Occident and American Jewish Advocate in 1859. The article begins with a brief summary of Iberian Jewish history, then turns to the subject at hand with the editorial comment, "An instance of more horrifying persecution and bitter religious fanaticism cannot be produced."[73]

Philippson's account of the expulsion is strikingly similar to that of Shalom Cohen in Ha-Measef. Like Cohen, he relies primarily on Jewish chronicles from the sixteenth century for his information. He refers to the works of Abrabanel, ha-Kohen, Ibn Verga, and Capsali. His analysis of events leading up to the edict is particularly indebted to the

last, with its claim that a royal vow was the immediate cause of the catastrophe:

> From March, 1492, onward, their sorrow was at its height. Queen Isabella, as well as her minister De Torre [Torquemada], had induced Ferdinand, before the commencement of the war with the Moors in Granada, to make a vow, that in the event of his bringing the war to a successful close, he would either banish the Jews from the country or force them to adopt Christianity. The war was closed,--the Moors were completely subjugated when, in the above-named month, the royal edict went forth, that within four months all Jews should leave the country.[74]

In this narrative, Philippson departs from Capsali's account in almost exactly the same instances as Shalom Cohen did before him. Ferdinand swears the vow instead of Isabella, although he agrees to make it only upon her inducement. Again the explicitly theistic language of the vow in Capsali's version is abandoned for a more ambiguous formulation. And once again, while Torquemada plays a major role in these events as the queen's confessor, the historian does not tell his readers whether Ferdinand and Isabella were motivated by true religious piety, avarice or both. Finally, like Cohen, Phoebus Philippson insists that in expelling the Jews, the Spanish monarchs were "hazarding the danger (by no means a trifling one) of a union on the part of the Moors, Anusim, and Jews to sell their lives dearly."[75] In other words, they risked a possible civil war.

Philippson's conclusion also shares a common feature with Cohen's: the belief that Spain's suffering subsequent to the expulsion is a form of punishment for her misdeeds. Unlike Cohen, Philippson makes no explicit references to the deity here. Nonetheless, as I have argued earlier, the tacit insistence that the maxim "מדה כנגד מדה" is operative

in history constitutes a modern and somewhat secularized but nonetheless real reformulation of the old notion of providence. Thus he asserts:

> Nowhere has fanaticism been more severely punished; in no country in Europe was it of such long duration, uprooting the prosperity, education, and religion of the people. The retributive justice which reigns in history has been felt there to a terrible degree; even now the country bleeds from its self-inflicted wounds and its soil is saturated with the blood of the innocent. . . .[76]

When all is said and done, the "retributive justice which reigns in history" is not so different from that which Joseph ha-Kohen perceived as God's vengeance on Israel's enemies, the powerful presence which led him, when relating the occasion of Isabella's painful death to proclaim: "The Lord is just!"[77]

It is interesting to note that not one of the aforementioned German historians describes Isabella in the idealistic manner which marks the accounts of Milman, Prescott, Llorente and Castro. The image of the queen in the writings of Cohen, Jost, and Philippson is far closer to the one found in the sixteenth-century Jewish chronicles than that present in the narratives of their non-Jewish contemporaries.

This may stem partially from the fact that the Jewish historians placed much greater emphasis upon the works of their sixteenth-century predecessors. The Gentile historians derived most of their information on the period from Spanish sources, while the Jews referred primarily to Ibn Verga, ha-Kohen, Capsali and Abrabanel. Given the latter as sources, it is not easy to come up with a picture of Isabella as a Victorian matron.

Yet this cannot be the end of the matter, for there were critical Jewish scholars who consulted the same traditional chronicles and nonetheless portrayed Isabella in the glowing terms of many of their non-Jewish colleagues. These writers were Englishmen and Americans, not Germans. Therefore, it seems likely that the idealization of Queen Isabella was at least partially a function of cultural factors which cut across religious lines and which were prevalent in the United States and Great Britain, but not in Germany. The logical conclusion here is that the general image of women differed in these countries. I have already commented on the vision of the "perfect lady" and the "Cult of the Womanhood" which influenced American and English writers to idealize Isabella much as they did their own wives and mothers. Apparently this concept never gained such popularity in Germany, at least among that largely liberal segment of her Jewish population with an interest in history. We turn now, however, to the work of two English Jews who may be counted among Queen Isabella's admirers, E. H. Lindo and Frederic Mocatta.

E. Jewish Historians in England

1. Elias Hayyim Lindo

E. H. Lindo was born into a Sephardic English family in 1783. A direct descendent of Spanish exiles, he grew up on the island of St. Thomas, where he married and made his fortune as a leading merchant. He

was also very active in the Jewish community there, serving as president of the synagogue and as the local mohel.[78]

In 1832, Lindo settled in England, where he began his literary and scholarly career. He wrote a popular compendium on the Jewish calendar, and translated Menasseh ben Israel's "Conciliator." He also did translations of Bachya's חובות הלבבות, ha-Levi's Kuzari, and other medieval texts, none of which were published.[79]

Lindo's most enduring work, however, is his History of the Jews of Spain and Portugal, first published in 1848. It was the first modern book-length treatment of the subject, and it remains valuable today. In preparation for writing it, Lindo actually toured the Iberian peninsula, visiting what remained of the former homes and synagogues of his ancestors, and gaining access to often obscure original sources which shed new light on their history.[80]

In his preface, Lindo asserts that the main distinction of his book is the information that he culled from ancient Spanish manuscripts which were largely unfamiliar to his predecessors. History of the Jews of Spain and Portugal is still the only work to include a complete English translation of the expulsion edict, and it offers a wealth of other important texts rendered into English by Lindo such as Abrabanel's account (taken from his commentary on the book of Kings) and various laws and proclamations of the Catholic sovereigns. In addition to all of these source materials, Lindo also cites the works of Spaniards such as Mariana and Bernaldez, and Jews like Joseph ha-Kohen, Usque, Ibn Verga, and Jost.[81] He is unapologetic about using narratives composed by non-Jews, and claims that his goal is to write an impartial history.

In order to do so, he insists, the historian must consider the general history of the Iberian peninsula, for the Jewish past is intimately connected with that of the nations within whose boundaries the Jews lived.[82] For example, Lindo claims that shortly after Ferdinand and Isabella's marriage, the sovereigns sought to protect Spanish Jews from antisemitic rioting in order to put an end to feudal anarchy and assert the power of the newly unified monarchy. The Jews were saved for a short while because the king and queen were fighting a general campaign for law and order at the time and the Jewish communities were lucky enough to fall under its protective umbrella.[83]

Such protection would not last long. When Lindo enumerates the sources of anti-Jewish sentiment in fifteenth-century Spain, he leaves the reader with the feeling that the Jewish communities were doomed long before the edict was officially issued. His analysis draws heavily upon the Shevet Yehudah. Like Ibn Verga, Lindo claims that opposition to the Jews was exacerbated by ostentatious displays of wealth and political power which riled the poor Spanish populace. Their anger and envy, coupled with the fanatic ravings of bigoted clergy and rumors of ritual murder, put Spanish Jewry in an extremely precarious situation.[84]

Yet as long as the war with the Moors continued, the Jews could not be expelled. They were essential to the military effort, providing badly needed capital and procuring provisions and supplies for Ferdinand and Isabella's army. Thus, notes Lindo, ". . . although Christians did not regard the Hebrew people kindly, their rancour towards them was suspended for a time."[85]

This respite came to an abrupt end when Granada fell. With the successful conclusion of the Reconquista, the Jews were no longer indispensable. The Catholic monarchs issued the expulsion edict shortly thereafter:

> Elated with the conquest and instigated by the Inquisition, they resolved that Spain should no longer afford an asylum, nor should its soil be polluted by the tread of anyone not professing the Catholic religion. Those whose ancestors had resided in it, from time immemorial, were doomed by a fanatic zeal and insatiable avarice to be banished forever from the happy scenes of their youth, the graves of their dearest ties, the land they had cultivated, and the country they had enlightened by their learning and talents in ages of darkness and ignorance.[86]

This account might at first glance imply that the sovereigns acted mainly out of misguided, intolerant religious conviction. Urged on by priests and inquisitors, they took the opportunity to rid the land of those who refused to accept the true faith. But Lindo also insists that avarice was a major factor underlying the harsh decree. How can these two explanations be reconciled?

Later in the narrative, it becomes clear how Lindo understood the relationship between greed and fanaticism as causes of the expulsion. He associates the religious motivation with Isabella, whom he claims "would not sanction what was directly opposed to the natural mildness of her disposition. . . ."[87] Because he depicts her as a proper Victorian lady, Lindo can only attribute the queen's participation in the affair to her piety--the over abundance of which is understandable in a woman. Isabella, then, agreed to the edict only when it was presented to her as a religious duty.

When he discussed Ferdinand, on the other hand, it becomes apparent that Lindo believes the king acted entirely out of greed. He rejects Jost's claim that Ferdinand was truly pious; instead he follows in the footsteps of Basnage, Llorente, and Castro with his assertion, "Under the specious hypocritical mask of zeal for religion, the crafty Ferdinand sought to gratify his avarice."[88] Thus the Crown sequestered the property of the exiled Jews and filled its coffers with the wealth which they abandoned.

Yet ultimately Lindo maintains that whatever the reason for it, the expulsion was an abysmal policy failure for the Spanish. Like Philippson, Jost, and Cohen, he asserts that the edict almost sparked a civil war, which might have severely threatened the security of Castile and Aragon. Ferdinand and Isabella narrowly avoided an immediate disaster when the Jews opted to forsake resistance and submit to the decree.

The catastrophic ramifications of the expulsion became evident, however, over the long term. When the Catholic sovereigns forced the Jews out of their land, they doomed their nation to a future as a faded, second-rate power. In attributing the decline of the Spanish empire to the expulsion of the Jews, Lindo shares the providential bent of Cohen and Philippson. He is much more subtle than either of his German counterparts. He makes no explicit reference to God, or even the "retributive justice in history." Yet his narrative places so much emphasis upon the causal connection between the fall of Spain and the edict that it, too, constitutes an implicit affirmation that over the

course of history, nations are rewarded and punished "measure for measure." This is particularly evident in his conclusion, when Lindo declares, "From being the first among nations, she has fallen into a secondary rank in the European family. Such has been the effect of impolicy, fanaticism and persecution!"[89]

Lindo clearly relishes Spain's losses. He abandons his goal of impartiality here, and heaps criticism upon the Spanish nation for expelling the Jews from a land which they had occupied for over a millenium. He speaks as an historian, but also as a Jew and a descendent of the Sephardic exiles who has not forgotten the bitterness of his people's past. Apparently there were quite a few English Jews who shared Lindo's interest in history, for his book was well-received by his readers. Its influence can still be seen in the work of an amateur English Jewish historian of the following generation, Frederic David Mocatta.

2. Frederic David Mocatta

Like E. H. Lindo, Frederic Mocatta was a member of a powerful Sephardic English family. Born in London in 1828, he made an enormous fortune in the firm of Mocatta and Goldsmid, bullion brokers to the Bank of England. He was very generous with his money, and at the age of forty-six he retired from business to devote himself to philanthropic causes.[90]

Foremost among these was the promotion of Jewish scholarship. Mocatta supported Zunz, Berliner, and Joseph Jacob (an editor of the Jewish Encyclopedia and compiler of Sources of Spanish Jewish History). In 1900 he was elected president of the Jewish Historical Society of England.[91]

Mocatta dabbled in history himself. He enjoyed speaking about the Jewish past, and one set of lectures which he delivered to a group of Jewish working men was published in 1877 as The Jews and the Inquisition. He was well aware of his limitations as a scholar, noting in the preface to this work that he could pay the subject only "very scant and imperfect justice." His research was confined to secondary sources, which included Lindo's book, the relevant sections of Graetz's great work, and the Spanish histories of Llorente and Jose Amador de los Rios.[92]

Mocatta's book opens with a summary of the causes of antisemitism in fifteenth-century Spain. Like Solomon Ibn Verga, the author addresses the question: Why were the Jews hated? His answers are almost identical to those given in the Shevet Yehudah two hundred and fifty years earlier.

First he points to the economic roots of enmity against the Jews. He notes that many Jews served as tax collectors and money lenders, positions which generally arouse the ill will of the populace. Furthermore, Mocatta shares Ibn Verga's view that Spanish Jews were in fact guilty of some of the accusations of usury and greed leveled at them. Unlike his medieval predecessor, however, Mocatta states his

position openly, without the veil of historical fiction. He lived in an age when it had become commonplace for Jews to criticize their people freely, even in public lectures. In a time of emancipation, religious reform, and Wissenschaft, past generations were no longer considered sacred or untouchable, and so they sometimes came under harsh scrutiny. Thus Mocatta asserts, ". . . It is likely that the Jews of the Peninsula afforded much colour of truth to the allegation that they were grasping and avaricious."[93]

After questioning the means by which the Spanish Jews acquired their fortunes, Mocatta hastens to blame the sephardim for their ostentatiousness. He lambastes his ancestors for the arrogance and love of display which further aroused the envy and anger of their neighbors. Here, too, his words jibe with the account in the Shevet Yehudah.[94]

As Mocatta attacks Jewish avarice and ostentatiousness as sources of antisemitism in Christian Spain, one cannot help but wonder whether his own background played an important role in shaping his position. Lest we forget, these are the words of a wealthy Jewish businessman who retired early in order to dedicate himself to philanthropy. Is he railing against other prominent English Jews who flaunt their money and provide grist for the mills of anti-Jewish bigotry? Does he feel guilty about his own wealth? Or is he providing a sort of paternal advice, encouraging his audience of Jewish working men not to be too ambitious? Any one, or all of these could have been factors underlying Mocatta's condemnation of a large part of Spanish Jewry as ostentatious usurers.

Yet he does not lay all the blame for antisemitism on the Jews. Mocatta follows in the footsteps of most Jewish and many Gentile historians in strongly criticizing the intolerance and fanaticism of the Catholic clergy. He refers to the insults and denunciations which they delivered from their pulpits as major causes of the popular antagonism toward the Jewish people. Urged on by the crusading spirit of the Reconquista, the unholy alliance of clerics and impoverished Catholic multitudes demanded either the conversion or the expulsion of Spanish Jewry.[95]

With the victory over Granada, the stage was set for the final act, which awaited only the official seal of the triumphant monarchs. Ferdinand was eager to oblige the request which was constantly set before him by Torquemada and the clergy. Mocatta does not discuss the king's motives in much detail, but he describes the sovereign as "ambitious, unscrupulous, and avaricious to the last detail," and later adds that he ". . . never disguised his antipathy to the Hebrew race."[96] Ferdinand seems to have supported the expulsion out of both greed and personal prejudice against the Jews.

Isabella appears in a much more favorable light. She is again portrayed as the idealized Victorian lady of the time, an exemplar of "womanly virtues." Mocatta insists that her assent was difficult to obtain, ". . . for she always evinced an under-current of feeling which made her at first repel from sanctioning acts of cruel and oppressive persecution."[97] When she submits, it is out of allegiance to the

priests, who present the expulsion edict to her as an act of Christian faith.

With Isabella's consent, the last obstacle fell away, and the edict was proclaimed throughout the land. Mocatta recounts Abrabanel's courageous effort to persuade the monarchs to revoke the cruel decree, which failed when Torquemada burst into the royal chamber with his crucifix, raging against the treachery of "Judas." He also notes that the final day of departure for the Jews was the ninth of Av, "the anniversary of so many troubles to the House of Israel." Mocatta was not a critical historian, and he probably followed popular convention in accepting this theologically significant date.[98]

Mocatta's narrative concludes with what has by now been shown to be typical of nineteenth-century Jewish accounts: a summation of the consequences of the expulsion which demonstrates that Spain suffered for its act of bigotry against the Jews. After the exiles departed, the Spanish nation began its precipitous decline from prominent power to European backwater. Immediately there was a serious shortage of doctors, and the depopulation of the middle class inflicted major wounds on trade and industry. History proved to be if not openly providential, then at least purposeful and just. Mocatta seems to reassure his people when he proclaims, ". . . The effects of bigotry and intolerance have recoiled with more lasting evils on the persecutors than on the persecuted; and Spain and Portugal languish, while the more tolerant lands have flourished and are continually acquiring strength."[99] Once

again, we see an illustration of the principle, " מדה כנגד מדה "-- measure for measure.

One could attribute the prevalence of this teleological view of history to the naiveté of the aforementioned Jewish chroniclers. Mocatta was at best an amateur historian, and although more dedicated to the field, Lindo wrote largely for a popular audience. Among the German writers we have seen so far, Philippson made his living as a doctor, Cohen was a typical maskil who turned to history much as he had previously turned to poetry, drama, and literature; even Jost was primarily a school teacher with little advanced training in history. Perhaps if these men had come to their subject with a more professional, critical background, they might have adopted a more secular approach.

When we turn to the work of late nineteenth-century German Jewish historians, however, we find that this teleological outlook (which emphasized the justice evident in Spain's fall subsequent to the expulsion) is not a function of a lack of historical sophistication. It remains particularly dominant in Graetz's History of the Jews, which for all its failings is still one of the greatest landmarks in modern Jewish scholarship. It is to this triumph of Jewish Wissenschaft that we now direct our attention.

F. Late Nineteenth-Century German-Jewish Accounts

1. Henrich Graetz

Born into an Orthodox family in Posen in 1817, Heinrich Graetz received a traditional Jewish education as a boy. As a young man he travelled to Oldenburg to study Talmud there with Samson Raphael Hirsch. He remained with the prominent neo-Orthodox thinker until 1840, when he entered the university in Breslau. Graetz studied history and philosophy there. It was also in Breslau that he met another student who would become his life-long opponent, the reformer Abraham Geiger. In 1845 he obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Jena and after a few jobs teaching children, he received a position at the newly opened Jewish Theological Seminary in Breslau in 1854. By this time he had long since broken Hirsch and adopted the "positive-historical Judaism" of Zacharias Frankel, the founder of the seminary, where he taught history until his death.[100]

It did not take long for Graetz to distinguish himself as the pre-eminent Jewish historian of his time. His great work, the eleven-volume Geschichte der Juden (published between 1853 and 1876) exhibits the structure and consistency so conspicuously lacking in Jost's history. Translated into many languages and very widely read, Graetz's history reflects the outlook of romanticism which permeated German intellectual circles of the time. Graetz saw Jewish history as a combination of two main strands: suffering and learning. The former comprised the Jews' external history, while the latter constituted an

internal history of thought or ideas. Unlike reformers such as Geiger, however, Graetz espoused a variant of Idealism which portrayed Judaism's essence as multifaceted, rejecting the notion that his people's history could be reduced to the continuous development of ethical monotheism. His response to the Jews who rejected or scorned major portions of their past parallels Ranke's famous manifesto, "Every age is close to God."[101]

Graetz's account of the Spanish expulsion is found in the fourth volume of the 1894 JPS English translation of his history. Like most of his predecessors, he draws a connection between that catastrophe and the war against Granada which preceded it. He argues that the Reconquista created a crusading spirit which did not augur well for the Jews. As long as the battle raged, this threat could not be translated into action, for the Spanish military effort depended heavily upon Jewish capital and provisions. However, once victory was achieved and the royal treasury filled with booty taken from the Moors, the Jews became expendable. Rumors of ritual murder fed the flames of antisemitism, and Spanish Catholics began to mutter among themselves, "Are the unbelieving Mahometans to be vanquished, and the still more unbelieving Jews to go free in the land? The question was too pertinent not to meet with an answer unfavorable to the Jews."[102]

Graetz places responsibility for the final edict upon Ferdinand, Isabella, and Torquemada. Each, however, acted out of a different motive. Torquemada was incensed over Jewish contact with the New Christians, and believed expulsion to be the only way to keep the conversos firmly within the Catholic church. Ferdinand, on the other hand, ". . . was quite ready to use religion as the cloak of his

avarice."[103] Like many of the historians whose works we have discussed above, Graetz claims the king pretended to act piously, but his true intention was to enjoy the wealth which the exiles--barred from taking gold and silver out of the country--had to leave behind.

Graetz does not idealize Isabella. Earlier it was noted that the German accounts of the expulsion by Cohen, Jost, and Philippson differed from their Spanish, English, and American counterparts in this respect. Graetz continues in this pattern. He refers to the queen as "the Bigot" and condemns her as a narrow-minded, prejudiced ruler with no respect for any religion other than her own. Indeed, when Graetz recounts the story of Torquemada and the crucifix, he notes that the confessor's speech inspired Isabella to urge her husband not to soften his antagonism towards the Jews. Here he follows Abrabanel's statement that Isabella stood by Ferdinand's side and acted as the antagonist.[104]

Graetz's theological bias begins to emerge when he discusses the final day of departure. Not only does he insist that the date fell on Tisha B'Av; he also adds a shaky defense of this claim. He admits that the original deadline had been set for July 31 (Av 7), but he argues that the Jews obtained a two day respite. He is unable to muster any real evidence in support of this position.

In his discussion of the expulsion's impact, Graetz follows in the footsteps of his predecessors, emphasizing the connection between the measure and Spain's rapid deterioration. He speaks of the loss to Spanish trade and industry and concludes, "In one word, Spain fell into a condition of barbarism through the banishment of the Jews. . . ."[105]

While the presence of providence may be difficult to detect in this account, I believe that however subtle it may be, it is implicit in Graetz's insistence that Spain's decline was strictly due to her mistreatment of the Jews. My argument is borne out by another of Graetz's notes on the expulsion, which states its providential nature quite openly. In a letter published anonymously as part of Briefwechsel einer englishen Dame über Judenthum und Semitismus (The Correspondence of an English Lady on Judaism and Semitism) he wrote:

> . . . Spain, after its successful expulsion of Jews yearned for Jewish doctors, jurists, and artisans. From the seventeenth century on, as the experience of Holland, Hamburg, Bordeaux, and the Italian cities attested, the wealth and business acumen of the Jews was creating a flourishing prosperity, a veritable rivalry arose among nations bidding for the despised sons of Jacob. Can't you see in this the finger of God, or if you wish, the rectifying justice of history?[106]

This extraordinary statement summarizes the view of providence embraced in all of the aforementioned nineteenth-century Jewish historians' accounts of the expulsion. Phoebus Philippson spoke of the "retributive justice in history." Others showed the workings of this principle without referring to it explicitly. Now Graetz reiterates the claim in almost the exact same terminology as Philippson: "the rectifying justice of history."

Yet Graetz also uses an even more explicitly theistic phrase, "the finger of God." In doing so, he points up the similarities and differences between the nineteenth-century narratives and their sixteenth-century counterparts. Both are providential, stressing the vengeance which Spain incurs. The earlier chronicles, however, express a powerful belief in God's direct and active participation in his

people's history which is lacking in the later accounts. Men like Samuel Usque, Elijah Capsali, and Isaac Abrabanel believed the event was a sign that the messiah was on the way; they saw it as evidence of God's mighty hand and outstretched arm. Three centuries later, all that remained of the deity was a finger. If the problem in the sixteenth century was how to make room for human free will in the divine scheme of history, the dilemma for Jewish historians in the much more secular nineteenth century was just the opposite: how could God fit into the realm of human affairs in which causal relationships were largely seen in natural, socioeconomic terms? Most were content to identify God with the spirit of justice which becomes visible only with historical perspective, and which, in this case, manifested itself in Spain's collapse. In an increasingly empirical age, that would have to suffice for most historians.

2. Meyer Kayserling

Born in Hanover, Germany in 1829, Meyer Kayserling became a prominent rabbi and historian. He studied with a number of the most enlightened Orthodox Jews of his day, including S. R. Hirsch, S. J. Rapoport, and S. B. Bamberger. Later he became a congregational rabbi, serving pulpits in Endingen, Switzerland and Budapest.[107]

He is better known, however, for the corpus of his published works on Jewish history, literature, and religion. Of these, his reputation rests on his efforts in Iberian Jewish history. Here he did a great deal of original research, combing through both Hebrew sources and

Spanish and Portuguese manuscripts. The fruits of his labor include Geschichte der Juden in Spanien und Portugal (2 volumes, 1861 and 1867), Sephardim: Romanische Poesien der Juden in Spanien (1859) and Christoph Columbus und der Anteil der Juden an den spanischen und portugiesischen Entdeckungen (1894).[108]

The last of these appeared in English translation as Christopher Columbus and the Participation of the Jews in the Spanish and Portuguese Discoveries (1894). While this book contains only a few paragraphs on the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, Kayserling does offer a brief analysis of the causes of that event. A reader with knowledge of German would certainly wish to consult some of his other, more detailed works; I, however, shall have to rely on this succinct discussion, which refers primarily to the Spanish histories of Adolfo de Castro, Amador de los Rios, and Abdon de Paz.

Kayserling begins by noting that the edict was of a "wholly religious character, especially as regards the chief reason given for the act." He summarizes the argument contained in the decree, which asserts that the interaction between Jews and conversos necessitated the ouster of the former in order to put an end to the Judaizing of the latter. Having stated this position which the edict itself articulates, however, Kayserling goes on to argue that this was not the true cause of the expulsion.[109]

Kayserling does not idealize Isabella; indeed, he admits that the sovereigns acted in "full accord." Nonetheless, he portrays Ferdinand as the primary instigator of the measure, and attributes his motivation

to avarice rather than piety. In doing so he follows in the footsteps of many of his Jewish colleagues, but he cites as his authorities for this view the Spanish histories of Abdón de Paz (Revista de España), Bofarull y Broca (Historica crítica de Cataluña) and Adolfo de Castro whose work we discussed earlier.[110] Thus he concludes:

> Recent Spanish historians readily admit that Ferdinand was led to adopt this measure more by economic and political reasons, than by the religious zeal which actuated Isabella. The king needed plenty of money to carry out his plan of bringing new territory under his dominion. He took it from the Jews, who were wealthy, especially in Castile; some of them were worth as much as one or two million maravedis or more. The Inquisition, which he had called into existence, and the expulsion of the Jews, which he had decreed, had one and the same object: the former aimed to secure the property of the secret Jews for the state treasury, the latter, under the cloak of religion, aimed to confiscate the property of those who openly professed to be Jews.[111]

The only feature of this account which we have not seen previously is Kayserling's claim that Ferdinand used the money he expropriated from the Jews to finance his country's territorial expansion. This point almost certainly comes up because it is central to the wider focus of the book in which the narrative occurs.

Like most nineteenth-century Jewish historians, Kayserling lists the day of the departure of the Jews from Spain as Tisha B'Av.[112] However he does not discuss the expulsion's subsequent impact on the fate of the Spanish nation. He does not write about Spain's decline or suffering following the forced banishment of her Jews, and he makes no reference (either explicitly or tacitly) to vengeance or punishment that balances the scales. In short, divine providence plays no role in his brief account of the expulsion.

This may seem rather odd. Given the general bent towards implicitly providential views among nineteenth-century Jewish historians, we would certainly not expect to find otherwise in a work by a rabbi who studied with Rapoport and Hirsch! Yet the absence of such a section reveling in the justice of Spain's demise is easily understandable as due to the nature of this book. It is not a history of Spain, or even of Spanish Jewry. Instead, it is a short study of possible Jewish links to Columbus's journeys, which only brings in the expulsion as a topic of related but secondary interest. Therefore a section on the broader consequences of the expulsion would be too tangential here. As a traditional rabbi, Kayserling probably believed in some sort of providence, but as a respected historian, he recognized that it would have been inappropriate to speak of its role in the Spanish expulsion within the context of a book on Christopher Columbus.

There were, however, other writers who were not so bound by the topic of their books, the empirical evidence, or the scientific method. Without professing to be professional historians, they had greater latitude to work within when they composed their accounts of the expulsion. The final sections of this chapter will deal with two such narratives: a set of sermons on the subject by Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf and a novel by Grace Aguilar.

G. The View From the Pulpit: Joseph Krauskopf

Born in Prussia, Joseph Krauskopf came to the United States as a youngster in 1872. Three years later he enrolled in the first class of the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, where he was ordained in 1883. He served as vice president of the conference which ratified the Pittsburgh Platform and as president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis from 1903 to 1905. He was a radical reformer who instituted Sunday services at the two congregations whose pulpits he filled, the first being B'nai Yehudah in Kansas City and the second Keneseth Israel in Philadelphia, where he spent most of his rabbinical career.[113]

It was in the former, however, that he delivered a series of sermons which were printed, first in the local newspaper, and then in 1887 in book form under the title The Jews and Moors in Spain. This narrative clearly reflects its Sitz-im-Leben. Krauskopf consulted no primary sources, for he was no historian. He relied largely on Prescott, Jost, and Graetz, and he simplified their accounts into a rendition which could be delivered orally before a popular audience. His language is flowery, and he did not hesitate to romanticize historical events, coloring them with rhetorical flourishes in order to keep the attention of his congregation.

In the sermon which describes the events leading up to the expulsion, Krauskopf singles out Torquemada as the villain. This fanatical cleric was determined to rid Spain's holy soil of all non-Catholics. Once the war in Granada ended, he took great pains to

see that the Jews would be expelled forever, and "with him, resolve was equal to execution. . . ."[114]

Krauskopf insists that Torquemada was motivated solely by religious intolerance. Perhaps as an American Reform rabbi, he was particularly attuned to the evils of such fanaticism. Spain must have seemed like the European world which he left as a young teenager, a world epitomized by Torquemada: intolerant of minority groups and especially eager to castigate the Jews. All of this was the antithesis of the young reformer's vision of America, a heterogeneous land of immigrants which offered the hope of religious freedom for all. As he spoke to a congregation in the western town of Kansas City and condemned the Spanish effort to create an entirely Catholic country at the expense of the Jews and Moors, his listeners must have responded favorably. Spain's sin was not only unethical, but also un-American, and Krauskopf fervently believed that things would be different in the New World.

Ferdinand and Isabella play a fairly minor role in this account. Krauskopf does criticize the king as "crafty and arrogant," but he portrays him as a basically weak ruler who follows the more powerful Torquemada's every whim. Isabella, on the other hand, is once again idealized as the embodiment of the "Cult of True Womanhood." She is a perfect lady, a noble-hearted queen who resists oppressive measures against the Jews until Torquemada and her husband prevail upon her to submit to their judgment, which, as a woman, she was obliged to do. Thus the monarchs agreed to issue the edict on March 30, 1492, giving Torquemada his greatest triumph.[115]

Given this chronology and the edict's stated four month grace period, the final day of departure should have been July 31. Like Graetz, however, Krauskopf argues that the Jews received a two day extension which expired on August 2--Tisha B'Av. It is interesting that this radical reformer attached such significance to Tisha B'Av, a day which he probably did not even personally observe.[116]

Krauskopf is also explicitly theistic in his conclusion, which is subtitled, "The Effect of the Expulsion." He describes the economic chaos which Spain fell into after the Jews' departure, then he adds, "Verily God's prophecy was fulfilled: 'And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee, in thee shall the families of the earth be blessed.'"[117]

This sounds almost like Usque's Consolation for the Tribulations of Israel, with its enumerations of prophecies and their fulfillment. Such writing would not seem out of place in the sixteenth century, but two hundred and fifty years later it stands out. However, this makes sense when we recall that Krauskopf delivered his narrative from the pulpit. Statements which would be jarring in a scientific history of the period are not necessarily unusual in the context of a sermon, wherein the rabbi is in fact expected to speak theologically. The synagogue is by necessity not a secular institution, and Krauskopf recognized this in his talk. His purpose was religious and didactic. He wanted to inspire the emotions as much as to teach. In doing so, he followed a path blazed by another rousing writer who lived earlier in the century. She

was the novelist Grace Aguilar, and it is with her book, The Vale of Cedars, that we close this chapter.

H. A Romantic Novel Set in Spain: Grace Aguilar

The oldest child of parents descended from marranos, Grace Aguilar was educated at her home in England. Even as a little girl she loved to read, and she was especially fond of Scripture and Jewish history. She was a sickly child, but this did not keep her away from her texts. She began to write at an early age and before she died in 1847 (when she was only thirty-one years old) she had penned several books. Among these were Women of Israel, a two volume study of women in the Bible, and The Days of Bruce, a romantic Scottish history. Her religious writings were often apologetic, defending the Jews against charges commonly levelled at them.[118]

She is perhaps best known for her novel The Vale of Cedars, or the Martyr: A Story of Spain in the Fifteenth Century, which she wrote before she turned twenty. It was published posthumously in 1850, and later translated into both German and Hebrew. It enjoyed great popularity in its day, especially among the young women who were its intended audience.[119]

While it is by no means a great work of literature, The Vale of Cedars is quite indicative of its time, and therefore of interest to the historian; in fact it takes many of the themes which we have seen in historical accounts of the expulsion and carries them to imaginative

extremes. The book is very romantic and at the same time didactic. Aguilar's plot resembles a soap opera at times, but beneath the tumultuous emotions there is a message: Jews are ordinary human beings who live and love like everyone else, and should not be persecuted on account of their faith.

The heroine is a young woman named Marie Henriquez. She is a secret Jew who often returns to the Vale of Cedars, her hidden ancestral home deep in the mountains of Spain. There she can practice her native religion without fear. As the story opens, Arthur Stanley arrives, looking for her. This brave English nobleman loves Marie, and she loves him as well. But when he finds her at the Vale, she sends him away, for he is not a Jew, and therefore she can never marry him. He rides away heartbroken.

The next scene takes place some years later. Marie marries her cousin, Ferdinand Morales, who is generally known as a Christian lord and soldier. He is one of the richest and most powerful men in the realm, a confidant to the king and queen. But like Marie, he is a marrano, a secret Jew who beneath the facade remains loyal to his people's faith.

After some initial difficulties, Ferdinand and Marie prosper and grow to love each other deeply. One day Ferdinand takes her with him to see the monarchs, Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile. The king is pleased with his loyal servant's beautiful young wife, and Isabella is absolutely infatuated with her. She invites her to join the royal

court, and Marie accepts, soon to become the queen's favorite lady-in-waiting.

Then, just when all seems to be going so well, Ferdinand Morales is tragically murdered and Arthur Stanley is apprehended as the chief suspect. Isabella does all she can to console the crestfallen Marie, but she refuses to be comforted. In the midst of her intense grief, she is called upon to testify at Stanley's trial. She cannot bear the pressure and breaks down on the witness stand, admitting publicly that she is a Jew.

In the aftermath of her confession, Torquemada and the inquisitors want to send Marie to prison. Yet Isabella will not release the young widow from her custody, even after her dark secret gets out. The inquisitors respond by kidnapping Marie from the castle and subjecting her to the tribunal's horrible torture.

Marie is saved by her uncle, who has for many years masqueraded as a monk. The two Jews escape, and in the process identify the inquisitor who actually killed Ferdinand Morales. Now assured of Arthur's innocence, the ailing Marie hurries to save him, and arrives on the scene disguised as a Benedictine novice. He is about to be executed when at the last moment she names the true murderer. Arthur Stanley's life is spared, and justice is done.

Meanwhile, Isabella recognizes Marie beneath her costume. She tells her confessor--Torquemada--of this, and he replies that if the queen cannot persuade Marie to convert, then she will have to be imprisoned again. Marie refuses to deny her ancestral faith. But once

again, Isabella takes compassion on her Jewish friend. She strikes up a deal with Torquemada, who agrees to let Marie go free on the condition that the queen grant him the right to do what he wishes with Spanish Jewry. Marie returns to the Vale of Cedars, and Torquemada begins to prepare the edict of expulsion, which is enacted immediately after the war with Granada ends in triumph. The story nears its conclusion, too, as Arthur Stanley comes to see Marie at the Vale once more, and finds her on her death bed, broken by the torture which she incurred at the hands of the Inquisition. He pledges his eternal love for her, and after a brief speech, she dies.

Several details of this complicated plot stand out as important for our discussion. First, there is the incredible idealization of Isabella. Even more than any of the historians whose work we have examined, Aguilar portrays the queen as the perfect Victorian woman. Throughout the novel, Isabella is Marie's friend, confidante, and savior. She is described as kind, gentle, and just. And at one point Aguilar even depicts her as a martyr figure, noting, "Once impressed that it was a religious duty, she would do violence to her most cherished wishes, sacrifice her dearest desires, her best affections, resign her most eagerly pursued plans. . . ."[120]

Ferdinand also appears as a relatively wise and chivalrous ruler. While he is not quite the glowing figure Isabella is, he certainly is not the villain either. This role is reserved for the inquisitors, such

as Torquemada. They are the antagonists, and their cardinal sin is their intolerance.

In fact the entire novel is in many ways a sermon preaching the virtues of tolerance and pluralism. Most of the Jewish characters are respectful towards their Christian fellows, and they do not understand why this favor is so seldom returned. Aguilar makes an impassioned plea for ecumenicism in a speech which she has Marie deliver to Arthur from her deathbed:

> In heaven I feel there is no distinction of creed or faith; we shall all love God and one another there, and earth's fearful distinctions can never come between us. I know such is not the creed of thy people, nor of some of mine; but when thou standest on the verge of eternity, as I do now, thou wilt feel this too.[121]

This speech, and Marie's death are followed by a brief epilogue. It takes place long after 1492. A group of Spanish citizens are reflecting back on events of that tumultuous year when one who is too young to remember them asks why the Jews were expelled. He adds that he has no favorable feelings toward the Jewish people, but he cannot understand why the king and queen would agree to a policy which proved to have such a devastating effect upon the Spanish economy. This statement echoes the notion of providence as the rectifying justice of history.

Finally one of the bystanders offers an answer to the question. He concludes that, "Impolitic it was, so far as concerned the temporal interests of the kingdom; but the sovereigns of Spain decided on it, from the religious light in which it was placed before them by Torquemada. . . . Isabella had, it appears, when reproached by

Torquemada for her act of mercy [to Marie], which he termed weakness, pledged herself not to interfere with his measures. . . ."[122] The queen did her best, but the inquisitor and his fanaticism proved to be too great an adversary in the end.

It is, perhaps, fitting to leave the nineteenth century with this novel. Its intense plea for pluralism and tolerance and its extreme idealization of Isabella are not really so far removed from many of the factual historical accounts which we considered earlier. Once we recognize that each generation writes its own history of past generations, we begin to find that the line which separates fact from fiction and evidence from imagination is not so firm as some positivists might like it to be. We turn our sights now to where that line takes us in our own century, a momentous time in which our people was struck by a catastrophe which overshadows even the darkest stories of the expulsion.

Notes to Chapter Two

[1] Yerushalmi, Zakhor, 85.

[2] R. G. Collingwood, The Idea of History (London, 1956), 70-71.

[3] Ibid., 81.

[4] Ibid., 86-8, 118.

[5] Hans Meyerhoff, ed., The Philosophy of History in Our Time (Garden City, New York), 7.

[6] Salo Baron, History and Jewish Historians (Philadelphia, 1964), 76.

[7] Collingwood, Idea of History, 126-9.

[8] Meyerhoff, Philosophy of History, 10.

[9] Lionel Kochan, The Jew and His History, (London, 1977), 69.

[10] Benzion Dinur, "Basnage, Jacques Christian," Encyclopedia Judaica, 4: 309-10.

[11] Jacques Basnage, History of the Jews from Jesus Christ to the Present Time, trans. Thomas Taylor (London, 1708), 693.

See Nicollo Machiavelli, The Prince, trans. George Bull (New York, 1975), 119-20. Machiavelli describes his contemporary, King Ferdinand of Aragon as "the first king in Christendom." He praises his achievements, noting above all his extraordinary craftiness in matters of state. As the supreme example of this, he refers to the sovereign's war on Granada, which distracted the barons of Castile (thereby turning their attention away from domestic issues) and gained the support of the people and the Church. The latter was particularly important, since the clerics wielded considerable power which Ferdinand won to his side through this military venture fought "under the cloak of religion."

Machiavelli also notes, "In addition, in order to be able to undertake even greater campaigns, still making use of religion, he turned his hand to a pious work of cruelty when he chased out the Moriscos and rid his kingdom of them: there could not have been a more pitiful or striking enterprise." It is not exactly clear what act the historian refers to here, since the Moors were not expelled from Spain until 1610. Some have argued that Machiavelli confuses the Moors with the Marranos, and is actually describing the

expulsion of the Jews in 1492. Others disagree. In a note on this passage, translator George Bull asserts that the historian is probably referring to the forced expulsion from Granada in 1502 of those Moors over the age of fourteen who refused to undergo baptism. This debate is not likely to be resolved, but whatever Machiavelli's intentions were, his view of Ferdinand as the instigator of "pious works of cruelty" certainly pre-figures the description of the expulsion of the Jews in the accounts of Basnage and others to follow.

[12] Ibid., 693.

[13] Joseph L. Blau, "Adams, Hannah," Encyclopedia Judaica, 2: 249; Hannah Adams, The History of the Jews from the Destruction of Jerusalem to the Present Time (London, 1840), v-viii.

[14] Adams, The History of the Jews, 262, 264-5.

[15] Ibid., 265.

[16] Ibid., 265.

[17] Richard Garnett, "Milman, Henry Hart," Dictionary of National Biography, 13:449-50.

[18] Henry Hart Milman, The History of the Jews, 2 vols. (New York, 1909), 2: 396.

[19] Ibid., 396.

[20] Martha Vicinus, ed. and introd., Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age (Bloomington, Indiana, 1972), ix-xiv.

[21] Patricia Hollis, Women in Public: The Women's Movement 1850-1900 (London, 1979), 20.

[22] Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," in Michael Gordon, ed., The American Family in Social-Historical Perspective (New York, 1973), 225.

[23] Ibid., 225-6.

[24] Ibid., 232.

[25] Juan Antonio Llorente, A Critical History of the Inquisition of Spain, trans. ?, introd. Gabriel H. Lovett (reprint of Original English edition, 1823), introduction.

[26] Ibid., Introduction (no page numbers).

[27] Ibid., 54.

[28] Don Adolfo de Castro y Ruiz, The History of the Jews in Spain, trans. Edward D.G.M. Kirwan (Cambridge, England, 1851), footnote p. 160.

[29] Llorente, Critical History of the Inquisition, 55.

[30] Meyer Kayserling, "Castro, Adolf de," Jewish Encyclopedia, 3: 608; Castro, History of the Jews in Spain, 3.

[31] Castro, History of the Jews in Spain, 119.

[32] Ibid., 138-40, 173.

[33] Ibid., 156-8.

[34] Manuel Perez Villamil, "Expulsion of the Jews from Spain in the Fifteenth Century," Catholic World, 55 (1892): 861.

[35] Ibid., 853-4.

[36] Ibid., 858.

[37] Ibid., 859.

[38] Abraham David, "Finn, James," Encyclopedia Judaica, 6: 1300.

[39] Ibid., 1300.

[40] James Finn, Sephardim; or, The History of the Jews in Spain and Portugal (London, 1841), viii.

[41] Ibid., 396.

[42] Ibid., 408.

[43] Ibid., 369-70.

[44] Gerald Le Grys Norgate, "Rule, William Harris," Dictionary of National Biography, 17: 394-5.

[45] William Harris Rule, History of the Inquisition (London, 1868), 110.

[46] Ibid., 110.

[47] Roger B. Merriman, "Prescott, William Hickling," Dictionary of American Biography, 15: 196-9; G. P. Gooch, History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century (Boston, 1959), 384-7.

[48] William H. Prescott, History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic, 3 vols. (Philadelphia, 1865), 2:135-6, 150.

[49] Ibid., 150-3.

[50] Ibid., 138-9.

[51] Ibid., 153-4.

[52] Baron, History and Jewish Historians, 65.

[53] Gedalyah Elkoshi, "Cohen, Shalom ben Jacob," Encyclopedia Judaica, 5: 685; Michael A. Meyer, The Origins of the Modern Jew (Detroit, 1967), 119.

[54] Shalom Cohen, "Gerush ha-Yehudim mi-Sefarad," Ha-Measef, 3rd series (1809): 21.

[55] Ibid., 21.

[56] Ibid., 21-2.

[57] Ibid., 45.

[58] Capsali, Seder Eliyahu Zuta, 1: 205-6; see also supra, 39-40.

[59] Cohen, "Gerush ha-Yehudim mi-Sefarad," 44, 48.

[60] Ibid., 47-8.

[61] Ibid., 80.

[62] Nathan Stern, The Jewish Historico-Critical School of the Nineteenth Century (New York, 1901), 64.

[63] Ibid., 64.

[64] Baron, History and Jewish Historians, 12-13, 23; Meyer, Ideas of Jewish History, 26.

[65] Baron, History and Jewish Historians, 12-14, 28-30.

[66] Isaac Marcus Jost, Geschichte der Israeliten seit der Zeit der Maccabaer bis auf unsere Tage (unpub. trans. for pp. 81-84 by M. A. Meyer), 9 vols. (Berlin, 1820-29), 7: 81.

[67] Ibid., 81.

[68] Ibid., 82.

[69] Ibid., 82, 84.

[70] Ibid., 82.

[71] Abrabanel, פירוש על נביאים ראשונים, 188a; see also supra, 63-4.

[72] Max Cohen, "Philippson, Phoebus," Encyclopedia Judaica, 9: 685.

[73] Phoebus Philippson, "Expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal," trans. Abraham Harris, The Occident and American Jewish Advocate, 17 (1859): 93.

[74] Ibid., 107.

[75] Ibid., 130.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ha-Kohen, Emek ha-Bakha, 102; see also supra, 53.

[78] Cecil Roth, "Lindo," Encyclopedia Judaica, 11: 260.

[79] Ibid., 260.

[80] Ibid., 260.

[81] E. H. Lindo, The History of the Jews of Spain and Portugal (1848; reprint edn., New York, 1970), iv-v.

[82] Ibid., iii-iv.

[83] Ibid., 245.

[84] Ibid., 179-80, 228, 273.

[85] Ibid., 271.

[86] Ibid., 275.

[87] Ibid., 249.

[88] Ibid., 275.

[89] Ibid., 299.

[90] Goodman Lipkind, "Mocatta," Jewish Encyclopedia, 8: 636-7.

[91] Ibid., 636-7.

[92] Ibid., 637; Frederic David Mocatta, The Jews of Spain and Portugal and the Inquisition (1877; reprint edn., New York, 1933), v.

[93] Mocatta, The Jews of Spain and Portugal, 10.

[94] Ibid., 10.

[95] Ibid., v-vi, 12.

[96] Ibid., 25, 42.

[97] Ibid., 42-3.

[98] Ibid., 44-5, 47; see also supra, 6-7.

[99] Ibid., vi-vii.

[100] Heinrich Graetz, The Structure of Jewish History and Other Essays, trans. ed., and introd. Ismar Schorsch (New York, 1975), 31-8; Stern, The Jewish Historico-Critical School, 67-8.

[101] Graetz, The Structure of Jewish History, 38-52.

[102] Heinrich Graetz, History of the Jews, trans. ?, 5 vols. (Philadelphia, 1946), 4: 343, 346.

[103] Ibid., 309-10, 347-8.

[104] Ibid., 320, 348; see also supra, 63-4.

[105] Ibid., 353.

[106] Graetz, Structure of Jewish History, 219.

[107] Cecil Roth, "Kayserling, Meyer," Encyclopedia Judaica, 10: 835.

[108] Ibid., 835-6.

[109] Meyer Kayserling, Christopher Columbus and the Participation of the Jews in the Spanish and Portuguese Discoveries, trans. Charles Gross (1894; reprint edn., 1968), 82.

[110] Ibid., 82-3.

[111] Ibid., 83.

[112] Ibid., 87.

[113] Sefton D. Temkin, "Krauskopf, Joseph," Encyclopedia Judaica, 10: 1246-7.

[114] Joseph Krauskopf, The Jews and Moors in Spain (Kansas City, Mo., 1887), 191.

[115] Ibid., 179, 192, 196, 199.

[116] Ibid., 199.

[117] Ibid., 233.

[118] Henrietta Szold, "Aguilar, Grace," Jewish Encyclopedia, 1: 276-6.

[119] Ibid., 274-6.

[120] Grace Aguilar, The Vale of Cedars (New York, 1916), 212.

[121] Ibid., 312-3.

[122] Ibid., 321-2.

Chapter III

Historiography in a Secular Age: Twentieth-Century Accounts of the Expulsion

Introduction

With the exception of Solomon Ibn Verga, the Jewish chroniclers of the sixteenth century saw the events of their people's past as the record of a theistic God's constant presence and concern. Three centuries later, historians both Jewish and Gentile, largely rejected this sort of outlook which made history the handmaiden of theology. Explicitly, history was given over to humans. Implicitly, however, the theology remained. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Idealists continued to believe that the course of human events was one of progress, propelled slowly but surely toward a telos, a fixed end. The biblical God may have faded from view, but providence was still discernible to the watchful eye, at least as the "retributive justice in history." Even after Idealism lost its popularity as the nineteenth-century wore on and historians began to turn their attention to detailed, scientific studies of individuals and events, this subtle belief refused to fade away. At the century's end, the history of the Jews had not yet become fully secularized.

Between 1900 and our own day, historiography has proceeded down quite a number of diverse paths. Historians have broadened their geographic horizons, exploring the pasts of parts of Asia, Africa, and South America largely ignored earlier. They have, for the most part, set aside the "great man" theories according to which a few elite

leaders (in our case Ferdinand and Isabella) determine the fate of the multitudes in every generation. Some have written social histories, stressing the power of the common people and the influence of communal and societal structures. Other accounts have emphasized the impact of demographic, environmental, or political factors. Yet another area which has received a great deal of attention is economic history with its focus on class struggles, natural resources, and means of production as the forces which ultimately shape the destiny of a tribe, people, or nation. Many of these approaches overlap, and most historians have used more than one.

This diversity is only one characteristic of twentieth-century historiography. Another is its secularism. As historical writing has grown more eclectic, it has also become almost totally secular. The philosophy of logical positivism, which replaced Idealism early in the century, and its dedication to scientific empiricism was not without its influence upon historians. The new emphases in history, particularly the interest in economics, tended towards a materialism which left no room for providence, in any shape or form. Furthermore, the tragedy of two world wars with their legacies of gas masks, trenches, Auschwitz and Hiroshima seemed to confirm the secular assumptions which denied the presence of justice or retribution in history. Maybe Nietzsche's words were premature in the nineteenth century; maybe he spoke with prophetic intentions. At any rate, as the twentieth century nears its conclusion, it has become clear that as far as most historiography is concerned, he spoke the truth: God is either dead or, perhaps more accurately, insignificant.

Jewish historiography did not escape the effects of any of these broader tendencies. Jewish historians held on to the Idealist approach longer than most of their colleagues, for the uniqueness of their people, which had endured longer than any other without a land to call its own, somehow defied the standard "rules" of history. Yet, as Salo Baron has noted, by the early twentieth century there was "a growing feeling that the historical explanations of the Jewish past must not fundamentally deviate from the general patterns of history which we accept for mankind at large or for any particular national group."[1] Beginning with the work of Simon Dubnow, a staunch non-believer, Jewish history too became secularized. For some historians, the Holocaust may have validated this approach: after such a triumph of evil who could speak with certainty of the operation of even a tacit form of providence in history?

Like their colleagues in other branches of history, those who studied the Jewish past began to turn to new approaches. The role of individual rabbis and rulers was de-emphasized, while sociological, economic, and political factors gained in importance. The religion of Judaism became yet another thing to be examined for its social role, as a shield protecting its adherents from assimilation and sorrow. Jewish history was no longer viewed within a vacuum; historians began to pay a great deal of attention to the interaction of Jews and the nations in which they lived. Particular Jewish events were now considered within the context of the general history of their geographic region and chronological period. In order to understand the history of the Spanish Jews, one now had to have a considerable knowledge of the history of

Spain, and even of Western Europe as a whole. Good historiography demanded broad erudition.

Another phenomenon which had a profound effect upon Jewish historiography in the twentieth century was the rise of Zionism and the establishment of the State of Israel. One of the political Zionists' central principles was the negation of the galut. This affirmation that diaspora life lost all validity with the creation of the Jewish state remains prevalent in Israel today. It has influenced many Jewish historians, who have accepted this view as part of their Zionism, then applied it in their historiography. Thus there arose in the land of Israel a school of Jewish history which made that land a central force even in the long years of exile. These historians assume that every Jewish settlement in the diaspora, from Alexandria to Spain to Germany, was doomed from the start, for without the autonomy to determine its own fate, even the most powerful Jewish community must fall victim to external forces seeking to destroy it.

As we turn now to twentieth-century accounts of the Spanish expulsion, we should keep in mind all of these changes in general and Jewish historiography, and try to determine what bearing they had on the interpretation of this particular event. We shall see that the role of Ferdinand and Isabella is, generally, diminished in the sociological, political, and economic histories of our century. The nineteenth-century notion that the Jews might have risen up against their oppressors in a major rebellion does not appear in any of the accounts which I shall examine in this chapter, perhaps because of their heightened sense of realism. We shall also follow the disappearance of

the tacitly providential emphasis on Spain's decline following the expulsion. This notion, so common in nineteenth-century accounts, is almost nonexistent in those of the twentieth century. I qualify this with the term "almost" because there are a few prominent exceptions which we shall consider at the end of the chapter.

The new emphases in historiography which affected twentieth-century accounts of the expulsion cut across national and religious boundaries. Therefore it would make little sense to break this chapter down according to such divisions, a distinction which was relevant in the previous chapter but which would be totally artificial here. Thus I have divided this section according to the predominant tendencies of the various interpretations of why the expulsion occurred: apologies for the Spanish monarchs, those accounts which accept the explanation offered in the edict of expulsion at face value (the expulsion was needed to stop the Judaizing of New Christians), sociological-political interpretations, economic histories, and the unique providential view of Leo Baeck.

Such a division is not without its drawbacks. For example, the categories may be too broad. The realm of economic interpretations contains within itself a vast number of conflicting views. Even given the presupposition that the expulsion of the Jews was due to class struggle, there remains much room for disagreement. Which class wanted the Jews out? The peasants? The nobles? The urban elite? And what was the source of tension? The range of answers to such questions is huge, and it applies equally within each of my divisions.

Furthermore, there is actually a large overlap between such divisions. Few historians whose primary emphasis is economic totally ignore social, political, religious and other factors. An argument stressing the rise of the absolute monarchy, for example, is related to all of these areas. To lump information into broad general categories is to simplify it, to blur distinctions and even to distort in order to draw out some universals. Yet one must do just this in order to synthesize information and emerge with more than just an amalgamation of raw historical data. Without an effort to categorize the explanations of the expulsion according to their primary orientation, I would be left with nothing more than a glorified annotated bibliography.

Finally, it is worth noting that in our century the quantity of historical writing has increased by leaps and bounds. This is certainly true of accounts of the Inquisition and Spanish expulsion. General medieval historians, Spaniards, and Jews have all addressed this topic with increasing interest and frequency. Therefore this chapter represents only a sampling of the available works with relevance to the subject at hand. I have tried to examine those which are well-known, provocative, and important as well as some of the more obscure books and articles. I was limited once again to texts available in Hebrew or English, yet found these to represent a wide spectrum of interpretations. We now turn to the first of these, the works of those historians who offer apologies for Ferdinand and Isabella and their edict of expulsion.

A. Apologists for Spain

Of the many twentieth-century Spanish historians who have discussed their nation's expulsion of its Jews in 1492, few have followed in the footsteps of Juan Antonio Llorente and Adolfo de Castro y Ruiz and condemned that action. In his book Los Catolicos y la Unidad Nacional (1935), Luis Ulloa Cisneros criticizes the policy as the outgrowth of the masses' fanaticism and the rampant false charges of ritual murder.[2] Another critic of the expulsion is Americo Castro, the renowned historian of the Iberian Peninsula whose work we will have occasion to examine later. Yet these men were the exceptions, not the rule. Most of their colleagues and countrymen have taken a position closer to that of Manuel Perez Villamil, defending the expulsion edict as a laudable course of action. Among these latter day Spanish apologists, two have works available to the English reader: Don Salvador de Madariaga and Felipe Torroba Bernaldo de Quiros.

Spanish historians, however, have not been the only practitioners of their art to favor the expulsion. Within our century, at least two major works of scholarship have supported the decision to issue the edict which would prove so injurious to the Jews. These books, by Valeriu Marcu and William Thomas Walsh, echo the view that by their very nature the Jews somehow brought the expulsion upon themselves. Although they are not Spanish, these men too are apologists for Spain. Therefore their accounts are examined here, along with those of Madariaga and Torroba.

1. Don Salvadore de Madariaga and Felipe Torroba Bernaldo de Quiros

Originally presented as a lecture to the Jewish Historical Society of England in 1946, Don Salvadore de Madariaga's pamphlet Spain and the Jews begins, as might be expected given the audience, in a tone highly sympathetic to the Jews. The author refers to the works of Graetz, Yitzhak Baer, and Cecil Roth with admiration, and notes the need for sensitivity in discussing all things Jewish, present or past, in a time when "the Jewish people has just been cruelly and barbarously tried."[3] After such an introduction, we are led to expect a treatment of the subject which is favorable to the Jews and critical of Spain's decision to expel them. This is not at all what follows.

Instead, Madariaga points to the Jews' power and ambition, ostentatious displays of wealth, and "unbelievable" rates of usury as the roots of widespread antisemitism among the Christian populace. Compounded by the general feeling that the Jews were "different"--not quite true Spaniards--these tensions led to the riots and forced conversions of 1391.[4]

Those conversions created a new element in Spanish society, the New Christians. Madariaga believes the converts all fell into one of three categories. Some became sincere Christians who were content to quietly observe their new faith. Others became Christian fanatics, intent upon converting all of their former kinspeople. Most continued to practice various rites of Judaism in secret while masquerading as Christians.[5]

It was the secret Judaizers, or Marranos, who proved to be the downfall of their unconverted fellow Jews. Correctly perceived by the

Crown as a threat to the unity of Spanish Christianity, the conversos could not be brought into the Church securely as long as the aljamas remained intact, providing them with ritual items, books, kosher food and spiritual encouragement. Given the popular antipathy toward the Jews and the threat they posed to the purity of the Catholic church, Ferdinand and Isabella made the only logical choice when they opted to expel them from their kingdom.

Madariaga does show some sympathy for the exiles. He refers to the edict as a dictatorial act which violated a number of rights once granted to the Jews. Nonetheless, he refuses to condemn this action. He insists that Spain and her monarchs really had no choice. The expulsion was "popular, and in the circumstances inevitable." It was an era of religious triumphalism, not pluralism. Given the standards of the time, Spain committed no wrong-doing. She solved her Jewish problem by the only means left to her--she banished it.[6]

While Madariaga defends the Spanish expulsion as unavoidable under the circumstances of the time, he certainly does not endorse the edict as a laudable measure, nor does he criticize the Jews any more harshly than Ibn Verga had in the sixteenth century. This is not the case with Felipe Torroba Bernaldo de Quiros's book, The Spanish Jews, originally written in Spanish some time after 1967 and translated by John Inderwick Palmer in 1972. This volume, which covers the history of the sephardim from the Visigothic period to the Six Day War contains no bibliography and precious few footnotes. The chapter on the expulsion, which is

rather short and non-detailed, makes reference only to the work of Andreas Bernaldez.

Like that sixteenth century clergyman's account, The Spanish Jews attempts to justify the edict of 1492 at the expense of the exiles. Torroba insists that they had never assimilated into the mainstream of Spanish culture and society, and in failing to do so aroused the animosity of their neighbors. This intensified after 1391, when the mass conversions led to the Marrano problem. Suddenly the Church seemed suspect of corruption and heresy from within, and this could not be rooted out without the removal of those aiding the New Christians in their treachery: the Jews.[7] As the pressure applied by both the Christian populace and the clergy grew ever more intense, Ferdinand and Isabella (who were not by nature unfavorably disposed toward the Jews) responded to the urgent problem in the only manner which seemed feasible to them:

> The entire people was clamouring for the disappearance of the race that had installed itself so firmly in Spanish territory, like a cyst in the body of the nation. There remained no other formula than expulsion to put an end to the "Jewish peril," for the pogroms had shown clearly that the Israelites could not be drowned in blood. . . . As for the conversions, when it was realised that they were hardly ever sincere, they were a dangerous ferment leading to disintegration.[8]

Torroba's argument here is essentially the same one offered by Madariaga: popular opposition to a threat to Church purity pushed the Catholic monarchs to take action. Yet Torroba's account contains a harsher anti-Jewish tone. Even while defending the edict as inevitable, Madariaga speaks with a measure of sympathy for its victims. This is not true of Torroba, who refers to the Jews as a "race," a dangerous

cyst in the body-politic, and a "peril." He wants to leave the reader with the general feeling that it was no great sin to expel this troublesome people from the Spanish nation. Torroba seeks to uphold the integrity of his native land. It is a shame that like many of his countrymen, he used the Jews as a scapegoat once again in his effort to achieve this goal.

2. Valeriu Marcu and William Thomas Walsh

Originally written in German as Die Vertreibung der Juden aus Spanien in 1934, Valeriu Marcu's book appeared in English the following year as The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain. It is somewhat of an enigma, translated by Moray Firth under the pseudonym of William Rose, and containing neither footnotes nor bibliography. Its general orientation is also somewhat odd and ambivalent, sometimes appearing rather sympathetic to the Spanish Jews, and at other times quite critical of them. Thus he can point to the importance of the aljamas to Spain's economic well-being, then a few paragraphs later claim that the Jews "thoroughly approved of the 'cutting out of the tongues' of Arabic and Greek blasphemers of the Mosaic tradition." He makes this outrageous statement in an effort to prove that Spanish Jews shut themselves off from the rest of Spain and lived in a world of "arid Talmudism." He derides them for this supposed tendency, but he also criticizes the restrictive anti-Jewish laws enacted by Spanish Christians which only served to exacerbate the isolationism of the Jews.[9]

Like Madariaga and Torroba, Marcu notes that the mass conversions of 1391 created a whole new class of Christians, most of whom continued to covertly carry out Jewish practices. As these conversos began to climb through the ranks of society and enter into the aristocracy, their heresy became especially bothersome to the Old Christians. Here Marcu adds an economic factor which is not found in the accounts of the Spanish historians. Charges of Judaizing become a pretext for the underlying envy and animosity toward a social and economic rival, in this case the powerful and resourceful New Christians.[10]

The old aristocracy was not alone in its condemnation of Jews and conversos. Marcu believes that in fact the roots of antisemitism lie in the hatred of the Christian masses. This enmity tended to become particularly intense during periods of economic depression. Frustrated by their poverty and goaded on by the clergy, the populace took their anger out on the Jews. Those in power saw the advantage of harnessing the anti-Jewish sentiment which came from below and exploited it to their own political ends.[11]

The third source of opposition to the Jews, according to Marcu, was the Spanish Catholic Church. He describes Spanish Catholicism as militant and nationalistic, far removed from the pope in Rome and his universality. Papal authority carried little clout in the Spain of Ferdinand and Isabella. Church and state were inseparable there, each one serving the other, particularly in the religious/national battles of the Reconquista, which finally ended with the fall of Granada in 1492. The domestic equivalent of that war was the converso/Jewish problem. The Cross and the Crown combined to establish the Inquisition to fight

the conversos, and eventually decided upon expulsion as the only way to defeat the Jews.[12]

All of this mounting antagonism toward the Jews came to a head in the reign of the Catholic monarchs. They viewed their primary goal--the unification of Spain under an absolute monarchy--in both a nationalistic and a religious light. Experts in the art of statecraft, they moved quickly to achieve this desired end. They enlisted the support of the aristocracy in the romantic war against the Moors. They smiled upon the rampant rumors of ritual murder which roused the anger of the masses. Finally, they impressed the clergy with their piety, which was "not in faith alone, but also in State policy." As soon as Granada was vanquished, the convergence of religious and nationalistic interests must have seemed to them a fulfillment of destiny. The next step was obvious. The Jews were doomed. Thus Marcu concludes that "unity of faith could be surmounted without delay: the expulsion of the Jews was agreed upon by all."[13]

Marcu goes on to describe the suffering of the exiles in a highly sympathetic fashion; he even states that the expulsion damaged the Spanish economy. Yet, in his epilogue, Marcu insists that it cannot be shown that the expulsion or the Inquisition really hurt Spain. Here he returns to a somewhat apologetic tone, maintaining that while the loss of merchants and financiers wrought negative repercussions, the task of unifying the Spanish nation was achieved.[14] He refrains from passing judgment on the Spaniards, leaving the reader to form his/her own impressions. Thus he concludes his book much as he started it, with an odd mixture of sympathy and criticism of the Jews. Given the fact that

The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain was first published in Germany under Hitler, perhaps we might have expected worse.

Grim expectations are met in William Thomas Walsh's blatantly antisemitic book, Isabella of Spain, The Last Crusade (1930). The text of the work is even more one-sided than the title portends. Like the nineteenth-century Spaniard, Manuel Perez Villamil, Walsh presents his readers with a highly romantic and fiercely pro-Catholic history of Spain which idealizes the Catholic monarchs and their era at the expense of the Jews. This is apparent even from the sources which he cites. Although he refers briefly to the accounts of Prescott, Lea, Amador de los Rios, and Bernaldez, he bases most of his chapter on the expulsion on the Boletin de la real academie, volume XI, a record of the La Guardia trial which he accepts uncritically.

From the opening pages of Isabella of Spain, it is clear that the author will not accept even an iota of criticism leveled at his subject. He condemns Prescott, who dared to occasionally question the queen's actions. Walsh describes Isabella's primary goal as the unification of Spain under Christendom, and he lauds her for pursuing it with an undistracted passion. He speaks in superlatives of her piety, strength, and devotion to her people and even refers to her as the Spanish Joan of Arc.[15]

Wherever there is a saint, there must also be sinners. For Walsh, these are the Jews and Moors, Isabella's adversaries in the battle for the soul of the Iberian Peninsula. He portrays this struggle as a holy war of epic proportions and draws upon the common antisemitic myth of a

worldwide Jewish conspiracy to enlarge its scope. In setting the stage for the series of events leading to the general expulsion, he insists:

> In Medieval Spain the Jews came nearer to building a New Jerusalem than at any other time or place since their dispersion after the Crucifixion. Had they succeeded--and several times they came perilously near success--they might conceivably have managed, with Mohammedan aid, to destroy the Christian civilization of Europe. Their ultimate failure was caused chiefly by the life work of Isabel.[16]

This is not the only antisemitic diatribe that Walsh offers his readers. After a brief section on the 1391 riots and the converso problem which came in its wake, and a few pages on the victory over Granada, he proceeds to a detailed discussion of what he considers to be the true cause underlying the expulsion edict: the charges of host desecration and ritual murder, and especially the La Guardia affair. Walsh admits that numerous lies were spread concerning the Jews, but he hastens to add that the charges cannot be dismissed out of hand, for "the fact is that from time to time Jews were actually convicted of such crimes." When he describes the infamous case of the "Holy Child of La Guardia," it is obvious that he gives credence to such outlandish accusations.[17]

This affair began in June of 1490 when the New Christian Benito Garcia was arrested and accused of stealing the host from a church. Under torture he admitted to secretly practicing Judaism with the aid of two unconverted Jews, Ça Franco and his son Yucé. These two were in turn arrested and tortured until Yucé confessed to killing a Christian child. When the trial began in December, Yucé named several Jews and conversos who he claimed participated with him in the crucifixion of a Christian boy on Good Friday in the town of La Guardia. Almost a year

later a jury of twelve men found the accused guilty. Two Jews and six conversos were burned at an auto-da-fe on November 16, 1491. The supposed "Child of La Guardia" became known as saintly miracle worker.[18]

Needless to say, the trial and the accusations were farcical. The alleged victim's body was never found; in fact, it was not even sought. All of the "confessions" were made under torture. Yet Walsh accepts the verdict as proof that Spanish Jews actually committed these sorts of crimes and therefore constituted a danger to Iberian society. He never questions the validity of the "evidence" offered by Garcia, Yucé and others under extreme duress. He derides Henry Charles Lea for dismissing the case as an inflammatory fraud staged by the Inquisition and insists, "It is no longer possible to pretend successfully that it was a popular myth or a bit of anti-Jewish propaganda released by the Inquisitor General to justify the edict of March 31."[19]

Walsh declares that the atrocities which this case brought to light proved to be the downfall of the Spanish Jews, a circumstance which he delights in. After the trial, a series of antisemitic riots spread across the countryside. With the guilt of the Jews exposed and the public outrage against them at a fever pitch, Torquemada approached the king and queen and advocated the course of expulsion. Themselves appalled by the crucifixion, the monarchs (especially the pious Isabella) gladly agreed to banish the Spanish Jews, who made a few fruitless efforts to have the edict rescinded then resigned themselves to their fate and left the country. Walsh concludes the chapter by debunking the notion that the expulsion led to Spain's economic decline, asserting that the number of exiles was considerably lower than is

commonly estimated and that the small loss of population was therefore insignificant.[20] This claim, like much else in Walsh's book, seem to be founded more on the author's own antisemitism than convincing historical evidence, which is almost completely absent from the account.

It is perhaps unfair to categorize Walsh's book with that of Marcu or even the works of Madariaga and Torroba. Isabella of Spain is much more blatantly anti-Jewish in its defense of the queen than these other accounts. Nonetheless, all offer what is at least to some degree an apology for the expulsion edict. Marcu's history is the most balanced, maintaining a definite sympathy for the Jews even while denying that the expulsion was necessarily bad for Spain. Madariaga and Torroba speak as Spanish nationalists, viewing the edict as a small sacrifice which was necessary in order to achieve the higher good of national and religious unity. Walsh points to the same goal of unification, differing only insofar as his disdain for the Jews prevents him from viewing their banishment with any sense of sympathy.

All of the writers discussed in this section express the view that there were major benefits to be gleaned by the state in creating and enforcing religious homogeneity. For Marcu, the drive for unity of faith was part and parcel of an emerging national solidarity. Walsh rails against an imaginary Jewish conspiracy to undermine Spanish civilization, and Madariaga and Torroba refer specifically to the converso problem, which they maintain could have been solved only by purging Spain of its Jewish element, thereby discouraging the efforts of the Judaizing conversos.

These Christian apologists were not the only historians to attribute the expulsion to primarily religious concerns. As we have seen in previous chapters, in both the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries most Jewish historians (like the Spaniards Madariaga and Torroba) tended to accept the edict's own claim that the Jews were expelled in order to put an end to Judaizing among New Christians. They agreed that the Jews had aided their converso brethren in their effort to subvert the Church and covertly maintain their Jewish faith. The Jewish chroniclers differed from their Gentile counterparts in one important way: they viewed their people's tenacity as a virtue rather than a vice. For many of the non-Jewish writers, persistent Judaizing provided the valid justification for a commendable edict. For Joseph ha-Kohen, Jost, Graetz and their ilk, obstinate zeal for the faith was a meritorious course of action which a fanatical Spanish regime unfortunately could not tolerate. This traditional Jewish interpretation of the expulsion did not fall out of favor in the twentieth century. Many modern historians have continued to offer some variation of this view. Their works are the subject of the next section.

B. The Expulsion as a Response to Judaizing and the Need for Catholic Unity

All of the sixteenth-century Jewish historians and the vast majority of their nineteenth-century successors who held religious factors to be the principal causes of the expulsion were themselves religiously observant in some sense of the term. However, this should

not imply that this outlook in historiography necessarily derives from personal religiosity. We have seen several cases of observant Jews who held Ferdinand's avarice to be the primary reason for their people's tragic fate in Spain.

The other side of this equation is also true: not all historians who consider religion to be a vital force in history are themselves religious. A recognition of religion's power in the past may compel belief, it may repel it, or it may have no personal impact on the historian whatsoever. As we turn to the works of twentieth-century historians who emphasize the converso problem and the quest for Catholic unity as the main factors underlying the expulsion, we find a full spectrum in terms of personal observance, from pious Orthodoxy to staunch secularism. Many of these men would probably take diametrically opposed positions on the various religious issues of our own day. But our concern here is with how they view the past. On this question they form a broad consensus, though differing on the particulars: at least in regard to events surrounding the edict of 1492, they consider religious factors to have been of the utmost importance.

1. Simon Dubnow

Simon Dubnow was the first Jew to write a fully secular, extensive history of his people. He was born in Belorussia in 1860 and given a traditional Jewish education. Like many of his generation, however, Dubnow broke with religious Judaism as a youth. He taught himself the classics of Western thought and formed an especially strong attraction

to the works of Auguste Comte and John Stuart Mill. Their influence stayed with him all of his life, and led him to attack with special vehemence those parts of Judaism which he felt ran contrary to individual rights and scientific thought.[21]

Despite his loss of faith, Dubnow maintained strong ethnic ties to the Jewish people. He believed that a sociological history of the Jews could provide a key to their past and a guide for the present and the future. Thus he spent his career teaching Jewish history, first in St. Petersburg, then in Berlin, and finally in Latvia, where he was killed by the Gestapo in 1941. He was also a prolific writer. His works include a Russian translation and introduction to Graetz's history, a study of Hasidism (1888-93), History of the Jews in Russia and Poland (1916-20), and his magnum opus, the multi-volume World History of the Jewish People (German 1925-29; Hebrew 1923-38; English 1969).[22]

All of Dubnow's writings show a definite rationalist bent. He glorifies Jewish philosophers and criticizes the Kabbalists. Long term socio-economic tendencies are stressed over powerful and charismatic personalities. Unlike Graetz, Dubnow does not give his readers detailed biographical information on rabbis and scholars. In fact, he believed that after Emancipation, the religious component of Judaism was neither needed nor desirable. Instead, Dubnow advocated a nationalistic Judaism grounded not in Palestine, but in autonomous regimes within the boundaries of modern European nation-states. This view both emerges from and shapes his historiography, which holds the diaspora to be the preordained fate of the Jewish people, and concentrates on a number of shifting centers of diaspora life (hegemonies) as the focal points of

Jewish culture and civilization. This position earned Simon Dubnow the opposition of both Zionists and assimilationists.[23]

The English translation of the World History of the Jewish People contains few footnotes listing sources. Most of the notes are the author's own scholarly excursuses. There is, however, a fairly detailed bibliography. It is clear from it that in obtaining material on the expulsion, Dubnow relied primarily upon his Jewish predecessors. He refers to the works of Ibn Verga, Joseph ha-Kohen, Graetz, and Kayserling, among others, while citing only one major Spanish history--that of Jose Amador de los Rios. Dubnow essentially consulted the same sources which had been available to Graetz and other Jewish historians of the late nineteenth century. In this sense his work has more in common with theirs than with that of his successors. This should not be surprising. Dubnow was already sixty-five years old when the first volume of his history was published, and therefore more a product of the nineteenth century than the twentieth.

Dubnow traces the roots of the expulsion back to the antisemitism rampant in late fourteenth-century Castile. Here he does not hesitate to lay much of the blame for the hostility on the Jews themselves, particularly those wealthy dignitaries who lived extravagantly and aroused the hatred of the Christian population by their ostentatiousness. He is highly critical of the Jewish upper class, whose enrichment through often dishonorable means brought suffering upon the rest of their people. This claim that the Jews provoked the Christians with their arrogant displays of wealth and power is not a new one; among Jewish historians it goes back as far as the Shevet Yehudah.

Yet Dubnow's emphasis on the damage which the Jewish aristocracy inflicted on their working-class kinsmen is fairly novel. Perhaps it reflects the socialist ideology which was extremely influential among the Russian Jews of Dubnow's generation, even though he was not himself a socialist.[24]

While envy may have moved the masses against the Jews, Dubnow considers the Spanish clergy their primary adversary. He blames the clerics for the demise of the religious tolerance which characterized much of Spanish history, lambasting them for their desire to eliminate everything that was alien to them in the name of church-state unity. They were responsible for the hundred year "holy war" which ended with the defeat of the Moors at Granada and the ouster of the Jews.[25]

Dubnow dates the beginning of this "crusade" to free Spain of non-Catholic elements to the anti-Jewish riots of 1391. This catastrophe and the restrictive laws, violence, and religious disputation which followed between 1412 and 1415 led to an unprecedented flood of conversions and the creation of a new class: the conversos, most of whom continued to practice Judaism in secret. Unconverted Jews would aid their troubled brethren, supplying them with religious items and instruction to help them in their covert observance. This naturally upset the church, which saw its flock of New Christians reverting to Jewish heresy. Some efforts were made to solve the problem by separating the Jews from the conversos, but these largely failed.[26]

This is where the situation stood when Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile united the two most powerful kingdoms on the Iberian Peninsula. Dubnow notes that at first the Jews were pleased with the

union of the two young sovereigns, for it seemed to portend the strict enforcement of law and order throughout their realm. Yet for all their renowned piety, Ferdinand and Isabella were harsh and unyielding rulers. Dubnow dispenses with the nineteenth-century idealization of the queen, which does not occur again in any of the twentieth-century accounts composed by Jews which I have examined. Instead he describes both monarchs as "entirely dominated by the priests" with their pernicious intolerance and hostility. This did not bode well for the Jews.[27]

Ferdinand and Isabella believed their nation's "Jewish problem" to be made up of two interrelated components. The first was the conversos, whom they wished to secure firmly for the church. For this purpose they brought the Inquisition to Castile and Aragon, and used it as a tool to distinguish the sincere Christians from the Judaizers. The second component was the community of unconverted Jews. Without their aid, the New Christians would find it much more difficult to continue in their Judaizing. Therefore the monarchs began to restrict the Jews to their own segregated quarters and even tried to expel them from the Andalusian districts of Seville and Cordoba between 1480 and 1482. When these measures failed to produce the desired results, Ferdinand and Isabella recognized the only solution which remained untried. As Dubnow states, "In order to transform bad Christians into good Catholics, they had to be isolated from their brethren; and since that was impossible, the Jews had to be expelled from the country forever."[28]

The Catholic sovereigns knew that the timing of the expulsion would be crucial. They could take no action before Granada fell, for the Jews were needed as wartime financiers and tax collectors. They made their

decision, then waited until the moment was ripe. The Reconquista finally came to a successful conclusion in January 1492, and on March 31 they issued the edict. Dubnow reiterates his assertion that the sovereigns and their chief advisor on this matter, Torquemada, were motivated first and foremost by religious concerns when he describes the edict as their act of thanksgiving to God for the triumph over the Moors. Thus the staunchly secular Dubnow identifies religion as the chief causal factor for the expulsion.[29]

In summarizing the consequences of that act for the Spaniards, the historian notes:

> With the merciless expulsion of three hundred thousand educated and industrious citizens, Spain achieved uniformity of religion within its borders, but at the cost of its decline as a European power. With the Jews there passed out of the kingdom a hardworking and enlightened element which had greatly contributed towards the development of its resources. Militant knights and fanatical monks became masters of the situation, and in the course of time their activities brought the country to the verge of ruin.[30]

In its concluding paragraph, Dubnow is highly critical of the religious zeal which led Spain to expel its Jews. His bias here is quite clear: any time "fanatical monks" exercise a great deal of power, ruin will inevitably follow. This attitude is typical of the Eastern European <u>haskalah</u> with its roots in rationalism and its scorn for intolerance.

This section of Dubnow's work bears an interesting comparison with the corresponding passages in the histories of Graetz and other nineteenth-century Jewish writers. Like his predecessors, Dubnow establishes a direct connection between the expulsion of the Jews and the decline of Spain as a dominant power. In doing so, he shows a strong sense of pride in his people's accomplishments, and he seems to

revel in the misfortune which befell Spain after she gave her soul to the forces of fanaticism. It was only later in the twentieth century that historians would begin to point out that in fact Spain's decline did not begin until the early seventeenth century, over one hundred years after the expulsion.

Yet Dubnow's account differs from those of the nineteenth century insofar as it does not refer to Spain's fall from world power as evidence of vengeance or a spirit of retributive justice in history. He does not seem to hold--either explicitly or implicitly--that this sequence of historical events demonstrates the operation of the principle, " מדה כנגד מדה ." He states only that the loss of a productive middle class severely crippled the Spanish economy. This secular, non-providential view constituted a rather sharp break with earlier, more traditional modes of Jewish historiography. It set the course for the decades to come, as others would follow upon his path.

2. Henry Charles Lea

Like Simon Dubnow, Henry Charles Lea was really a nineteenth-century historian. Born in 1825, this Philadelphia publisher and historian devoted himself to the study of the Catholic church and its influence in medieval Europe. His works are well-researched and even-handed, and his books on the Inquisition remain authoritative in many areas even today. This is particularly true of his four volume set A History of the Inquisition in Spain, published in 1906, just three years before his death. A product of the author's old age, this history

is quite modern, reflecting a great deal of original research and independent thought. It is also very sympathetic to the Spanish Jews and conversos.

Lea was familiar with the work of Jewish historians, whose books he cites in the section on the Spanish expulsion. He refers especially favorably to Lindo and Graetz and uses their accounts to supplement that which he has gleaned from Amador de los Rios and a plethora of Spanish manuscripts.

He begins by noting in some detail the antisemitic tendencies of the Catholic church throughout medieval Europe. This anti-Jewish sentiment developed later in Spain than in other areas, but under the influence of the fanatical Dominican clergy it began to spread first through Aragon and then Castile. Lea is highly critical of the Church's hatred and bigotry, branding it the worst sort of hypocrisy.[31]

Lea does not hold the Jews completely blameless for the disdain directed toward them. Like Dubnow, Ibn Verga, and many others, he believes that "the Church, in its efforts to arouse popular hatred, was powerfully aided by the odium which the Jews themselves excited through their ostentation, their usury, and their functions as public officials." The lavishly extravagant garments which the Jewish women wore aroused the envy and wrath of the impoverished Christian masses. This took little provocation, for the populace was already ill-disposed toward that people whom they knew primarily as tax collectors for the Crown and lenders of money at exorbitant rates. It is clear, however, that Lea does not make these charges out of any personal antisemitic feeling, for he hastens to add that usurious interest rates actually

reflected the extraordinarily high risk of most loans and the scarcity of coinage--not the greed or avarice of Jewish financiers.[32]

According to Lea, the mounting antisemitism reached a critical point in 1391, as violent riots against the Jews spread across Castile and Aragon. Over the course of the next century Spanish Jewry declined in terms of both wealth and numbers, so that by 1492 the aljamas were obviously considered expendable by those in power. Meanwhile, the unprecedented numbers of Jews who apostatized either in 1391-2 or 1412-15 grew powerful and prosperous. They began to marry into the most prestigious aristocratic families in Spain. Yet many remained secretly steadfast in their Judaism, covertly following as many of the mitzvot as they could. Neither the Church nor the Crown could tolerate this sort of underground heresy, so they brought the Inquisition in to identify and punish those New Christians who refused to relinquish the true faith of their ancestors.[33]

At this point Lea makes his most original contribution to the literature on the expulsion. He offers the rather obvious, yet previously unnoted observation that the Inquisition, which was established to mitigate the converso problem, also served to exacerbate the "Jewish question." As long as the Jews could be viewed as potential Christians, their continued presence could be endured by the clergy and the sovereigns, who felt a mission to bring them into the Church. Once the Inquisition launched its inquiries and autos-da-fe, however, the Jews could no longer be expected to convert. As Jews they stood outside the sphere of the inquisitors' power, and therefore remained better off then their apostate brethren. The Spanish monarchs recognized this

irony and prepared to follow the only viable policy option available for dealing with the Jews.[34]

Lea attributes some of the incentive behind the expulsion edict to Torquemada, whom he describes as a religious fanatic with a powerful sway over the queen. Nonetheless, the historian places the primary responsibility for the expulsion on the shoulders of Ferdinand and Isabella. He rejects the "exaggerated encomiums" which previously idealized Isabella and calls her "a woman exactly adapted to her environment," combining tough self-reliance, crafty duplicity, and true piety. He also denies the commonly-held view that Ferdinand acted out of avarice, insisting that the king was a superb statesman and true Christian who believed that his sincere religious convictions were bound up with the good of the entire Spanish nation. In this case, that common good seemed to entail the expulsion of the Jews. Blood libel stories were spread in order to further inflame the common people against the Jewish communities. The tactic worked. Public opinion reached a fever pitch with the La Guardia trial. Shortly thereafter, the final obstacle disappeared with the capitulation of Granada. A few months later Ferdinand and Isabella issued the edict.[35]

Lea does not discuss the impact of the expulsion on the Spanish culture or economy. Providence plays no role whatsoever, then, in his account of events surrounding the exile. Yet he shares Simon Dubnow's assumption that religious rather than economic factors were to blame for the unfortunate decree. In summarizing the causes of the expulsion, he reiterates one last time his assertion that the edict was not a product of greed:

> The popular fanaticism required constant repression to keep the peace; the operations of the Inquisition destroyed the hope that gradual conversion would bring about the desired unity of faith and the only alternative was the removal of those who could not, without a miraculous change of heart be expected to encounter the terrible risks attendant upon baptism. It is easy thus to understand the motives leading to the measure, without attributing it, as has been, to greed for the victims' wealth. . . .[36]

It would, perhaps, make things easier for the historian if all antisemitism could be tied to material causes. Lea, like Dubnow, argues that this is not the case. He continues to hold that ideologies--both good and bad--make a very real difference in history. This position is also reflected in the work of Cecil Roth, a completely twentieth-century Jewish historian.

3. Cecil Roth

Cecil Roth was born in London in 1899. He was raised in a traditional Jewish household and remained an observant Orthodox Jew throughout his lifetime. He was trained as a general historian at Oxford, where he received his doctorate, but he soon turned his attention to Judaica. He was a reader in Jewish studies at his alma mater from 1939 to 1964, when he settled in Jerusalem and spent some time as a visiting professor at Bar Ilan University. In the last years of his life he served as the general editor of the Encyclopedia Judaica, dividing his days between Israel and New York. He died in 1970, leaving behind an enormous literary legacy which included hundreds of articles, and full-length histories of the Jews of England and Italy as well as of the Marranos and the Spanish Inquisition. The two main works containing

chapters on the expulsion are A History of the Marranos (1941) and The Spanish Inquisition (1937). There is a great deal of overlap between the two accounts, which draw upon sources as diverse as Henry Lea, William Thomas Walsh, Ibn Verga, Graetz, Llorente, Amador de los Rios, and Y. F. Baer's collection of primary materials gleaned from Spanish archives.[37]

Like most of the historians we have discussed earlier, Roth dates the beginning of the chain of catastrophes foreshadowing the expulsion to the mass conversions of 1391 and those which followed in the wake of the Tortosa dispute between 1413 and 1415. He, too, believes that the majority of New Christians remained Jews in all but name, and that this unprecedented class of secret Judaizers eventually made life exceedingly difficult for both themselves and their unconverted brethren. At first the conversos rose rapidly through the ranks of Spanish society, finally freed of those restrictions which shackled Jewish commerce. As it turned out, their rise was too meteoric. They provoked the envy of the poor Catholic masses and threatened the Old Christian nobles who resisted any challenge to their age-old hold on the aristocracy. Worst of all, they aroused the animosity and suspicion of the Church, which saw its ranks facing heresy and corruption from within. The clergy responded through their virulently antisemitic spokesman Tomas Torquemada, the queen's confessor, who helped the monarchs set up the Inquisition in 1480. This powerful body did its best to quash the Jewish heresy.[38]

As time went on, however, it became apparent that "it was hopeless to attempt to extirpate the Judaizing heresy from the land while Jews

were left in it to teach their kinsmen, by precept and by example, the practices of their ancestral religion.[39] Nonreligious factors also played a secondary role in bringing on the downfall of the Jews. Spanish nationalism was intensifying, and as it developed, the emerging nation grew increasingly intolerant towards those internal elements which worked against social homogeneity. Furthermore, the declining economic status of the Jews negated the material advantages which had earlier made their presence indispensable. Once the war with the Moors was successfully completed, the Jews became completely expendable and the Catholic monarchs signed the edict to expel them.[40] Bolstered by such socio-political and economic movements, religious fanaticism triumphed in Spain.

Despite all of its emphasis on the religious motives for the expulsion, Roth's account actually illustrates the dramatic rise of secularism in the first half of the twentieth century. Neither A History of the Marranos nor The Spanish Inquisition makes any mention of a decline in Spanish fortunes following the expulsion. Roth's works lack even the last vestiges of providence which tacitly linger in the nineteenth-century histories. Just fifty years earlier even the least religious thinkers had been unable to completely detach themselves from the influence of providential history. By 1940, Cecil Roth, who was traditionally observant, had managed to do so. Almost his entire generation followed a similar course, maintaining that the history of the Jews was subject to the same laws and standards as that of any other people or nation. Thus with only a few notable exceptions, we shall see

that providence disappeared from modern Jewish historiography before the Holocaust.

Yet Cecil Roth's books still retain one hint of their author's sympathy for religious piety. Unlike many of the other historians who trace the origins of the expulsion back to the 1391 riots, Roth offers an explanation for why so many Spanish Jews chose conversion over martyrdom. He blames rationalistic philosophy and social assimilation for the widespread apostasy, claiming that these factors had "minimized the cleavage between the various faiths" and "made the step of conversion seem less drastic." The implications here are quite clear: if the Jews had not spurned the simple piety of their ancestors, there would have been no converso problem and therefore no expulsion.[41]

This approach is somewhat reminiscent of Joseph Jabez's anti-rationalist polemics. Cecil Roth, however, was no mystic or reactionary. His Orthodoxy was of the fully modern variety, and he was at least as guilty of "philosophical interests and rationalising tendencies" as the Spanish Jews whose history he documents. Perhaps for this reason he refrains from passing judgment on them and their communities.[42] Not every historian would be so tolerant. The strongest critic of Iberian Jewish rationalism in our own century was an historian who was Roth's elder, Yitzhak Fritz Baer.

4. Yitzhak Fritz Baer

Born in Germany in 1888, Isaac (Yitzhak) Fritz Baer received a thorough education in both Jewish and secular subjects. He attended the

universities of Berlin, Strasbourg, and Freiburg, studying history and philosophy. In 1919 he took a post as a research assistant at the Akademie fur die Wissenschaft des Judentums, which sent him on two trips to Spain to gather new archival materials. These junkets were very fruitful. Baer published his findings in two volumes of sources, Die Juden im christlichen Spanien (1927, 1936), which made a monumental contribution to Spanish-Jewish history.[43]

In 1928, Baer accepted a position as a lecturer at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where he became a professor in 1930 and taught until his retirement in 1959. He also served as a founder and editor of Zion, the first modern Hebrew historical review. While he was at the university, he wrote several important works. Foremost among these is The Jews in Christian Spain, based largely on his own earlier archival work and first published in Hebrew in 1945. This detailed study is impressive in its accuracy and its synthesis of enormous quantities of historical data. Baer demonstrates a broad knowledge of both general history and the internal forces shaping Jewish life. It is in the second volume of this work, and in an earlier article entitled "גירוש היהודים מספרד" (1932) that he presents his account of the Spanish expulsion.[44]

Baer follows Dubnow and Roth in identifying the mass conversions of 1391 and 1412-15 as the beginning of the end of Spanish Jewry. He argues that the anti-Jewish riots took place against the wishes of the Crown and spread across Castile and Aragon because of the general social disorder and poverty of the time. Nonetheless, he asserts that the

primary motive for the disturbances was religious hostility, since they came to an end once numerous conversions were obtained.[45]

The peace proved to be short-lived, for Baer believes that the great bulk of the conversos remained unconvinced of the truth of Christianity and began to undermine the purity of the Church by secretly Judaizing. He insists again and again that "the story of the conversos is not one of racial 'remnants' which had lost their Jewish characteristics but of a large population-group, the majority of whose members adhered, consciously and by conviction, to the living Jewish tradition."[46] The percentage of those who covertly observed dietary laws, sabbaths, and festivals grew even higher after a messianic flurry which moved through the Jewish and New Christian communities in the wake of the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453.[47] This situation aroused the ire of many Old Christians, who began to urge the segregation of the Jews from their converted kin.

Upon assuming the monarchy of Castile and Aragon, Ferdinand and Isabella responded to the growing "Jewish problem." At first they sought to protect the unconverted Jews while punishing those New Christians who were caught Judaizing. Thus they established the Spanish Inquisition as a tool for identifying the true sources of heresy. Under Torquemada's leadership, however, the Inquisition began to work expeditiously for the destruction of Spanish Jewry. The Inquisitor General and his clerical associates urged the forced movement of Jews into separate neighborhoods and their expulsion from Andalusia. When these measures failed to stem the tide of Judaizing, the sovereigns began to consider a general expulsion.[48]

Other factors also boded ill for the Jews. Ferdinand and Isabella sought to overcome the feudal forces which had long divided the Iberian Peninsula. Their task was to unify Spanish Christendom under a strict absolutist regime. This would be considerably easier to achieve with a relatively homogeneous population than with a land full of Jews and Moors. Furthermore, the prominence of Jewish financiers and tax farmers had hardly earned the aljamas the good will of the common people. Therefore it became increasingly clear that once Granada fell, the Jews would be doomed.[49]

The Catholic sovereigns triumphantly entered that long-embattled city on January 2, 1492, and issued the fateful edict a few months later. Baer accepts the explanation offered in the decree itself, strongly asserting that ultimately the aforementioned political and economic considerations had no bearing on the final decision; the Jews were expelled because all other means of securing the conversos for the Church had been tried and found wanting. In summing up the Catholic sovereigns' proclamation he concludes:

דברי הפקודה מקיימים רק את הפרטים שאנחנו יודעים היום מתוך התעודות. ואין שום טעם לחפש אחרי סבות אחרות שגרמו לגירוש. ביחוד אין כאן מקום לחפש אחרי סיבות כלכליות. וגם שאר המוטיבים השונים של שנאת היהודים ששלטו בספרד בצורותיהם הכי חריפבת כמו שראינו לא היו שוף שוף המכריעים בדבר. גם לא היתה באן.. שאיפה פוליטית לעשות מן הספרדים אומה אחת ע"י הסרת האלמנט הזר של היהודים.. רעיון רחוק מאוד מרוח הזמן.50

> The words of the edict constitute the only documented facts we know of today, and there is no reason whatever to seek out other causes for the expulsion. In particular, there is no need to search for economic causes. As for all the other varied motives for hatred of the Jews which prevailed in Spain in their most virulent forms, as we have seen, in the end they did not determine the matter. There was also no political aspiration here which sought to form the Spaniards into a single nation through the removal of the foreign element of the Jews--a concept very distant from the spirit of the age.

This statement shows Baer to be the most single-minded among those who attribute the expulsion to the drive for Christian unity and zeal for the faith. Others such as Dubnow, Lea, and Roth view political, social, and economic motives as important but secondary. For Baer such factors are for all intents and purposes negligible.

Yitzhak Baer's continued emphasis on the power of religious considerations to move history does not commit him to a fully traditional account of the expulsion. In several ways his work is quite secular and modern. He demythologizes the legend that the Jews all departed from Spain on Tisha B'Av, calling it "a fable invented in the bright light of history." He also dismisses with a degree of scorn the popular nineteenth-century notion that the Jews could have launched a rebellion which would have truly threatened Spanish national security. He believes that once their appeals were rejected, the aljamas had no choice other than to accept the edict's provisions and either convert or leave the country. He hastens to add that most Jews had no need for another course of action because they were bolstered by the strength of their faith.[51]

Yet for all of his rationalism and modern methodology, Baer becomes oddly pietistic in those sections of his history which address the question of why so many Jews in Spain deviated from the tradition of Kiddush ha-Shem and accepted baptism. Like Cecil Roth, he attributes the apostasy to the widespread Averroist philosophy which denied divine providence and lowered the barriers between one faith and another. While Roth advances this view rather cautiously and non-judgmentally, however, Baer sounds like Joseph Jabez hurling critical barbs at the

philosophers. They must bear the ultimate responsibility for the expulsion, since their teaching led to the conversions, which in turn brought about the covert Judaizing and the Spaniards' ultimate turn to the measure of banishment. The pious Jewish masses suffered on account of their intellectual and assimilated leaders. Baer's words sound as if they could have been taken right out of Jabez's אור החיים when he states that "Jewish religious zealots rightly sought the cause of apostasy in the philosophical views of the converts, and contrasted these people with humble men and women whose simple faith stood the test."[52]

Isaiah Sonne discusses the roots of such statements in an article entitled "On Baer and his Philosophy of Jewish History." He shows that under the influence of colleagues at the Hebrew University such as Martin Buber and Gershom Scholem, Baer developed a theory of historiography which posited the Jews as bearers of a mythic-religious order, with a destiny to preserve it in a hostile Western world of rational thinking. Pious men of faith stand as heroes, while manifestations of Jewish rationalism represent assimilation, abandonment of the people's true mission, and eventually national suicide. Sonne concisely sums up the whole of Baer's analysis of the expulsion in a paragraph:

> The final judgment Baer passes upon the Jews in Spain may be defined as follows: in trying to adopt the rational way of thinking, the Jews in Spain neglected their own heritage, the mythical religious way of life assigned to them, and invaded a foreign spiritual domain. Consequently they were unable to resist external pressure, to bring the extreme sacrifice and to face martyrdom, as did the loyal German Jews. It was the rational strain that led the Spanish Jews to desertion, and paved the way to the tragedy of the "Anusim," fatal to the whole of Spanish Jewry. It was the legitimate nemesis for their illegitimate invasion of an alien spiritual domain.[53]

When Joseph Jabez fumed against philosophy four centuries ago, it probably struck no one as particularly notable. He was, after all, a traditional rabbi who followed a long line of pietist criticisms of rationalism. In the work of an eminent modern historian, however, the claim that "Averroism" was the chief cause of the Spanish expulsion is somewhat more striking. In Baer's case, it also leaves the reader with a major inconsistency to ponder. The problem is obvious: if, as the historian repeatedly insists, the conversos had been Averroistic, nonobservant Jews who scorned traditional religion in general, why would they have risked their lives to practice Judaism clandestinely after they had been baptized? Perhaps Baer would have us believe that the apostates became baalei teshuvah after their conversion, but this seems a rather unlikely scenario to have occurred en masse. At any rate, Baer says nothing about this paradox; he is either unaware of it, or chooses consciously to ignore it.

There is one other issue which may be raised in relation to Baer's notion of the Jews as a people with a unique destiny. Since that destiny entails the propagation of a mystic-religious order in the midst of an antagonistic society, it follows that as long as the Jews continue to strive to fulfill that mission in the diaspora, they will be doomed to failure and exile. Yitzhak Baer escaped from Nazi Germany in the final hour, and his experience could not have been far from his heart when he wrote from his refuge in Jerusalem:

> In Spain we see recapitulated, as it were, what took place--albeit against a wider historical backdrop--on two other occasions in the history of the Jews: once in the course of the drawn out struggle with the united powers of Graeco-Roman civilization and early Christianity, and again in our own

> time, that began with the call to assimilate among the nations of Europe and whose continuation may be seen in all that has happened to the Jewish people since, down to our own generation.[54]

Not surprisingly, Baer's position here is in accord with the classical political Zionist view of galut: no matter how hard diaspora Jews try to assimilate into the mainstream of society they will always eventually meet with failure and end up as exiles defeated by the inevitable forces of antisemitism. Baer had seen this happen with his own eyes in Germany, and undoubtedly he found much support for this damning attitude toward the diaspora when he arrived in Palestine. Indeed, this conception that outside the homeland all Jewish life is doomed became a widespread doctrine among Israeli historians. We shall see it at work in several other accounts of the Spanish expulsion, though not in that of Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson.

5. Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson

Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson was born and raised in Lithuania. Like Yitzhak Baer, he later moved to Palestine and took a position on the history faculty of the Hebrew University. He also joined his elder colleague as an editor of the quarterly Zion, which printed a number of his articles on the history of the Jews in the Middle Ages. Of his published works, at least two contain accounts of the Spanish Expulsion. These, to be considered here, are the article " דור גלות ספרד על עצמו " (1960) and the section which he wrote on the medieval period for A History of the Jewish People (Hebrew 1969; translation 1976). The

sources which he cites in these accounts include the histories of Graetz, Dubnow, Roth, Baer, and Salo W. Baron.[55]

Ben-Sasson gives a fairly detailed explanation of the events leading up to the expulsion in the large general history which he edited and partially wrote. His narrative closely follows Baer's interpretation. He, too, begins with the anti-Jewish riots and massacres of 1391 which resulted in mass baptisms and created the converso problem. The New Christians were justly held in suspicion as Judaizers while the Church groped for ways to deal with the unprecedented internal heresy. First the Inquisition was introduced to distinguish the sincere Christians from the clandestine Jews. When this failed to solve the problem, the Catholic monarchs intensified their efforts to segregate the Jews through a series of restrictive policies. Then Granada fell and Ferdinand and Isabella zealously resolved to ensure the purity of the faith in the newly unified Christian nation. Encouraged by Torquemada and the clergy, they agreed to issue the expulsion edict. Ben-Sasson notes that the last exiles departed on July 31 (Av 7) but adds that "legend has recorded the date as the Ninth of Av . . ." Here, too, he follows Baer in contrasting the myth with the reality.[56]

Yet Ben-Sasson breaks with Baer on the all-important question of why so many Jews chose conversion over martyrdom in 1391 and the decades that followed. Baer had argued that the roots of apostasy (and ultimately of the expulsion as well) lay in the "Averroism" of the Spanish Jewish leaders. Ben-Sasson takes issue with his colleague's position in the final portion of " דור גלות ספרד על עצמו." He insists

that the writings of the exiles themselves show that the dominant ideology among Spanish Jews in the late fifteenth century was mystical rather than rationalistic. A few Jews in the royal court may have been lax in observing the mitzvot, but their impiety was due to the influence of an extravagant and corrupt lifestyle, not an Averroistic philosophy.[57]

According to Ben-Sasson, a mystic religious fervor swept over all of Spain about one hundred years before the expulsion. The movement began among Christians, then spread to the Jewish communities. It brought in its wake new doctrines of Torah and galut which reflected some Christian elements. This shift made it easier for Jews to accept the Catholic church's mystical symbols and sacraments. The gap dividing the two faiths was bridged by the shared mysticism. As evidence for this, Ben-Sasson points to such famous apostates as Shlomo ha-Levi (Pablo de Santa Maria) and Joshua ha-Lorki (Geronimo de Santa Fe), both of whom arrived at their apostasy out of an anti-rationalist, eschatological form of Judaism. He is careful to avoid over-generalizations. He refuses to blame one group for the entire crisis in Spain, but he rejects Baer's thesis by asserting that the predominant religious outlook among Spanish Jews at the time was mystical rather than rationalistic.[58] Thus he asserts:

אלא שבעת המשבר היתה המגמה המיסטית האסקטית הבוח הדינאמי בספרד בולה, בנצרות וביהדות. קול ראציונאליזם הוא קול ענות חלושה בתוך מחנה ישראל למן המאה הארבע עשרה ואיליך... לעמת זאת הולך וגובר קול המיסיקאנים[59]

> During the period of the crisis, the mystical, eschatological tendency was the dynamic force throughout Spain, in Christianity and Judaism. The voice of rationalism was weak and lowly in the Israelite camp from the fourteenth century onward . . . while the voice of mysticism grew stronger.

The dispute between Baer and Ben-Sasson illustrates the range of diversity among those historians who agree that the expulsion edict was issued primarily as a response to Judaizing and the quest for religious unity. Under the broad banner of this general approach we have met Gentiles, Secular and Orthodox Jews, diaspora dwellers and Israelis, historians favorably inclined toward mysticism, and ardent rationalists. Their differences are at least as great as their similarities. Yet all of these men largely accept the reasoning presented in the edict at face value: the Jews were expelled primarily out of a desire to put an end to heresy among the New Christians.

In the second half of the twentieth century, historians began to question the assumption that the infamous edict gave the true reasons for the expulsion. A number of thinkers started to search for sociopolitical explanations for the event. They put special stress on the heightened desire for national (as opposed to religious) unity, and on the rise of the absolute monarchy--both of which received their impetus from the union of Ferdinand and Isabella. These historians also form a fairly eclectic group. They differ considerably in what they identify as secondary causes of the expulsion even while sharing a broad agreement with regard to the primary causal factors. We turn now to their works, beginning with that of the Israeli scholar Ephraim Shmueli.

C. Sociopolitical Explanations: National Unity and the Rise of Absolute Monarchy

1. Ephraim Shmueli and Victor Eppstein

Born in Lodz, Poland in 1908, Ephraim Shmueli emigrated to Palestine in 1933. He received his academic training there, and eventually he became an educator and historian. He held several positions at American universities, among them a professorship in philosophy and religion at Cleveland State. He also wrote a history of Zionism, two Hebrew textbooks on Jewish history, and דון יצחק אברבנאל וגירוש ספרד (1963).[60]

The book on Abrabanel actually contains a wealth of interesting information in a whole variety of areas somehow connected with the life of the great scholar and statesman. It touches on fifteenth-century social and political trends, Jewish philosophy, the status of the conversos, the image of the Jews in Western Europe, and an overview of Jewish historiography. Shmueli draws on a wide range of sources including all of the Jewish chroniclers of the sixteenth century, Kayserling, Graetz, Dubnow, Baer, Baron, Ben-Sasson, and Gershom Scholem. He also refers to the work of the Spaniard Andreas Bernaldez. Even more important for him is A. A. Neumann's two volume history, The Jews in Spain: Their Social, Political, and Cultural Life during the Middle Ages. The latter study is still an invaluable guide to understanding medieval Jewish civilization on the Iberian Peninsula; it

is not taken up in this chapter, however, since it does not give an account of the expulsion.

In a section on Jewish historiography, Shmueli claims that Graetz and Dubnow misunderstood the causes of the Spanish expulsion because they lacked archival materials and were bound by the limitations of their age, which tended to overlook the social and political relations between the Jews and their host nations. They, therefore, accepted the edict's claims at face value and viewed the event as the culmination of a one hundred year "holy war" spearheaded by fanatical clerics. Shmueli concedes that one motive behind the expulsion was the strengthening of the Catholic church, but he considers this only a secondary factor.[61]

Shmueli believes that the expulsion was an act of statecraft masterfully cloaked in the guise of religiosity by Ferdinand and Isabella. Here he follows in the footsteps of Basnage and Llorente who also adopted the Machiavellian view identifying the Catholic monarchs (especially Ferdinand) as cunning practitioners of the art of realpolitik. First the king enlisted the support of the urban patriciate. They helped him muster the local militias (Holy Brotherhoods) which enabled him to suppress the power of the Old Christian aristocracy. Then he established the Inquisition, the tool he used to crush the New Christians who dared to challenge his authority. After the victory over the Moors at Granada in 1492, only the independent-minded Jews stood between the sovereigns and absolute monarchy. Their ouster promised to yield clear and immediate profits, and it would also set the devious king in good graces with the church. Therefore in March of 1492, Ferdinand and Isabella issued the edict

which had become almost inevitable, and the Jews prepared to face the trials of exile.[62]

Shmueli makes no explicit statements about the future of diaspora life in his account. However his interpretation of the expulsion is in tacit agreement with Baer's insofar as it subtly implies that in galut even the mightiest Jewish civilizations are doomed to extinction. By attributing the downfall of Spanish Jewry to impersonal and uncontrollable forces rather than the antisemitism of either the sovereigns or the clergy, Shmueli emphasizes the helplessness of all Jews in the diaspora. The implications of his claim that the sephardim were victimized by Ferdinand's amoral statecraft are quite clear: Jews can find security only when they possess the power to determine their own destiny. The Jewish people will never escape from the threat of future expulsions (and even more tragic disasters) except in the shelter of their own homeland, where they themselves steer the ship of state. All of this Zionist doctrine lies just beneath the surface in Shmueli's narrative.

In the September 1964 issue of Midstream, Victor Eppstein (who the magazine identifies as the Hillel director at the University of Oklahoma) offers some cogent criticism of Shmueli's book in a review essay. He takes note of Shmueli's claim that the rise of monarchical absolutism was the fundamental cause of the expulsion, then proceeds to argue that while he is in agreement with the general tenor of this view, it is simplistic.

Unlike Shmueli, Eppstein points to a long history of antisemitism in Spain and seeks to identify its origins. He asks why the Jews were

so despised in medieval Europe, then responds with the same answers which had been commonly offered since Ibn Verga's time: Jewish economic success aroused the envy and anger of the impoverished Christian masses, and fanatical priests played on that wrath with a barrage of anti-Jewish propaganda. These factors isolated the aljamas from the rest of Spanish society and paved the way for the expulsion edict.[63]

At this point Ferdinand and Isabella entered upon the scene. Their greatest desire was to crush the power of the feudal nobility and establish an absolute monarchy. Yet they could not achieve this goal without considerable support. The monarchs won the populace to their side by exploiting the almost universal disdain for the Jews. As Eppstein states, ". . . In the contest for power between king and nobles, the hatred of the people for the Jews was employed as a lever."[64]

In other words, while Shmueli describes the expulsion as a purely political move reflecting no real animosity towards the Jews, Eppstein believes that the use of such a tactic to achieve absolute monarchy could never have succeeded without the long legacy of anti-Jewish sentiment among the Christian masses. This distinction is subtle but important. Shmueli perceives the drive for monarchical absolutism as the final cause underlying the infamous decree. For Eppstein this was merely the precipitant.[65]

Yet Eppstein shares Shmueli's conception of Jewish life in the diaspora as fated to failure. He, too, asserts that the Spanish Jews were overcome by circumstances which they were powerless to combat.

Indeed, he explicitly voices the concern which remains implicit in Shmueli's book, claiming that the banishment from Spain was a part of the "historical process which had written into the evolution of European civilization the inescapable decree of destruction against the Diaspora of Israel."[66] The obvious though unstated corollary to this position is that in order to survive as a people, the Jews must rebuild and resettle their own sovereign state. Once again we see the tangible impact of political Zionism on historiography.

It should be noted that not every sociopolitically inclined Jewish historian considers the expulsion in light of the negation of the galut. One would expect to find a somewhat different perspective in the work of most life-long residents of the diaspora. This proves to be the case in Salo Baron's comprehensive history. He points to some irresistible forces endangering Jewish co-existence among the nations, but he tends to emphasize the role of the dispersion as a "major vehicle of progress in the history of Europe and Jewish civilization."[67]

We shall now examine his work in more detail.

2. Salo W. Baron

The elderly Jewish historian Salo W. Baron was born in Galicia in 1895. During World War I he came to Vienna, where he attended the university and received graduate degrees in philosophy, political science, and law. He was also ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary of Austria in 1920. In 1927 he accepted Stephen S. Wise's invitation to come to America and teach history at the Jewish Institute

of Religion. Three years later he left to take a position at Columbia, thereby becoming the first full professor of Jewish history at any secular American university. He remained there until his retirement in 1963, since which he has devoted his time almost exclusively to research and writing.[68]

Over the course of his long lifetime, Baron has written hundreds of books and articles. His outstanding erudition is particularly evident in the unfinished Social and Religious History of the Jews. This enormous multi-volume work stresses the interaction of Jewish communities with the general environment. Baron's interdisciplinary training and his fluency in most European languages make him uniquely qualified to examine the Jewish past in light of wider historical trends. His narrative is arranged topically rather than chronologically, as he moves from one region to another, drawing parallels and analyzing differences.[69]

Baron discusses the chain of events leading up to and including the Spanish expulsion in the tenth and eleventh volumes of his history, published in 1965 and 1967 respectively. He draws on an extraordinary range of sources, including all of the Jewish chroniclers of the sixteenth century, Machiavelli and other Italian Renaissance historians, Bernaldez, Amador de los Rios, Graetz, Kayserling, Roth, Baer, Shmueli, and various modern Spanish historians. His account of the catastrophe is quite complex, attributing the edict to a number of factors which made the Jews anathema in Spain. Indeed, Baron's narrative could be reasonably subsumed under several of the sections in this chapter. Nevertheless, I believe that he places a special emphasis on the effects

of nationalism and the desire for demographic homogeneity; on this basis his history is considered here.

Baron begins with a broad overview of the status of the Jews in the medieval world of Western Europe. He describes the late Middle Ages as a difficult time, culminating with general expulsions from England, France, and Spain. While most historians have pointed to religious fanaticism as the root of such anti-Jewish actions, Baron finds this explanation inadequate. He notes that rulers such as Ferdinand and Isabella were certainly no more zealous for the faith than Charlemagne or Louis the Pious, both of whom granted special privileges to the Jews of their realm. Therefore he determines to look elsewhere for the origins of the disturbances.[70]

First he examines the decline of feudalism and the ensuing rise of a middle class with a strong aversion for the Jews. As the old order fell apart, this new and largely urban class found itself in direct competition with established Jewish economic interests. They began to pressure their kings and queens to enact restrictions on the Jews. Many rulers agreed to do so and used the opportunity for their own imperialistic purposes.[71]

Foremost among the sovereigns' concerns were the strengthening of state power and ultimately the desire to establish absolute monarchies. Western European rulers slowly started to consolidate their dominance over the feudal aristocracy, calling for national unity and centralization. This late medieval nationalism did not bode well for the Jews, for it encouraged a patriotic fervor grounded on ethnic and religious homogeneity. As monarchical power increased and newly-found

national pride reached a fever pitch, the Jews could no longer count on the protection traditionally afforded to them by the nobles or the Crown. Without their former benefactors' support they were easily banished, first from England, then France, and finally from Spain.[72]

After setting forth these generalizations about the status of the Jews throughout late medieval Europe, Baron presents the histories of each national region. The section on Spanish Jewry begins, like many accounts we have seen previously, with the disastrous pogroms of 1391. Baron believes that Jewish usury and ostentatiousness helped arouse the anger of the Christian populace which, goaded on by fanatical clerics, erupted in a series of murderous antisemitic riots. Many Jews chose baptism over martyrdom, turning to the Church in an unprecedented rush of forced conversions. At first the Church may have basked in a sense of mission and accomplishment. Not much later, however, the Spanish clergy and lay people alike came to recognize that the Jews converted en masse could not be easily assimilated into the majority. Many continued to uphold their ancient faith clandestinely, aided by their unconverted brethren. Thus the "converso problem" was born.[73]

By the time that Ferdinand and Isabella established their sovereignty over the Kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, this problem had grown to critical proportions. The Catholic monarchs responded by bringing the Inquisition to Spain as an instrument to separate the sincere new Christians from the Judaizers. It had no authority over unconverted Jews, and for a short while Ferdinand and Isabella seemed to offer the aljamas some relief and security. They relied heavily on their Jewish public officials and fiscal agents. Even more importantly,

their strict insistence on law and order promised an end to the anarchic state of affairs which left the Jews helpless victims of antisemitic rioters. By 1483, however, the sovereigns recognized that the Inquisition could not achieve its goal as long as the Jews and conversos were permitted to maintain a steady stream of intercourse. Therefore they moved to expel the Jews from Andalusia. Shortly thereafter they issued a series of decrees designed to isolate Spanish Jewry from their New Christian kin. When even these measures failed to put an end to the Judaizing, Ferdinand and Isabella began to consider the possibility of ordering a general expulsion.[74]

Yet Salo Baron maintains that the sovereigns had a number of other reasons for taking this particular course of action. They stood to gain a great deal financially by exiling the Jews and expropriating the bulk of their possessions and property. The opportunity to ally themselves with the Church and fill the royal coffers at the same time must have been virtually impossible to pass up.[75]

The momentum building for expulsion became completely irresistible when the king and queen recognized this policy's potential for "consolidating monarchical rule and integrating the disparate elements in the population."[76] Baron deems this the most important motive of all, for like Shmueli he believes that Ferdinand was first and foremost a statesman. As the Reconquista came to a successful conclusion, this calculating ruler leapt at the chance to assert his power over the nobles and expel that people which simply could not be assimilated into the mainstream of Spanish society. The Jews had become an obstacle in the path to national unification and homogenization, both prerequisites

for the consolidation of absolute monarchical power. Shortly after the Moors capitulated, the Catholic monarchs decided they could wait no longer. On March 31, 1492 they issued the expulsion edict.[77]

In a brief recapitulation of the roots of the catastrophe, Baron states that Spanish Jewry "tumbled under the combined assaults of religious intolerance, economic rivalry, folkloristic prejudice, and inner Jewish weakness--all climaxed by the effects of national unification."[78] In other words, he proffers a multi-causal interpretation with a slight stress on the primacy of political factors. In both his broad overview of the tragic fate of all medieval European Jewries and his detailed analysis of the situation in Spain, Baron considers the quest for national unity and monarchical authority to be the catalyst for the array of other determinative factors, a sort of primus inter pares.

This interpretation of the expulsion is completely secular. Baron does not launch into a discourse connecting Spain's decline with her mistreatment of the Jews; in fact, he does not touch upon the effects of the measure on the Spanish economy at all. He makes no reference to the "retributive justice of history," either explicitly or implicitly through a scheme of reward and punishment. He also follows Baer and Shmueli in debunking the myth that the last contingent of Jews left Spain on Tisha B'Av. He refers to this as a pious legend, then identifies the true date of departure as July 31, the seventh of Av.

It is interesting to recall that the author of this secular account is an ordained rabbi. Despite his background and his personal religiosity, Baron writes as a professionally-trained historian and his

work reflects the critical, empirical spirit of the twentieth century. He never forgets that he is discussing history rather than homiletics or theology. In this respect he differs from another rabbi and chronicler of the events surrounding the Spanish expulsion, the amateur historian Jacob S. Minkin.

3. Jacob S. Minkin

Born in Poland in 1885, Jacob Minkin attended several yeshivot before emigrating to the United States in 1904. In America this Old World Talmud scholar received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Columbia, and was ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1910. He worked as a congregational rabbi in Ontario and Rochester, New York until 1933, when he decided to devote his time to writing, particularly as a frequent contributor to Jewish periodicals.[79]

His best known book, Abarbanel and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain, was published in 1938. It is clearly intended for the lay reader rather than the scholar, for it is written in romantic, almost novel-like prose and contains no footnotes. The bibliography does not include any Spanish texts or manuscripts, and one can surmise from it that this history is based almost entirely on secondary sources. In some respects the text is also rather dated, reflecting the historiography of the nineteenth century more than that of the twentieth. The combination of modern and traditional assumptions in Abarbanel and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain is probably somewhat

related to the author's own varied background as a talmudically-trained congregational rabbi with a graduate degree from Columbia.

Minkin follows Ibn Verga and other critical Jewish historians in placing some of the blame for Spanish antisemitism on the Jews themselves. He notes that their success as tax-collectors and money-lenders fostered resentment among impoverished Christians. Wealthy Jews made the situation even worse by basking in their luxury and splendor in the presence of envious Christian countrymen. Minkin comments that "Jewish moralists thundered against the expensively attired women but to no avail."[80]

While the Jews must bear some responsibility for the malice of the Spanish populace, the primary onus rests on the clergy. Fanatic priests roused the people against the Jews, pressing for their conversion in rabidly antisemitic sermons. The tension came to a head in 1391, when thousands were forcibly baptized in the wake of murderous anti-Jewish riots. Like many historians whose works we have examined in previous sections, Minkin describes this catastrophe as a turning point, the origin of the converso problem. He accepts the commonly-held conviction that most of the New Christians clandestinely carried on Jewish practices. This Judaizing eventually led to the establishment of the Inquisition, a vicious body governed by the cruel and despotic Father Tomas Torquemada. Neither he nor the body over which he presided had any official authority over the unconverted Jewish population. Nonetheless, Torquemada believed that the only way to uproot the heresy from the Church was to isolate the <u>aljamas</u> from Spanish Christendom.

Eventually, he resolved that Spain could not purify herself without expelling all of her Jews.[81]

Yet Minkin knows that on his own Torquemada could not have enacted such a measure. Ultimately, only the Crown had the power to sanction this act. Therefore he questions what might have moved the Catholic sovereigns to issue the infamous decree. He describes the queen's role as secondary. This is not to say that he idealizes her in the manner of his nineteenth-century counterparts; indeed, he calls her "severe and callous and utterly indifferent to human agony." Still, he insists that while she may have eagerly concurred, the directive came almost exclusively from the king.[82]

Minkin attributes Ferdinand's motivation to cupidity and an intense lust for absolute authority. He portrays the monarch as a master of deceit who eagerly used religion to mask his avarice and ambition. As the fifteenth century drew to a close, this "veritable Machiavellian model" laid plans to emulate his royal counterparts in England and France. He would expel the Jews from his nation and appropriate their property, thereby asserting his personal power, enlarging his treasury, and earning the Church's favor.[83]

Once he set his mind on this course of action, Ferdinand could afford to wait patiently until the moment was right. During the war with the Moors, the Crown could not have done without the services of Jewish merchants and financiers. After Granada fell, however, the Jews became expendable. By spring of 1492 many had already left the Iberian Peninsula. Others had lost their wealth and status to heavy taxation and a century of persecution. When the king sensed the patriotic fervor

following the military triumph, he knew the proper time had come. On March 31, the edict was decreed throughout Castile and Aragon. Three months later, not a single man, woman, or child lived openly as a Jew in those two kingdoms.[84]

This account presents a rather unique mixture of old and new historiographical features. Insofar as it reflects an awareness of economic factors and emphasizes Ferdinand's cunning pursuit of absolute political power, it is typical of the twentieth century. As we have seen in the work of Dubnow, Roth, Baer, and others, Minkin also has ample modern precedent for reading the edict at face value and accepting at least partially the view that the expulsion constituted a response to the aljamas' continued corrupting influence on the New Christians.

When Minkin discusses the aftershocks of the expulsion, however, he sounds more like Graetz than Baer or Baron. He insists that Abrabanel obtained a two-day extension of the edict's July 31 deadline, enabling the Jews to depart on the second day of August--Tisha B'Av.[85] He also returns to the nineteenth-century view of providence as the "retributive justice in history." He revels in Spain's decline, which he takes as a sort of vengeance, " מדה כנגד מדה." Thus he concludes:

> The children of the martyred race once more trudged on. They were a people horribly wronged, but in the centuries to come they were to be avenged a thousand fold for the pain and suffering they had endured. With the departing Jews went all that had made Spain great. They left behind impoverished cities and depopulated provinces. The country, once a fairyland of culture and riches, now became a land of misery, ignorance and superstition."[86]

This part of Minkin's account of the expulsion reveals a side of the author that seldom surfaces elsewhere in Abarbanel and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain. Throughout most of the book, he maintains some

sense of detachment, writing as a fairly critical, albeit amateur, historian. Here, on the other hand, the reader meets Jacob S. Minkin the rabbi, speaking of the Jewish people and divine providence in rich sermonic tones. This impassioned voice rises for a moment, rings with the clarity of a more assured and faithful age, then settles back into the cooler and more distant idiom of the secular twentieth century.

Neither Baron's nor Minkin's books present strictly sociopolitical accounts of the expulsion. Actually, each of these historians offers a multi-causal interpretation of that event, viewing it as the intersection of a number of diverse tendencies in medieval Spanish and Jewish life. Only because I believe they attribute a degree of primacy to sociopolitical factors have I categorized them together within this chapter.

The dividing line between them and the "economic historians" whose works I shall take up in the next section is thin indeed. Here too, classification is strictly a matter of emphasis. Marcus Arkin, Henry Kamen, Ferdnand Braudel, Americo Castro, B. Netanyahu, and Stephen Haliczer all point to a complex array of motivations and processes behind the expulsion edict. Furthermore, only Arkin is by his training first and foremost an economist; the other men are professional historians who look to the teachings of the "dismal science" to help them to better understand the past. Nonetheless, I have placed their accounts together in this section, for they all stress the importance of material (particularly monetary) factors in the decision to expel the Jews. They also tend to view the whole of Spanish Jewry as one of many

factions or classes on the Iberian Peninsula competing for scarce resources. These historians may disagree over which side won the class struggle. They may even debate the identity and nature of its participants, but they all concur on one most important and obvious point: the Jews, insofar as they were exiled, clearly stand among the losers of the economic battle, at least in the short run.

D. Economic Interpretations

1. Marcus Arkin

A South African professor and economic historian, Marcus Arkin is the author of "The Economic Background to the Expulsion of Spanish Jewry," a short article published in the September 1957 issue of the Johannesburg monthly, Jewish Affairs. He probably wrote the piece with a lay readership in mind, but it also contains material of value for the professional historian. The text's few footnotes cite the works of Prescott, Graetz, Lea, and Neumann; Arkin is particularly fond of Prescott, whom he considers an early precursor of his own economic approach to Iberian-Jewish history.

Arkin opens the article by suggesting that many of the Catholic monarchs' policy decisions that are commonly viewed as purely "religious" were in fact "almost always backed, consciously or unconsciously, by other considerations--especially economic ones." He maintains that while the converso problem weakened the aljamas, Ferdinand and Isabella did not consider expelling the Jews until they

determined that new political concerns and colonial expansion demanded a national economic policy incompatible with continued toleration of the Jewish population. Spanish Christians had gradually begun to recognize new economic opportunities as small craftsmen and merchants. Consequently the Jews, who had previously been the only people consistently interested in these occupations, found themselves engaged in a bitter competition which they could not win. The guilds closed their doors to non-Christians, and the Castilian merchants on the Cortes (parliaments) pressured the government to force the Jews out of the market. Jewish fortunes went into a tailspin, and only the Jewish elite--the powerful tax farmers and money-lenders--maintained a good portion of their wealth.[87]

Yet even these mighty Jews eventually met their match. By collecting the taxes levied on the sheepowner's guild (the Mesta), they aroused the resentment of a group with enormous influence in royal circles. Arkin cites a history of the Mesta which claims that its organizers were "never far from the royal presence [and] had not a little to do with the edict for expulsion of the Jews."[88] There is, however, at least one major flaw in this argument: it seems unlikely that the monarchs would have responded to the Mesta's anti-Jewish request when the guild's main complaint was that the Jews had dared to farm the taxes which Ferdinand and Isabella had themselves imposed.

Arkin presents a more logical economic ground for the expulsion when he argues that the Catholic sovereigns invoked the decree in order to allay a chronic shortage of liquid funds created by the drawn out conquest of Granada. The expulsion enabled Ferdinand and Isabella to

avoid repaying the war debts owed to affluent Jews; indeed, it allowed for royal appropriation of a large part of the exiles' fortunes. Banned from taking gold or silver out of the land, Jews left with almost nothing. Their property flowed into the royal treasury, feeding the greed of the supposedly pious monarchs.[89]

Yet Arkin believes that over the long run, Spain lost more than she gained. He notes that the persecutions and expulsion destroyed an important, productive class and led to a rather severe shortage of skilled labor. These deficiencies soon offset the immediate financial benefits. In other words, the measure was "an occasion of impoverishment rather than prosperity for Spain."[90]

This discussion may leave the impression that Arkin's narrative endorses the implicitly providential belief in the "retributive justice in history." This is not the case. Indeed, Marcus Arkin criticizes this tendency, "once fashionable among historians, to ascribe to the religious expulsions all the economic misfortunes which increasingly beset Spain after the middle of the sixteenth century." However he also rejects the view of those more contemporary writers who deny that the expulsion had any injurious effect on the Spanish economy. His intention is to present a balanced, secular summary of the measure's impact which expressly rejects tacit theological polemics without overreacting and throwing the baby out with the bath water.[91] His analysis of this long-standing issue is quite convincing. Over the past thirty years a number of other historians have joined him in advocating similar positions. One such scholar is Henry Kamen.

2. Henry Kamen

Born to a British family in Burma in 1936, Henry A. Kamen, a Catholic, received his bachelor's degree and his doctorate from Oxford University. He has taught history at Edinburgh, SUNY Binghamton, and the University of California at San Diego. He is also the author of many works on medieval Spain. One of these, The Spanish Inquisition (1965), contains an account of events leading up the expulsion. It draws on the histories of Bernaldez, Prescott, Amador de los Rios, Lea, Baer, and Neumann. Kamen emphasizes economic factors, gleaning most of his material in this area from Jaime Vicens Vives's Historia Economica de Espana.[92]

In the introduction to his book, Henry Kamen reviews some of the possible causes of the expulsion. Like Marcus Arkin and others before him going back as far as Ibn Verga, he cites the bad will generated by Jewish tax-collecting and money-lending. Such financial activities alienated the Jews from the Christian populace. Kamen also refers to the Church's fanaticism and the problem posed by the converso situation, but he strongly denies that the edit was issued to foster either religious or national unity. To those who offer such an interpretation, he responds that if this had been the sovereigns' desired goal, they would have expelled the Moors with the Jews rather than offering them generous terms of surrender at Granada. Thus he insists that while the expulsions of Jews from England and France may have been due to cupidity or religious extremism, this was not the case in Castile and Aragon.[93]

identify Spain's precipitous fall from power as a punishment for the mistreatment of her Jews. Yet while he rejects this sort of providential reading of the past, he does not adopt the opposite extreme which would deny that the expulsion had any real effect on Castile and Aragon. He merely makes the cautious observation that "the disappearance of the Jews and the persecution of conversos created a void in the world of capital which was never satisfactorily filled by Spaniards."[96] In other words, he describes the edict's debilitating after effects in a detached and neutral manner, without a feeling of vengeance. This view of the expulsion's impact on Spanish society represents, as Arkin's does, a moderate position.

3. Fernand Braudel and Americo Castro

Born in 1902, the French historian Fernand Braudel is best known for his two volume work The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, originally published in his native tongue in 1949. This detailed study has been very influential for subsequent generations of historians, many of whose own books have tended to share Braudel's emphasis on long-term economic, geographic, demographic, and climatic factors over the thoughts and acts of individual men and women. This methodological slant gives Braudel's history a strongly deterministic tone. Even the most renowned people, such as the rulers of great nations, appear as slaves of history rather than its masters or makers. Civilizations are borne onward by their own force and momentum, leaving precious little room for human free will along the way.

In a brief section on the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, Braudel cites the works of Ibn Verga, Joseph ha-Kohen, and Madariaga. His account, however, is very different from theirs. He relieves Ferdinand and Isabella (and all people, for that matter) of all responsibility for the event, then goes on to point to what he considers to be its two chief "causes."[97]

The first of these was the tendency of the Jews to maintain themselves as a unique civilization, insisting that they had a special destiny among the nations. By refusing to relinquish their identity in all their long years of existence without a state, they insured their survival as a people but also brought on their own demise in a Spain that was rapidly moving towards national consolidation. In other words, notes Braudel, like every civilization, Israel's destiny was its own heaven and hell.[98]

Yet even as he speaks in a somewhat romantic and abstract manner of conflicting national destinies, Braudel also offers a more concrete, immediate explanation of antisemitism in general and the expulsion in particular. Here he holds economic factors to be primary. In short, he argues that all anti-Jewish actions are ultimately provoked by economic decline and stagnation. In Spain, as was the case elsewhere in the Mediterranean, the grim economic climate of the late fifteenth century led to a severe scarcity of resources and turned the Christian masses against the Jews, whom they despised as rivals.[99] When the Iberian peninsula's dwindling resources could no longer sustain its expanding population, something had to be done. Braudel concludes that the

expulsions of Jews throughout the region were intended as a response to the looming economic/demographic crisis:

> Proof of the overpopulation of Mediterranean Europe after the end of the fifteenth century is the frequent expulsion of the Jews. . . . In countries whose population was too great for their resources, as the Iberian peninsula may already have been, religion was as much the pretext as the cause of the persecution.[100]

America Castro criticizes Braudel's account of the expulsion in his books, The Structure of Spanish History (1954, Spanish 1948) and The Spaniards (1971, based on a revised version of the same Spanish text). Born in Brazil to Spanish parents in 1885, Castro first taught Spanish literature and history in Madrid, then held posts at various Latin American universities, the University of California at San Diego, and Princeton. His studies emphasize the role of the interaction of medieval Christian, Islamic, and Jewish culture in the formation of modern Spanish society. His discussion of the Jews is based on Spanish manuscripts as well as works by Y. Baer, F. Fita, A. A. Neumann, and Isaac Abrabanel.

Castro argues that in focusing so intensely on long-term trends affecting the entire Mediterranean region, Braudel fails to pay sufficient heed to the uniquely Spanish features of the 1492 expulsion. Castro maintains that this event can only be understood within the context of the particular contours of Spanish history. He also offers a sharp critique of Braudel's claim that the expulsion constitutes an effort to deal with the problem of scarce resources and overpopulation. Thus he asserts:

> The situation of the Jews in Spain had nothing to do with the Mediterranean but with the very innards of Spanish history. For Braudel, religion is as good a pretext as any other, since he is

> convinced that the decisive factor was the extrahuman law of numbers, which in fact had nothing to do with the number of unbaptized Jews. If Ferdinand and Isabella had wished to reduce the population of their realms, they would not have allowed even those Jews who converted to Christianity to remain there, as thousands did.[101]

Castro's own understanding of the expulsion is more a sociopolitical than an economic one. Like many of his predecessors, he maintains that as tax-collectors and fiscal agents, the Jews aroused the scorn of the Christian masses. They were enraged by the fact that the supposedly hated, lowly "Christ-killers" were in realty their superiors in wealth and power. Castro refers to this topsy-turvy state of affairs as the "supremacy of the despised," a phenomena which would lead to the downfall of the Jews. They had managed to survive for centuries because they enjoyed the protection of the monarchy and the upper classes. As Ferdinand and Isabella asserted their control over the newly-unified Spanish nation, however, the monarchs found they needed the support of the Christian masses more than that of the Jews. They also knew that the populace would not cooperate with them as long as they continued to favor the despised Jews with royal privileges. Therefore Ferdinand and Isabella went against their own preference and the dominant pattern of Spanish history and allied themselves with the anti-Jewish hermandades (the holy brotherhoods, paramilitary groups formed by commoners and headed by municipal officials). They harmonized the formerly divergent interests of the Crown and the populace by setting up the aljamas as a common enemy. Thus Castro notes that this alliance between the sovereigns and the commoners "had as a condition and a result the exile of the Jews. . . ."[102]

It was, Castro believes, only under intense pressure and with great reluctance that the Catholic monarchs turned against the Jews, whom they had relied upon heavily in fiscal matters. Other historians echo this claim that Ferdinand and Isabella were not eager to expel such an important segment of the population. We find this to be the case in the accounts of both B. Netanyahu and Stephen Haliczer.

4. B. Netanyahu

Benzion Netanyahu was born in Warsaw in 1910, and moved with his family to Tel Aviv ten years later. In Palestine, he became an active member of the Zionist Revisionist Party, serving on its executive committee from 1932 to 1935. In 1940 he went to the United States with Jabotinsky and a delegation of the New Zionist Organization; in the following year he became the director of that group's press campaign and diplomatic unit in America.[103]

After 1948, Netanyahu shifted his attention to scholarly pursuits. He edited several important Jewish reference works, including the Encyclopedia Hebraica, the uncompleted World History of the Jewish People, and the collected works of Herzl, Nordau, and Pinsker. As a professor at Dropsie College, the University of Denver, and Cornell, he taught a variety of Judaic studies courses. He also published a number of books and articles.[104] The most renowned of these, Don Isaac Abravanel: Statesman and Philosopher (1953; revised 1968) illustrates the author's fine command of the sources of Iberian Jewish history. It drawn from a vast array of medieval and modern texts and manuscripts in

Hebrew, Spanish, and German. This work also contains a fascinating account of the Spanish expulsion, which owes a great deal to Ignaz Schipper's study of the relationship between burghers and Jews, Anfaenge des Kapitalismus bei den abendlaendisched Juden.

Netanyahu identifies two groups as the primary anti-Jewish elements in late medieval Spain. Not surprisingly, the first is the clergy. He refers to them as the "spearhead of the drive against the Jews." They were the aljamas' most ancient adversaries, the latest in a long line of Catholic clerics throughout Europe who would stop at nothing to complete their task of baptizing every Israelite, if not by persuasion then by force. Their behavior was motivated by zealous faith and intolerant doctrine.[105]

The second source of antisemitic sentiment was the burgher class, residents of Spain's growing towns and cities. Like Marcus Arkin, Netanyahu believes that these middle class urbanites were the main menace to the Jewish communities. They viewed the Jews as intruders, competitors planted within their cities by insensitive kings or nobles. While the Church's ultimate goal was conversion, the burghers would settle for nothing less than exile or annihilation. Only then would the Jews cease to be a threat to their economic welfare.[106]

Despite these differences in motivation, the burghers and clergy worked together in 1391 to foster the wave of antisemitic riots which swept the country. Netanyahu claims that the burghers joined the clerics in calling for death or conversion because they fully expected the Jews to choose martyrdom as they had in the Rhineland a few centuries earlier. The unprecedented decision of most of the Jewish

community to undergo baptism left the burghers dumbfounded. Their tactics had completely backfired: instead of eliminating their economic rivals, they had encouraged them to join the newly-created converso class, which lost none of its Jewish know-how, but now operated free of anti-Jewish commercial restrictions.[107]

The burghers searched long and hard for a way to strike at these New Christians until eventually they came upon a brilliant scheme: the Inquisition. To most fifteenth-century Spaniards and the majority of historians to this day, the tribunal was a Church-inspired body with a mandate to root out heresy. Netanyahu, however, believes that this commonly-held view is nothing more than propaganda. He insists that the charges of Judaizing were almost invariably fictitious and claims that the vast majority of conversos felt no attachment to their former faith. The Inquisition attacked them because it was the brainchild and instrument of the burghers, who hid behind its veil of piety, all the while using it to cripple their economic competitors.[108]

Yet the Inquisition had no authority over the unconverted Jews. Therefore, as the fifteenth century wore on, the burghers recognized that in order to wipe out all competition from the aljamas they would need the support of the Crown. Fortunately for them, the time was ripe for such an alliance. A cunning statesman himself, Ferdinand of Aragon longed to crush the old feudal aristocracy but could not do so on his own. The burghers proposed to help him in exchange for his promise to meet their demands on the Jewish question. He agreed to their proposal.[109]

At first Ferdinand moved reluctantly. He felt bound to his concession to the urban middle class, but he was not enthusiastic about it. He merely pushed through a few additional restrictions on the Jews, and in 1483 he agreed to oust them from Andalusia. As time passed, however, he began to recognize opportunities to exploit the anti-Jewish policy for his own personal gain. He realized that by using the Inquisition to suppress Spanish liberties he could bolster his absolutist regime. He also started to expropriate Jewish and converso property. Consumed by avarice and lust for power, he intensified his antisemitic program. Finally, as his troops marched triumphantly into Granada, he took advantage of the nationalist spirit of the day and expelled the Jews from Spain. In doing so, he fulfilled his obligation to the burghers, asserted his political authority, and enlarged the royal treasury. The mark of his incredible cunning is that he did all of this without arousing any doubts over his personal piety and integrity. Hiding his ruthlessness behind a mask of virtue, he led even Jews such as Abrabanel to blame others (especially Isabella) for his own handiwork.[110]

This novel account is not without at least one rather obvious discrepancy. Netanyahu makes a fairly good case in explaining why the burghers cooperated with the clergy in 1391, arguing that they expected the Jews to accept death before apostasy. Yet if these burghers really exercised such potent political power in Spain, why would they have encouraged or even allowed another wave of forced conversions between 1412 and 1415? After failing so dismally the first time, it is highly unlikely that they would have chosen to exacerbate the converso problem

two decades later. Perhaps the Church had more clout than Netanyahu gives it credit for.

Whatever other minor shortcomings it may have, Netanyahu's narrative is never dull. He is clearly an historian who delights in tangled webs of deception and realpolitik. He is also a completely secular thinker. Early in his own career as a statesman and diplomat he must have developed an interest in political intrigue which remained with him in his scholarly investigations. Providence is of no concern to him; he is fascinated by the often complex human motivations underlying historical events.

Netanyahu's strong Zionist background is also evident in his narrative. His historiography--like Baer's and Shmueli's--reflects the assumption that in galut even the grandest Jewish communities and cultures are mortally vulnerable. Indeed, Netanyahu is more explicit than his colleagues in exposing the inevitable flaws of life in exile. He concludes his account of the expulsion with an explanation of why the Jews were so unprepared for the edict despite years of persecution and several obvious forewarnings. Here he offers a biting critique of diaspora existence in every age, drawing open parallels between the situation in Spain and more recent events in Nazi Germany:

> The blindness manifested by Jews of the Diaspora for developments laden with mortal danger is nothing short of proverbial. Its sources are a weakened political sensitivity and man's natural reluctance to draw radical conclusions which imply uprooting oneself from a comfortable spot. But whatever the cause, the phenomenon is there Just as the Jews of Germany failed to foresee Hitler's rise to power at any time during the period preceding that rise, so the Jews of Spain failed to notice, even a few years before the expulsion, the mountainous wave which was approaching to overwhelm them.[11]

5. Stephen Haliczer

A professor of history at Northern Illinois University with a special interest in the politics and economics of medieval Spain, Stephen Haliczer presents a rather unique and controversial analysis of the expulsion in his article, "The Castilian Urban Patriciate and the Jewish Expulsions of 1480-92." He draws on works by Amador de los Rios, Baer, Kamen, and various contemporary Spanish historians. Like Netanyahu and Arkin, he maintains that the rising municipal authorities used their newfound economic leverage to pressure the king to expel the Jews. Haliczer, however, adds a distinctive twist to this now-standard explanation: he asserts that the majority of the prominent urban leaders vociferously demanding the ouster of the Jews were either conversos themselves or children of conversos.

Haliczer views the mass conversion of Jews in 1391 as a turning point in Spanish history. Released from age-old restrictions limiting Jewish commerce, the ambitious conversos rose quickly through Spain's socioeconomic hierarchy. Especially in Castile, they began to infiltrate the upper class; some even married into families of the elite Christian nobility. More importantly, they were extraordinarily successful at obtaining power in municipal governments.[112]

This often sparked resentment. Many floundering Spanish Catholics expressed their exasperation at the meteoric rise of the conversos by accusing these former Jews of heresy and questioning the sincerity of their conversions. Between 1465 and 1475, this dispute threatened to destroy all semblance of order in Castile and Aragon. Therefore, a few

years after assuming the thrones of these two kingdoms, Ferdinand and Isabella established the Inquisition. Its purpose was not to condemn all New Christians (as some resentful Old Christians desired, and as Netanyahu argues); instead it was intended to protect the majority of loyal Catholic conversos by sorting out the few heretics.[113]

Despite these good intentions, the tribunal quickly became a threat to all of the conversos, faithful Christians and Judaizers alike. Its policy of anonymous accusations and secret procedures made it highly untrustworthy. The conversos, therefore, applied their considerable energies to the development of a response that would protect their status in Castilian society. Eventually, argues Haliczer, they succeeded through the formulation of a stance that "involved the acceptance of a certain anti-Semitism by the conversos themselves." They countered the Inquisition's accusations by first defending the unity of all true Catholics regardless of their origins and then pointing to the unconverted Jews as the true danger to both Old and New Christians.[114]

Whenever the conversos found themselves under attack, they would shift the focus to the Jews. Here they found their aforementioned power in municipal government useful. Haliczer, like Arkin and Netanyahu, asserts that by the late fifteenth century the Crown found it necessary to turn to the rising urban oligarchies for support. The towns responded by providing the bulk of the soldiers and contributions for the Granadan war effort. In return, they made several demands of their own. One of the concessions which the converso-influenced city councils exacted from Ferdinand was his reluctant consent to a three stage

anti-Jewish program consisting of segregation, isolation from the economic mainstream, and expulsion, first from cities and regions, and finally from the entire country.[115]

While Haliczer concurs with Netanyahu's assertion that most of the conversos were not Judaizers, he disagrees with his claim that eventually Ferdinand overcame his reluctance and found good reason to enthusiastically support a policy he had initially consented to only out of obligation. He insists that Ferdinand remained personally opposed to the anti-Jewish policy to the end, even as he signed the edict of expulsion in 1492. Haliczer offers as evidence for his view the sudden nature of that measure, which came shortly after the Crown had extended Jewish tax farming contracts to 1494. Thus he concludes:

> The climax of this process came when the Crown itself, under the pressure of events and fearing further deterioration of its relations with the urban oligarchies, ordered a hastily prepared, poorly timed expulsion that did not correspond to either its previous Jewish policy or its true interests.[116]

Haliczer leaves several important questions unanswered. For example, he does not explain how the conversos obtained such power on the municipal level without alienating the well-to-do urban Christians. On this issue, the Arkin-Netanyahu claim that the burghers expressed enmity toward Jewish and New Christian competitors seems to make more sense. Furthermore, by Haliczer's premises, the Jews should have been expelled earlier. If Ferdinand needed the urban oligarchies most intensely during the war with Granada (to provide men and money), then why would he wait until its conclusion before issuing the edict which they so badly desired? Perhaps Haliczer would respond that the measure was fully set out during the conflict and only its enactment had to wait

until later. Finally, Haliczer pays too little attention to the important fact that there were obviously a number of strongly anti-Jewish elements in Spain besides the New Christians; after all, it was the antisemitic pogroms of 1391 and 1412-15 which created this converso class. He tells us nothing about the identity of these groups and their role in the events surrounding the expulsion.[117]

Yet Haliczer's claim that the conversos forced the king to expel the Jews against his will provides us with a sense of the distance we have covered in this chapter. We began with the apologists for Spain, then continued with Simon Dubnow and other historians who argue that the edict's own explanation of the expulsion is essentially a true one: the Jews were banished because they encouraged the New Christians in their Judaizing. We are now faced with Stephen Haliczer, who turns that explanation on its head and offers the ultimate revisionist assertion. The converso is transformed into the instigator.

Having thus made such a one hundred and eighty degree shift, we move on to the last account which we shall consider here--that of Rabbi Leo Baeck. Baeck was not an historian. He was a theologian, and his narrative speaks to us in an explicitly theistic, even providential manner. In a sense he takes us another one hundred and eighty degrees, bringing us back--full circle--to a historiography which predates that of Dubnow and even Graetz and his contemporaries. Baeck reconnects the bond between history and theology, and in doing so, recalls the work of sixteenth-century Jewish chroniclers.

E. Providence Regained: The View of Leo Baeck

Born in Germany in 1873, Leo Baeck grew up to become the leader of that country's movement for progressive Judaism. He studied history and philosophy at the University of Berlin, and attended both the conservative seminary in Breslau and the liberal Hochschule in Berlin. In 1912 he accepted two positions, one as lecturer in midrash and homiletics at the Hochschule, and the other as a congregational rabbi. His work in both earned him the respect and affection of the entirety of German Jewry. Baeck returned his people's love in the most trying circumstances imaginable. As the Nazis launched their insidious scheme of hatred and murder, he repeatedly turned down opportunities to go abroad. Determined to stay until the last minyan left Germany, Baeck was deported to Theresienstadt in 1943. He remained there until the end of the war, continuing to teach, counsel, and console. Miraculously he survived, and in 1945 he moved to London where he served as chairman of the World Union for Progressive Judaism. He also taught intermittently at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati until his death in 1956.[118]

Baeck wrote the core of This People Israel at Theresienstadt, where he was forced to conceal his manuscript on countless occasions. It is a unique book; Baeck's English translator Albert Friedlander calls it modern midrash.[119] I believe it is best described as theology through history. Baeck refers to it as toldot (as opposed to historia). He rejects the prevailing notion of our century that Jewish history like any other should be empirical and secular. He insists, "This people's history is a history of encounters with God. It has this history for

its own sake and for the sake of humanity. It bears it and is borne by it."[120] In This People Israel Baeck looks at many of those "encounters with God." One brief section is devoted to the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. In it he writes:

> The fourth millenium aroused in this people hope after hope, in one century after another, now here, now there But it began with that darkness of the expulsion of the Sephardim from Sepharad, out of the land in which their congregations had lived from the days of the Roman Republic. Despots, in the hour of the edict of eviction, thought that they had pronounced judgement upon this people. In reality, they had uttered a verdict upon themselves.[121]

Baeck speaks of a darkness here, but not without a firm belief in an even greater power of light. He mocks the despots of medieval Spain along with those of every other land and era. They cannot prevail, for although they believe that ultimate power and dominion are theirs, they are in turn subject to a greater force which turns their verdicts back upon themselves. A few pages later Baeck refers to the potent messianic vision of the Safed Kabbalists, and adds that they are "a consequence of inner tremors caused by the expulsion of the Sephardim"[122] Providence, he seems to be telling us, may work in mysterious ways, but it does work, spinning a school of mystical visionaries out of a previous generation's catastrophe, illuminating the darkness and making it bearable.

Leo Baeck speaks as one who has been acquainted with the night. He stands as proof that it is not impossible for a modern Jew to write a providential account of his or her people's past, even after the Holocaust. Indeed, it is surely significant that the only twentieth-century work to express a consistently theistic understanding

of the Spanish expulsion was born inside the hellish world of Theresienstadt.

There is more than a bit of irony in this fact. Yet it is not entirely surprising that only a survivor of a catastrophe as unprecedented and horrible as the Shoah could speak of God's presence in the expulsion from Spain. Perhaps having lived through the maelstrom sustained by the strength of his hope and his spirit, he felt compelled to proclaim to the world that without God, history is ultimately vain. Like those few Iberian exiles of old who searched for the meaning of their experience and in doing so revived Jewish historiography in the sixteenth century, Leo Baeck looked to the past and found hope to face the future. What could be more fitting than to conclude with this ancient vision which he restored again in our own age?

Notes to Chapter Three

[1] Baron, History and Jewish Historians, 77-8.

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[3] Don Salvador de Madariaga, Spain and the Jews (London, 1946), 3.

[4] Ibid., 12-13.

[5] Ibid., 14-15.

[6] Ibid., 22-3.

[7] Felipe Torroba Bernaldo de Quiros, The Spanish Jews, trans. John Inderwick Palmer (Madrid, 1972), 281.

[8] Ibid., 282-8.

[9] Valeriu Marcu, The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain, trans. Moray Firth (New York, 1935), 20-23, 27.

[10] Ibid., 38-9.

[11] Ibid., 61-2.

[12] Ibid., 68, 73-6.

[13] Ibid., 73-6, 137, 145.

[14] Ibid., 173.

[15] William Thomas Walsh, Isabella of Spain, The Last Crusader (New York, 1930), foreword.

[16] Ibid., 195.

[17] Ibid., 344.

[18] Ibid., 348-66.

[19] Ibid., 363, 346.

[20] Ibid., 368-70.

[21] Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson and Joseph Meisl, "Dubnow, Simon," Encyclopedia Judaica, 6: 252-5.

[22] Ibid., 252-3.

[23] Ibid., 253, 255-6.

[24] Simon Dubnow, History of the Jews, trans. Moshe Spiegel, 3 (4th edn., New York, 1969): 211-12.

[25] Ibid., 289, 224.

[26] Ibid., 306-10.

[27] Ibid., 151, 323.

[28] Ibid., 324-5, 331.

[29] Ibid., 332-4.

[30] Simon Dubnow, An Outline of Jewish History, trans. ?, 3 (New York, 1925): 161-2.

[31] Henry Charles Lea, A History of the Inquisition of Spain, 1 (New York, 1906): 81-5.

[32] Ibid., 96-8.

[33] Ibid., 110, 120, 125, 131.

[34] Ibid., 131.

[35] Ibid., 21-4, 131-4.

[36] Ibid., 135.

[37] Vivian David Lipman, "Roth, Cecil," Encyclopedia Judaica, 14: 326-8.

[38] Cecil Roth, A History of the Marranos (Philadelphia, 1941), 16-20, 29-48.

[39] Ibid., 52.

[40] Ibid., 46-52.

[41] Cecil Roth, The Spanish Inquisition (London, 1937), 24.

[42] Ibid., 24.

[43] Benzion Dinur, "Baer, Yitzhak," Encyclopedia Judaica, 4: 82-3.

[44] Ibid., 82-3.

[45] Yitzhak F. Baer, A History of the Jews in Christian Spain, trans. Hillel Halkin et al., 2 (Philadelphia, 1966): 102-14.

[46] Ibid., 278-9.

[47] Yitzhak F. Baer, "Gerush ha-Yehudim mi-Sefarad," Ahdut ha-Avodah, 3 (1932): 300.

[48] Baer, "Gerush ha-Yehudim mi-Sefarad," 300-01, 306; The Jews in Christian Spain, 313-20, 330-33.

[49] Baer, "Gerush ha-Yehudim mi-Sefarad," 300-02; The Jews in Christian Spain, 279, 313.

[50] Baer, "Gerush ha-Yehudim mi-Sefarad," 306.

[51] Baer, The Jews in Christian Spain, 439; "Gerush ha-Yehudim mi-Sefarad," 306-7.

[52] Baer, The Jews in Christian Spain, 130-31.

[53] Isaiah Sonne, "On Baer and his Philosophy of Jewish History," Jewish Social Studies, 9 (1947): 67-8.

[54] Baer, The Jews in Christian Spain, 443.

[55] "Ben-Sasson, Haim Hillel," Encyclopedia Judaica, 4: 546.

[56] Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson et al., A History of the Jewish People (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), 575, 583-5, 570.

[57] Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson, "Dor galut Sefarad al atzmo," Zion, 3-4 (1960): 60-1.

[58] Ibid., 62-4.

[59] Ibid., 64.

[60] Eisig Silberschlag, "Shmueli, Ephraim," Encyclopedia Judaica, 14: 1427-8.

[61] Ephraim Shmueli, Don Yitzhak Abravanel v'gerush Sefard (Jerusalem, 1963), 214-15, 59.

[62] Ibid., 58.

[63] Victor Eppstein, "The Expulsion from Spain," Midstream, September 1964, pp. 71-2, 77.

[64] Ibid., 77-8.

[65] Ibid., 77-8.

[66] Ibid., 79.

[67] Salo W. Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews, 17 vols. (2nd edn., New York, 1952-), 10:219.

[68] Arthur Hertzberg, "Baron, Salo (Shalom) Wittmayer," Encyclopedia Judaica, 4: 253-4.

[69] Ibid., 253-4.

[70] Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews, 11: 192.

[71] Ibid., 200.

[72] Ibid., 194-5, 198, 230.

[73] Ibid., 232-5.

[74] Ibid., 202-5, 237.

[75] Ibid., 237-40, 403-4.

[76] Ibid., 236.

[77] Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews, 10: 202, 207; 11: 242.

[78] Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews, 11: 240.

[79] Jack Riemer, "Minkin, Jacob Samuel," Encyclopedia, Judaica, 12: 32.

[80] Jacob S. Minkin, Abarbanel and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain (New York, 1938), 19.

[81] Ibid., 20, 30-1, 85-9, 105, 122.

[82] Ibid., 94-5.

[83] Ibid., 91-4, 122-4.

[84] Ibid., 137-9.

[85] Ibid., 174.

[86] Ibid., 7.

[87] Marcus Arkin, "The Economic Background to the Expulsion of Spanish Jewry," Jewish Affairs, September 1957, pp. 30-2.

[88] Ibid., 34.

[89] Ibid., 34-5.

[90] Ibid., 35.

[91] Ibid., 35.

[92] "Kamen, Henry A.," Contemporary Authors, Newly Revised Series, 7:216.

[93] Henry A. Kamen, The Spanish Inquisition (New York, 1965), 7, 15-19, 25.

[94] Ibid., 7.

[95] Ibid., 4, 7, 10-11, 23.

[96] Ibid., 11.

[97] Fernand Braudel, The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, trans. Sian Reynolds, 2 vols. (New York, 1973), 1: 822.

[98] Ibid., 825-6.

[99] Ibid., 820.

[100] Ibid., 415-16.

[101] Americo Castro, The Spaniards: An Introduction to their History, trans. Willard F. King and Selma Margaretten (Berkeley, Ca., 1971), 8.

[102] Americo Castro, The Structure of Spanish History, trans. Edmund L. King (Princeton, N.J., 1954), 497, 299, 378-81.

[103] Martin A. Cohen, "Netanyahu, Benzion," Encyclopedia Judaica, 12: 970.

[104] Ibid., 970-1.

[105] B. Netanyahu, Don Isaac Abravanel: Statesman and Philosopher (2nd edn., Philadelphia, 1968), 41.

[106] Ibid., 41-3.

[107] Ibid., 41-2.

[108] Ibid., 42, 44-5.

[109] Ibid., 41.

[110] Ibid., 47, 55-7.

[111] Ibid., 45.

[112] Stephen H. Haliczer, "The Castilian Urban Patriciate and the Jewish Expulsions of 1480-92," American Historical Review, 78 (1973): 40-1.

[113] Ibid., 42.

[114] Ibid., 43-7.

[115] Ibid., 49-55.

[116] Ibid., 38.

[117] For additional criticism of Haliczer's article, see the letters to the editor in the American Historical Review, 78 (1973): 1163-6. Peggy Liss notes a sense of confusion surrounding his view of the conversos, questioning whether those who served on town councils were true New Christians or secret Judaizers. She insists that his arguments make little sense unless we know the interests and influence of both sorts of conversos.

David Berger offers two major objections to Haliczer's thesis. First he points out that an expulsion of Jews would increase the number of Judaizing conversos and therefore intensify the pressure on all New Christians from the Inquisition. Thus it seems unlikely that expulsion would have constituted the "converso position." Second, he states that if the motivation behind the expulsion had been converso pressure, the Jews would have recognized this and expressed intense resentment toward the New Christians. Haliczer fails to offer any evidence that the Jews ever accused their former kinsmen of responsibility for their misfortunes.

Finally, Teofilo Ruiz argues that Haliczer neglects the fact that the urban oligarchies pursued an antisemitic program long before the influx of conversos after 1391. He presents a number of examples of earlier anti-Jewish measures, and concludes: "A program of segregation, economic exclusion and even expulsion did not originate with converso intellectuals, nor did their program represent a departure from the traditional attitude of the urban oligarchies in Castile."

[118] Akiba Ernst Simon, "Baeck, Leo," Encyclopedia Judaica, 4: 77-8.

[119] Leo Baeck, This People Israel: The Meaning of Jewish Existence, trans. and introd. Albert H. Friedlander (New York, 1964), xv.

[120] Ibid., 197, 395.

[121] Ibid., 294.

[122] Ibid., 299.

Chapter IV

Summary and Epilogue

The broad range of accounts of the Spanish expulsion which we have considered in the previous chapters provides ample evidence of the truth of Salo Baron's claim that every generation writes its own history of past generations. Indeed, the diversity among even contemporaneous narratives makes this aphorism appear too limiting. We have seen that no matter how sophisticated the means of gathering raw historical data have become, all students of history still must ultimately interpret the facts for themselves, deciding which are more important and which less so. Reconstructing the past necessarily entails using knowledge and imagination to fill in inevitable gaps and establish causal connections between seemingly unconnected events. If any one lesson emerges from our encounter with dozens of narratives, it is that history is not an exact science yielding objective, demonstrable conclusions. The vast differences between the accounts of men like Joseph ha-Kohen, E. H. Lindo, Heinrich Graetz, Salo Baron, and Benzion Netanyahu, for example, show that much of history is still "story," the product of each individual author's creative reading of past events.

Nonetheless, as in the cases of music, art, and literature, so too in historiography upon close examination one can discover certain broad tendencies which typify most of the output of any particular period. There are, of course, always exceptions, but when people of not

completely dissimilar backgrounds labor in the same general realm, one would expect to find some common bonds between their works as a result of the influence of the Zeitgeist.

This, as we have seen, is also true of accounts of the expulsion. Therefore, we can speak of a few characteristics which distinguish late fifteenth and sixteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth-century views of that event and its causes. The contemporary chronicles and sixteenth-century accounts tend to cast Isabella as at least Ferdinand's equal in treachery, and they attribute the expulsion edict to the Catholic monarchs' religious fanaticism. They also praise the Jews for their passive compliance with the hated decree.

A few hundred years later, in the nineteenth century, the attitude toward the queen changed dramatically. Probably under the influence of the Victorian "Cult of True Womanhood," Jewish and Gentile writers idealized Isabella, and put the blame for the expulsion on either the priests' intolerance or Ferdinand's avarice. Most accepted the edict's own claim that the measure was taken in order to put an end to the Judaizing heresy among conversos by eliminating their contact with Jews. Many also wondered for the first time (rather unrealistically) whether the Spanish Jews might not have been better off if they had actively resisted complying with the degree and launched a civil war against the regime.

In twentieth-century accounts, this talk of armed rebellion disappears, as does the idealized portrait of the queen. In the majority of narratives, the role of both sovereigns in the drama surrounding the expulsion is greatly reduced. Quite a few historians

have continued to view the edict as a response to Judaizing. Others, however, prefer to trace its origins to sociopolitical or economic factors. The result has been an array of views considerably more diverse than that of previous eras.

My primary concern throughout this work has been the question of what role, if any, the many thinkers writing on the Spanish expulsion have attributed to divine providence. In considering the plethora of explanations offered for this unfortunate event over the past five hundred years, I have first and foremost sought to understand how their authors perceived God's presence (or absence) in the history of the Jewish people. The pattern which I have discerned is one of gradual but steady diminution of the role of the deity. With the prominent exception of Solomon Ibn Verga's Shevet Yehudah, nearly every sixteenth-century account stresses some sense of divine, messianic purpose underlying the seemingly catastrophic decree. By the nineteenth century, God's mighty hand was reduced to a finger, a spirit of retribution or justice inherent in the historical process. Finally, as historiography entered the twentieth century, even this dim view of deity disappeared almost completely from the stage of history; now secular assumptions shaped the methodology of even traditionally-observant Jewish historians.

Some Jews have undoubtedly applauded the demise of this sort of "sacred history." They would claim that it had imposed a heavy burden insofar as it blinded Israel to the harsh realities of life in a profane and often hostile world. In making this argument they, to some degree,

follow the precedent of Ibn Verga, who hoped that the Jews would take note of the natural, non-theistic reasons for their suffering, and use this knowledge to ameliorate their situation.

But perhaps it is not yet time to sound the death knell for providential views of the Jewish past. In 1982, Professor Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi published a small but influential book which he called Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory. In it, he distinguishes between the specialized discipline of history and the people's collective memory. While he himself is a highly-respected professional Jewish historian at a secular university, Yerushalmi speaks of the need for memory, an understanding of the past which infuses it with meaning and which can spring only from a kind of shared religious, communal identity.

The question then arises: Does the Spanish expulsion still remain a part of Jewish memory? I believe that it does and that at least for some Jews, it lives on there in a providential fashion. I learned this firsthand only a few months ago, when speaking to a group of Jewish lay people about the causes of the expulsion. At the end of my talk, I entertained questions. At first, no one said a word. Then, slowly, a middle-aged man stood up, raised his hand and asked, "Don't you know that in the same year that Ferdinand and Isabella expelled the Jews, Columbus discovered America? This is why Jewish history is such a miracle. When God closes one door, he opens another! And that, my friends, is why we're here in America celebrating Shabbat tonight."

With that, the lone questioner took his seat, and others in the congregation around him began to nod in silent consent and endorsement. For a moment I pondered possible rejoinders. But I did not respond, opting instead to add my silence to the powerful, wordless show of support for this insistence on the presence of providence in the Jewish past. After all, I thought, who am I to argue with this sort of memory?

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Edict of Ferdinand and Isabella for the Expulsion of the Jews, dated Granada, 30th March, 1492.

Whereas, having been informed that in these our kingdoms, there were some bad Christians who judaized and apostatized from our holy catholic faith, the chief cause of which was the communication of Jews with Christians; at the Cortes we held in the city of Toledo in the year 1480, we ordered the said Jews in all the cities, towns, and places in our kingdoms and dominions, to separate into Jewries and places apart, where they should live and reside, hoping by their separation alone to remedy the evil. Furthermore, we have sought and given orders, that inquisition should be made in our said kingdoms, which, as is known, for upwards of twelve years has been, and is done, whereby many guilty persons have been discovered, as is notorious. And as we are informed by the inquisitors, and many other religious, ecclesiastical, and secular persons, that great injury has resulted, and does result, and it is stated, and appears to be, from the participation, society, and communication they held and do hold with Jews, who it appears always endeavour in every way they can to subvert our holy catholic faith, and to make faithful Christians withdraw and separate themselves therefrom, and attract and pervert them to their injurious opinions and belief, instructing them in the ceremonies and observances of their religion, holding meetings where they read and teach them what they are to believe and observe according to their religion; seeking to circumcise them and their children; giving them books from which they may read their prayers; and explaining to them the fasts they are to observe; assembling with them to read and to teach them the histories of their law; notifying to them the festivals previous to their occurring, and instructing them what they are to do and observe thereon; giving and carrying to them from their houses unleavened bread, and meat slaughtered with ceremonies; instructing them what they are to refrain from,

as well in food as in other matters, for the due observance of their religion, and persuading them all they can to profess and keep the law of Moses; giving them to understand, that except that, there is no other law or truth, which is proved by many declarations and confessions, as well of Jews themselves as of those who have been perverted and deceived by them, which has greatly redounded to the injury, detriment, and opprobrium of our holy catholic faith.

Notwithstanding we were informed of the major part of this before, and we knew the certain remedy for all these injuries and inconveniences was to separate the said Jews from all communication with Christians, and banish them from all our kingdoms, yet we were desirous to content ourselves by ordering them to quit all the cities, towns, and places of Andalusia, where, it appears, they had done the greatest mischief, considering that would suffice, and that those of other cities, towns and places would cease to do and commit the same.

But as we are informed that neither that, nor the execution of some of the said Jews, who have been guilty of the said crimes and offences against our holy Catholic faith, has been sufficient for a complete remedy to obviate and arrest so great an opprobrium and offence to the Catholic faith and religion.

And as it is found and appears, that the said Jews, wherever they live and congregate, daily increase in continuing their wicked and injurious purposes; to afford them no further opportunity for insulting our holy Catholic faith, and those whom until now God has been pleased to preserve, as well as those who had fallen, but have amended and are brought back to our holy mother church, which, according to the weakness of our human nature and the diabolical suggestion that continually wages war with us, may easily occur, unless the principal cause of it be removed, which is to banish the said Jews from our kingdoms.

And when any serious and detestable crime is committed by some persons of a college or university, it is right that such college or university should be dissolved and annihilated, and the lesser suffer for the greater, and one be punished for the

other; and those that disturb the welfare and proper living of cities and towns, that by contagion may injure others, should be expelled therefrom, and even for lighter causes that might be injurious to the state, how much more then for the greatest, most dangerous, and contagious of crimes like this.

Therefore we, by and with the counsel and advice of some prelates and high noblemen of our kingdoms, and other learned persons of our council, having maturely deliberated thereon, resolve to order all the said Jews and Jewesses to quit our kingdoms, and never to return or come back to them, or any of them. Therefore we command this our edict to be issued, whereby we command all Jews and Jewesses, of whatever age they may be, that live, reside, and dwell in our said kingdoms and dominions, as well natives as those who are not, who in any manner or for any cause may have come to dwell therein, that by the end of the month of July next, of the present year 1492, they depart from all our said kingdoms and dominions, with their sons, daughters, man-servants, maid-servants, and Jewish attendants, both great and small, of whatever age they may be; and they shall not presume to return to, nor reside therein, or in any part of them, either as residents, travellers, or in any other manner whatever, under pain that if they do not perform and execute the same, and are found to reside in our said kingdoms and dominions, or should in any manner live therein, they incur the penalty of death, and confiscation of all their property to our treasury, which penalty they incur by the act itself, without further process, declaration, or sentence.

And we command and forbid any person or persons of our said kingdoms, of whatsoever rank, station, or condition they may be, that they do not presume publicly or secretly to receive, shelter, protect, or defend any Jew or Jewess, after the said term of the end of July, in their lands or houses, or in any other part of our said kingdoms and dominions, henceforward for ever and ever, under pain of losing all their property, vassals, castles, and other possessions; and furthermore forfeit to our treasury any sums they have, or receive from us.

And that the said Jews and Jewesses during the said time, until the end of the said month of July, may be the better able to dispose of themselves, their property, and estates, we hereby take and receive them under our security, protection, and royal safeguard; and insure to them and their properties, that during the said period, until the said day, the end of the said month of July, they may travel in safety, and may enter, sell, barter, and alienate all their moveable and immoveable property, and freely dispose thereof at their pleasure.

And that during the said time, no harm, injury, or wrong whatever shall be done to their persons or properties contrary to justice, under the pains those persons incur and are liable to, that violate our royal safeguard.

We likewise grant permission and authority to the said Jews and Jewesses, to export their wealth and property, by sea or land, from our said kingdoms and dominions, provided they do not take away gold, silver, money, or other articles prohibited by the laws of our kingdoms, but in merchandise and goods that are not prohibited.

And we command all the justices of our kingdoms, that they cause the whole of the above herein contained to be observed and fulfilled, and that they do not act contrary hereto; and that they afford all necessary favour, under pain of being deprived of office, and the confiscation of all their property to our exchequer.