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Inhalt

Raphael Gross
Editorial 9

Allgemeiner Teil

Joachim Kalka, *Leipzig*
Im Allgemeinen oder im Besonderen?
Proust und die Affaire Dreyfus 15

Svetlana Natkovich, *Leipzig*
Questionable People:
The Figure of the Criminal in the Literature of Russian-Jewish Authors, 1862–1884 29

Yfaat Weiss, *Jerusalem*
»Nicht durch Macht und nicht durch Kraft, sondern durch meinen Geist«:
Die Hebräische Universität in der Skopusberg-Enklave 59

Michael Birnhack, *Tel Aviv*
Rechts- und Sprachkulturen im Widerstreit:
Der Copyright-Prozess um die Schriften Theodor Herzls in Israel . . . 91

Robert S. C. Gordon, *Cambridge*
Gray Zones:
The Heterodox Left and the Holocaust in Postwar Italian Culture . . . 111

C. K. Martin Chung, *Hongkong*
Repentance:
The Jewish Solution to the German Problem 129

Schwerpunkt
Geschichte choreografieren:
Zur Theatralisierung der Gedächtnisse nach 1945
Herausgegeben von Jörg Deventer und Stefan Hofmann

Jörg Deventer/Stefan Hofmann, *Leipzig*
Einführung 159

Matthias Naumann, *Berlin*
Krieg in der Gegenwart und Erinnerung an die Schoah:
Verflechtungen und Fragmentierungen im israelischen Theater 167

Theresa Eisele, *Leipzig*
Unerwünschte Uraufführungen:
Das *Deutsche Miserere* und die *Jüdische Chronik* 1966 in Leipzig . . . 195

Hilla Lavie, *Jerusalem*
An Ambivalent Relationship:
Representations of Germany and Germans in Israeli Cinema,
1950–1990 219

Tobias Ebbrecht-Hartmann, *Jerusalem*
The Missing Scene:
Entebbe, *Holocaust*, and Echoes from the German Past 243

Hannah Maischein, *München*
Das Vergessen der Augenzeugen:
Schuld im polnischen Holocaust-Film 265

Schwerpunkt
Biografie und Erkenntnis –
Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy (1888–1973) oder die Konversionen des Wissens
Herausgegeben von Jörg Deventer

Jörg Deventer, *Leipzig*
Einführung 293

Martin Otto, *Hagen*
»Habilitandenjahrgang 1912« –
Wege und Wirkungen einer rechtshistorischen Generation 297

Inka Sauter, *Leipzig*
Dialogische Revisionen –
Über die Versuchungen des Protestantismus 325

Diether Döring, *Frankfurt am Main*
Eine ambigue Berufung: Eugen Rosenstocks Lehrjahre an der
Akademie der Arbeit in der Universität Frankfurt am Main 349

Knut Martin Stünkel, *Bochum*
Kybele oder Symblysma?
Eugen Rosenstock und der Kreis um den Patmos-Verlag 367

Gelehrtenporträt

Samuel Joseph Kessler, *Chapel Hill, N. C.*
Translating Judaism for Modernity:
Adolf Jellinek in Leopoldstadt, 1857–1865 393

Dubnowiana

Arndt Engelhardt, *Leipzig/Jerusalem*
Über Bewegung und Stillstand im öffentlichen Raum:
Simon Dubnow und die russisch-jüdische Publizistik
in den 1880er Jahren 423

Aus der Forschung

Gal Hertz, *Tel Aviv/Berlin*
Spiegelmenschen:
Karl Kraus und Franz Werfel über Sprache und Identität 449

Literaturbericht

Lukas Böckmann, *Leipzig*
»An Gott glaube ich nicht mehr« –
Katholische Tradition und politische Theologie innerhalb der
argentinischen Guerilla der 1960er Jahre 479

Abstracts 509

Contributors 519

Samuel Joseph Kessler

Translating Judaism for Modernity: Adolf Jellinek in Leopoldstadt, 1857–1865

When Adolf Jellinek (1821–1893) relocated his family from Leipzig to Vienna in the early months of 1857 to assume the post of Community preacher in Leopoldstadt, the young rabbi and scholar also entered a new phase in his intellectual life.[1] Even a quick review of the works Jellinek published on either side of his move to the Habsburg capital reveals a drastic, almost radical shift in the themes and style of his writing and thinking. Whereas in Leipzig he had attended mostly to scholarship, in Vienna he focused on his sermons, and specifically on formulating and developing a language that would link texts from the Jewish canon with the broader (and more amorphous) values of mid-nineteenth-century Enlightenment liberalism. In that first decade in the Habsburg capital Jellinek used his responsibilities as the leader of a rapidly transforming Jewish Community to formulate an interpretation of Jewish modernity, and to develop a language to explain the way traditional rabbinic life and texts could find meaningful and logical symbiosis with the broader tenets of German liberalism and Enlightenment rationalism. The social milieu of immigrant Vienna, I argue, is interwoven with the epistemological foundations of Jellinek's vision of Jewish religious modernity.

Jellinek's fifteen years in Leipzig, from 1842 until 1857,[2] had been ones of learning and maturation, as well as of remarkable intellectual accomplish-

1 For overviews of Jellinek's life, see Klaus Kempter, Die Jellineks 1820–1955. Eine familienbiographische Studie zum deutsch-jüdischen Bildungsbürgertum, Düsseldorf 1998; Moses Rosenmann, Dr. Adolf Jellinek. Sein Leben und Schaffen. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien in der 2. Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts, Vienna 1931.

2 The issue of Jellinek's official beginning in Vienna is somewhat a matter of interpretation, and therefore involves some confusion about dating. As part of the official hiring process by the Jewish Community *(Gemeinde)* of Vienna, Jellinek gave a sermon in the Seitenstettengasse Tempel. Originally scheduled for 3 May 1856, the sermon was moved back to 1 November 1856. Because of this, Jellinek took up his duties in Vienna at the beginning of 1857, although the position had officially been awarded him at the end of 1856. Scholars, therefore, have variously dated the beginning of his tenure in Vienna to 1856 or 1857 (with one outlier, dating it to 1858). For a history of these negotiations and the discussions between Jellinek and the Viennese *Gemeinde*, see Rosenmann, Dr. Adolf Jellinek, 68 f., and 76–78. For further discussion and dating, see Björn Siegel, Facing Tradition. Adolf Jellinek and the Emergence of Modern Habsburg Jewry, in: Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts/Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook 8 (2009), 319–344, here 323, fn. 17;

JBDI / DIYB • Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook 14 (2015), 393–419.

ment. His transition from young university student to the leader of a thriving Jewish Community – whose synagogue on Gottschedstraße was one of the grandest in the region – proved immensely successful.[3] The friends and contacts he made in Leipzig, both Jewish and non-Jewish, would remain close to him throughout his life. But above all, in Leipzig Jellinek had shown himself to be a promising scholar. At the University he studied with the famous orientalist Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer (1801–1888), with whom he grew close enough to later invite to stay at his home in Vienna during the meeting of the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft (German Oriental Society) in 1858. Jellinek likewise worked with Julius Fürst (1805–1873), lecturer in Hebrew at the university and editor of the important scholarly journal *Der Orient*.[4] Following in the tradition of the founders of Haskalah and *Wissenschaft des Judentums* – among them Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786) and Leopold Zunz (1794–1886) – Jellinek became one of the central figures of modern Jewish historical scholarship.[5] Describing the ethos of this new "Science of Judaism," Ismar Schorsch writes: "At the core of modern Jewish scholarship there is a new way of thinking about Judaism. Emancipation exposed Jews inexorably to the historical perspective: to understand the present in terms of the past and the past in terms of itself."[6] Similarly, Michael A. Meyer notes that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, "Attention was drawn away from the 'eternal verities' of metaphysics

Holger Preißler, Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer. Ein Leipziger Orientalist, seine jüdischen Studenten, Promovenden und Kollegen, in: Stephan Wendehorst (ed.), Bausteine einer jüdischen Geschichte der Universität Leipzig, Leipzig 2006, 245–268, here 254; and Robert S. Wistrich, The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph, Oxford 1990, 111. For the outlier, see Marsha L. Rozenblit, Jewish Identity and the Modern Rabbi. The Cases of Isak Noa Mannheimer, Adolf Jellinek, and Moritz Güdemann in Nineteenth-Century Vienna, in: Leo Baeck Institute Year Book 35 (1990), 103–131, here 110. – I follow the 1857 date here.

3 For an overview of the history of the Leipzig Jewish Community, see the articles in Judaica Lipsiensia. Zur Geschichte der Juden in Leipzig, ed. by the Ephraim-Carlebach-Stiftung, Leipzig 1994; Kerstin Plowinski, Die jüdische Bevölkerung Leipzigs 1853 – 1925 – 1933. Sozialgeschichtliche Fallstudien zur Mitgliedschaft einer Großgemeinde (unpubl. diss., Leipzig University, 1991); and Wendehorst (ed.), Bausteine einer jüdischen Geschichte der Universität Leipzig.

4 See Ismar Schorsch, Converging Cognates. The Intersection of Jewish and Islamic Studies in Nineteenth Century Germany, in: Leo Baeck Institute Year Book 55 (2010), 3–36, here 29 f.; Preißler, Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer, 254; idem, Die Anfänge der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, in: Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft 145 (1995), 241–326, here 290 f.; Kempter, Die Jellineks 1820–1955, 39–48.

5 Jellinek's generation produced some of the most important minds for *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, among them Heinrich Graetz (1817–1891), Ludwig Philippson (1811–1889), Abraham Geiger (1810–1874), and Moritz Steinschneider (1816–1907).

6 Ismar Schorsch, From Text to Context. The Turn to History in Modern Judaism, Hanover, N. H./London 1994, 152.

toward the individual and empirical facts of history. Philosophy was employed to explain the course of human events."[7] Indeed, in a matter of decades – from the French Revolution to the close of the Napoleonic Wars – Judaism and Jewish philosophy in the German-speaking lands gained a third interpreter: joining the rabbis and Christian Hebraists were the *maskilim*, Jewish practitioners of Enlightenment-style learning, thinkers trained at universities in the newest forms of scientific historical and philological scholarship.[8] Following in the path of those *maskilic* pioneers, over the course of the 1840s Jellinek received a fully modern education at the university of Leipzig. Thereafter, between 1847 and 1855, he proceeded to publish ten books of history in the *Wissenschaft* mold (including the first volume of his seminal work, *Beit ha-Midrash* [House of Learning]) and numerous academic articles.[9] By the time he set off for Vienna, Jellinek seemed destined for a career as a leading proponent of the scientific study of Judaism.

Yet the writings that Jellinek produced during his first decade in the Habsburg capital stand in marked contrast to those he had completed in Leipzig.

7 Michael A. Meyer, The Origins of the Modern Jew. Jewish Identity and European Culture in Germany, 1749–1824, Detroit, Mich., 1967, 144. See also Shmuel Feiner, Haskalah and History. The Emergence of a Modern Jewish Historical Consciousness, trans. from the Hebrew by Chaya Naor and Sondra Silverston, Oxford 2002; Amos Funkenstein, Perceptions of Jewish History, Berkeley, Calif., 1993, 220–256; Michael Brenner, Propheten des Vergangenen. Jüdische Geschichtsschreibung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert, Munich 2006; and Nils H. Roemer, Jewish Scholarship and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Germany. Between History and Faith, Madison, Wis./London 2005.

8 The importance of philology to the development of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* remains to be more thoroughly investigated. For some preliminary research, see Anthony Grafton, Juden und Griechen bei Friedrich August Wolf, in: Reinhard Markner/Giuseppe Veltri (eds.), Friedrich August Wolf. Studien, Dokumente, Bibliographie. Eine Veröffentlichung des Leopold-Zunz-Zentrums zur Erforschung des Europäischen Judentums, Stuttgart 1999, 9–31; idem., Defenders of the Text. The Traditions of Scholarship in an Age of Science, 1450–1800, Cambridge, Mass., 1991; Dirk Hartwig, Die Wissenschaft des Judentums und die Anfänge der kritischen Koranforschung. Perspektiven einer modernen Koranhermeneutik, in: Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte 61 (2009), no. 3, 234–256; Gregor Pelger, Wissenschaft des Judentums und englische Bibliotheken. Zur Geschichte historischer Philologie im 19. Jahrhundert, Berlin 2010.

9 Jellinek's books in that period included: Adolf Jellinek, Elischa ben Abuja, genannt Acher. Zur Erklärung und Kritik der Gutzkow'schen Tragödie "Uriel Acosta", Leipzig 1847; idem, Moses ben Schem-Tob de Leon und sein Verhältniß zum Sohar. Eine historisch-kritische Untersuchung über die Entstehung des Sohar, Leipzig 1851; idem, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kabbala, 2 vols., Leipzig 1852; idem, Thomas von Aquino in der jüdischen Literatur, Leipzig 1853; idem, Auswahl kabbalistischer Mystik. Erstes Heft, Leipzig 1853; idem, Midrash eleh ezkerah [Legends of the Ten Martyrs], Leipzig 1853; Bet ha-Midrash [House of Learning]. Sammlung kleiner Midraschim und vermischter Abhandlungen aus der älteren jüdischen Literatur, Leipzig 1853; Beit ha-Midrash [House of Learning], 6 vols., Leipzig 1853–1877; idem (ed.), Philosophie und Kabbala. Erstes Heft, Leipzig 1854; idem, Über das Buch der Jubiläen und das Noah-Buch, Leipzig 1855.

While he did publish two more volumes of *Beit ha-Midrash*, as well as a commentary on the Song of Songs: *Shir ha-shirim. Derasha* (1861), he devoted the majority of his attentions to the writing of sermons, which appeared in a three-volume edition between 1862 and 1866.[10] These sermons represent something of a traditionalist turn in Jellinek's work. Aside from *Beit ha-Midrash* and an additional commentary on the biblical book of *Lamentations* (*Eicha*), his earlier publications had focused primarily on extra-biblical texts, many of them medieval in origin and often only minimally associated with the central Torah-and-Talmud core of rabbinic learning.[11] His shift in Vienna, then, was both abrupt and, in some sense, out of character. Little about his work in Leipzig foreshadows the stylistic and thematic departure that his Leopoldstadt writings represent.

Jellinek's work changed again when he replaced Isaac Noah Mannheimer in 1865 as Vienna's chief rabbinical leader and left suburban Leopoldstadt for the center of town.[12] From then until his death in 1893, Jellinek returned to the writing of historical and ethnographic works as well as to more overt political treatises: between 1869 and 1886, he published four volumes of scholarship and maintained a lively correspondence with orientalists and philologists across Europe.[13] Some contemporary academics, not finding much of enduring value in the historical works outside of *Beit ha-Midrash*, have mostly ignored the content of Jellinek's writings altogether, instead focusing on what he can tell us about the political and social currents buffeting Austrian Jewry in the second half of the nineteenth century.[14] Other scholars, who do see Jellinek as important to the history of Viennese Jewish reform, too quickly describe him as one link in a much longer chain, passing over his dual distinctions: methodological, in terms of his modes of arguing and speaking, and theological, in terms of his philosophy of Judaism.[15]

10 Idem, Predigten, 3 vols., Vienna 1862–1866.

11 Interestingly, a handful of these earlier works focused on Kabbalistic texts, a subject many of his *Wissenschaft* peers avoided and derided.

12 For an interpretation of Mannheimer's place in Viennese Jewish modernity, see Rozenblit, Jewish Identity and the Modern Rabbi. For a general biography, see Moses Rosenmann, Isak Noa Mannheimer. Sein Leben und Wirken. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien in der 2. Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts. Nebst einer Auswahl der politischen Reden und Schriften Mannheimers, Vienna/Berlin 1922.

13 These are: Adolf Jellinek, Der jüdische Stamm. Ethnographische Studien, Vienna 1869; idem, Zeitstimmen. Reden, 2 vols., Vienna 1870/71; idem, Der jüdische Stamm in nichtjüdischen Sprichwörtern, 3 vols., Vienna 1881–1885. For letters, see Archive of the National Library of Israel, Jerusalem, ARC. 4°1588, Adolf Jellinek Collection.

14 Among these are Benjamin Maria Baader, Gender, Judaism, and Bourgeois Culture in Germany, 1800–1870, Bloomington, Ind., 2006.

15 Among these are Wistrich, The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph; Siegel, Facing Tradition; Rozenblit, Jewish Identity and the Modern Rabbi.

In the pages that follow, I argue that when Jellinek arrived in Vienna he found a Jewish Community in need of a very specific sort of rabbinic voice. Whereas in some sense Isaac Noah Mannheimer appealed to the reform-minded and wealthier Jews of the Viennese *Gemeinde*, Jellinek could speak to the more conservative immigrants, whose ranks grew each year.[16] Robert Wistrich correctly notes that "[Jellinek's] sermons of the 1860s can be seen as a faithful mirror of the aspirations and ideas of liberal Austrian Jewry,"[17] and Björn Siegel comments that "[Jellinek's] view was similar to Mannheimer's concept of moderate Reform."[18] Yet while acknowledging Mannheimer's immense influence on Jellinek,[19] both Wistrich and Siegel underestimate the unique rabbinic epistemology that runs through Jellinek's writings. The Reform movement, as epitomized by such strong characters as Abraham Geiger (1810–1874), Samuel Holdheim (1806–1860), and Ludwig Philippson (1811–1889), represented its own unique strand of Jewish intellectual innovation, one that Jellinek recognized but did not adopt.[20] Similarly, the forerunners of the conservative movement, the rabbis of the Jewish Theological Seminary in Breslau headed by Zacharias Frankel (1801–1875), also developed a set of critical methodologies and theological assumptions that, while vastly more influential as a school than anything Jellinek produced, likewise failed to capture either the spirit or purpose of Jellinek's work.[21]

16 There is an interesting parallel to be made here – though I shall not pursue it – between Jellinek and Michael Sachs (1808–1864), a leading rabbinical figure of the Reform who took a more conservative line and eventually left the rabbinate. See Margit Schad, Rabbiner Michael Sachs. Judentum als höhere Lebensanschauung, Hildesheim/Zurich/New York 2007.

17 Wistrich, The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph, 120.

18 Siegel, Facing Tradition, 325.

19 See Adolf Jellinek, Festrede am LXX. Geburtstage Seiner Ehrwürden des Predigers Herrn Isaak Noa Mannheimer (17. October 1863) im alten israelitischen Bethause gehalten, Vienna 1863; idem, Rede bei der Gedächtnissfeier für den verewigten Prediger Herrn Isak Noa Mannheimer, am 26. März 1865 im Tempel in der Leopoldstadt, Vienna 1865.

20 See Susannah Heschel, Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus, Chicago, Ill./London 1998; Christian Wiese (ed.), Redefining Judaism in an Age of Emancipation. Comparative Perspectives on Samuel Holdheim (1806–1860), Leiden 2007. See also Carsten Wilke, "Den Talmud und den Kant". Rabbinerausbildung an der Schwelle zur Moderne, Hildesheim/Zurich/New York 2003, esp. 295–302.

21 See Ismar Schorsch, Zacharias Frankel and the European Origins of Conservative Judaism, in: Judaism 30 (1981), no. 3, 344–354; Andreas Brämer, Rabbiner Zacharias Frankel. Wissenschaft des Judentums und konservative Reform im 19. Jahrhundert, Hildesheim/Zurich/New York 2000; idem, The Dilemmas of Moderate Reform. Some Reflections on the Development of Conservative Judaism in Germany 1840–1880, in: Jewish Studies Quarterly 10 (2003), no. 1, 73–87. – The rabbi who followed Jellinek at Leopoldstadt, Moritz Güdemann (1835–1918), was a disciple of the Seminary in Breslau, suggesting affinity – but not necessarily coterminous intent – between Jellinek's thought and the Breslau school.

As I set out below, Jellinek believed that he was employing traditional rabbinic techniques in his attempt to translate Judaism into a modern idiom. His was not a case where liberalism trumped Judaism. Instead, Jellinek's communal voice was traditionalist in tone and modern in interpretation. He was "creative" in the way identified by Mordechai Breuer: "rooted in the desire and the ability to respond to the challenge of tradition by the new, the modern; not stubborn and purely passive rejection [of all things contemporary] but responding to them with activity and imagination."[22] That is, Jellinek's writings found a way of being liberal within a traditionalist setting. They mediated the crosscurrents of German (non-Jewish) intellectual discourse and Jewish ritual, narrative, and historical consciousness. As Siegel further notes, "For Jellinek, the focus was not on the blind observance of religious rules, but rather centered on the preservation of religious, ethical and social ideals embodied in the Jewish scriptures and texts."[23]

The first section of this article describes the community and politics that Jellinek encountered on arrival in Vienna. The second explores the ways I believe that Jellinek created a syncretic rabbinic Judaism from classical Jewish texts and German Enlightenment principles. His rabbinic theology not only gave his writings a unique patina, but was also one of the core reasons why – in the midst of a very fractious religious Community – he was able to rise to such prominence. By embedding non-Jewish ideas in a Jewish matrix of language and examples, Jellinek invented a form of liberal modernity for his Community that was at once accessible and non-hostile to their traditionalist sense of Jewish history, practice, and peoplehood.

Jellinek's Leopoldstadt

In early 1856, Adolf Jellinek, then living in Leipzig, received a note from the Jewish Community in Vienna.[24] In it, the governing body of Viennese Jewry invited Jellinek to assume a newly created rabbinical post in the neighborhood of Leopoldstadt, a historic town across the Danube Canal near the city center. The position, officially described as that of "preacher," would be second in importance only to the one held by Isaac Noah Mannheimer,

22 Mordechai Breuer, Kreativität und Traditionsgebundenheit, in: Michael Graetz (ed.), Schöpferische Momente des europäischen Judentums in der frühen Neuzeit, Heidelberg 2000, 113–120, here 113. All translation from the German, if not otherwise noted, are by the author.

23 Siegel, Facing Tradition, 325.

24 A description of the process of deciding on and inviting Jellinek can be found in Rosenmann, Dr. Adolf Jellinek, 74–77.

who had presided over the Community since 1825, mainly from the Seitenstettengasse synagogue – also called the Stadttempel – in the town center, built in 1826.[25] Though the Viennese Community of 1856 was still comparatively small, with the relaxing of Jewish settlement laws after 1848 the Community was planning for major growth. In the next half-century, tens of thousands of Jews would move to Vienna, making the city the most densely Jewish metropolis in Central Europe.[26]

Accepting the position, Jellinek moved his family to Vienna. In Leopoldstadt, Jellinek acted as both religious leader and social organizer for this new community of immigrant Jews. Unlike in Leipzig, where the city's Jewish migrants had originated mainly in towns along the trade routes crisscrossing rural central Germany, the families moving to Leopoldstadt came from a much wider portion of Central Europe, and from milieus that varied greatly in religious observance, local custom, and interaction with non-Jewish culture. Instead of being the main rabbinic family in a small commercial city, Jellinek was now the preacher in what was fast becoming one of the most influential Jewish Communities in Europe. As others have written about at length, Viennese Jews were pioneers in almost everything. But the development most keenly relevant to Jellinek was in the Community's cautious but decidedly liberal religious reforms.[27] The "Vienna Rite," as their custom of prayer worship came to be called, while often contested, remained central to the Community's sense of identity and cohesion well into the final decade of the nineteenth century.

Paralleling the religious and cultural transformation which was slowly overtaking the Viennese Community, Jellinek's move to Vienna likewise marked the beginning of many changes in the young rabbi's intellectual mindset. Born and schooled in the Czech regions of the Austrian Empire, followed by a decade and a half residence in the non-Habsburg Kingdom of

25 Between the 1670 expulsion of the Jews from Vienna by Leopold I and the appointment of Moritz Güdemann to preside at the Leopoldstädter Tempel in 1869, the term *"Rabbi"* was not used for leaders of the Jewish Community in Vienna. Instead, the term *"Prediger,"* (German for "preacher"), was employed, and was meant, first, as a sign of the Jews' second-class status (they were not allowed official religious representation in the city), and later, as a sign of religious reform ("preacher" being more modern than "rabbi"). Jellinek never assumed the title of Chief Rabbi, though it was officially presented to him at the very end of his life. Mannheimer likewise remained *Prediger* throughout his tenure in Vienna. Güdemann began to use it once he succeeded Jellinek as head of the Viennese Community, though likely this was motivated as much by intra-Jewish politics as out of reverence for the title itself. See Wistrich, The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph, 122.

26 Marsha L. Rozenblit, The Jews of Vienna, 1867–1914. Assimilation and Identity, Albany, N. Y., 1983, 17 f.

27 See Rozenblit, Jewish Identity and the Modern Rabbi, 105 f.

Saxony, Jellinek lived out the remainder of his life in Catholic Vienna, the heart of Habsburg political power. It was during these final decades that he began to take a greater interest in both communal and national politics. Though he never came to embrace the radical liberalism of his brother Hermann, after his move from Leopoldstadt to Seitenstettengasse in 1865 he took a much broader view of the Empire's multi-ethnic and multi-cultural heterogeneity.[28] These political observations and reflections provided him with material for some of his most provocative and politically interesting ethnographic writings.[29]

But much of that would come later, many years into his Viennese career. What Jellinek wrote during his first decade in the city was something different altogether: sermons and articles that sought to find a continuum between the traditional world of Jewish textuality and the new social and intellectual space of mid-nineteenth century German liberalism. The concept of "liberalism" has many definitions, and has long carried various social and political assumptions. To accurately describe the model of liberalism to which Jellinek adhered the term here must suggest three separate, though interrelated, nineteenth-century phenomena. First, liberalism was about modifications to and alterations of traditional Jewish practice, especially as they were developed and fostered by scholars and rabbis in *maskilic* and *Wissenschaft* traditions. Such changes could affect anything from liturgy, e. g. what was included in the prayer book;[30] to pedagogy, e. g. who attended and what was taught in Jewish schools;[31] to the physical experience of religious practice,

28 For a study of his brother, Hermann (1823–1848), see Kempter, Die Jellineks 1820–1955, 48–80. The youngest of the three Jellinek brothers, Moritz (1824–1883), would become one of the most important entrepreneurs in modern Budapest. See Michael L. Miller, Going Native. Moritz Jellinek and the Modernization of the Hungarian Economy, in: Gideon Reuveni/Sarah Wobick-Segev (eds.), The Economy in Jewish History. New Perspectives on the Interrelationship between Ethnicity and Economic Life, New York/Oxford 2011, 157–173.

29 These observations were first published in Jellinek, Der jüdische Stamm. Three additional volumes of collected ethnographic writings were published in the 1880s: idem, Der jüdische Stamm in nichtjüdischen Sprichwörtern. At the date of this writing, there is no substantive secondary scholarly literature on any of these works, though they receive mention and brief analysis in Kempter, Die Jellineks 1820–1955, 142 f. See also Johannes Sabel, Die Geburt der Literatur aus der Aggada. Formationen eines deutsch-jüdischen Literaturparadigmas, Tübingen 2010, 90–98.

30 For example, see Adam S. Ferziger, Exclusion and Hierarchy. Orthodoxy, Nonobservance, and the Emergence of Modern Jewish Identity, Philadelphia, Pa., 2005, 1–17; Mordechai Breuer, Modernity within Tradition. The Social History of Orthodox Jewry in Imperial Germany, New York 1992, 173–184.

31 For example, see Simone Lässig, Bildung als "kulturelles" Kapital? Jüdische Schulprojekte in der Frühphase der Emanzipation, in: Andreas Gotzmann/Rainer Liedtke/Till van Rahden (eds.), Juden, Bürger, Deutsche. Zur Geschichte von Vielfalt und Differenz 1800–1933, Tübingen 2001, 263–298; idem, Jüdische Wege ins Bürgertum. Kulturelles Kapital

such as what rabbis wore and how synagogues were built.[32] Second, liberalism involved vast shifts within non-Jewish philosophy and intellectual life as an outgrowth of the Enlightenment, and is most often associated with universalizing ethical and cultural assumptions.[33] Third, liberalism manifested as a political platform, expressed in the French Revolution of 1789, in the 1848 revolutions, and then intermittently by governments and political parties until the First World War.[34] Of course, the changes brought about by Enlightenment – and the ensuing battles to claim, elucidate, deny, or disown it – underpin and connect each of these three aspects of liberalism. Which is why, as Hans-Joachim Salecker observes, "[though what I have written here] achieves no definition of what liberalism actually means, […] it creates a panorama of different concepts of liberalism that have arisen as innovative responses to the upheavals of the turn of the [nineteenth] century."[35] Just such a panorama allows us to see the intertwining of ideas and ideologies at play within "liberal" culture in Jellinek's era.

In the spirit of political and social liberalism, perhaps the symbolic moment of Vienna's transformation from medieval capital to modern urban center came in 1858, less than two years after Jellinek's arrival, and in the same year the new synagogue in Leopoldstadt was completed. Jellinek's arrival in the Danube metropolis corresponded with the beginning of liberal dominance in Viennese governance, a two-decade period that witnessed the massive reconstruction of the capital and an attempt to permanently solidify a new sort of enlightened bourgeois ethic.[36] Over the course of 1858, the city's public works department demolished the remaining sections of the capital's medieval walled fortifications, which, almost exactly two centuries earlier, had withstood the siege of the Ottoman army, halting Islamic military expansion into Central Europe and solidifying Habsburg rule. Yet even more than in its physical impact, the razing of the walls must be seen as part

und sozialer Aufstieg im 19. Jahrhundert, Göttingen 2004; Wilke, "Den Talmud und den Kant", esp. 191–254 and 401–416; Simon Schwarzfuchs, A Concise History of the Rabbinate, Oxford/Cambridge, Mass., 1993, 97–109.

32 For example, see Eric K. Silverman, A Culture History of Jewish Dress, Oxford 2013; Carol H. Krinsky, Synagogues of Europe. Architecture, History, Meaning, Cambridge, Mass., 1985.

33 See Hans-Joachim Salecker, Der Liberalismus und die Erfahrung der Differenz. Über die Bedingungen der Integration der Juden in Deutschland, Berlin 1999, 65–97.

34 See David Weinstein, Art. "Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Liberalism," in: The Oxford Handbook of the History of Political Philosophy, ed. by George Klosko, Oxford/New York 2011, 414–435.

35 Salecker, Der Liberalismus und die Erfahrung der Differenz, 70.

36 See Anthony Alofsin, When Buildings Speak. Architecture as Language in the Habsburg Empire and its Aftermath, 1867–1933, Chicago, Ill., 2006; Carl E. Schorske, Fin-de-Siècle Vienna. Politics and Culture, New York 1981, 24–115.

of a larger political transformation. Nine years after the failed March 1848 revolution, and a century into the intellectual foment of the Enlightenment, the inhabitants of Vienna were no longer merely crown subjects but rather bourgeois individuals in their own right.[37]

In many ways, the new buildings in Vienna offer in stone an interpretation of modernity very much in concert with those that Jellinek would come to espouse in his writings. "The modern world in all its aspects," Egbert Klautke writes, "was created in urban contexts."[38] As Vienna spread outward, construction and conglomeration of suburban towns and neighborhoods occurred along axes that fed into the city's new main artery, the Ringstraße.[39] When the agreement uniting the houses of Austria and Hungary was signed in 1867, Vienna unquestionably became one of the most important centers of political and economic power in Central Europe, with its emperor, Franz Josef, presiding over a territory stretching from the borders of Russia to those of France, and from the Mediterranean Sea to the southern frontiers of Prussia.

In the decades following 1848, the Jews of the Habsburg Empire migrated from the rural provinces to the urban centers in unprecedented numbers, seeking to capitalize on newly enacted emancipatory laws as well as the promises of "embourgeoisement" offered by transformations in all aspects of nineteenth century life.[40] Though Leopoldstadt was one of the first areas to be heavily settled by immigrating provincials in the mid-nineteenth century, it also had a long early-modern history.[41] A medieval town located on the islands between the Danube Canal and the Danube River east of the city cen-

37 See David Tarot, Vienne et l'Europe central, Paris 2012, 171–188.

38 Egbert Klautke, Urban History and Modernity in Central Europe (Historiographical Review), in: The Historical Journal 53 (2010), no. 1, 177–195, here 177.

39 Ilsa Barea, Vienna. Legend and Reality, London 1966, 238–244. See also Schorske, Fin-de-Siècle Vienna, 24–115. For a socio-political account of the dismantling of walled cities in central Europe, see Yair Mintzker, The Defortification of the German City, 1689–1866, Washington, D. C./New York 2012.

40 David Sorkin, The Transformation of German Jewry, 1780–1840, New York 1987. For broader studies of this moment in Austrian and Austrian Jewish history, see Rozenblit, The Jews of Vienna, 1867–1914; Robert A. Kann, A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526–1918, Berkeley, Calif., 1980, 318–342; Lässig, Jüdische Wege ins Bürgertum. For a wide-ranging analysis of transformations in nineteenth-century life generally, see Jürgen Osterhammel, Die Verwandlung der Welt. Eine Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts, Munich 2009.

41 For an overview of construction and ordinances in pre-1848 Leopoldstadt (including three re-created survey maps of the suburb and its Danube island region), see Robert Meßner, Die Leopoldstadt im Vormärz. Historisch-topographische Darstellung der nordöstlichen Vorstädte und Vororte Wiens auf Grund der Katastralvermessung, Vienna 1962. For a general introduction, including a brief account of medieval Jewish settlement in the area before 1670, see Helga Gibs, Leopoldstadt. Kleine Welt am großen Strom, n. p. [Vienna] 1997.

ter, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Leopoldstadt was the only area in which Jews could live legally. From a hundred residents at the beginning of the seventeenth century, by the time of the Edict of Expulsion in 1670 the neighborhood contained some two thousand Jewish families.[42] Originally referred to simply as Unterer Werd, which roughly means "the lower quarter" (Middle High German: island), after the 1670 expulsion it was renamed in honor of Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I, at whose order the Edict was promulgated.[43]

The geography of Leopoldstadt, situated in a Danube River floodplain outside Vienna's defensive fortifications, provides something of a metaphor for the relation that the capital's poorer Jewish immigrants (as well as many of its other working-class citizens) had with the city's traditional brokers of power. The first new (officially-sanctioned) synagogue in Vienna since the Expulsion was (re)constructed on Seitenstettengasse, in the center of town, in 1826. It was where the chief rabbinical leader presided and the Jewish lay leadership kept its offices.[44] Yet Leopoldstadt was less a satellite of the city center than it was a unique urban center in its own right. With its dense Jewish population, the town retained those Jews who desired to live among other members of the Community. Well into the later decades of the nineteenth century, when more neighborhoods were made available for Jewish settlement, Leopoldstadt kept its own mores and conventions. Indeed, while never being more than about 36 percent Jewish in total, it was home to half of the city's entire Jewish population. By the turn of the twentieth century had gained the nickname *Mazzesinsel* (Matza Island), and remained until World War II the Viennese neighborhood with the highest density of Jewish inhabitants.[45]

The Jews in Leopoldstadt came from all across the Empire, but in the 1850s and 1860s the largest numbers originated from the Habsburg crown

42 Gerson Wolf, Die Juden in der Leopoldstadt ("unterer Werd") im 17. Jahrhundert in Wien, Vienna 1864, 3; Wistrich, The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph, 7. For another history of the Jewish Community of pre-1670 Leopoldstadt, see Hans Rotter/Adolf Schmieger, Das Ghetto in der Wiener Leopoldstadt, Vienna 1926.

43 Kann, A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526–1918, 125 and 189; Gibs, Leopoldstadt, 12 f.

44 A history of the Seitenstettengasse Synagogue (Stadttempel), as well of the slow Jewish migration back into Vienna after the 1670 expulsion, is recounted in Wistrich, The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph, 3–61. A catalogue of religious objects and essays on the Jewish Community of Vienna is Karl Albrecht-Weinberger/Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek (eds.), Judentum in Wien. "Heilige Gemeinde Wien." Sammlung Max Berger. Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien, Vienna 1987.

45 Rozenblit, The Jews of Vienna, 1867–1914, 78. See Ruth Beckermann (ed.), Die Mazzesinsel. Juden in der Wiener Leopoldstadt 1918–1938, with an historical essay by idem, Vienna/Munich 1984.

lands of Bohemia and Moravia, rural lower Austria, and the Empire's Balkan territories.[46] As Helga Gibs recounts, the cultural life in Leopoldstadt reflected the desire of its population for upward mobility and entrance into the bourgeois classes. The neighborhood contained the largest dancehall in pre-1848 Vienna; its concert house hosted some of the most famous conductors in Europe; and it was the site of Vienna's Nordbahnhof, the city's rail link to the north.[47] While these venues were neither built by nor for Jews, Jews certainly attended their events and took these trains. However, for many of the Jews in Leopoldstadt, some form of traditionalism remained the more natural religious disposition, with liberal changes continuing to represent a somewhat foreign, i. e. Christian, invention.[48]

In 1858, during the second year of Jellinek's tenure, work was completed in the neighborhood on a large new synagogue, called the Leopoldstädter Tempel. Located on Wallisch-Gasse (now Tempelgasse), upon inauguration the Leopoldstädter Tempel became and remained, until its destruction on 9 November 1938, one of the grandest of Vienna's Jewish houses of worship, representing a new era of wealth, affluence and stability for the Commu-

46 Robert Waissenberger, Judentum in Wien bis 1938, in: Albrecht-Weinberger/Heimann-Jelinek (eds.), Judentum in Wien, 18–28. On Bohemian and Moravian Jewry, see Michael L. Miller, Rabbis and Revolution. The Jews of Moravia in the Age of Emancipation, Stanford, Calif., 2011; Wilma Abeles Iggers (ed.), The Jews of Bohemia and Moravia. A Historical Reader, Detroit, Mich., 1992; Michael Brocke/Julius Carlebach (eds.), Biographisches Handbuch der Rabbiner, part 1: Carsten Wilke, Die Rabbiner der Emanzipationszeit in den deutschen, böhmischen und großpolnischen Ländern 1781–1871, Munich 2004; Hillel J. Kieval, Autonomy and Interdependence. The Historical Legacy of Czech Jewry, in: David Altshuler (ed.), The Precious Legacy. Judaic Treasures from the Czechoslovak State Collections, New York 1983, 46–109; idem, Imperial Embraces and Ethnic Challenges. The Politics of Jewish Identity in the Bohemian Lands, in: Shofar. An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies 30 (2012), no. 4, 1–17; idem, Choosing to Bridge. Revisiting the Phenomenon of Cultural Mediation, in: Bohemia. Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der böhmischen Länder/A Journal of History and Civilization in East Central Europe 46 (2005), no. 1, 15–27; idem, The Making of Czech Jewry. National Conflict and Jewish Society in Bohemia, 1870–1918, New York 1988; idem, Languages of Community. The Jewish Experience in the Czech Lands, Berkeley, Calif., 2000. – Contrary to some accounts, Galician Jews did not arrive in mass numbers until the 1880s and 1890s. By then, Jellinek was presiding at Seitenstettengasse.

47 Gibs, Leopoldstadt, 30–44. See Klaus Hödl, Als Bettler in die Leopoldstadt. Galizische Juden auf dem Weg nach Wien, Vienna/Cologne/Weimar [2]1994. Robert Wistrich argues that before 1880 it seems unlikely that the largest percentage of Jews to migrate to Vienna were so-called *Ostjuden* from Galicia. Idem, The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph, 43. – The Nordbahnhof opened in 1838. It was rebuilt in 1865 in magnificent style. See Evelyn Klein/Gustav Glaser, Peripherie in der Stadt. Das Wiener Nordbahnviertel. Einblicke, Erkundungen, Analysen, Innsbruck 2006.

48 Waissenberger, Judentum in Wien bis 1938; Hödl, Als Bettler in die Leopoldstadt, 147–165.

nity.[49] Designed by German-born Viennese architect Ludwig von Förster (1797–1863), the Tempel had "[h]orseshoe arches and wiry cast-iron columns" and an eastern wall "articulated with a monumental arch."[50] The street façade featured parallel minarets and was colored in Moorish-revival style, and, significantly, the building "no longer had to be hidden in the courtyard like the [Seitenstettengasse] synagogue's entrance."[51] As Carol Krinsky notes, while the Leopoldstädter Tempel was built with space for an organ, "the fact that the congregation did not use [it] […] showed that the more liberal Jews wanted to come to terms with the more orthodox."[52] Mannheimer, who had an influential say in the synagogue's practices (though he would never consistently preach there), was thoroughly against inclusion of an organ, on the grounds that it was too Christian.

Debate over what sort of Judaism would be practiced inside the new synagogue was both sharp and ongoing. Indeed, the entire creation and evolution of the Vienna Rite itself represents a deeply conflicted view about the meaning and practice of modern Jewish religion. Mannheimer, whose education spanned both the religious and secular, was hired in 1825 specifically for his interest in creating a synagogue ritual that could respond to the liberal urban enlightenment that Vienna's Jews hoped to make their own. Björn Siegel argues that much of Jellinek's political success comes from his very close association with Mannheimer, and especially from his tenacity in arguing for a more liberal Vienna Rite well into the latter half of the nineteenth century.[53] But both Nikolaus Vielmetti and Marsha Rozenblit note that reform

49 See Bob Martens/Herbert Peter, Die zerstörten Synagogen Wiens. Virtuelle Stadtspaziergänge, Vienna 2009, 21–30; Krinsky, Synagogues of Europe, 191–195.

50 H. A. Meek, The Synagogue, London 1995, 189. – Förster's best-known works are all synagogues, though he himself was not Jewish: the Leopoldstädter Tempel in Vienna, the Dohány Street Synagogue in Budapest (also called the Great Synagogue), and the Kazinczy Street Synagogue of Miskolc, Hungary. The latter two remain standing, and all three were constructed in Byzantine/Moorish-revival style. See Kinga Frojimovics/Géza Komoróczy, Jewish Budapest. Monuments, Rites, History, New York 1999, 107 f. – Ludwig Förster, who contributed heavily to the plans for Vienna's reconstruction, was the father of Emil von Förster (1838–1909), who designed a number of important buildings during the genesis of the Ringstraße. Janine Burke gives a brief account of Ludwig Förster's role in the building of the Ringstraße as well as some common perception of Leopoldstadt, see idem, The Sphinx on the Table. Sigmund Freud's Art Collection and the Development of Psychoanalysis, New York 2006, 28–30.

51 Krinsky, Synagogues of Europe, 191.

52 Ibid., 194. The other synagogues Förster designed also either included an organ or had a place for one.

53 Siegel, Facing Tradition, 324 f. See also Marsha L. Rozenblit, The Struggle over Religious Reform in Nineteenth-Century Vienna, in: AJS [Association for Jewish Studies] Review 14 (1989), no. 2, 179–221.

came slowly to the Stadttempel.[54] While nearly all of the Jews who lived in the Habsburg capital before 1848 were from the more affluent professions, and generally more welcoming of reform, they resisted the radical reforms being implemented in other German-speaking cities.[55]

Mannheimer, however, did make the German sermon a standard part of the Vienna Rite. It was in this genre that Jellinek most actively and thoughtfully engaged his talents during his years in Leopoldstadt. The sermons he published from that time reveal him to be a mature and sophisticated intellectual, one who understood the challenges facing modern German-speaking Jewry. His writings are deeply empathic toward those who sought a continuation with the more conservative past, yet likewise focused with intensity and nuance on the present. As I discuss in the following section, in Leopoldstadt Jellinek became intimately concerned with finding a way to mediate between enlightenment ideas and the historical practices and ethics that he believed formed the core of traditional Judaism.

Rabbi as Preacher

Jellinek's responsibilities in Leopoldstadt differed greatly from those of his rabbinical peers in the smaller, more rural regions of the Empire's provinces. During his first decade in the capital, before he gained leadership over the entire Viennese Community, Jellinek was primarily a neighborhood preacher. This was a role uniquely suited to his personality and intellectual goals. Historically, the rabbi of a Community presided mainly over the civil and ritual responsibilities and obligations (as well as disputes) of his people.[56] The rabbi would have given lessons to his students and a *shir* – an elucidation of that week's biblical reading – on Sabbath afternoons to the Community, but was not likely to give a sermon during morning prayers. Instead, the rabbi might make a formal sermon a few times per year, as well as during

54 Nikolaus Vielmetti, Reform und Tradition im Neuen Stadttempel in der Seitenstettengasse zu Wien, in: Albrecht-Weinberger/Heimann-Jelinek (eds.), Judentum in Wien, 30–34; Rozenblit, Jewish Identity and the Modern Rabbi, 106.

55 For a history of the Reform movement in Germany, see Michael A. Meyer, Response to Modernity. A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism, New York 1988.

56 For the many-faceted role of the rabbi as Community leader, see Marc Saperstein, Leadership and Conflict. Tensions in Medieval and Early Modern Jewish History and Culture, Oxford/Portland, Oreg., 2014; Shaul Stampfer, Families, Rabbis and Education. Traditional Jewish Society in Nineteenth-Century Eastern Europe, Oxford/Portland, Oreg., 2010; Daniel Frank/Matt Goldish (eds.), Rabbinic Culture and its Critics. Jewish Authority, Dissent, and Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Times, Detroit, Mich., 2008; and Schwarzfuchs, A Concise History of the Rabbinate.

the High Holidays *(Shabbat Shuva)* and on the Sabbath before Passover *(Shabbat ha-Gadol)*.[57] His position outside of the study hall was primarily civil and psychological, dealing with the daily needs of the people while extensively educating only a few.

Jellinek's position in Leopoldstadt was very different from that traditional model.[58] He was not brought to Vienna to spend his hours as a halakhic (religious legal) authority for small claims and disputes, although he was certainly trained for the role. Instead, following in the path of Mannheimer, his was one of the first recognizably "modern" rabbinical positions, where the ritual function of the synagogue, as opposed to the halakhic obligations of his Community members, was his central priority.[59] The synagogue has long acted as the focal point of the Jewish Community. What was now different was that the synagogue functioned as the center of the rabbi's life as well. The rabbi became overseer of the ritual life of the synagogue, as opposed to being arbiter of the legal lives of his Community with the synagogue (with its fairly simple and repetitive regulations) administered by laypersons. This transformation in the role of the rabbi is apparent in the title of Jellinek's position: *Prediger* (preacher). It symbolized the centrality of the act of speaking to a multitude, over and above the intimacies of legal or interpersonal adjudication.

For Jellinek in Vienna, the ritual and social functions of the new Tempel were predominant. While in Leipzig he had had time to pursue his academic interests, in Leopoldstadt he was responsible for all the ritual needs of his growing Community, like circumcisions, bar mitzvot, and weddings as well as weekly sermons. Observing Jellinek's first decade in Vienna through the distance of history, we can see that, sometime around the date of his move, the young rabbi made a serious and profound personal decision. Rather than attempt to continue his remarkable scholarly productivity, he instead channeled his energies into communal education and outreach through his sermons. He experimented with ways of making his knowledge accessible. He returned to the classic rabbinic canon, not for historical interest, but with an eye toward the future of the Jewish people. In a way, Jellinek became less insular than he had ever been. Whereas the cosmopolitan scholar educated in Prague and Leipzig had previously written for a select crowd of fellow

57 For an example of a rabbinic contract that specified days of preaching, see Schwarzfuchs, A Concise History of the Rabbinate, 51–53.

58 For one account of the evolution of the German rabbi in the nineteenth century, see Schorsch, From Text to Context, 9–50.

59 Mordechai Breuer notes how these changes effected both Reform and neo-Orthodox Communities, with Samson Raphael Hirsch critiquing the over-emphasis on synagogue ritual found in liberal Communities. See idem, Modernity within Tradition, 44 f.

academics, in Vienna, by turning to the traditional sources of Judaism and using them to explain contemporary intellectual theories and political affairs, he broadened his notion of what it meant to be a religious reformer, teacher, and "translator" of modernity.

The idea of being a preacher, of giving a verbal elucidation of a traditional text in a form relevant to the present time and in a vernacular language, has a long history in Judaism. However, in the early part of the nineteenth century the job was transforming, leaving behind many of its medieval and early modern roots. By adopting Christian models, the sermon itself became a site of Jewish modernism and acculturation. Alexander Altmann, in his study on the German-Jewish sermon, noted a link between the rise of rationalism and the formalization of the weekly sermon in the closing decades of the eighteenth century:

> "The sermon had evolved into a type of pulpit oratory decidedly different from the genre of the homily. It was not to be an exegetical discourse on Scriptural verses loosely strung together but was to be a disquisition on some definite theme based on a text and presented according to a well-defined pattern of component parts."[60]

Indeed, this is precisely the model we see undergirding Jellinek's sermons in the 1850s and 1860s. He was widely known as a gifted orator, but his importance arose not just from his rhetorical style. His linguistic choices concerning the translation of Jewish ideas and principles into contemporary German are also singularly his own and represent a particular and interesting vision of and for Jewish modernity.[61]

When we look closely at Jellinek's language and imagery – working neatly within the new tradition of sermon-as-disquisition described by Altmann – we see that he was actually making a deeply *interpretive* translation of Jewish history, one that accentuated its links to the present ethos of liberalism. Yet of course, it is the very role of the rabbi himself to make mediated interpretations. Even the most supposedly exacting of readings is part of a regime of signs and symbols. Jellinek knew this and thought of himself as being embedded in just such an intellectual lineage.

60 Alexander Altmann, The New Style of Preaching in Nineteenth-Century German Jewry, in: idem (ed.), Studies in Nineteenth-Century Jewish Intellectual History, Cambridge, Mass., 1964, 65–116, here 68. He also noted: "An analysis of the theology of the sermon is still a desideratum." Ibid., 65.

61 Clearly, Jellinek was deeply influenced by Mannheimer's use of rabbinic sources in his sermons, none the more once he moved to Mannheimer's city. See Altmann, The New Style of Preaching in Nineteenth-Century German Jewry, 79 f. But I retain the argument that Jellinek's use of these traditional sources in his sermons was more pointedly social and philosophical, and were constructed to persuade his congregation that Judaism embodies the same ethical values as German modernity.

Interestingly, we can observe a linguistic dichotomy in Jellinek's published sermons that both hints at his communal rabbinic project in Vienna and demonstrates his link with and belief in traditional forms of Jewish knowledge creation and dissemination. What set Jellinek's writing apart from a vast majority of his contemporary rabbinical colleagues in "modern" pulpits was his use of Hebrew footnotes in the published sermons. At an earlier time, rabbis would often give their sermons in Yiddish but publish them in Hebrew. Jellinek both gave and published his sermons in German. Yet his references were always in Hebrew. And those Hebrew footnotes were to classical Jewish sources: Bible, Talmud, Midrash, and rabbinic commentary. With this in mind, Michael A. Meyer comments:

> "In contrast to the early style of Reform preaching, Jellinek did not dwell on general moral truths but on the specific teachings of Judaism. His elegantly crafted sermons were lavishly embellished with appropriate texts from Midrash and Talmud. Their dominant purpose, it seems, was to make his listeners proud of their particular Jewish heritage, to make them 'feel good' about being Jewish."[62]

Meyer's understanding of Jellinek's sermons is to see them as motivational: Judaism not only contained essential moral truths, it had proven throughout the centuries that it could sustain and enhance them, creating a unique society that embodied and advanced both an ethical and a divine mission. One's Jewish ancestors, Jellinek wanted his listeners to believe, were equally as enlightened concerning the world of culture and science as they themselves felt in the nineteenth century; in the same way as writers and philosophers were quoting the Greek classics, Jews could cite Talmud. When they did so, instead of just finding law, as the Christian polemic insisted, they would find a universal moral code as sophisticated and thoughtfully designed as anything being taught in Humboldt's Berlin or at Vienna's university on the Ringstraße.

A further interpretation is to view Jellinek's sermons and their German-Hebrew division as not only motivational but as also pedagogical. Though Germany had produced some exceptionally poetic translations of the Bible – not least of which was the *Lutherbibel* –, modern rabbis needed to reiterate that the God of Israel did not speak from Sinai in German.[63] As the liturgical service in non-Orthodox congregations increasingly adopted Protestant customs, and as German (rather than Yiddish, which intrinsically reminds its

62 Meyer, Response to Modernity, 192.

63 For an examination of the concept of *"Bildung"* in this context, as well as about the acquisition of the German language and translation, see Simone Lässig, Systeme des Wissens und Praktiken der Erziehung. Transfers und Übersetzungen im deutschen Judentum des 19. Jahrhunderts, in: Hans-Joachim Hahn et al. (eds.), Kommunikationsräume des Europäischen. Jüdische Wissenskulturen jenseits des Nationalen, Leipzig 2014, 15–42.

speakers and reader of its Hebrew foundations) became the communal language of Austrian Jewry, Jellinek's consistent references and gestures to the core texts of Jewish theology and philosophy aimed to reinforce their older, illustrious status.[64] If Jellinek could prove, both to Jews and non-Jews, that Judaism embodied the tenets of German liberalism and had done so at least since the time of the early rabbis if not since Sinai then, just as the antiquity of Greece brought honor to their thought, so too, perhaps, the antiquity of the Jews could bring honor (and thereby acceptance and equality) to them as well.

Still, it remains a fact that by including Hebrew footnotes, Jellinek was excluding some portions of his Community from understanding and thereby engaging with his source. So while remaining every bit a man of the Enlightenment, who viewed knowledge as progressive and who believed that the Jews had a place in the European family of nations, Jellinek was also traditional in his view about the role of the rabbi when it came to the classical texts of Judaism. His was the lens through which his Community would come to know these writings, he believed. Those who had the learning to read and understand Hebrew could engage in the original. But for the main body of his Community, who did not have a deep religious education, his explanations and elucidations (in both literal and metaphoric terms, his translations) of the sources was the dominant vision of Judaism they received.

This returns us to my central thesis: Jellinek's writings during this period are deeply concerned with Jewish history and the continuing relevance of religious ritual for Jewish life in the modern era. Jellinek wrote:

> "We want to introduce [Judaism] *in the midst* of the grappling and contentions of our moment […] [so that we may] know how it responds to the important questions of our time; [we] want today to speak to and judge [Judaism] on some of the principle tasks with whose solution our age is occupied."[65]

These words appeal to the soul of Judaism, looking not only at ritual strictures but even more so at ethical wisdom and history. Judaism's long history, he argues, is part of its great strength. Or to put Jellinek's formulation into a more Hegelian discourse: "Life consists rather in being the self-developing whole which dissolves its development and in this movement simply pre-

64 See Yaacov Shavit/Mordechai Eran, The Hebrew Bible Reborn. From Holy Scripture to the Book of Books. A History of Biblical Culture and the Battles over the Bible in Modern Judaism, Berlin/New York 2007; and Ran HaCohen, Reclaiming the Hebrew Bible. German-Jewish Reception of Biblical Criticism, Berlin/New York 2010.

65 Adolf Jellinek, Der Talmud. Zwei Reden am Hüttenfeste 5625 (am 16. und 22. Oktober 1864), Vienna 1865, 21.

serves itself."[66] Which is to say, for Jellinek rabbinic Judaism is a continual act of overcoming, a dissolving of the ideas and opinions of before by assimilating them into new commentaries, which themselves allow Jewish culture to live inside a tradition that is, in a realistic sense, perpetually contemporary. Following Hegel, in Jellinek's formulation the preservation of Judaism across so many centuries is a distinctly Enlightenment act. It is its developing – its synthesis and overcoming – which allowed Judaism to remain ever perceptive to new trends in cultural and moral thought. This final ability to assimilate new moral thoughts is what Jellinek believed made the heart of the rabbinic project both eminently modern and sure to persist.

As we turn now to look at some specific instances of Jellinek's writing, a number of key themes emerge. First, Jellinek sought to bring together on equal terms the languages of Judaism and German modernity. By putting the Hebrew in the footnotes and writing a German text that was accessible, interesting, and focused heavily on the interpretation of traditional Jewish narratives, Jellinek was reforming and educating in a way that overtly demonstrated the importance of Judaism for a full and thoughtful contemporary life.

The second key theme is Jellinek's focus on the various ways in which Judaism espouses a care for the "other." He argued that many of the universal values of liberalism are embodied in the textual and, more importantly, the ritual and dialogical history of Judaism. A Jewish life, he thought, that was not only cultivated through rabbinic and biblical texts but also *validated* by them, would help his Community to understand and integrate the non-Jewish value systems they encountered in modern Vienna. Finally, we will see in these texts three interlinked ideas: *Wahrheit*, *Freiheit*, and *Gerechtigkeit* (truth, freedom, and justice). In his search for an overlapping language between Judaism and the broader human experience, Jellinek relied heavily on these concepts, often though not exclusively in unison, and returned to them repeatedly, finding their referent in nearly every classic Jewish text, folktale, and ritual.

66 Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, trans. by Arnold V. Miller with analysis of the text and foreword by J. N. Findlay, Oxford/New York 1977, 108.

The "Other" and the "Stranger"

In a clear example of his focus on the care of the "other," Jellinek wrote in early summer 1861:

> "But is Judaism so indifferent to the healing of other people? Is it really so narrow-minded and selfish that it does not care about its progress and the spreading of its truth? Certainly not! Forty-five times […] God focuses the Israelites on justice, love, and mercy toward the foreigner."[67]

These words were spoken on Shavuot, the Feast of Weeks, the celebration of the giving of the Torah on Sinai to the Jewish people. Among all nations, Israel was chosen for a special set of laws and ordinances. As the rabbis imagined it, the other peoples of the world were asked to accept the Torah and they refused, and only Israel accepted without precondition: "we will do and we will understand" (Ex 24:7).

Yet Jellinek refocuses the scene. Reading the book of Ruth on Shavuot, he interprets, is a reminder that the values inherent in Judaism are universal and accepting. "What is this little Book of Ruth now on our Festival [of Shavuot]? […] It is an ancient monument to Jewish forbearance, Jewish love, and Jewish loyalty."[68] Ruth is a foreigner, a non-Jew, who accepts the Jewish God and the moral codes of the Jews and is assimilated into the Jewish people; indeed, she is abundantly rewarded, for she becomes great-grandmother to King David, the greatest of the biblical monarchs. What does Jellinek imply we should learn from this story? That the Jews have shown to the world: forbearance to history, love of stranger, and loyalty to those who share their values. That is, the story describes civic virtues, arguing thereby that the Jewish presence in non-Jewish lands should be something to value and not to fear.

These issues appear again in a sermon from 1858 entitled "Love the Stranger!". The biblical text Jellinek cites (Dt 10:19),[69] has long held an important place in Jewish law and theology; indeed, care for and inclusion of the stranger (the non-Jew living among Jews) appears during some of the main liturgical moments of the Jewish week.[70] However, in building on these estab-

67 Jellinek, Predigten, vol. 1, Vienna 1862, 7.

68 Ibid., 4.

69 "Love the stranger [Heb.: the *gär*, the non-Jew who lives in one's community] for you yourselves were strangers in the land of Egypt." (Dt 10:19).

70 For example, in the Sabbath blessing on wine, it is recited that the stranger who lives in one's midst must be allowed to rest as well. See David Novak, The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism. The Idea of Noahide Law, Oxford ^{2}2011; David L. Lieber, Art. "Strangers and Gentiles," in: Encyclopaedia Judaica, ed. by Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, 22 vols., here vol. 19, Detroit, Mich., ^{2}2007, 241 f.; and Daniel Sperber/Theodore Friedman, Art. "Gentile," in: ibid., here vol. 7, 485–487.

lished traditions, Jellinek argued two points: that the commandment to the Jews to love the stranger is unique among the nations; and that the communal legacy within the Jewish nation to uphold this commandment has remained strong throughout the centuries:

> "'Love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.' What a sublime, blessed law! What a triumph here celebrating the Jewish spirit, which lovingly gathers all strangers around it! Strike out the law books of the ancient peoples; inquire of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Greece, and Rome; inquire of the Middle Ages, with their blood fanaticism; inquire of the present age, with its clever statecraft; see if [any of their law codes] contain the three words: 'Love the stranger!'"[71]

That the stranger is someone worthy of loving (Heb.: *ahava*), and of loving without desiring his or her conversion to one's own creed, is a political philosophy foreign to most times and places. Yet the Torah's commandment "love the stranger" *(ve-ahavtem et ha-gär)* assumes, perhaps even encourages, that the stranger will remain outside the community of Jews, that the stranger might never become one's kinsman. It also assumes that the stranger will reside *at length* in one's midst. It is not a law about those who are passing through, about being kind to travelers and merchants. The Israelites were strangers in Egypt for four hundred years, and the biblical law's presumption is that the dominant community will maintain and respect – not just be peaceful to or benignly neglectful of, but actually engage with and accommodate – those who live among them but are not of their people. Moses Mendelssohn wrote similarly: "If a *Confucius* or a *Solon* lived among my contemporaries, I could, in accordance with the principles of my religion, love and admire the great man, without hitting on the ridiculous idea of wanting to *convert* a Confucius or a Solon."[72]

Still, such rhetoric is only meaningful if groups outside of Judaism are also interested in developing a similar set of moral codes. As we see with Mendelssohn, Jellinek was invoking a form of liberal political philosophy that had already been developing in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Almost ninety years before this sermon, Thomas Jefferson put these ideas into writing: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights." The French *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* of 1789 likewise enshrined: "Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions can be founded only on the common good."[73]

71 Jellinek, Predigten, vol. 1, 104 f.

72 Moses Mendelssohn, Open Letter to Lavater, in: idem, Writings on Judaism, Christianity, and the Bible, ed. by Michah Gottlieb, trans. by Curtis Bowman, Elias Sacks, and Allan Arkush, Waltham, Mass., 2011, 10 (italics in original).

73 "Les hommes naissent et demeurent libres et égaux en droits. Les distinctions sociales ne

Yet in both cases, these political documents aimed to protect the right of individuals to maintain their differences within broader society. But Jellinek's argument in 1858 was that neither of these founding documents of political liberalism captured the two most essential aspects of the biblical injunction "love the stranger." First, Jefferson and the French republicans had only enshrined "negative liberties," to use Isaiah Berlin's terminology: protecting in their texts "simply the area within which a man can act unobstructed by others."[74] Jellinek, however, believed that one *should* love the stranger. That is, that one could be implored through law to reach out and be kind to the stranger. Because God is not the state, one is not imprisoned for ignoring God's laws – Mendelssohn called this the "non-coercive" nature of Jewish religious law. Nevertheless, divine laws were still meant to show a person the right way to be. Jellinek thought that the bible had, in fact, created the potential for "positive liberty" amongst the Jewish people, an impetus for responsible and thoughtful decision-making. One would not be stoned for disrespecting the stranger but one could be taught to choose to love the stranger. In this sense, God was taking a gamble on humanity.[75] Jellinek, full of optimism, wanted in on the bet.

Second, Jellinek believed that to fully internalize the imperative "love the stranger" one must remember the second part of the biblical command, "for you yourselves were strangers in the land of Egypt." (Ex 23:9) Strangers might not be individuals. Even Mendelssohn, who was arguing for the same political rights for the Jews as was Jellinek, missed (or purposefully overlooked) the gravity of the latter half of the phrase. Israel was a stranger in the land of Egypt for four hundred years, not individual Hebrews but the children of Jacob in its entirety. Therefore, even if the Jews might be strangers in Europe for a thousand years, such a thing could only make this commandment more essential. Not only, thought Jellinek, did the nations of Europe need to respect the right of individual Jews to practice their traditions, they needed to *love* the presence of the Jewish people – as a separate people – in their midst.

peuvent être fondées que sur l'utilité commune." Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen de 1789, see Legifrance. Le Service Public de la Diffusion du Droit, <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/Droit-francais/Constitution/Declaration-des-Droits-de-l-Homme-et-du-Citoyen-de-1789> (23 April 2015).

74 Isaiah Berlin, Four Essays on Liberty, New York 1970, 122.

75 Berlin is particularly appropriate here, since he believed that "political theory is a branch of moral philosophy," as Jellinek implicitly did. See ibid., 120.

Truth, Freedom, and Justice

Despite these many and important emphases on Judaism and the "other," Jellinek was in no way uniform in his approach to the interpretation of traditional texts: he was concerned with internal Jewish questions as well as with relations between Jews and non-Jews. *Wahrheit*, *Freiheit*, and *Gerechtigkeit* (truth, freedom, and justice) transcended any specific event or moment; they were the *Zeitgeist* of his brand of modernity. Yet while he frequently extoled them he likewise recognized that they are not always for the good since they can be enemies of tradition and ritual. They do not respect history in the way that Jewish texts demand or expect. And often as not, that disrespect for ritual and history becomes an assault upon the Jews. On *Shabbat Zakhor* (the Sabbath immediately preceding the festival of Purim) in 1860, Jellinek argued forcefully against those who negate the Jewish contribution to civilization. "Has not the Hebrew tribe, through its bible, more deeply impacted the freedom and morality of the nations than Greece through its artistic and literary creations?,"[76] he asked. Here Jellinek was in direct confrontation with those intellectuals of the Enlightenment who retained their anti-Jewish prejudices, even as they passionately debated the concepts of freedom and morality.

Such overt defenses of Judaism are not the only rhetorical device found in the sermons. More often, Jellinek sought to find subtle links between traditional practices and modern ideas. In one example of his concern for *Gerechtigkeit*, Jellinek pointed out:

> "The Palm [used during the Jewish festival of *Sukkot*, the Feast of Booths, which occurs in September or October] is the image of the righteous, of the right, the strictly, impartially right. Over everything the standpoint of the right is the most excellent mark of *halakha* [religious law]."[77]

The closed palm frond, straight and narrow, sharp at the edges but sturdy, was the central metaphor of *halakha* and Jellinek's idea of the moral. "Where was the moral amongst the legal jargon," Jellinek heard the enemies of Judaism crying out – it was there, in the *halakha*, he responded. By rhetorically associating morals with the sturdy and straight, invoking along the way the literal definition of *halakha* as the way, the road, the path, Jellinek interwove apologetics with traditional rabbinic interpretation. The place of

76 Jellinek, Predigten, vol. 1, 69. Abraham Joshua Heschel makes a similar argument in his essay *No Religion is an Island* (1965), where he argues that the values of contemporary Christianity necessitate the protection of the Jewish people, who are the original keepers of the Hebrew Bible. See idem, Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity. Essays, ed. by Susannah Heschel, New York 1996, 235–250.

77 Jellinek, Der Talmud, 12.

morality, and therefore of justice, was in the tall and strong center, made from traditional laws and practices. It is an argument again reminiscent of Moses Mendelssohn who asserted that Judaism received "revealed legislation," which was not a unique form of revealed truth but simply a mechanism for solidifying a code of ethics within the people. Because humanity is flawed and full of moral errors, "the lawgiver of [Israel] gave the *ceremonial laws* […]. *Men must be impelled to perform actions and only induced to engage in reflection*."[78] Yet Mendelssohn was at pains to stress that these ceremonial laws are merely to ensure a form of morality amongst the Jews equivalent to that which is practiced and preached in the other nations of the world. "Judaism," he says, "boasts of no *exclusive* revelation of eternal truths that are indispensable to salvation."[79] Judaism, expressing its moral heritage through laws and ritual, is neither more nor less moral. It simply codified an already existing universal morality through different mechanisms.

Yet again Jellinek pushes Mendelssohn's argument one step further. The historical record of Judaism's revealed legislation, he argues here and elsewhere, suggests that Judaism is not only in full concert with Enlightenment, but quite obviously *preceded* Enlightenment. Whereas European thinkers only came to understand the separation of universal and particular moral systems recently, rabbinic Judaism has recognized just such a bifurcation for the better part of two millennia. Acknowledging the unique relationship between God and Israel by necessity requires God to have relationships with other nations as well. If the commandments for the Jews are unique to them, then God cannot leave the other people of the Earth without law or justice. Moreover, if such moral codes as God gives to the non-Jewish nations cannot be in conflict with the moral codes of Israel, then there must be a universal system underlying the particularity of Judaism. This is why Jellinek says, "'Love the stranger' […] [for] every human being […] is loved by God."[80] In other words, for Jellinek, the Talmud gives Judaism a central role in the historical arc toward Enlightenment's recognition of universal morality.

In this way, Jellinek imagined the Talmud – and by extension, all traditional rabbinic texts – as functioning like a prism, taking the non-Jewish elements of the world and refracting them into a Jewish idiom and practice.[81] What that new post-prismatic idiom might look like varied across time and

78 Moses Mendelssohn, Jerusalem, or, On Religious Power and Judaism (1783), trans. by Allan Arkush, Waltham, Mass., 1983, 118 f. (italics in original).

79 Ibid., 97.

80 Jellinek, Predigten, vol. 1, 105 f.

81 I am reliant on Abraham Joshua Heschel for this imagery of refraction from his final book: idem, Torah min ha-shamayim be-aspaklaryah shel ha-dorot [Torah from Heaven as Refracted through the Generations], 3 vols., London/New York 1962–1990.

geography, but what Jellinek desired was for the Talmud's method of meaning making to open Judaism outward, helping it become a part of the conversation of modernity:

"The words of the Talmudic sages are at the same time as stepping stones, whilst also holding together the faith and the various types of human community through the teachings of justice, humanity and morality, which, they note, are instilled in every nation and every state through the principles of religious toleration, and by exhortations to peacefulness, which they preach aloud to the glory of God – who makes peace in His heights – so the Heavens can be witness to the harmonious and peaceful interaction of the enlightenment of the universe [*zur Erleuchtung des Weltalls*]!"[82]

In a sincere way, Jellinek wanted his Community to believe that the resources of the Jewish past could speak to the Jewish present. Furthermore, he wanted to convince them that rabbinic literature would be able to positively engage with whatever modernity created. The Talmud, one can almost hear him saying, was fundamentally a system of Enlightenment – motivated by the same philosophical questions and searching for the same political ends.

This is an understanding of Enlightenment, it should be noted, focused not just on the people but on governments as well. Jellinek said that "justice, humanity, and morality […] are instilled in every nation and every state through the practice of religious toleration."[83] Compare those words with Kant's famous essay, *What is Enlightenment?*:

"When even a people may not decide for itself [the sort of freedom it wants,] can even less be decided for it by a monarch; for his lawgiving authority consists in his uniting the collective will of the people in his own. If only he sees to it that all true or alleged improvements are consistent with civil order, he can allow his subjects to do what they find necessary for the wellbeing of their souls."[84]

Civil order and religious toleration are synonymous, Jellinek is reasoning. Torah and Talmud provide both a civil framework for equal rights among peoples, as well as care for the soul. In a real sense, Jellinek was setting the Talmudic sages as the originators of the idea of universal justice and humanity. Jews, long hated for their purported insularity, were really seen as incubators of a broader world vision, since only through the Enlightenment have non-Jews come to recognize what Judaism understood and preached all along.

82 Jellinek, Der Talmud, 32.

83 Idem, Predigten, vol. 1, 105.

84 Immanuel Kant, An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment? (1784), trans. by James Schmidt, in: James Schmidt (ed.), What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth-Century Questions, Berkeley, Calif., 1996, 58–64, here 62.

By describing Judaism as if it had long embodied the new liberal philosophies, Jellinek was in some ways creating a novel role for the rabbi and for Jewish texts, one that sought to place Judaism overtly into the lineage of European history and ideas. In his biblical exegesis, Jellinek continuously looked not toward law and history but toward goodness, righteousness, and lawfulness. He was interested in the cultivation of a certain type of moral life, one that he believed Judaism embodied but that ultimately transcended the particularities of the religion. He wrote: "And only in free realms of spirit [does one meet] arbitrariness and randomness, distance and alienation, from the path of the original human nature, from the way of law and justice."[85] Jellinek did not want a fully liberalized Jewish religion. He did not want a Jewish philosophy of life, which could mean a way of being moral without ritual or practice. A "free realm of spirit" is an individual and isolated world, where people look inside themselves for moral truth, rather than to the texts and rituals of the past. Jellinek truly believed that the ancient Jewish sources embodied the interpretations he was finding within them. Such texts were both comforting and burdensome to the Jews of Leopoldstadt. They were their heritage, the texts of their fathers and mothers. But so too, these traditions weighed heavily, especially at a time when the promises of emancipation seemed so near at hand.

Conclusion

As I have attempted to show, Jellinek recognized the gap between Jewish traditional discourse and Enlightenment discourse, and was able to bring a Jewish vocabulary into conversation and, so he believed, into harmony with modernity in the medium of the sermon. The need for Jellinek to interpret and address German-speaking liberal culture for the Jewish immigrant was acute from the start. His impassioned defenses of Judaism, alongside his obvious learning and ability to engender respect in non-Jewish scholarly and theological circles, represented for the Jews of Vienna the quintessence of emancipation. Michael A. Meyer thought that

> "to the Viennese Jewish leadership [Jellinek] must have seemed just the right man for their Jewish milieu: a religious leader who did not create ideological division, an accomplished preacher who provided his listeners with memorable artistic experiences, and a man who expressed their own feelings, reconfirming both Jewish loyalties and universal convictions."[86]

85 Jellinek, Predigten, vol. 1, 39.
86 Meyer, Response to Modernity, 192 f.

Unlike what the French had offered in 1789, which was for the Jew as Jew to be a fully emancipated individual but not to be part of a communal Judaism, it appeared to many that the potentials of the German Enlightenment did not require the same total individualization. In Vienna, some members of the Community hoped that they could integrate and gain civil rights while remaining identifiably Jewish and part of a historic community.

Vienna was socially and culturally vibrant in the 1850s and 1860s, and the immigrant Jews of Leopoldstadt had every intention of partaking in the city's urban life. They were also, however, accustomed to a particular form of Jewish traditional discourse, a style of thinking and being that on the surface contrasted sharply with the liberal, trendsetting, Catholic Vienna. What we see on the part of Jewish migrants to the city in the mid-nineteenth century is that they did not all believe – and most assuredly Jellinek did not – that the urge to participate in German life *de facto* necessitated an abandonment of Jewish tradition, either its discourse or ritual. It did, however, cause what we might now understand to be a sort of cognitive dissonance. Still, I argued here that this rapidly changing modern world, combined with the immense contrast between Viennese life and the rural provinces, necessitated a sort of "leader of translation" for these immigrant and acculturating Jews, someone who could put modern life into a Jewish lexicon. Jellinek, I believe, proved to be just that leader.

Over the course of many pages and many Sabbaths, Jellinek asked his congregation to see the relationship between the Jewish and non-Jewish world as something fluid and dynamic – an interaction without a requisite antagonism. Despite increasing political fractiousness within Judaism, inside Vienna and across the European world, and continued attacks on Jewish practice and theology from Christians, Jellinek used his intellectual training and rhetorical skill to forcefully define a moderate center. His sermons are an example of his unapologetic religious equanimity. A gifted speaker, praised by one writer as "an oratorical poet or a poetic orator,"[87] Jellinek attempted to pair his skill with words to his intellectual training. He sought to chart a path of religious synthesis, integration, and non-destructive transformation, a path that would embrace the newly liberalizing culture of the capital without demeaning or forgetting the deeply traditional towns and lives that the Jews of Leopoldstadt – and in fact he himself – had only recently left behind.[88]

87 Julius David, Zum ersten Jahrzeitstage Dr. Adolf Jellinek's, in: Die Neuzeit, 11 January 1895, 14 f., here 14.

88 This article is an early version of my doctoral thesis, being written for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I wish especially to thank Dr. Arndt Engelhardt of the Simon Dubnow Institute for his selfless help, encouragement, support, and friendship.