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Contextualizing the Franco-Jewish Experience in the South

by

Lee Shai Weissbach*

Between 1830 and 1914, about ten thousand Jews are reported to have immigrated to America from the regions of Alsace and Lorraine in northeastern France.¹ However, in the past, scholars have paid little attention to this migratory stream. To the extent that they have taken notice, they have focused almost exclusively on settlement in the South, and especially in the so-called Gulf South, the region centered on the city of New Orleans and encompassing nearby locales including the interior of Louisiana, the states of Mississippi and Alabama, and the eastern part of Texas. In recent years, for example, the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience mounted an exhibit called *Alsace to America: Discovering a Southern Jewish Heritage*, and the French sociologist Anny Bloch-Raymond published a book based on her doctoral dissertation focusing on Jews from northeastern France who settled in the Gulf region.² So, too, in November 2009, the Historic New Orleans Collection, an important local museum and research center, organized a colloquium on the *Alsace-Lorraine Jewish Experience in Louisiana and the Gulf South*.³

It is time now to consider the experience of the Jewish immigrants who came to America from Alsace and Lorraine, and especially those who arrived in the South, in a larger demographic

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2 SOUTHERN JEWISH HISTORY

and historical context by examining how the transplantation of these Jews fit into more general Jewish migration patterns in France and America, and by exploring the extent to which the Franco-Jewish experience in the U.S. was distinct from that of other immigrant groups. Thus, this article will begin by describing how the nineteenth-century arrival of Jews from Alsace-Lorraine fit into larger trends in Jewish migration and by examining the multiple factors that explain the pattern of settlement of French Jews in the United States. As this account will reveal, in establishing this pattern, the search for economic opportunity was paramount, but other factors, such as the phenomenon of chain migration and especially the desire to maintain contact with French culture, played a significant role as well. Finally, this essay will consider the relationship between Franco-Jewish immigrants and their German Jewish counterparts, revealing that because of the relatively small size of the Franco-Jewish community in America, French Jews became amalgamated with German Jews to a large extent, even as both groups moved along a path toward Americanization. Ultimately, French Jews developed a multifaceted identity in the United States. In some ways they sought to retain their French heritage, just as did French immigrants of other faiths. In other ways, they became integrated into the German Jewish population of the United States with whom they shared religion and European ties. With all this, they also became acculturated as Americans.

*Map showing Alsace-Lorraine
in relation to adjacent
geographic regions.*

Franco-Jewish Migration Patterns during the Nineteenth Century

In order to better understand the place of Jewish migration from Alsace-Lorraine to America as part of larger migration patterns, we begin back in France. On the eve of the Revolution of 1789, medieval restrictions on Jewish settlement still applied almost everywhere in the kingdom, and, as a result, the greatest part of France's Jewish population was located in the northeastern border regions of the country, where officials had used prerogatives granted by the monarchy to permit a limited degree of Jewish settlement. Indeed, some thirty thousand of France's forty thousand or so Jews lived in northeastern France, mainly in various small towns in Alsace and in the cities of Metz and Nancy in Lorraine.⁴ With the revolution, however, came the collapse of the old system of restrictions imposed on the Jews, who now came to enjoy the right of unrestricted settlement throughout France. Beginning with the elite and the more ambitious, many Jews took advantage of their new freedom of movement, and, within a relatively short time, the beginnings of a major demographic transformation could be detected.

In the immediate aftermath of the French Revolution, Jews began to migrate within Alsace and Lorraine. Most notably, they started to move into the main cities of the region. Strasbourg, Colmar, and Mulhouse, cities from which Jews had been entirely barred before the revolution, now became home to new Jewish communities. Strasbourg had a Jewish population of some 1,500 as early as 1808 and of nearly 3,000 by 1863. Mulhouse, which had a Jewish population of only 163 in 1808, was home to over 1,200 Jews by 1851 and nearly 2,000 by 1866. The historian Paula Hyman has shown that between 1820 and 1870, one-third to one-half of all Jews in Alsace relocated at least once, usually while they were young.⁵

While some of the Jews of Alsace and Lorraine moved to new locations within their home provinces, others left the region altogether. Mainly, those who left flocked to Paris. They went in such large numbers that by the middle of the nineteenth century, the Jewish population of the capital had increased from about five hundred individuals before the Revolution of 1789 (when their residence in Paris was technically illegal) to over ten thousand. By

4 SOUTHERN JEWISH HISTORY

1872, about twenty-four thousand Jews lived in the French capital and 34 percent of all Parisian Jews were natives of either Alsace or Lorraine.⁶

Jews from northeastern France also fanned out to smaller cities and towns throughout the French interior, establishing new communities in many provincial cities and towns from which Jewish settlement had been banned previously. By 1872, forty-six cities and towns in France, besides Paris, had Jewish populations of one hundred or more individuals, and this number excludes the cities and towns in Alsace and Lorraine that had come under German control as a result of the Franco-Prussian War. The vast majority of France's provincial Jewish centers was small, with only triple-digit Jewish populations, but their very existence reflects the dramatic expansion of Jewish settlement into the interior in the aftermath of the French Revolution. Although a few of the Jewish communities that existed in 1872 were in cities that were already centers of Jewish life before 1789, places such as Avignon, Carpentras, and Bordeaux, the vast majority of the 1872 communities were newly established, mainly on the basis of the dispersal of Jews from Alsace and Lorraine.⁷

It was primarily the economic transformation of northeastern France during the nineteenth century that prompted so many Jews to migrate from their original homes there. The main occupations of Jews in Alsace and Lorraine were peddling, the sale of second-hand goods, cattle dealing, and other functions in which they served a largely rural population as middlemen. As the economy began to modernize, however, especially after the middle of the nineteenth century, these occupations became less viable. The arrival of railroads, banking facilities, and peasant marketing cooperatives resulted in the phasing out of just the kinds of occupations Jews had commonly pursued. To compound the problem, despite the departure of many, the total Jewish population of Alsace and Lorraine grew just as economic opportunities in traditional Jewish occupations shrank. High fertility rates and the migration of Jews from the German states to a France where they would be considered full citizens caused the Jewish population of Alsace alone to rise

from about 22,500 at the time of the French Revolution to over 37,000 by 1861.⁸

All the changes taking place in northeastern France prompted Jews to search for new sorts of economic opportunities. This often involved moving to a new location, generally a city or town that served as a center of trade and industry attuned to new economic developments. Of course, Paris fit the description of such a place, and fully half of the other French cities and towns with Jewish populations of one hundred or more in 1872 were themselves departmental capitals, urban places that were almost invariably the main market and service centers for their regions.

Factors besides the search for new economic opportunities also motivated Jewish migration out of Alsace and Lorraine. Some Jews may have been prompted to move away by the antisemitic outbursts that occasionally plagued northeastern France. The disruptions brought about by the Revolution of 1848, for instance, were the occasion for serious antisemitic rioting. During those disruptions, some 20 percent of all Jewish communities in Alsace were subject to turmoil. In the town of Altkirch, for example, peasants sacked the local synagogue and looted Jewish stores.⁹

Another motivation for Jewish migration was added after 1871, when Germany gained control of most of the territory of Alsace and Lorraine as a result of its victory in the Franco-Prussian War. Many of the Jews of northeastern France had developed such a sense of loyalty to their country that they simply could not abide living under German rule. For example, entire Jewish textile firms relocated from Bischwiller in Alsace to towns such as Elbeuf, Sedan, and Reims in France proper. Frenchmen of other faiths left the new German territories for patriotic reasons as well, joining thousands of Catholics and Protestants who had left before 1871, mainly in response to agricultural crises and changes in various government policies. One estimate reports that Alsace lost some 25 percent of its Jewish population, over nine thousand people, between 1871 and 1905, and about half of all the French Jews who came to America between 1830 and 1914 arrived in the four decades following the Franco-Prussian War.¹⁰ Certainly the best known Alsatian Jew to leave his hometown out of patriotic fervor was Alfred Dreyfus,

6 SOUTHERN JEWISH HISTORY

whose infamous trial and conviction for treason had a role in the development of modern Zionism.

Less evident factors also played their part in decisions to migrate. It appears that in some cases the actions of particular organizations or individuals affected the inclination of Jews to leave their original homes and to establish new Jewish communities in new places. Already in the era of the French Revolution, Alsatian Jews were attracted to Dijon, for example, because of philosemitic sentiments expressed within the city's Collège de Godrans. One official of the *collège* went so far as to write a letter to the Alsatian Jewish leader Cerf Beer asking him to urge Jews to come to Dijon and establish their businesses there.¹¹

At the same time that many Jews from Alsace and Lorraine were relocating within France, a significant number quit the country completely in their quest for a fresh start. Those who left dispersed rather widely. The first Jews to settle in São Paulo, Brazil, were immigrants from Alsace-Lorraine who arrived in the middle of the nineteenth century. Similarly, the Jews living in the Canadian province of Manitoba in the years before 1882, although only a handful, were mainly fur traders originally from Alsace-Lorraine. Some Jews who left northeastern France relocated to Algeria, a French colony since the 1830s.¹² The United States, however, proved to be the most popular destination for Jews leaving France.¹³

Taken together, this information leads to the conclusion that in order to understand the appearance of Jews from Alsace and Lorraine in Louisiana and the Gulf South, or, for that matter, elsewhere in the United States, we must recognize their arrival as part of the much larger picture of Franco-Jewish migration both within France and across the seas during the nineteenth century.

French Jews and the Expansion of Jewish Settlement in America

In the same way that it is essential to understand the migration of Jews from northeastern France to the American South as an element in the migration history of French Jewry more generally, it is also necessary to understand how the arrival of these Jews fit into overall migration patterns in nineteenth-century America.

Just as Jews were on the move both within and beyond Alsace-Lorraine in the 1800s, Jews were migrating across America during that period as well. Just as Jews flocked to major urban centers and established new Jewish communities all over France in the decades following the French Revolution, so too did they fan out across the United States.

Around 1830, only about four thousand Jews resided in the United States, the vast majority of whom lived in just a few urban centers. The only American cities that had Jewish populations over one hundred were New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, Richmond, Cincinnati, and New Orleans.¹⁴ Over the next half century, however, the Jewish population of the United States swelled to approximately 250,000, and the number of cities in the U.S. with Jewish populations of one hundred or more climbed to 160. Twenty-six of these places hosted Jewish populations of one thousand or more. For example, some sixty thousand Jews claimed New York City as their home around 1880, while four other cities in New York State also had Jewish populations over one thousand and eleven towns were home to at least one hundred but fewer than one thousand Jews. In Ohio, to take another example, Cincinnati and Cleveland had become major Jewish centers by 1880 and eight other towns had triple-digit Jewish populations. In Louisiana, New Orleans had about five thousand Jewish residents around 1880, and five other towns counted Jewish populations in triple digits.¹⁵

In the final two decades of the nineteenth century, America's Jewish population expanded even more rapidly as the mass migration of eastern European Jews to the U.S. began to make its impact felt. By the first decade of the twentieth century, the Jewish population of the country approached two million, and the number of individual Jewish communities continued to increase. In 1907 there were at least ninety American cities with Jewish populations of one thousand or more, and another 260 or so triple-digit Jewish communities.¹⁶

Exactly what role Jews from Alsace and Lorraine played in this American Jewish growth and expansion during the nineteenth century is not easy to discover, for it is difficult, if not

impossible, to systematically identify where all the Jews who came to America from Alsace-Lorraine in the 1800s settled. Nonetheless, some patterns are apparent. They reveal that, in many ways, French Jews behaved much like other French immigrants who came to America during the same period.

For one thing, French Jews, like their Catholic and Protestant counterparts, tended to come to the U.S. as individuals rather than in groups, and they did not necessarily gravitate to the same places. As the Harvard historian Patrice Higonnet has written, "traditionally, the French have not gone where other French were already living, but where new opportunities might be found." So, for example, many French settlers had originally been attracted to New Orleans, but after 1860, as railroads expanded and the Mississippi River became a less important route to the West than it had been previously, the French population of New Orleans and Louisiana actually declined from about fifteen thousand in 1860 to approximately ten thousand in 1880. Moreover, both Jewish and non-Jewish French immigrants tended to have economic motives for coming to the U.S. and all immigrants from France were likely to prefer urban settings, to find employment as merchants or artisans, and to succeed economically in America. The U.S. Census of 1910 revealed, for instance, that French Americans were more highly literate and had larger living spaces than other immigrant groups.¹⁷

The paramount importance of finding economic opportunity helps explain why the histories of a great many nineteenth-century American Jewish communities attest to the presence of individual settlers originally from Alsace-Lorraine. So, for example, Alexander Levi, born in 1809 in Hellimer, Alsace, came to America before 1836 and settled in the frontier town of Dubuque, Iowa. There he made a living first as a fur trader, then as a grocer, then as a miner and mining provisioner, and eventually as the owner of a dry goods store. Active in Dubuque's civic life, Levi was a member of the local Masonic lodge for fifty years. He also helped found the city's first Jewish congregation around 1860 and remained an important supporter. Significantly, when local historians explained why Levi settled in Dubuque, they observed that

“there were many avenues of opportunity in the region,” that “mercantile activity was booming,” and that “Levi was a man of entrepreneurial vision.”¹⁸

*Charcoal portrait of Alexander Levi, Dubuque, Iowa.
(Courtesy of Karin Pritikin, Chicago.)*

To take another example, Abraham Blum, together with his wife and five children, arrived from Alsace-Lorraine in St. Paul, Minnesota, prior to 1857. He soon became involved in Jewish communal affairs and was among a group of dissidents who split from the city's Mt. Zion congregation, although a few years later, in 1862, he also played a role in healing the rift in the community. In central Indiana, the Alsatians Samuel and Isaac Kahn were merchants in Bloomington by the 1850s, and around 1880 the French-born Isaac May was a store clerk in Muncie. He later moved to Rome, Georgia. In the American northwest, among the few hundred Jewish residents of nineteenth-century Tacoma,

10 SOUTHERN JEWISH HISTORY

Washington, were at least two natives of Alsace-Lorraine: the liquor dealer Emile Marx, who arrived in 1888, and the dry goods merchant Theophil Feist, who arrived in 1889.¹⁹

Indeed, not only did individual Jews from Alsace or Lorraine end up in many different cities and towns throughout the United States but, like other Jewish immigrants, they often roamed around extensively before finding permanent homes. Bernard Ehrstein, for example, was born in Alsace in 1831 and arrived in Alexandria, Louisiana, in 1853. The late 1850s, however, found Ehrstein in business with his brother-in-law in Texas before Ehrstein spent the Civil War years in Mexico. Only after 1872 did he return permanently to Alexandria, where he opened a general store. Later he also engaged in the grocery business and in money lending. He finally died in Alexandria in 1902.²⁰ Similar is the story of Achille Baer, who was also born in northeastern France in 1831. Once in America, he operated a butcher shop in the frontier town of Cheyenne, Wyoming, and then in Red Jacket, Michigan, before finally moving his family to Denver, Colorado.²¹

An even more energetic wanderer was the Alsatian Lazar Kahn. Arriving in America in 1866, he spent nearly two decades doing business in several cities in the Midwest and in the South, including Marshall, Illinois; Nashville, Tennessee; Selma, Alabama; and Ironton, Ohio. In 1884, he relocated the foundry that he owned in partnership with his brother to Hamilton, Ohio, where the firm developed into the nation's largest manufacturer of stoves. From his base in Hamilton, Kahn became an internationally prominent figure, serving as president of the National Association of Stove Manufacturers from 1895 to 1897.²²

And then there is the example of Rabbi Abraham Blum (not the same Abraham Blum who settled in St. Paul), who was born near Strasbourg in 1843 and educated for the rabbinate in the Alsatian town of Niederbronn-les-Bains. He served as a rabbi in Lorraine soon after he was ordained, but in 1866 he came to America and accepted a rabbinic post in Dayton, Ohio. After three years there, he moved to Augusta, Georgia, where he was reported to be "fast acquiring a proper pronunciation of the English language." Next he moved to Galveston, Texas, where he stayed

from 1871 until 1885. When he left his Galveston pulpit to attend to his failing health, he again spent time in Ohio and Georgia, and also in South Carolina and Florida. By 1889, Blum felt well enough to resume his rabbinic duties, this time in Los Angeles. After several years in California, he moved again, now to New York City. There he served as the spiritual leader of a congregation in the Bronx, as a chaplain at Bellevue Hospital and several others, and also, for ten years until his death in 1921, as chaplain to the New York City Police Department.²³

*Rabbi Abraham Blum
proudly wearing his uniform
and badge as the first Jewish
chaplain with the New York
Police Department.
(Courtesy of NYPD.)*

12 SOUTHERN JEWISH HISTORY

Primary Centers of Franco-Jewish Settlement in America

Despite what Higonnet has written about the disinclination of French immigrants to follow where earlier Frenchmen had settled, and despite the fact that there are many examples of American towns in which French Jews settled and multiple examples of peripatetic immigrants from Alsace-Lorraine, some places clearly attracted a disproportionate number of French immigrants, both Jews and non-Jews. The major port cities of New York, New Orleans, and San Francisco, for instance, became important places of settlement for those relocating from France, including Jews. Not only were these ports either initial or secondary points of arrival for new immigrants, but they also served as significant seats of trade and commerce offering numerous economic opportunities.

New York was, of course, well established as a major economic center and as the primary hub of Jewish life in America by the middle of the nineteenth century. Every significant segment of America's Jewish population was represented there, and Jews of French origin were no exception. Some sense of the attractiveness of New York is reflected in the fact that of the 134 Jewish immigrants known to have left for America between 1840 and 1870 from the department of the Haut Rhin, that is, from southern Alsace, eighty-nine (66 percent) indicated that they were bound for New York. It appears that as New York Jews began to spread out to Brooklyn, the first to arrive included Alsatians who established businesses on Fulton Street.²⁴ New Orleans, too, was one of America's great ports of entry, especially before the Civil War. New Orleans sea captains who had delivered cotton to Europe did not want to sail home with empty ships, so they offered immigrants passage at attractive rates. Among the travelers who took advantage of this opportunity were Jews and non-Jews relocating from France.²⁵

In the far west, the California Gold Rush that began in 1848 transformed San Francisco into a major port city, and that metropolis also became something of a magnet for those of diverse religions arriving from Alsace and Lorraine. The turmoil associated with the Revolution of 1848 was something of a push factor

motivating migrants to leave France, but much more important was the lure of potential riches to be had in California. Some twenty thousand Frenchmen arrived in 1851 alone.²⁶ Although the exact number of Jews who came is unavailable, San Francisco's Congregation Emanu-El, the oldest Jewish congregation west of the Mississippi and a pioneer in Reform Judaism, was said to have a "valued Alsatian contingent" by the 1870s, and a number of prominent Jewish leaders in the city were of French origin. These included the Lorraine-born Daniel Levy, who was "reader" at Emanu-El from 1857 to 1864,²⁷ and Raphael Weill, also born in Lorraine, who arrived in San Francisco in 1853 and who, according to one observer, eventually acquired a reputation as "the city's best-known merchant prince, boulevardier, club man, arts patron and connoisseur, gourmet chef, and perennially eligible bachelor."²⁸

San Francisco was not the only California city to attract Jews from Alsace-Lorraine during the Gold Rush era. According to one account of French settlement in America, among the most prominent French residents of Los Angeles in the 1870s were Leon Loeb, P. N. Roth, and the brothers Constant and Eugene Meyer, all Jews.²⁹ A number of other then-small California communities attracted Jews from Alsace-Lorraine as well. These early settlers included Leopold Hart and his half-brother, Lazard Lion, who were among the first Jews in San José, and Louis Wolf, who arrived in Temecula as a twenty-four-year-old in 1857 and ultimately became a successful storekeeper there.³⁰ The first Jews to arrive in Lompoc were the Alsatians Isidore and Hannah Weill, who came in 1880.³¹

Places that attracted clusters of immigrant Jews from Alsace and Lorraine existed in other parts of the country as well. In the Ohio valley, several small towns, including Wheeling, West Virginia, and Portsmouth, Ohio, became home to discernible groups of Jews originally from northeastern France. In Madison, Indiana, more than a third of the Jewish residents in 1860 were of Alsatian origin.³²

And in the Gulf South also, of course, places besides New Orleans had identifiable concentrations of Jews originally from

*Congregation Emanu-El, Sutter Street, San Francisco, California, 1866.
(From Rachel Wischnitzer, Synagogue Architecture in the United States,
courtesy of the Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, PA.)*

Alsace-Lorraine. Between 1850 and 1865 alone, some forty-five Jews from northern Alsace came to Montgomery, Alabama, for example, and the historian Moses Rischin reports that from before the Civil War until the 1920s, most of the Jews who lived in Opelousas, Louisiana, “were francophones, many from Alsace.”³³ So, too, in his study of the business of Jews in Louisiana, Elliott Ashkenazi identified Alsatian Jews in Bayou Sara, Clinton, Monroe, and Shreveport, Louisiana, and in Jackson, Mississippi.³⁴ Moreover, according to the research conducted by Anny Bloch-Raymond, Jews from Alsace-Lorraine actually “gave their names to the towns of Geismar, Klotzville, and Marksville in Louisiana.”³⁵

*Alabama's Kahl Montgomery (now Temple Beth Or) at Church and Catoma,
dedicated in 1862 with Alsatians among its founders.*

*(From: Maurice Eisendrath, 100 Years of Kahl Montgomery,
Published on the Occasion of its 100th Anniversary, 1952.)*

The Persistence of French Culture

As French immigrant populations grew in New York, Louisiana, California, and elsewhere, the economic attractiveness of these places was reinforced by the operation of chain migration and by the fact that these locales became centers of cultural continuity. Individuals or families who settled in a particular location often attracted relatives or acquaintances who wished to move to America. Earlier settlers facilitated employment for the newcomers, and resonances of the old country certainly helped with adjustment to a new environment. Thus, places where the French

language was in use and where French cultural ties could be maintained proved to be particularly attractive to French Jews in America.

The researchers Irwin Lachoff and Catherine Kahn report, for example, that the Alsatian Theodore Dennery settled in New Orleans, a city with a long French heritage, "because French was spoken in the streets and he felt at home," and Moses Rischin points out that the French origins of so many Jews in Opelousas gave them "a linguistic bond with . . . the dominant French-speaking elites" in their city and in the neighboring port town of Washington. The French language, Rischin adds, "also provided a linkage with the French-speaking white Cajuns and black Creoles who filled the unilingual agricultural communities of the surrounding prairie." Similarly, Elliott Ashkenazi, speaking of Jews from Alsace and Lorraine, observes that "Louisiana offered an obvious attraction, the language, and many a peddler had his task eased by the availability of a common tongue."³⁶

In the Ohio Valley, Gallipolis, Ohio, one of the several towns that became home to a contingent of French Jews, must have held a special attraction because of its French associations. Only the second permanent settlement in America's old Northwest Territory, Gallipolis had been founded in 1790 by émigrés fleeing the French Revolution. The name of the settlement, in fact, means "city of the Gauls." The town did not prosper at first, but over the years French immigrants continued to come to Gallipolis, and these included Jews. Three Moch brothers, originally from a small town between Strasbourg and Hagenau, arrived in the early 1850s, for example, and, in typical chain migration fashion, they were soon followed by their cousins Emma and Abraham Moch, by four Emsheimer brothers from the Alsatian town of Soultz-sous-Forêts, and by several members of the Frank family, also from Alsace.³⁷

The propensity of so many Jews from Alsace and Lorraine to settle where other French immigrants had made their homes reflects the fact that, as Anny Bloch-Raymond has shown, the Jews from Alsace-Lorraine who migrated to America were often intent on retaining elements of their French identity. They not only

*The Dennery family on Milan Street,
New Orleans, Louisiana, c. 1906.
Theodore Dennery seated in chair.
(Courtesy of Touro Infirmary Archives, New Orleans, LA.)*

continued to speak the French language, but thought of themselves as French.³⁸ The Alsatians among the founders of the Gates of Prayer congregation in New Orleans were said to be “the most patriotic of patriots, always loyal to France,” and when Rabbi Abraham Blum’s sons were born in Galveston, Texas, he gave them the French names Moïse and Jacques. The interest in France evinced by the celebrated poet Penina Moïse of Charleston no doubt reflects her father’s Alsatian heritage. Her first published poem was called “France after the Banishment of Napoleon,” and her “A Geographical Alphabet” opens with the lines “A stands for Alsace—a famous old place/That Prussia would in its dominions embrace.”³⁹

*Gates of Prayer synagogue, New Orleans, dedicated in 1867.
(Courtesy of Touro Infirmary Archives, New Orleans, LA.)*

So, too, French Jews in America were inclined to maintain direct contacts with France and with French institutions. During the Civil War, several Alsatian Jews in the Gulf South registered their property with the French consul in New Orleans in the hope that their property would be protected as Union troops occupied the area. Rabbi Blum regularly translated news items and other writings of Jewish interest from France for publication in English. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Jews of French origin in Louisiana helped fund the rebuilding of a synagogue in the Alsatian town of Ingwiller, and Jews of Alsatian background in Illinois and New York helped underwrite a home for indigent Jewish girls in Strasbourg.⁴⁰

Another way that French Jews expressed their connections with France was by collaborating in local organizations with French immigrants of other faiths (settlers with whom they had much in common, as we have seen) and by associating themselves with French cultural developments generally. The Strasbourg-born Eugene Meyer was president of the French Benevolent Society of Los Angeles in the 1870s, for example, and, almost simultaneously, Daniel Levy served as president of San Francisco's Alliance française. Eugene Meyer also served as French consul in Los Angeles, as did his Strasbourg-born cousin Leon Loeb.⁴¹ When Meyer named his dry goods store the City of Paris, he was no doubt intending to advertise his French identity to his customers, although it was not only Jews from France who endeavored to link their retail businesses to French fashions, which were popular in America from the early nineteenth century onward.⁴² For example, in early twentieth-century Marion, Indiana, Saul Hutner called his women's apparel shop The Paris, and in Asheville, North Carolina, the Lipinsky dry goods store was called the Bon Marché.⁴³

So connected to their country of origin were some Franco-Jewish immigrants that they even traveled back to France on occasion. Bernard Ehrstein of Alexandria, Louisiana, spent two years back across the Atlantic in Strasbourg in the early 1870s, for instance, and Lazar Kahn, the stove manufacturer from Hamilton,

*Leon Loeb, French consul in Los Angeles.
Below, his daughter Rose Loeb Levi,
c. 1900.*

*(Courtesy of Linda Levi, their great grand-
daughter and granddaughter,
respectively.)*

Ohio, acted as an official juror at the Paris Expositions of 1889 and 1901. Michel Heymann, born in Schirrhoffen, Alsace, and eventually superintendent of the Jewish Orphan's Home in New Orleans, was a delegate to the International Prison Congress in Paris in 1895. Raphael Weill, the "merchant prince" of San Francisco, routinely spent six months a year in Paris.⁴⁴ Doubtless, family visits, vacations, and buying trips intertwined.

French Jews, German Jews, and Americanization

Despite the survival of a certain French self-image among Jewish immigrants from Alsace and Lorraine, in none of the places where they settled did Jews from France establish their own totally distinct sub-communities. Generally, even where they clustered, they seem to have become integrated into the institutions and social networks of other central European Jews, especially those from the states of southern Germany. In many ways, they seem to have become part of what historians usually refer to as the "German Jewish" population of the United States. So, for example, an 1855 letter to the editor from Daniel Levy in San Francisco informed the readers of the *Archives israélites* in Paris that in San Francisco the French Jews, "for the most part from Alsace and Lorraine, do not actually form a real group and are integrated into the mass of their nearest European neighbors."⁴⁵ Similarly, in 1856, the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, published in Leipzig, informed its readers that Alsatian and Bavarian Jewish women in San Francisco had declined to join the Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Society dominated by Polish and English Jews in their city, but instead had banded together to form what they called the German Women's Society.⁴⁶

Association with Jews from Germany came naturally. Even back in Alsace and Lorraine, significant ties of culture, marriage, and kinship existed between the Jews on the French side of the border and those in German states such as Bavaria, Württemberg, and the Palatinate. Although marriages between Jewish men and women both of whom were from France were common in America, patterns of intermarriage between French and German Jews persisted, as some intermarried couples made the move across the

Atlantic together and others wed in the U.S. In 1880s Vicksburg, Mississippi, for example, the French-born entrepreneurs Jacob Ehrman, Simon Metzger, and Marx Wolfe were all married to women of south German background, and the Prussian-born dry goods merchant Marks Sokolosky was married to a woman from Alsace. In Jackson, Michigan, the French-born furniture store owner Henry Hanaw was married to the New York-born daughter of German Jewish immigrants.⁴⁷ Except perhaps in the immediate aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War,⁴⁸ ties between Jews from southern Germany and Jews from Alsace-Lorraine seem to have been reinforced and even magnified, as individuals from these regions met on neutral ground in America.⁴⁹ The incentive for French Jews to bond with their German counterparts was especially strong in small towns. As the historian Amy Hill Shevitz has written, there “two or three Jewish families from Alsace would find their commonalities with two or three families from Bavaria more salient than their differences, given the greater difference between them and the much larger Christian population.”⁵⁰

Indeed, many similarities existed between the experiences of Franco-Jewish and German Jewish immigrants to America. Although French Jews did not have to flee legal discrimination, as German Jews sometimes did, members of both groups came for many of the same reasons, spread out widely across the United States, and exhibited similar patterns of chain migration and ethnic clustering. They also pursued the same kinds of economic activities, with some individuals prospering and others remaining in more modest circumstances. The French-born residents of Madison, Indiana, in 1860, for instance, included a clothier, a butcher, a rag dealer, and three peddlers. The French-born breadwinners of Alexandria, Louisiana, in 1880 comprised a retired merchant, a butcher, a cooper, two store clerks, and eight dry goods and grocery merchants. In Vicksburg, Mississippi, in the same year, the French-born male heads of household were a butcher, a grocer, three store clerks, and a broker, probably involved in the cotton trade.⁵¹ Even the relationships of French Jews and German Jews with their countries of origin were similar.

Members of both groups continued to use the languages they had spoken in Europe, to associate with non-Jewish immigrants from their original homes and to replicate some of their behaviors, to stay in touch with relatives in Europe, and to return there from time to time.⁵²

It appears that New York City was the only place in the United States where any institutions were established with an exclusively Franco-Jewish identity. In New York, Alsatian Jews founded congregation Shaarey Beracha (Gates of Blessing) in 1858. The founding rabbi of this congregation was apparently the Alsatian-born Elias Eppstein, who had earlier served congregations in Prussia and in Syracuse, New York, and who would later serve congregations in Jackson and Detroit, Michigan; in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; in Kansas City, Missouri; in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and in Quincy, Illinois.⁵³ Shaarey Beracha, which survived as a separate entity only until 1909, had its own mutual benefit society called the *Communauté israélite française*,⁵⁴ and New York City was also home to another mutual aid organization called the *Société israélite de New York*, founded in 1873. The *Société israélite* maintained its own cemetery on Long Island.⁵⁵

Rabbi Elias Eppstein.
(From Frank J. Adler, *Roots in a Moving Stream: The Centennial History of Congregation B'nai Jehudah of Kansas City 1870-1970*, courtesy of Congregation B'nai Jehudah, Overland Park, Kansas.)

Besides the long-standing association between the Jews of Alsace-Lorraine and their south German neighbors, perhaps the main factor driving the integration of French and German Jews in America was the fact that there were simply not enough French Jews in the country to sustain more than a handful of Franco-Jewish institutions. Even where they were most concentrated, as in the Gulf South and in California, their numbers were small in proportion of the total local Jewish population. Some idea of the paucity of French Jews in nineteenth-century America can be discerned from the fact that of the 138 burials recorded in the Gates of Mercy cemetery in New Orleans between 1828 and 1848, a period during which this was the only Jewish cemetery in town, only sixteen burials were of Jews born in Alsace-Lorraine or in other places in France.⁵⁶ The record of admissions to Jews' Hospital in New York in the 1850s provides an additional indication of the relative size of the Franco-Jewish population at midcentury, in this case, in America's foremost Jewish community. Between 1856 and 1858, when some 319 German-born Jews and some 256 Polish-born Jews were admitted to the hospital, along with sixteen American-born patients, a mere eight French-born Jews were admitted.⁵⁷

In 1900, there were only ninety-eight seat holders at New York's French congregation Shaarey Beracha, and only 138 members of the Société israélite de New York. By 1907, Shaarey Beracha had only forty-five members and membership in the Société israélite had declined to seventy-two.⁵⁸ Generally speaking, although the roughly ten thousand Jews who migrated from Alsace-Lorraine did constitute an interesting subgroup of American Jews with its own history, they could not possibly have constituted a completely separate sub-community in an American Jewish population that was growing to nearly three million by the beginning of World War I. By contrast, close to two hundred thousand German Jewish immigrants arrived in the U.S. just in the five decades between 1830 and 1880.⁵⁹

Consistent with the ties that developed between Franco-Jewish immigrants and their German Jewish counterparts was the

attraction of French Jews to American Reform Judaism. Reform had never gained a foothold in France, as it had in the German states, primarily because French Jews had been emancipated during the French Revolution without being required to acculturate first. This was contrary to the experience of Jews in Germany. In America, some French Jews remained traditionalists. In San Francisco, for example, the French-born Emanuel Blochman arrived in 1851 and joined the traditionalist Congregation Ohabai Shalom. In 1864 he founded a school to teach Torah to the city's Jewish children, and at various times he served the community as a dairy farmer, winemaker, and matzah baker. In New York, Shaarey Beracha seems to have remained traditionalist in orientation, with daily services conducted in Hebrew throughout its history.⁶⁰ Nonetheless, most French Jews in America joined the Reform congregations that were dominated by the German Jews with whom they came to be so closely bound.

The willingness of most French Jews to adopt Reform, with its assimilationist proclivities, was, moreover, consistent with their inclination to Americanize. In this they were similar not only to their German Jewish counterparts, but also to nineteenth-century Catholic and Protestant French immigrants to America. Many French Huguenots, for example, affiliated with the more mainstream Anglican Church when they came to the United States.⁶¹ Moreover, the French, never a huge immigrant group in America, did not create urban neighborhoods of their own and, as one scholar has concluded, "generally held no special reluctance toward Anglicanizing their names and their speech."⁶²

The desire of French Jews to integrate into American society, like the desire of their German Jewish and non-Jewish French counterparts, is reflected in their service during the Civil War. The Alsatian cousins Abraham and Isaac Hermann of Washington County, Georgia, were among the first of their neighbors to volunteer for the Confederate army in 1861, for example, and in Shreveport, Louisiana, the Alsatian brothers Samuel and Simon Levy also enlisted. Simon rose to the rank of captain, while his fellow Alsatian Henry Dreyfuss organized the Shreveport Home

*Shreveport, Louisiana, residents Simon Levy (above, left)
and Henry Dreyfuss (above, right), and the Dreyfuss Dry Goods Store,
northwest corner of Milam and McNeill Streets (below).
(Courtesy of Eric Brock and the Eric Brock Collection,
LSU- Shreveport Archives.)*

Guards to defend their city. In the north, the twenty-one-year-old New Yorker Kaufman Mandell, born in Dauendorf, Alsace, joined the Union army as a private in 1861 and rose to the rank of major in the cavalry. In Kentucky, the French-born Gabriel Netter served first as a captain in the Union Army's 26th Kentucky Infantry and later was commissioned a lieutenant colonel and authorized to raise a mounted regiment. He lost his life in battle near Owensboro, Kentucky.⁶³

The involvement of French Jews in local civic life and politics also attests to their desire for integration. Representative is the case of Abel Dreyfous, who was born in the Alsatian city of Belfort in 1815 and arrived in New Orleans by way of New York in 1836. Once in the Crescent City, he set up shop as a soap maker, but at the same time he began clerking in the office of a notary in order to prepare for entry into that profession. He eventually gained his commission, and by the time he died in 1891, he had become one of the city's most important notaries and well established within New Orleans society. Abel's son Felix became a leading New Orleans attorney and served in the Louisiana legislature. Among his other accomplishments, Felix was largely responsible for establishing the Levee Board charged with protecting New Orleans against flooding.⁶⁴

Bernard Schlesinger Weil, born in Alsace in 1802 and arriving in the U.S. by way of New Orleans in 1840, eventually founded a town in Wisconsin and in 1852 became the first Jew elected to the Wisconsin state legislature. In Indianapolis, Indiana, the Lorraine-born Leon Kahn served on the city's Common Council for eight years between 1869 and 1881. Mike Mandell and his wife, both born in Alsace-Lorraine, arrived in Albuquerque, New Mexico, just two weeks after their marriage. Mike became a successful merchant and, in 1890, the second mayor of the city. Similarly, in Dubuque, Alexander Levi became a justice of the peace, and in Temecula, Louis Wolf became not only a justice of the peace, but also a postmaster, school board member, Indian agent, and magistrate who was said to "[preside] over the law books with whiskey and [a] Colt revolver."⁶⁵

*Abel Dreyfous (above, left) and his wife, Caroline Kaufman Dreyfous.
Their son, Felix Dreyfous (below).
(Abel and Felix Dreyfous, courtesy of Lee Eiseman, Charlestown, MA.
Caroline Dreyfous, courtesy of Touro Infirmary Archives, New Orleans.)*

Conclusion

Previous studies of the relocation of Jews from Alsace and Lorraine to the American South have paid little attention to the way that population movement fit into larger patterns of Franco-Jewish migration in the nineteenth century, and, indeed, the dispersal of Franco-Jewish immigrants to parts of the United States beyond the South has received even less attention. Nor have studies of the arrival of Jews from Alsace-Lorraine in America taken account of similarities between Franco-Jewish immigrants and their non-Jewish counterparts. What this essay has demonstrated is that the arrival of Jews from Alsace and Lorraine in the South was only one element of a much larger story of Franco-Jewish migration and that the French Jews who arrived in the South did not behave all that differently from those who took up residence in other parts of the country. It was not only in the French-influenced Gulf South, for example, that French Jews attempted to maintain their French cultural identity. This they did wherever they clustered, and, in fact, the only exclusively Franco-Jewish institutions in the country were established in New York, and not in Louisiana. Moreover, this article has shown that in many respects, the experience of Jewish immigrants from France was similar to that of their Catholic and Protestant fellow migrants. The circumstances of all these immigrant groups were conditioned in part by the fact that French migration to America was never massive.

*The listing for New York's congregation Shaaray Beracha (Shaare Brocho)
in the American Jewish Year Book of 1900-1901.*

Ultimately, this article has revealed that the French Jews who moved to the United States during the nineteenth century, including those who came to the South, were possessed of a rather complex identity. To some extent, these settlers held on to their French self-image and to their connections with French immigrants of other faiths, at least for the first generation. However, because of their enduring identity as Jews and because of their relatively small numbers, they also became integrated in many ways into the German Jewish culture that dominated American Jewish communal life in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Alongside these two elements of their identity, moreover, was also a third, based on a desire to become American. Clearly, the experience of Jewish immigrants to the South from Alsace and Lorraine must be understood within the context of larger Jewish migration patterns in both France and America, and with an appreciation for the intriguing complex identity of French Jews in the United States.

NOTES

¹ Anny Bloch-Raymond, *Des berges du Rhin aux rives du Mississippi: Histoire et récits de migrants juifs* [From the Banks of the Rhine to the Shores of the Mississippi: The History and Stories of Jewish Migrants] (Paris, 2009), 14.

² See "Utica Site & Exhibits" on the Internet site of the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience at http://www.isjl.org/museum/utica_site.htm (accessed January 3, 2010); David Galef, "Arts/Artifacts: Vivid Reminders Of Jewish Life In the Old South," *New York Times*, June 21, 1998; Bloch-Raymond, *Des berges du Rhin*.

³ For more on this conference, see Erin Greenwald, "The Alsace-Lorraine Jewish Experience in Louisiana and the Gulf South," *Historic New Orleans Collection Quarterly* 26 (Summer 2009), 8-9, at http://www.hnoc.org/publications/pdf/HNOC_Q3_09.pdf (accessed January 4, 2010).

⁴ On the geography of French Jewry on the eve of the Revolution, see, for example, Simon Schwarzfuchs, *Du Juif à l'israélite: Histoire d'une mutation (1770-1870)* [From Jew to Israelite: The History of a Mutation (1770-1870)] (Paris, 1989), 19-37; Patrick Girard, *Pour Le*

Meilleur et pour le pire: Vingt siècles d'histoire juive en France [For Better or for Worse: Twenty Centuries of Jewish History in France] (Paris, 1986), 169-199; Arthur Hertzberg, *The French Enlightenment and the Jews: The Origins of Modern Anti-Semitism* (New York, 1968), 84-137, 321; Zosa Szajkowski, "The Growth of the Jewish Population of France," in Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Revolutions of 1789, 1830 and 1848* (New York, 1970), 76-80.

⁵ Paula E. Hyman, *The Emancipation of the Jews of Alsace, Acculturation and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven, 1991): esp. 31, 88, 96.

⁶ Ministre de l'agriculture, du commerce et des travaux publics, *Statistique de la France* [Statistics of France] (Paris, 1855); *Statistique de la France, Résultats généraux du recensement de 1872* [Statistics of France: General Results of the Census of 1872] (Paris, 1873); Hyman, *Emancipation of the Jews of Alsace*, 86.

⁷ For more on smaller Jewish communities in the French interior, see Lee Shai Weissbach, "Studying the Era of Emancipation: The State of Franco-Jewish Local History," *Shofar* 14 (Spring 1996): 63-87.

⁸ Hyman, *Emancipation of the Jews of Alsace*, esp. 49, 86-87.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 25. See also Anny Bloch, "L'émigration juive alsacienne aux Etats-Unis (1830-1930)" [Alsatian Jewish Emigration to the United States (1830-1930)], *Archives juives* 32:2 (1999): 78-79.

¹⁰ See, for example, Vicki Caron, "Patriotism or Profit? The Emigration of Alsace-Lorraine Jews to France, 1871-72," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 28 (1983): 159; Anny Bloch, "Mercy on Rude Streams: Jewish Emigrants from Alsace-Lorraine to the Lower Mississippi Region and the Concept of Fidelity," *Southern Jewish History* 2 (1999): 88-89, 108 (n. 17). On French migration out of Alsace-Lorraine generally, see Nicole Fouché, *Emigration alsacienne aux Etats-Unis, 1815-1870* [Alsatian Emigration to the United States, 1815-1870] (Paris, 1992), *passim*; Jacqueline Lindenfeld, *The French in the United States: An Ethnographic Study* (Westport, CT, 2000), 3.

¹¹ See Henri Giroux, "L'Installation de la communauté juive de Dijon (1790-1792)" [The Establishment of the Jewish Community of Dijon (1790-1792)], *Mémoires de l'Académie des sciences, arts et belles-lettres de Dijon* 119 (1966-69): 103.

¹² See "Ambassador Danilovich, U.S. Ambassador to Brazil, Speaks in New York City" at <http://www.embaixada-americana.org.br/index.php?action=materia&id=2978&submenu=1&itemmenu=10> (accessed April 17, 2009); Harvey H. Herstein, "The Growth of the Winnipeg Jewish Community and the Evolution of its Educational Institutions" at <http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/transactions/3/jewishschools.shtml> (accessed April 17, 2009); Bloch, "Mercy on Rude Streams," 88.

¹³ See, for example, Hyman, *Emancipation of the Jews of Alsace*, 87.

¹⁴ Ira Rosenwaike, *On the Edge of Greatness: A Portrait of American Jewry in the Early National Period* (Cincinnati, 1985), esp. 31 (table).

¹⁵ Lee Shai Weissbach, "The Jewish Communities of the United States on the Eve of Mass Migration: Some Comments on Geography and Bibliography," *American Jewish History* 78 (September 1988): 79-108.

¹⁶ Jacob Rader Marcus, *To Count a People: American Jewish Population Data, 1585–1984* (Lanham, MD, 1990), 241; Lee Shai Weissbach, “Small Jewish Communities in the Era of Mass Migration: The American Experience” in *Patterns of Migration, 1850–1914*, ed. Aubrey Newman and Stephen W. Massil (London, 1996).

¹⁷ Patrice Higonnet, “French,” in *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, ed. Stephan Thernstrom (Cambridge, MA., 1980), 385–386; Laurie Collier Hillstrom, “French Americans” at <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3405800064.html> (accessed March 17, 2011). See also Polly Morrice, *The French Americans* (New York, 1988), 15–16.

¹⁸ “Levi’s Journey,” at http://levicelebration.com/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/panel2_fnl.23550131.pdf (accessed April 24, 2009); “Building a Community” at http://levicelebration.com/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/panel3_fnl.23550309.pdf (accessed March 14, 2011).

¹⁹ Gene H. Rosenblum, *Jewish Pioneers of St. Paul, 1849–1874* (Mount Pleasant, SC, 2001), 56; Judith E. Endelman, *The Jewish Community of Indianapolis: 1849 to the Present* (Bloomington, IN., 1984), 13; “Rome, Georgia” in the *Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities* at <http://www.msje.org/history/archive/ga/rome.html> (accessed May 7, 2011); Deb Freedman, “Dry Goods and Wet Goods,” at <http://drygoodsandwetgoods.com/> (accessed April 17, 2009).

²⁰ Martin I. Hinchin, *Fourscore and Eleven: A History of the Jews of Rapides Parish, 1828–1919* (Alexandria, LA, 1984), 103; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Alexandria, Rapides Parish, Louisiana, 1880.

²¹ Achille was the grandfather of Max Baer, the famous boxer who wore a Star of David on his trunks and held the world heavyweight boxing title in the mid 1930s. See, for example, Bill Gallo, “The Legend of Max: Grin & Baer It,” at http://www.nydailynews.com/archives/sports/1997/10/26/1997-10-26_the_legend_of_max_grin_amp.html (accessed April 16, 2009); “Max Baer (boxer)” at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max_Baer_\(boxer\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max_Baer_(boxer)) (accessed April 16, 2009).

²² “Lazard Kahn, Manufacturer, Outstanding Man, Dies,” *Hamilton Evening Journal*, March 8, 1928.

²³ William M. Kramer and Reva Clar, “Rabbi Abraham Blum: From Alsace to New York by Way of Texas and California,” *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly (WSJHQ)* 12 (October 1979): 73–88; (January 1980): 170–184; (April 1980): 266–281. See also “Rabbi Abraham Blum Dies after Operation,” *New York Times*, August 7, 1921.

²⁴ Bloch-Raymond, *Des berges du Rhin*, 30; Bernard Postal and Lionel Koppman, *A Jewish Tourist’s Guide to the U.S.* (Philadelphia, 1954), 443.

²⁵ Barbara Krasner-Khait, “If Not Through New York, Then Where?” at <http://www.familychronicle.com/NotThroughNY.html> (accessed March 17, 2011).

²⁶ Morrice, *French Americans*, 13.

²⁷ Fred Rosenbaum, *Visions of Reform: Congregation Emanu-El and the Jews of San Francisco, 1849–1999* (Berkeley, CA, 2000), 28, 67.

²⁸ Leon Harris, *Merchant Princes: An Intimate History of Jewish Families Who Built Great Department Stores* (New York, 1994), 240. See also "Raphael Weill & Company" at <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nmpelton/sfbweil.htm> (accessed January 10, 2010).

²⁹ Higonnet, "French," 382. Eugene Meyer, who arrived in Los Angeles by way of New York and San Francisco, was the grandfather of Katharine Graham, one-time publisher and CEO of the *Washington Post* and *Newsweek* magazine. See Katharine Graham, *Personal History* (New York, 1997), 4-7; or Katharine Graham, "Personal History" at <http://www.usatoday.com/life/books/fc/2001-07-17-personal-history.htm> (accessed March 11, 2009); "Notable Relatives: Katharine Graham (1917-2001)" at <http://homepage.mac.com/lindalevi/PersonalAW/KMGraham.htm> (accessed March 11, 2009). See also Ava F. Kahn, ed., *Jewish Voices of the California Gold Rush: A Documentary History, 1849-1880* (Detroit, 2002), 138-140.

³⁰ Dan Pulcrano, "Keeping the Faith," at <http://www.sanjose.com/history/jews/> (accessed March 18, 2009); Harold Brackman, "Jewish threads wind way through Temecula's history," at http://www.jewishjournal.com/travel/article/jewish_threads_wind_way_through_temeculas_history_20070518/ (accessed March 18, 2009).

³¹ The Weill's son became a director of Keystone Comedies and a founder of the Screen Actors Guild. See "Tracing the Tribe: The Jewish Genealogy Blog," March 24, 2008, at <http://tracingthetribe.blogspot.com/> (accessed March 18, 2009).

³² Amy Hill Shevitz, *Jewish Communities on the Ohio River: A History* (Lexington, KY, 2007), 41.

³³ Bloch, "L'émigration juive alsacienne," 82; Moses Rischin, *The Jews of North America* (Detroit, 1987), 227.

³⁴ Elliott Ashkenazi, *The Business of Jews in Louisiana, 1840-1875* (Tuscaloosa, 1988), 75, 92, 110.

³⁵ "Tracing the Tribe: The Jewish Genealogy Blog," May 6, 2008, at <http://tracingthetribe.blogspot.com/> (accessed March 18, 2009).

³⁶ Irwin Lachoff and Catherine C. Kahn, *The Jewish Community of New Orleans* (Mount Pleasant, SC, 2005), 52; Rischin, *Jews of North America*, 227; Ashkenazi, *Business of Jews in Louisiana*, 158-59. On the French heritage in New Orleans, see, for example, Morrice, *French Americans*, 33-59; Leonard V. Huber, *New Orleans: A Pictorial History* (New York, 1971), 260-261.

³⁷ Shevitz, *Jewish Communities on the Ohio*, 40. On the early history of Gallipolis, see Hélène Fouré-Selter, *Gallipolis, Ohio: histoire de l'établissement de cinq cents français dans la vallée de l'Ohio à la fin du XVIII siècle* [Gallipolis, Ohio: The History of the Establishment of Five Hundred French People in the Ohio Valley at the End of the Eighteenth Century] (Paris, 1939); Phillip J. Wolfe and Warren J. Wolfe, "Prospects for the Gallipolis Settlement: French Diplomatic Dispatches," *Ohio History* 103 (1994).

³⁸ Bloch, "Mercy on Rude Streams," *passim*; Bloch-Raymond, *Des berges du Rhin*, esp. 105-111, 136-142.

³⁹ Bloch, "L'émigration juive alsacienne," 92; Kramer and Clar, "Rabbi Abraham Blum," *WSJHQ*, (October 1979): 81; National Council of Jewish Women, *Secular and Religious Works of Penina Moise, with Brief Sketch of Her Life* (Charleston, SC, 1911), i, 308; Harriet L. Parmet, "Penina Moïse—Sweet Singer of Israel" at <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Penina+Moise--Sweet+Singer+of+Israel.-a0151974728> (accessed March 17, 2011).

⁴⁰ Ashkenazi, *Business of Jews in Louisiana*, 92, 121; Kramer and Clar, "Rabbi Abraham Blum," *WSJHQ* (January 1980): 181-182; Copybook of Samuel Haas, 1886-1887, Special Collections, Louisiana State University Libraries, at <http://www.lib.lsu.edu/special/guides/jews.html#H> (accessed March 18, 2009); "Le Home Israélite de Jeunes Filles" [The Jewish Home for Girls] at <http://judaisme.sdv.fr/today/laurew/home.htm> (accessed April 17, 2009).

⁴¹ Higonnet, "French," 382; Rosenbaum, *Visions of Reform*, 28; John Newmark Levi, Sr., "This is the Way we Used to Live," *WSJHQ* 4:1 (October 1971).

⁴² Hillstrom, "French Americans"; Morrice, *French Americans*, 66-69.

⁴³ Jerry Miller, "Marion's Chosen Few," *Marion Chronicle-Tribune Magazine*, July 17, 1977; Letterhead in Ms. Coll. #5, "Hebrew Union College Records," Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati.

⁴⁴ Hinchin, *Fourscore and Eleven*, 103; "Lazard Kahn," *Hamilton Evening Journal*; "Biographical Sketches of Jewish Communal Workers in the United States," *American Jewish Year Book (AJYB)* 7 (1905-1906): 70; Harris, *Merchant Princes*, 240.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Kahn, *Jewish Voices of the California Gold Rush*, 83.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁴⁷ Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Vicksburg, Warren County, Mississippi; Tenth Census of the United States, Jackson, Jackson County, Michigan, 1880.

⁴⁸ See, for example, Norton B. Stern, "When the Franco-Prussian War Came to Los Angeles," *WSJHQ* 10 (1977): 68-73.

⁴⁹ See, for example, Bloch, "Mercy on Rude Streams," 84; Bloch-Raymond, *Des berges du Rhin*, passim.

⁵⁰ Shevitz, *Jewish Communities on the Ohio River*, 58. On the integration of Alsatian and German Jews in the rural South, see Pamela Dorn Sezgin, "Country Jews: Reconsidering Nineteenth-Century Alsatian Jewish Identity in the Southern United States" (paper presented at the Biennial Scholars' Conference on American Jewish History, Charleston, SC, June 6, 2006), at <http://spinner.cofc.edu/~jwst/pages/Sezgin,%20Pamela%20-%20Country%20Jews%20+.pdf> (accessed January 5, 2010).

⁵¹ Elizabeth Shaikun Weinberg, "Hoosier Israelites on the Ohio: A History of Madison's Indiana Jews," *Indiana Jewish History* 27 (July 1991), 44a-44b; Tenth Census of the United States, Alexandria; Tenth Census of the United States, Vicksburg. See also Bloch, "Mercy on Rude Streams," 101-103.

⁵² See, for example, Naomi W. Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation: The German Jews in the United States, 1830-1914* (Philadelphia, 1984), esp. 3-39, 58-63. See also Leonard Rogoff, *Down Home: Jewish Life in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, 2010), 142; Mark K. Bauman, "On German American and American Jewish History," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 29 (Fall 2009): 67-71.

⁵³ Union Historical Company, *The History of Jackson County, Missouri* (Kansas City, MO, 1881), 766; Frank J. Adler, *Roots In A Moving Stream: The Centennial History Of Congregation B'nai Jehudah Of Kansas City, 1870-1970* (Kansas City, MO, 1970), 43-44; Irving I. Katz, "Eppstein: Beth El's Rabbi 100 Years Ago," *Detroit Jewish News*, April 26, 1968.

⁵⁴ Hyman B. Grinstein, *The Rise of the Jewish Community of New York, 1654-1860* (Philadelphia, 1945), 474, 477. Shaarey Beracha merged with New York's Temple Israel in 1909. *AJYB* 2 (1900-1901): 382, gives the founding date of Shaarey Beracha as 1851.

⁵⁵ *AJYB* 2 (1900-1901): 383-384. See also "Historique" [History] on the Internet site of the Comité des Associations Françaises de New York at <http://www.cafusa.org/p2.php> (accessed January, 10, 2010).

⁵⁶ Wilbur E. Meneray, "Jewish Burials in New Orleans, 1828-1848," *The Louisiana Genealogical Register* (March 1989): 88-94, at <http://files.usgwarchives.org/la/orleans/vitals/deaths/certif/jewish.txt> (accessed March 21, 2011). On the Gates of Mercy cemetery, see Jacob Rader Marcus, *United States Jewry, 1776-1985* (Detroit, 1989), p. 227; "The New Orleans Cemeteries," at <http://www.jewishgen.org/cemetery/northamerica/louisiana.html> (accessed April 17, 2009).

⁵⁷ Grinstein, *Rise of the Jewish Community of New York*, 528-529.

⁵⁸ *AJYB* 2 (1900-1901): 382, 383; *AJYB* 9 (1907-1908): 302, 315.

⁵⁹ Marcus, *To Count a People*, 241; Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation*, 12.

⁶⁰ See Jeanne Abrams, "Orthodox Women in the 'Wild West'" at http://www.ou.org/jewish_action/article/orthodox_women_in_the_wild_west/ (accessed March 6, 2009); *AJYB* 9 (1907-1908): 302.

⁶¹ Hillstrom, "French Americans."

⁶² James S. Pula, *The French in America 1488-1974: A Chronology & Factbook* (Dobbs Ferry, NY, 1975), quoted in Hillstrom, "French Americans"; Morrice, *French Americans*, 73.

⁶³ Sezgin, "Country Jews," 10; Eric J. Brock, *The Jewish Community of Shreveport* (Charleston, SC, 2002), 20, 26; "Biographical Sketches," *AJYB* 7 (1905-1906): 86; Isaac W. Bernheim, *History of the Settlement of Jews in Paducah and the Lower Ohio Valley* (Paducah, KY, 1912), 43-45.

⁶⁴ Lachoff and Kahn, *Jewish Community of New Orleans*, 15; Bobbie Malone, "Ruth and Rosalie: Two Tales of Jewish New Orleans," *Southern Jewish History* 1 (1998), 122; "Abel Dreyfous" at <http://ourfamilybios.com/AbelDreyfous.htm> (accessed April 24, 2009).

⁶⁵ Postal and Koppman, *A Jewish Tourist's Guide*, 654; Endelman, *Jewish Community of Indianapolis*, 27; Naomi Sandweiss and Noel Pugach, *Jewish Albuquerque: 1860-1960* (Charleston, SC, 2011), 9, 35; "Levi's Journey"; Harold Brackman, "Jewish threads."