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Antonio's Devils: Writers of the Jewish Enlightenment and
the Birth of Modern Hebrew and Yiddish Literature (review)

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while Abigail Gilman's insightful interpretation of Arthur Schnitzler's "Jewish" novel, *Der Weg ins Freie*, shows how the Jewish parts of the novel and the non-Jewish Bildungsroman fit together. The contribution by Peter Demetz stems from personal experience, since it deals with the appearance and the disappearance of Yiddish in Prague; but it also gives significant insight into how the absence of Yiddish impacted Franz Kafka and Max Brod. The final essay in the collection, by Ritchie Robertson, considers Schnitzler's remarks about Jakob Wassermann, commenting specifically on the relationship these two men had with their Jewish heritage.

In a short tribute to Jeffrey Sammons that closes the volume, Jocelyne Kolb points to the reasons he was drawn to Heine and his writings: "wit, polemics, elegance, self-irony, and the occasional hint of melancholy" (p. 263) are elements Sammons admired in the nineteenth-century writer and that he himself evidences in his scholarly works. Although the essays dedicated to Sammons do not always contain the items he most esteemed and emulated, they do display other attributes encountered in Sammons' books: seriousness of purpose, lucidity in presentation, and great erudition. In this sense the contributions are a fitting tribute to one of the most distinguished American scholars of German literature in our time.

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Antonio's Devils: Writers of the Jewish Enlightenment and the Birth of Modern Hebrew and Yiddish Literature, by Jeremy Dauber. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004. 354 pp. \$60.00.

All too often, literature and literary questions are addressed solely from their own narrow and self-contained disciplinary confines. Reacting, perhaps, to the scholarly predilections of earlier generations, wherein literature was often pressed into the service of the history of ideas, contemporary scholars have generally insisted upon detaching the study of literature from all matters historical. One of the many significant contributions of Jeremy Dauber's *Antonio's Devils* is the fact that he sets aside such scholarly inclinations and produces a book that is a wonderfully enriching exploration of literary texts, as well as a suggestive and intelligent foray in the field of intellectual history.

Dauber's subject is the literature of the Haskalah, the Jewish Enlightenment, which flourished first in Prussia through the second half of the eighteenth century, and then a few decades later in Galicia. Dauber's key to under-

standing the Haskalah and its variegated literatures and languages—literature written in German, Hebrew, and Yiddish—is the use of textual allusion, that is, all manner of explicit and implicit allusion to earlier biblical and rabbinic canons. Given the long tradition of allusiveness in Jewish literature, from intra-biblical references to the poetry and prose of medieval scholars, the focus on textual allusion is a particularly useful tool, one that beautifully captures the complex lines of historical-cultural continuity even as they are fraught with far-reaching discontinuities. In Dauber's skilled hands and expertly trained eyes, an appreciation of textual allusion not only highlights the rich tapestry of Maskilic literature, but also deepens our understanding of the historical context that spawns modern Jewish literature, and beyond that, the very tensions and challenges that shaped the Jewish encounter with modernity.

Dauber begins his book in a somewhat daring fashion with a chapter-long analysis of the passage of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, in which Shylock alludes to a section of Genesis, triggering Antonio's famous quip that "the devil can cite Scripture for his purpose." Dauber's intent, of course, is to "illuminate a certain methodological approach," one that refers "both to the literary contexts of the allusive material and the historical and social factors that shaped the ways in which that material was employed" (p. 26). He then proceeds to frame the book neatly by supplying two introductory chapters. The first explores various theoretical approaches to the study of allusion, laying out in accessible terms the questions of text, reader, interpretative communities, and the dynamics that are operative between them. Dauber's exposition is particularly effective not only because he avoids the often over-the-top jargon-laden babble of literary theorists, but because he remains focused on its practical and historical application to the literature at hand. The second introductory chapter lays out the historical background of the Prussian and Galician Haskalahs, and although historians may quibble with this or that formulation, this historical chapter provides a clear, balanced, and most serviceable historical picture.

The heart of the book is taken up by successive presentations of the writings of three important maskilic writers: Moses Mendelssohn (1729–86), Aaron Halle-Wolfssohn (1754–1835), and Joseph Perl (1773–1839). In each case, Dauber carefully analyzes the author's use of allusion in a variety of contexts and languages and the ways in which these maskilim variously calibrated, reinforced, and shifted their writing strategies in order to advance their cultural agendas. The results, with regard to each of these particular writers, is naturally different, and the heart of Dauber's book is devoted to showing how the historical and cultural context shaped the nature of the writer's polemical strategy, which found expression in the nature, intent, and effect of the allu-

sions employed. What he has to say about the individual Maskilim is clear and articulately presented, and need not be recounted here. Dauber's point, after all, is as much his method as his conclusion, and his method, centered on his fine analysis of allusions, is consistently effective, insightful, and convincing.

Dauber has produced a first-rate book, at once interesting and eminently readable, and both historians and students of Jewish literature will learn much. Given that this is a first book from a young scholar, *Antonio's Devils* is a most impressive offering, one that would elicit from his maskilic protagonists the hope that he produce books without limit.

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Representations of Jews in Late Medieval and Early Modern German Literature, by John D. Martin. *Studies in German Jewish History* 5. Oxford: Peter Lang, 2004. 254 pp. \$49.95.

Incorporating recent discussions about the distinction between anti-Judaism and antisemitism and the "hermeneutic Jew," John Martin contests the almost universally negative portrayal of late medieval and early modern German representations of Jews formulated in modern scholarship. He rejects what he considers an uncritical acceptance of the idea that only decline in Jewish and Christian relations in medieval Germany is depicted in medieval German literature as well as the belief that medieval literature, especially medieval religious drama, played a large role in provoking anti-Jewish violence. In response to recent scholarship (especially the work of Natascha Bremer, Edith Wenzel, and Andrew Gow), Martin asserts that "the facts of daily life in medieval Germany make it difficult to defend the thesis that such conceptions of Jews as inhuman monsters exerted an unchallenged and unquestioned influence over the minds of medieval Christians" (p. 29). He suggests instead that medieval Christians were aware of the Jewishness of their own religion and that there existed a variety of literary Jews, who were complex and ambivalent. The monstrous image of the Jew, however, was never the sole, and often not the prominent, image in the literature.

In his attempt to establish this contention, Martin examines a wide range of German literature, focusing on Passion plays, saints' legends, and fables. He notes that Jews could frequently be depicted in sympathetic light. Often Jews clearly identified in the literature were depicted not as venal or irrational creatures but as people seeking the truth about God. Even when late medieval