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Glorious, Accursed Europe

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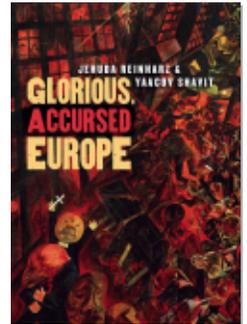
Published by Brandeis University Press

Reinharz, Jehuda & Shavit, Yaacov.

Glorious, Accursed Europe.

Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2010.

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THE ACCURSED CENTURY— EUROPE AS AN AILING CULTURE

Our unfortunate nineteenth century.

FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY¹

In *Notes from the Underground*, Dostoevsky's protagonist discovers that civilization neither tames mankind nor makes men less violent or thirsty for war. In "our unhappy nineteenth century," he declares, "blood is being spilt in streams . . . as though it were champagne."² In contrast, in Chekhov's novella *The Duel*, the zoologist von Koren mocks the lamentations of the clerk Ivan Andreitch Laevsky—"how we have been crippled by civilisation!"—noting that while Laevsky "has scarcely sniffed at civilisation," it had already brought him disillusionment and disappointment; he sought to undermine it "only to justify and conceal [his] own rottenness and moral poverty."³

These two opposing opinions reflect the debate that unfolded within the Russian intelligentsia. Pro-Westerners saw Russia as a pauper pounding on the gates of civilization, with the West its yearned-for ideal. Slavophiles believed that Russia superficially imitated values foreign to the authentic Russian spirit. The West was the looking glass into which the Russian intelligentsia had been peering since the eighteenth century, in an attempt to examine both the good and the bad in Russia and to find a path to the nation's rejuvenation.⁴ In the self-confident West, pessimistic historical consciousness and fear of what was to come had an entirely different character. So, for example, in 1897, as Britain began its lavish celebration of Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee, Rudyard Kipling wrote in his poem "Recessional" that he sensed a troubling optimism in the air, and wondered whether beyond Britain's might and global power lay the same bitter fate that had overtaken the great powers of the past, such as Nineveh and Tyre.⁵ H. G. Wells evoked this cosmic pessimism in his novels *The Time Machine* (1895) and *When the Sleeper Wakes* (1899). In

Germany,⁶ Austria, France, Poland, and Russia, new literary works and philosophical and historical treatises disseminated this mood of cultural pessimism and criticism and conjured a nightmarish vision of a rapidly approaching apocalypse.⁷ Beneath Western civilization's facade of bountiful, world-changing scientific and technological achievement, and behind the scenes of Europe's rule over a great portion of the world, fears and concerns set in, some real and some imaginary. Once again, it seemed that barbarians were closing in and that, as in the ancient past, Europe's self-confident culture would collapse. These fears crossed the Atlantic and made their way to the New World. Brooks Adams, in *The Law of Civilization and Decay* (1895), and his brother, Henry Adams, in *The Education of Henry Adams* (1907), both described a West mired in the process of decay and descent into a cesspit of vulgarity.⁸ This abundance of prophecies and predictions reflected an orientation toward the future, its integral role in the nineteenth-century worldview, and attempts to envision the world to come.

THE CLIMATE AT THE END OF AN ERA

Fear, pessimism, and the Europhobia that was an inseparable part of them also appeared in Jewish literature and journalism at the end of the nineteenth century. There, too, writers looked backward on the closing century with disappointment and disillusionment, and looked forward to the coming century with deep anxiety and even terror. Disappointment and fear were not only a reaction to the emergence of modern antisemitism, but also the result of intense identification with and admiration for Europe—hence, the concern that it might be drawn into an inescapable crisis.

A twilight atmosphere of looming demise had also emerged at the end of the fifteenth century—the “autumn of the Middle Ages,” as the Dutch historian Johan Huizinga called it. A sense of approaching doom prevailed then, rising from the decay that seemed to spread throughout European society.⁹ The great difference between these two periods lies in the fact that the nineteenth-century awareness of decline and destruction came at the end of an age seen as an incubator for a new European world—one that would be “the best of all possible worlds,” to use Voltaire's well-known phrase without his irony. It was for this reason that the fear of decline was so severe. Born in the middle of the century, the fear grew stronger during the *fin de siècle*, as the 1880s and 1890s came to be known. That term

became widely used to refer to various phenomena; as a French rhyme put it in 1891, “*Fin-de-siècle* . . . stands for everything.”¹⁰ Max Nordau, meanwhile, wrote in his introduction to *Degeneration* that the “mental state” known as *fin de siècle* was ubiquitous.¹¹

The name given to this historical period chiefly connoted a feeling of malaise and a sense of profound, irreparable cultural and social decadence.¹² According to the mood then in vogue, humanity (that is, the West) was heading irrevocably toward disintegration and loss. Not only had technology failed to heal the ills of Western society, it had also spawned destructive forces: ethical bankruptcy, alienation, emptiness, exploitation, horrific poverty, and even biological degeneration.¹³ Those who predicted decline had a ready audience, but they were also portrayed as false prophets who projected their own spiritual condition onto reality. According to von Koren, Chekhov’s protagonist, pessimism seemed an expression of egotistical wretchedness. The German Jewish writer Berthold Auerbach described the literature infused with *Weltschmerz* (the sorrows of the world) as *Ichpoesie* (self-centered writing) that projected the private, subjective world—that is, the authors’ private predicaments—onto reality, and thus distorted it.¹⁴ Nordau had a similarly decided opinion: *Weltgefühl* (one’s sense of the world) and objective reality were separated by a broad chasm. The mania for distress, as he put it, that was evident in fashionable pessimism testified to the triumph of the power of imagination over reality. In *Degeneration*, Nordau proposed a clinical diagnosis according to which the authors of pessimistic and nihilistic literature were possessed of a decadent personality and were, in fact, mentally unwell. The pessimism and egotistical individualism they created were the malady of the century. The radical *maskil* Yehuda Leib Levin, who would later spare few harsh words in his criticism of the nineteenth century, wrote in 1899 that the Eastern European Jewish intelligentsia’s “consciousness of decadence” was a fashionable illness, contracted from the Russian and German intelligentsia. This was a regrettable consequence of confused ideas, romantic decisions, and the tendency to follow intellectual and literary vogues.¹⁵

We might claim, from the perspective of the twenty-first century, that the pessimism expressed by Jewish writers and thinkers was not *Ichpoesie* but rather a product of sensitivity, intuition, and foresight. These writers and thinkers sensitively plumbed the depths of the crisis of modernity and thus were best able to foresee the calamity it heralded. Their pessimistic and even apocalyptic mood was not simply an imitation of intellectual and

literary fashions, but also a result of their alertness to existing undercurrents and the dangers these posed to Europe's future. It was because of this that they adopted the consciousness of decline and the mood of cultural pessimism, became filled with the sorrows of the world, and thought of Europe as sick—even moribund. This was all done without regard to the deep affinity between German prophets of decline such as Paul de Lagarde and Julius Langbehn—as well as the nostalgia they cultivated for the medieval German world, the sanctuary to which they wished to flee in the face of alienation and the false idols of capitalism, materialism, individualism, and liberalism, all destroyers of authenticity—on the one hand, and the antisemitic and racist *völkische* ideology, on the other hand.¹⁶

A CRITICALLY ILL EUROPE

The *maskilim's* faith in progress and in the myth of enlightenment was already a target of criticism in the first half of the nineteenth century, but few critics focused on modern Europe and its fundamental values. One who did was the learned Paduan rabbi Shmuel David Luzzatto (known by the acronym Shadal). In 1841 he published a poem in the Frankfurt journal *Tzion* (Zion) titled “Derech Eretz or Atheism: A Poem by Shadal to His Generation” (*derech eretz* here signifies a combination of traditional and religious morality). This poem expresses his bitter disappointment in the fruits of emancipation and sketches a bleak portrait of European culture. Luzzatto conceded that religious zealotry and political despotism had been reined in, and that Europe had made remarkable technological and scientific achievements; nonetheless, civilization (that is, European culture) was built upon a flawed and corrupt foundation. “Our generation’s civilization is half good and half bad,” he wrote elsewhere, claiming that the good half was derived from Jewish roots, and the bad half from Greek.¹⁷

This gloomy portrait also found its way to Jewish *maskilim* in the remotest places in Europe during the latter half of the century. As early as 1878, Yehuda Leib Levin—whom we have cited as believing that Europe was a homeland to the Jews in every respect—described the European nineteenth century—that “enlightened, intellectual, and glorious” century—through the eyes of a bitterly disappointed optimist. In his poem “Sheelot Hazman” (Questions of our time), he wrote:

This time, this century, perfection unblemished!
Alive! Nineteenth! Perfection in beauty!

What new power has this century, I ask myself,
That it bears such great praise without stumbling?
Can it really be? It soars so far up the scale,
And the brilliance of its intellect penetrates all;
Its leaders and thinkers—are they all superhuman,
Enlightened in thought and action—victorious?
Or is this perhaps a vain dream, a delusion,
Its gleam pale and putrid, mere spray upon the shore?¹⁸

Europe's glorious nineteenth century was a century not of enlightenment and progress, but of evil, cruelty, and the triumph of force. Jews could expect nothing good from such a century, and Levin prophesied: "The days march on, the Jews' plight deteriorates. How will you act on the day when calamity strikes like lightning and destruction rains down like a storm, and the pleasures in which you delight wither all of a sudden while you gape open-mouthed, your faces distorted, fit for contempt! Perhaps then you will repent within your souls for the blood of your brothers, which was spilled due to your pride."¹⁹

The best-known expression of the idea that Europe at the end of the nineteenth century was in a grave and deteriorating physical and spiritual condition was supplied by the young author Mordechai Zeev Feiberberg, in his short novel *Le'an?* (translated as *Whither?*), published in the periodical *Hashiloach* in 1899.²⁰ Feiberberg maintained that those who predicted a pleasant future for Europe were "small prophets" (false prophets), while the true prophets were those who forecast decline. He described decadent Europe as follows:

Europe is sick. Everyone can sense that society is crumbling; its foundations have long been rotten. Humankind is weary, thirsty for the word of God, for a prophet and a seer. Little prophets arise and strengthen it from time to time; Kant kept society alive for a century. Perhaps Darwin will be vital for another. But a great prophet and seer who would pronounce the word of God to the weary and the stumbling, who would inspire society—we have none. Society is now groping aimlessly; until the time when God's spirit will be poured out upon us in a mighty draught, and Civilization will be satiate for thousands of years.²¹

The historian Heinrich Graetz also painted a gloomy portrait of Europe in "The Correspondence of an English Lady on Judaism and Semitism" (1883): "You, culture enthusiast, do you have any idea how sick our highly

civilized Europe really is?" According to him, the disease was evident not only in the signs that a new, full-scale European war was about to break out over control of the Ottoman Empire, but also in Europe's social and moral condition. Europe's social organism was ill, and the continent appeared to be on its deathbed; a clear symptom of its licentiousness and moral corruption was the extensive spread of syphilis and prostitution. In this case, it was impossible to believe that *putrescat ut resurgat* (decay begets revival). Edith, the "English lady," countered this depressing description with omnipresent examples of progress: railways, steamships, urban planning, parks and gardens, science institutes, and museums. Could it be that among all these wonders, which had improved the quality of life beyond recognition, hidden ailments lurked and were devouring Europe from within? "You have robbed me," she scolded Graetz, "of my gilded illusion."²²

Two years later, in 1885, Edmund Menachem Eisler published his utopian novel *Ein Zukunftsbild* (An image of the future) in Vienna. In it, he painted a portrait of the Jewish kingdom destined to rise in Palestine and described the laws by which it would be governed. With honed sarcasm, Eisler addressed Europe: "How pleased you must be, oh Europe, that your Jews have all departed."²³ Prophets predicted that after the Jews' removal, Europe would be rid of the root of its troubles and enjoy happy, thriving days. But instead, Eisler wrote, Europe's troubles only multiplied. Europe fell ill; its exploits frothed and seethed like a witch's stew. Not only did its indecent, corrupting vices wreak havoc, but they were accompanied by further evils that, artificially cultivated during the last wave of violence, now flourished, sprouted, and spread abominably.

Eisler then described how militarism was gaining strength and political dominance in Germany; how Russia hovered on the horizon of Western Europe like an ominous cloud threatening to destroy every achievement of civilization; and how Great Britain was declining abruptly:

This is the vision of Europe, that imagines that by driving out her Jews she will find the key to her happiness. The Jews were therefore not the cause of her illness . . . Europe's power weakens from old age, and a malignant contagion has spread throughout her flesh; but Europe's first wound, which spread its foul pus over her entire face, was the rancid, putrid bog of antisemitism.²⁴

Articles in this spirit proliferated as the end of the century approached. In an article titled "Toward the End of the Nineteenth Century," Rabbi

Dr. Shimon Bernfeld wrote that the nineteenth century had brought forth only perversions and disappointment; it had “fallen miserably short regarding capital and man’s advancement in morality and thought.” Despite scientific progress, morality and culture had failed to overcome the animalistic urges of the masses. It was true that progress had improved the quality of life, but at the same time, the “culture of the masses” that arose during the French Revolution had eroded human culture: “the spirit of the masses now lies over the entire culture; it is a coarse spirit and lacks the noble quality it had possessed in generations past.”²⁵

Surprisingly enough, the century was defended against its detractors by Yehuda Leib Levin, who had become a radical *maskil* over the two decades since the publication of his pessimistic poem. In a series of articles titled “The End of the Century,” published in *Hamelitz* during April and May of 1899, Levin wrote that Bernfeld was expressing a conservative attitude and engaging in nostalgia for the days when “refined” nobility ruled with an iron hand, before Europe was “infected by the plague” of mass culture. Levin believed that “the reckoning of Ages” was an artificial concern, and that the year 1900 was neither the beginning nor the end of an age, as far as the unfolding of historical processes was concerned. However, he too assessed the nineteenth century, and proposed an explanation for the internal contradiction it contained. He also pointed out the century’s deficiencies. According to him, what caused the “evils of the nineteenth century” was not the flaws of mass democracy, but the gaping chasm between “impassioned minds and ossified hearts.” In other words, material civilization and morality were not equivalent; technology and science had no “feeling or compassion” and were simply instruments to be used. It was morality (“the heart”) that must determine how civilization’s advancements should be utilized. In contrast to the English historian H. T. Buckle, whose book had much influence over the European intelligentsia,²⁶ Levin believed that material progress had weakened rather than strengthened social morality, because it gave “the immoral” new and powerful means to carry out evil. Social Darwinism had become a political doctrine extolling power and militarism on the one hand, and exploitative and violent capitalism on the other: “mammon [capital] belonged to Almighty God, and the men of culture all prostrated themselves to it.” If so, “civilization marches forth in sound and fury and storm, and the human spirit sinks downward,” and “Europe’s intellect has become a fatal drug.” According to Levin, this chilling awareness of impending destruction was not a projection of *Ichpoesie* on reality, but the result of

a social, radical, and realistic understanding of reality. Another article, by an unknown author, described Bernfeld as denouncing modern culture, even though the only flaw he could identify in it was the democratic system and “the broadening of the sciences in the sense of superficial and fragmented knowledge”—and there he contradicted his own role as a popularizer of science.²⁷

But Bernfeld was not alone on the pessimistic front. Moshe Leib Lilienblum, for example, depicted Europe as a degenerate monster, awash in blood and evil urges, and he noted: “both in the Middle Ages and today, the nations of Europe have been entirely licentious.” After being surprised by the anti-Jewish riots that took place in czarist Russia in 1881, Lilienblum wrote that it was clear that the naive utopianists who believed that humanity’s great achievements in the realm of science would draw humans ever closer to moral perfection were mistaken. On the contrary, it turned out that science had provided mankind with more sophisticated weapons, and “humanity’s evil impulses have not abated, and there is no hope that they will do so in the future.”²⁸ In an article titled “The End of the Century,” which marked the birth of the phrase as cliché and was published in *Hamagid* on January 12, 1899, the writer Reuven Brainin wrote that progress had increased neither happiness nor morality. Enslavement to machines, to the flood of new knowledge, and to pleasure had brought only embarrassment and confusion:

Is there not a great measure of truth in the criticism that technological modernity has diminished the humanity of Man? The shape of our generation is that of a coin, and our breath is that of a steam engine. Our wildflowers have wilted from the chimney soot and smoke, our poetic genius is dulled, and the coin on the one hand and the steam engine on the other have bewitched the moral and virtuous . . . for our generation is made entirely of vanity and vice.

In Elchanan Leib Levinsky’s utopian work “Masa Leeretz Israel Bishnat 2040” (A voyage to the land of Israel in the year 2040), which was written in 1892, Europe was empty of wars; yet “despite that, all of Europe is like a battlefield, like a giant camp armed not against an external enemy but against an internal one. This is the more terrible war: the war over property and labor.”²⁹ Similarly, in a 1901 *feuilleton* titled “Thoughts and Deeds,” Levinsky wrote: “I was born during the golden age of the previous century . . . But it is true that I grew up and saw her far from the desired ideal: . . . old and weak, about to die, dragging her feet . . . I saw her in disgrace.”³⁰

In December 1901, the historian Simon Dubnow summarized the nineteenth century as follows: “The nineteenth century, which began with a wave of glowing youthful hopes, came to a close worn out and enfeebled and in an esthetic and ethical condition described by the term *fin-de-siècle*.”³¹

HAD EUROPE GONE MAD?

If this was the face of the nineteenth century, what could be expected from the twentieth? In 1901, Levinsky prophesied: “Considering its beginning, it is difficult to hope that the end of the new century [the twentieth century] will be peaceful. Man seems to have been condemned since the time of Creation to be born and die, century by century, in times of war. Each and every age, each and every century has a war of its own.”³²

Nordau, who believed in the power of science and technology to refine moral behavior and to contribute to the creation of a society grounded in a morality of solidarity (*Solidaritätsmoral*), offered “a glance into the future.” This glance revealed a horrifying, rather than utopian, vision. In one part, as we have seen, Nordau predicted that vicious wars would break out among Europe’s nations. In another section, his crystal ball revealed the solution to the problem of nationalism: the smaller nations of Europe would disappear and be absorbed into the “four or five great nations.” However, he wrote, this process of assimilation would be the result of Darwinian selection rather than choice. A unified Europe would thus reach a state of internal equilibrium, and its entire population would become a single family sharing a common culture. In this European paradise, moreover, modern technology would eliminate the need for manual labor. This vision might seem to predict the “end of history”; in effect, in Nordau’s vision of the future, a population surplus would prompt white Europeans to conquer other continents and “the inferior races” who lived there, until “the entire earth will be subject to the plow and locomotive of the sons of Europe.” The Europeans would treat the “black” and “yellow” races as they treated wild animals: the white race “will extirpate them root and branch.” Still, even Europe’s global domination would not bring history to an end; the aggressiveness of the Europeans who had emigrated to other continents would increase, and the surplus population would set out to roam like “a pack of wolves on the borders of the magic circle” of European civilization, but “they will be driven back into their icy deserts by the energetic lords of these lands of bliss.” Nordau’s racist, Darwinian apocalypse about the “clash of civilizations” ended thus: “And then? Yes,

what happens next I cannot tell; here the shadowy future darkens seven-fold, until I can discern nothing more and our tale comes to a close.”³³

This vision of horrors was not concrete. No Jews had predicted before 1914 that a full-scale European war was just around the corner, despite their seemingly seismographical sensitivity. Only after World War I broke out did there seem to be any evidence that Europe was indeed ill, even mad. About two years before the war, in October 1912, Ahad Haam wrote from his residence in London:

Behold: Sennacherib has come and wreaked havoc on the world . . . You, who live across the sea, are fortunate you need not witness “Europe” in its disgrace, or feel so strongly the emptiness and void that now govern our world . . . The Germans speak ad nauseam of *Kultur*, the English and their allies (including the Russians) of justice and honesty. How odious to hear words that only yesterday were sacred emanating from the mouths of wild beasts roaring over their prey.³⁴

A month later, Ahad Haam predicted that the Balkan wars would drive the Ottoman Empire out of its holdings in Europe and perhaps even in Asia, and these would then be divided among other countries. However, he added: “as to how this will affect our venture, no prophet can foretell.”³⁵ In any case, he did not expect that the Balkan wars would develop into a general European war. He was astonished to find at the end of 1914 that “the world has lost its mind” and devolved into chaos, and that Europe had descended to “the depths of depravity” and to wholesale slaughter—“the handiwork of that contemptible animal known as ‘Man.’” In this somber mood, he wrote of his yearning to escape far from “civilization” to a place where “the stench of humanity” would not penetrate.

Ahad Haam was not the only one caught unaware by the war. In Istanbul in November 1912, David Ben Gurion wrote to his father in Pinsk about the Balkan war, describing the Russians as “the enemy some three hours distant from Istanbul.” He predicted that the war would end quickly and that, “in any case, it is clear that we are facing rare historical developments that will determine an entirely new course for politics in Europe.”³⁶ Ben Gurion predicted neither World War I nor the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Even after the Young Turk Revolution, moreover, he believed that the empire had a long future ahead of it. He believed that the victory of the capitalist powers, Britain and France, would spur the rise of despotic regimes in the Middle East, and there would be no one left

to halt “victorious Slavic imperialism.” Consequently a strong Turkey was necessary for Zionism.³⁷

On June 28, 1914, Chaim Weizmann expressed his despair at the possibility that “the world is fully prepared to slaughter itself using all the innovations of the twentieth century,” and his belief that “a peaceful settlement will still be reached.”³⁸ In October 1914, Dov Ber Borochov wrote from his residence in Italy that “it is not possible or even imaginable that the German spirit will penetrate everywhere and drive out Europe’s variety, that Deutschland will extend *über alles in der Welt*.” He believed that “Germany has lost its mind and is infecting Austro-Hungary with its rising madness. Austria will reap all the consequences. It will pay more than any other actor. That is clear to everyone.”³⁹ In an article called “Horoscope,” published in *Odesskiya Novosti* on January 1, 1912, Zeev Jabotinsky wrote, with foresight: “The first item on the list of events in Europe is a great war . . . between two (or more) first-class powers, with all the grandiose madness of modern technology . . . [and] with an incredible number of human casualties.”⁴⁰ On May 18, 1915, he predicted that a victory by Britain and France would strengthen the czarist regime for years to come,⁴¹ and he was certain that Germany would remain a great power even after its defeat: “In terms of wealth, culture, and military power, [Germany] will remain, first of all, a great center of energy. Energy demands expansion; if it is prevented from expanding in the logical directions, it will necessarily explode. The policy of preventing Germany from every natural expansion is, in our opinion, suicidal.”⁴²

It is not our intention, in citing these extracts, to judge the authors’ prophetic ability regarding the nature of the postwar world. What is important to note here is the fact that their representation of Europe as a decaying continent hurtling toward self-destruction did not translate into a prediction of an impending all-European war that would destroy the old political order. On the contrary, most of the authors believed that the multinational empires of the day would continue to exist indefinitely, albeit becoming more liberal and democratic. As a result, the outbreak of the war, its duration, its events, and its results were deeply surprising. It was hard to understand how Europe, that realm of culture, had allowed itself to be swept up in a war so harrowing and destructive. Had the prophets of doom been correct while all the others, full of hope and optimism, had been blind to fathom Europe’s true character? Was this world war simply a unique spasm, the result of Europe’s growing pains in a modern world? Or did an even more dire future await Europe, like the

“rough beast” destined to spring again that William Butler Yeats foretold in his 1919 poem, “The Second Coming”? In *Lapis Lazuli*, Yeats described a hysterical woman who sees airplanes and zeppelins burst from the sky, scattering bombs and reducing cities to rubble. Planes were also the instruments of destruction that devastated France and Italy by means of poison gas, in Hans Gobsch’s prophetic novel *Wahn-Europa 1934, Eine Vision* (Madness in Europe 1934, a vision), which was published in 1931 and translated into Hebrew in 1932. The novel describes the beginning of a European war, ignited by a quarrel between Albania and Yugoslavia, that put an end to the ideas of pan-Europeanism and the creation of a unified European nation.

Was this, then, a war that aimed to destroy European culture in the name of the rebellion declared against it by the prophets of decline? Was it a war that would tear down the old world and create a new and better world in its place? Or would the true Europe have the strength to overcome the forces of destruction and rise again? After the collapse of the old European world order, the nineteenth century was often tinted with a soft, nostalgic cast, its many ailments apparently forgotten. The Europe of those days now seemed an orderly place where life proceeded at a moderate pace, with no dark passions or extremism—“an ordered world with definite classes and calm transitions, a world without haste.” Shocked by the war, the Jewish Austrian writer Stefan Zweig described it as an atrocious betrayal that destroyed the secure, tranquil life that had existed in nineteenth-century Europe. So secure and tranquil had that existence been that the impending darkness had not been presaged in even the worst nightmares. Zweig’s conclusion was that he had failed to foresee the coming war because “it is an indisputable law of history that one does not notice the great movements that determine the course of one’s own time, and which are already underway.” His senses honed by this lesson, he strove to decipher the voices that rose from the depths of postwar Europe. Others also whetted their senses after the war, in order never again to be caught unawares. The lesson they learned was, as Zweig put it, that in one’s own time one must be more alert to the “great movements” that determine the course of history and “are already underway.”⁴³

What lesson, then, did Jews learn from World War I with respect to their European heritage and the future they could expect in twentieth-century Europe?