In nineteenth-century German Jewish society, women and rabbis could be friends and allies. The function of the rabbinical profession changed and rabbis and women came to operate in similar ways as experts of morality, religious sensitivity, and bourgeois emotionality. Rabbis, preachers, male pedagogues, and women alike began to take an interest in the education of small children and became involved in the German kindergarten movement. Male Jewish leaders also encouraged Jewish women's literary creativity. Thus, the women- and family-centered theology of preachers and rabbis such as Gotthold Salomon, Adolf Jellinek, and Samson Raphael Hirsch found expression in the relationship between male Jewish leaders and women. As Christian clergymen became confidants and friends of women and cultivated a religiosity in which the clergy believed women to excel, rabbis and Jewish preachers, too, drew closer to the women of their communities who valued or even propagated religious and pedagogical reforms. In the culture of rabbinic Judaism, Talmudic learning had distinguished a rabbi more than anything else, and through the study of sacred literature, scholars had attained morality and virtue. Accordingly, rabbis and women had existed on different planes. In the nineteenth century, some of this division persisted and modern Jewish scholarship, *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, formed an exclusively male arena. At the same time, however, preachers, rabbis, and male teachers embraced the culture of bourgeois religiosity and came to share interests with women. In nineteenth-century middle-class culture, religion (and in particular morality and religious sentiment) had become a female domain, which rabbis, preachers, and male educators treasured. Thus, many rabbis placed an emphasis on teaching girls, and they enjoyed female company. Rabbis and women formed friendships, and male pedagogues encouraged women to write religious poetry, hymns, and Jewish devotional and educational literature. Sometimes male Jewish lead-
ers, such as Isaac Marcus Jost and Leopold Stein, also translated and published the work of their female students and friends. Rabbi Leopold Stein, indeed, was closely connected to Louise von Rothschild in Frankfurt and her daughters, who together with their female relatives in England produced an entire body of educational and devotional Jewish literature. Other women such as Therese Warendorff, who was a student and friend of preacher Eduard Kley, wrote hymns that were sung in the Hamburg Temple. Jewish women contributed to communal liturgy, translated the works of their male contemporaries, published their own writings, and drew on the ideas of their male mentors as they entered the politics of maternal feminism.

For nineteenth-century German Jews, the home in which the woman reigned, and the synagogue over which the rabbi presided became parallel and complementary sites of bourgeois religiosity. While other men engaged in business and professional careers, rabbis, preachers, male educators, and women took care of the young and acted as moral guardians of their families and communities. Rabbis and preachers in the synagogue and women in the home were responsible for providing edifying, spiritually uplifting, and aesthetically appealing experiences to adults and children. In the world of middle-class society, bourgeois religiosity overshadowed or even eclipsed halakhic Judaism, rabbinic learning, and ritual observance, and rabbis assumed roles akin to those held by Christian clergy. These modern rabbis had much in common with women. As German Jews integrated into middle-class society, rabbis and women pursued related goals and fulfilled similar educational and religious functions.

FROM THE RABBINIC SCHOLAR TO THE SEELSORGER AND TEACHER

In pre-modern Ashkenaz, the rabbi derived his power from the depth of his learning in Talmud Torah. He was a talmid hakham, a wise scholar, steeped in the legal and intellectual traditions of rabbinic literature. His ability to extract law from the Talmud and from the layers of halakhic writings by generations of rabbinic authorities formed the basis of his jurisdiction within the Jewish community. Thus, in pre-modern society, a rabbi fulfilled the role of a judge, responsible for questions of ritual concern as well as for most other areas of jurisdiction such as property and family law. In fact, rabbinic Judaism did not recognize any distinction between secular and religious law, and Jews regarded the legal codes by which their leaders governed the Jewish communities as based on divine revelation. Therefore, erudition in Talmud Torah on the one hand made a talmid hakham a master of the law. On the other hand, the study of rabbinic texts placed schol-
ars on a superior religious and moral plane. In the world of rabbinic Judaism, from antiquity through the early modern period, Jews believed that rabbinic learning led a man to moral perfection. Even more so, “study was identical with all the religious virtues, then, including morality.” A scholar of rabbinic literature had access to the sublime. He was competent in Halakhah, the law that regulated the social order of the Jewish community and guided personal conduct. Furthermore, a scholar’s learning represented virtue.

In early modern Europe, however, Jews increasingly distinguished between study and morality. Gradually, the ideal of learning lost its all-embracing force and ethical writings (musar literature) gained unprecedented importance. By the nineteenth century, Jewish communities in Germany had almost entirely lost the legal autonomy characteristic of Jewish society in the pre-modern era. The laws of the secular state had replaced internal Jewish jurisdiction in most realms of life. At the same time, Jews had embarked on embracing the value system of the emerging German middle-class society, thereby revolutionizing Jewish culture. Bildung now represented learning, character formation, virtue, and social status. German Jews came to expect rabbis to be as familiar with Goethe and Schiller as with the Talmud. Rabbinic study no longer possessed the uncontested prestige it had held in the preceding centuries. In the mid-nineteenth century, German Jewry valued university training and the ability to examine Jewish texts according to modern academic methods at least as much as traditional modes of Jewish learning and familiarity with intricate halakhic arguments and rulings. Yet the character of the rabbinic profession changed even more fundamentally, when German Jews also expected their rabbis to fulfill roles similar to those of the Christian clergy. Thus, rather than primarily being a Talmud scholar and a legal and halakhic authority, the modern rabbi became a preacher, teacher, and spiritual counselor and took on pastoral functions.

As in so many other areas associated with the modernization of Jewish culture and religion in nineteenth-century Germany, the Jewish consistory of Westphalia also pioneered in transforming the rabbinate. Its first important order, entitled “Duties of the Rabbis” and published in 1809, reads as a blueprint for the new professional profile of a communal rabbi. Most of all, the order stipulated, a rabbi needed “to set an example of moral conduct for his community.” The Westphalian reformers, however, no longer understood the moral excellence of a rabbi to be best expressed through the high standards of his Talmudic learning or in his scrupulous observance of ritual commandments. Rather, a rabbi was to demonstrate ethical superiority by visiting and comforting the sick and the mourning. With this ordinance, the consistory assigned the pastoral functions of Christian clergy to
the rabbi, whose responsibilities had hitherto not included being a Seelsorger (caretaker of souls). As a further innovation, the Westphalian consistory listed the delivery of edifying sermons, preferably in High German, among the most important tasks of a rabbi, and it ordained that all wedding ceremonies be conducted by communal rabbis. While Jewish communities in Westphalia failed to adopt these reforms broadly and permanently, over the succeeding decades German Jewry increasingly expected its rabbis to be Seelsorger, preachers, and exemplars of religious sensitivity and bourgeois morality.

Commonly, scholars measure the modernization of the German rabbinate by assessing the number of rabbis who received a university degree in addition to customary training in Talmud Torah. A university education, indeed, indicated that a Jewish man had achieved a substantial degree of integration into middle-class society and had become thoroughly familiar with the German culture of Bildung. Such education constituted a marker of cultural competence and invested Jewish leaders with prestige. Most Jewish reformers of the early nineteenth century, including Israel Jacobson, Jeremiah Heinemann, David Fränkel, and Gotthold Salomon, had been educators, ideologues, and preachers who had not attended universities. They had made themselves familiar with the treasures of German literature and culture outside the established institutions of higher learning and thereby had gained a novel sense of dignity, self-esteem, and purpose. The generation of rabbis who were born in the first decade of the nineteenth century—including Samuel Adler, Abraham Geiger, Salomon Herxheimer, Samuel Holdheim, Leopold Stein, and Samson Raphael Hirsch—began to enroll in university classes in the 1830s. Thus in the 1840s, university-trained rabbis and preachers came to serve Jewish communities throughout Germany and Central Europe, and by the second half of the nineteenth century, the rabbinic leadership in Germany consisted of men with an academic education and modern ideas on religion and Jewish culture. These men, who were Reform preachers, modern Orthodox rabbis, faculty and graduates of the Jüdisch-theologisches Seminar, and modern traditionalists, all donned the black clerical robes and collar bands of Christian clergy, complemented by prayer shawls and black skullcaps, when officiating at synagogue services. Previously, prayer leaders had not worn Amtstracht (official attire) or any other uniform garb beyond what was halakhically prescribed and locally customary. Moreover, the nineteenth-century rabbis and preachers who had immersed themselves in German literature and scholarship strove to excel as orators. In eloquent and carefully composed sermons in High German, these Jewish leaders aimed to enoble the tastes of their congregants, to culturally uplift the worshippers, and to inspire them with a sense of holiness and wholeness.
Rabbis and preachers presided at the life-cycle events of the men, women, and children in their communities, overseeing confirmations, weddings, and funerals. For many, Talmudic study no longer played a central role. Isaac Noah Mannheimer in Vienna, for instance, readily admitted that his rabbinic learning was limited. Born in Copenhagen in 1793 and raised there, he had attended a university in Denmark at a time when his colleagues in Germany had only rarely received a formal secular education. Yet Mannheimer had no intention of standing out as a modern Jewish scholar. He did not understand himself primarily as a man of learning. From 1824 to 1865, he served the Jewish community in Vienna as a preacher, delivering his sermons at the Vienna temple with passion and in a distinctly personal style. Mannheimer took pride in the popularity he enjoyed as a public speaker, but even more than his preaching he prized being a Seelsorger, spiritual counselor, and intimate friend of his congregants. In fact, he considered the pastorate his “most sacred calling.”

In modern Orthodox congregations, the concept of a rabbi as a scholar and as the halakhic authority of his community did not erode to the same extent. Orthodox Jews remained committed to ritual observance and were loyal to Halakhah as the foundation of Jewish life. A rabbi’s ability to interpret Talmudic law continued to be of vital importance in a modern Orthodox community. By the second half of the nineteenth century, however, no Jewish community in Germany would have considered hiring a rabbi who did not possess a university education along with training in interpreting rabbinic literature. Like other German Jews, adherents of the modern Orthodox movement desired a rabbi to have well-developed skills as an orator, and they expected him to represent the ideals of his community as a person. Rather than a “luminary of Torah” who lived in a world of text and taught Talmud to a select group of male students, a modern Orthodox rabbi, like his Reform counterpart, mixed with his community. Spreading the principles of Jewish law and the spirit of the Jewish faith among the old and the young, and among women, men, and children, formed the ultimate task of a modern Orthodox rabbi. The rabbi of a nineteenth-century modern Orthodox congregation fulfilled, most of all, the function of “a teacher and an educator of the people.”

Teaching children was not beneath the dignity of modern rabbis, and Jewish leaders showed great concern for the spiritual and moral development of the young. They were invested in securing the faithfulness of future generations to the Jewish religion. Thus, modern Orthodox as well as Reform rabbis took particular interest in teaching girls, who presumably would grow up to be mothers. Though contemporaries believed that both parents played an important role in the education of their offspring, in the cultural universe of middle-class Jews, the ultimate responsibility for char-
acter formation and the religious loyalty of young Jews lay in the hands of women. Some of the most prominent rabbis and scholars, therefore, taught girls.

With a combination of admiration and disdain, a visiting rabbi from Lithuania noted in the second half of the nineteenth century that the rabbi of the modern Orthodox congregation in Berlin, Esriel Hildesheimer, held lectures on Jewish law and Bible in front of young girls and women. Other Jewish leaders, however, had begun to teach Jewish girls decades earlier. In the 1840s, Moritz Steinschneider for instance remained the principal teacher of a private Jewish girls' school in Prague, even after he had received his ordination as a rabbi. Born in a small Moravian town in 1816, Steinschneider had attended the universities of Vienna, Berlin, Leipzig, and Prague and had gained broad competence in philosophy, history, linguistics, and particularly in Middle Eastern languages. Already in his years as a teacher in Prague, he was an achieved scholar, and later in life he gained a worldwide reputation as the founder of Hebrew bibliographical scholarship. Yet during most of his career, Steinschneider failed to support himself and his family with his scholarly work, and he had no calling to serve as a communal rabbi, preferring to be an educator. In fact, rather than pursuing his doctorate, he acquired state certification as a pedagogue and in 1869 accepted a position as director of the girls' school of the Berlin Jewish community. Nineteenth-century German Jews did not consider teaching girls an inferior occupation, and rabbis such as Abraham Geiger and Leopold Stein chose to instruct girls as well as boys.

In 1843, three years after he had assumed his position as rabbi in Breslau, Geiger established a private religious school in that city. The school catered to children who attended non-Jewish educational institutions. Soon the Jewish community took over the school, but Geiger did not lose interest in the establishment. He continued to direct it and taught there himself. Similarly, Eduard Kley, director of the Jewish Free School in Hamburg and first preacher at the Hamburg Reform Temple, gave classes in religion to children of both sexes. Among his students was not only Johanna Goldschmidt, who later gained prominence as a writer and an activist of the German kindergarten movement, but also Therese Warendorff, daughter of one of the founders of the Temple, Joseph Warendorff. Kley and Therese Warendorff developed a lasting personal friendship. In Warendorff's obituary from 1865, a contemporary asserted that the close tie between the preacher and his former student honored Kley as much as it did Warendorff. Warendorff, "a model of most tender femininity" even though she remained unmarried, had excelled in Jewish and non-Jewish philanthropy and had belonged to a circle of friends dedicated to progress and religious reform. In particular, the obituary reported, Warendorff had participated
ardently in the communal life of the Reform temple. As her most significant contribution to the congregation, Warendorff had composed religious hymns, which her mentor and confidant Kley included in the songbook of the *Neue Israelitische Tempel-Verein*. The “most soulful” hymns of the songbook, the obituary claimed, stemmed from Warendorff’s pen.10

Kley’s hymnbook, indeed, contained songs composed by him as well as by male and female authors, and Kley was not the only Jewish leader who included women’s writings in his publications. Rabbi Samson Wolf Rosenfeld in Bamberg, for instance, published poetry on biblical themes by Henriette Ottenheimer in his periodical *Das Füllhorn*.11 Rosenfeld was born in Markt-Uehlfeld in Bavaria in 1780, had not attended a university, and throughout his life remained fully committed to the observance of ritual laws. He shunned violations of Halakhah. Yet Rosenfeld embraced modern ideas about Judaism and his role as a rabbi. In the second decade of the 1800s, he was the first recognized and ordained rabbi in Bavaria to regularly give edifying sermons in High German, and he adapted the Protestant book of devotions *Stunden der Andacht* by Heinrich Zschokke for a Jewish audience. In 1835, he founded the journal *Das Füllhorn*—a relatively early Jewish publication—to propagate the new type of Jewish culture in nineteenth-century Germany.12

In *Das Füllhorn*, Rosenfeld printed Ottenheimer’s verses along with sermons, poetry, and a variety of instructive and enlightening contributions by male authors. The well-educated Henriette Ottenheimer, who was born in Stuttgart in 1807 and was partly paralyzed from a young age, wrote poetry in which she praised the Jewish past and the Jewish faith. In Rosenfeld’s periodical, she was given a public voice in Jewish culture. In the same vein, Leopold Stein published poetry by Minna Cohen in his journal *Der Freitagabend* (The Friday Evening). Stein, who had been born in a small town in Lower Franconia in 1810, was serving as rabbi in Frankfurt when he founded *Der Freitagabend* in 1859. He directed the periodical to the Jewish family, and on a title page of *Der Freitagabend* glowingly introduced Minna Cohen to his readers. At the time, Cohen was a gifted and carefully educated young woman in her teens from Elmshorn in Northern Germany. She had confessed to Stein that his publications inspired her to speak out on behalf of the Jewish people. Later, Cohen married Rabbi Levi Kleeberg; in 1866, she left Germany with him and continued to publish poetry in North America.13

Nineteenth-century rabbis no longer inhabited a world sharply distinguished from women’s expressions of piety. Many rabbis taught girls, became mentors and friends of women in their communities, and sometimes encouraged female literary creativity and published women’s works. For Christian middle-class society, the affinity and connections between clergy-
men and women have been explored extensively, and the figure of the feminized minister or priest is a well-documented feature of the nineteenth century. Clergymen such as some Catholic priests distanced themselves from male forms of sociability and appearance. They avoided taverns, refrained from growing beards, and donned the cassock rather than the customary masculine frock coat. In fact, religion and especially bourgeois religiosity became associated with a female lifestyle, and contemporaries expected women and clergy to possess the same virtues and to embrace the same standards of morality. Women indeed attended church services more frequently than many men in their families did and sought the company and the friendship of clerics. In particular, women from economically established or upwardly mobile families that took an interest in cultural refinement, bourgeois forms of sensitivity, and aesthetics, approached clergy members as confidants with whom they shared interests, concerns, and values.¹⁴

We owe an account of the feminization of clergymen in nineteenth-century America to the literary scholar Ann Douglas. The Protestant minister, Douglas has observed, “moved in a world of women. He preached mainly to women; he administered what sacraments he performed largely for women; he worked not only for them but with them, in mission and charity work of all kinds.”¹⁵ In fact, the functions that middle-class women and Christian ministers fulfilled resembled each other closely: both were expected to brighten the lives of their contemporaries and to spiritually and morally uplift their families or their congregations. Lacking political power, women and ministers sought to gain “‘moral’ and ‘religious’ control” over the young as mothers, educators, and spiritual counsellors.¹⁶

A similar development took place in nineteenth-century German Jewish society. As German Jewry aspired to emancipation, strove to integrate into the middle classes, and adopted the value system and the lifestyles of their non-Jewish counterparts, the social spheres and cultural sensibilities of rabbis, preachers, and women increasingly converged. Thus, a rabbi such as Leopold Stein in Frankfurt on the Main insisted on teaching children, chose to direct a girls’ school, formed close friendships with his female congregants, and guided Jewish women as authors.

**LEOPOLD STEIN, LOUISE VON ROTHSCHILD, AND CLEMENTINE VON ROTHSCHILD**

In 1844, the reform-minded faction of the Jewish community in Frankfurt overcame the resistance of more traditionalist community members and hired Leopold Stein as a rabbi. As a young man, Stein had studied at the prestigious yeshivah of Fürth but then had attended the Gymnasium in Er-
langen and Bayreuth as well as the University of Würzburg. Subsequently, he served as rabbi in two small communities in Upper Franconia and made a name for himself as a preacher and a modernizer. Stein was dedicated to synagogue reform and to a modern-style religious education for Jewish youth. Under his leadership, the Jewish community of Frankfurt came to reform the worship at its main synagogue. Jews there introduced German prayers and German hymns into the service and carried out other changes in liturgy and worship. Additionally, morning services now featured a regular sermon in the German language, and Stein came to enjoy the reputation of an exceedingly popular speaker. Yet, during the eighteen years of his appointment in the Frankfurt Jewish community, he was engaged in a series of conflicts with the community board over the realm of his rabbinical competence. These disagreements included a dispute about whether the rabbi was to be in charge of the schooling of Jewish children at the Philanthropin and in particular of the religious instruction of Jewish girls and boys. The Philanthropin, the Jewish Free School of Frankfurt, had formed the cradle of religious reform in the city and was a stronghold of modern and independent minds. Progressive laymen had created the institute at a time when conservatives had dominated the community board and the rabbinate, and now the modernizers were unwilling to cede any authority over the school to communal rabbi Stein, though he was a reformer like them. A year after Stein had assumed office, the leaders of the Philanthropin still celebrated the confirmation of their students without letting Stein play a role in the ceremony. Instead, the director, Michael Heß, delivered the address at the event, and the religion teacher performed the blessing of the children. Thus excluded by the Philanthropin from an area of religious life that he considered central to his profession, Stein established his own program of religious instruction for Jewish children attending non-Jewish schools. He confirmed these boys and girls in the synagogue. However, Stein persisted in trying to gain control over the educational program at the Free School. He failed and, in 1862, after years of dispute in which the conflict over the religious instruction of Frankfurt’s Jewish children formed an important but not the only point of contention, Stein resigned from his position.17

Rather than pursuing his rabbinic career elsewhere, Stein remained in Frankfurt and, with his wife Eleonore and the help of his daughters, established a boarding school for girls. In his school, he taught religion, literature, mythology, and creative writing, apparently with great success. His children reported that “the students hung enthusiastically on his every word.”18 Stein’s children also fondly remembered the Sabbath evenings that the family and its boarders celebrated, and they recalled with delight how Stein would sing self-composed songs at the dinner table.19
Stein, in fact, had a passion for composing songs and poems. In addition to Sabbath hymns, he wrote a large number of poems, many dedicated or addressed to family members, friends, and students. He created verses for birthdays, confirmation ceremonies, and weddings, and wrote poems on religious and moral issues. In his verses, he praised modesty, industry, friendship, and youthful innocence and, in particular, he lauded the female contribution to culture and society in poems with titles such as “About the Bildung of Women” and “Praise of the Better Woman.”

The religious and moral sensitivity that Stein expressed in his poetry stood at the core of his identity as a rabbi. He revered family life, domestic virtue, and a moral purity understood by contemporaries as feminine. His position as director of a boarding school for girls that functioned as his enlarged family, gave him the opportunity to practice the aspects of his rabbinical vocation that were dear to him. Stein loved to be a teacher and ap-
proached his students with affection and dedication. He was also active in philanthropy, and officiated as a preacher and prayer leader at Sabbath services in his home and in the Reform congregation Westend-Union, which grew out of these private services. Moreover, Stein persistently published works in which he promoted religious reform and cultural improvement.

Baader, Benjamin Maria. Gender, Judaism, and Bourgeois Culture in Germany, 1800-1870. E-book, Bloomington IN USA: Indiana University Press, 2006, https://doi.org/10.2979/GenderJudaismandBour. Downloaded on behalf of University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
He composed prayer and songbooks, religious manuals, sermons, dramas and plays, and poetry.\textsuperscript{21} However, he lacked scholarly ambitions and wrote neither any work of academic relevance nor any significant halakhic treatise. Other German Jewish religious leaders, conversely, knew how to combine love for poetry and commitment to serious and well-founded scholarship. In fact, at least some of the rabbis of this period who achieved distinction as scholars of Wissenschaft des Judentums shared Stein's fondness for verse. Abraham Geiger, for instance, protagonist of the German Reform movement and author of influential academic publications, not only valued Jewish family life highly, but for decades also composed poetry. In the 1870s, the widowed scholar wrote verses for Johanna Löwenstein, the middle-aged, married daughter of his colleague Salomon Herxheimer. The poems, in which Geiger expressed his longings, hopes, musings, and doubts, testify to a strong connection and an intimate friendship between Geiger and Löwenstein.\textsuperscript{22}

Stein, too, cultivated personal friendships with women and developed warm ties with his students. He cared deeply about the spiritual life of his female protégées and encouraged women's literary creativity. The enthusiastic welcome he gave Minna Cohen in his periodical Der Freitagabend did not form an exception. Stein's appreciation of women's moral and aesthetic sensibilities and his support for women's authorship of religious literature also expressed itself in Stein's relationship to Louise von Rothschild and her daughters. Louise von Rothschild had been born into the English branch of the Rothschild family in 1820 and had come to Frankfurt to marry her cousin Mayer Carl von Rothschild in 1842. Louise and Mayer Carl both belonged by birth to the third generation of the extraordinarily successful Rothschild family, a family of bankers with branches in London, Naples, Paris, Vienna, and Frankfurt. Mayer Carl's brother Wilhelm Carl von Rothschild is known for supporting the Israelitische Religionsgesellschaft in Frankfurt and for furthering the cause of modern Orthodoxy in the city. Yet Mayer Carl von Rothschild's and his wife Louise von Rothschild's sympathies lay with the Reform movement; accordingly, they entrusted Leopold Stein with the religious instruction of their seven children, all of them daughters. Thus, already during his tenure as a communal rabbi, Stein was a regular guest in their home, where he and Louise von Rothschild shared the responsibility of providing moral and religious guidance to the daughters of the house.\textsuperscript{23} Like her sister-in-law, namesake, and friend in England, Louise de Rothschild (née Montefiore), Louise von Rothschild in Frankfurt used to assemble her daughters on Sabbath for Bible lessons. Some of her talks appeared in London under the title Thoughts Suggested by Bible Texts. Having never become comfortable with and truly fluent in the German language, von Rothschild had held the talks in English and then published them in her native tongue.\textsuperscript{24}
Thoughts Suggested by Bible Texts consists of sixteen short essays on subjects such as faith, charity, neighborly love, immortality, unity, God’s attributes, industry, uprightness, respect for the parents, honor for the aged, Moses, and the Sabbath. Each speech is preceded by a verse from the Bible, introducing the theme of the address, and usually followed by a short prayer. The prayer as well as the talks, however, lack any particularly Jewish content. The essay on the Sabbath, for instance, in general terms relates to the seventh day of the week, as a day on which “we are to cease from our weekly toil,” “a day of reflection, of peace, and of thanksgiving,” and a day of self-examination, “when we are to try to mend and purify ourselves,” reflecting on one’s acts of idleness, selfishness, or untruth and remembering the greatness and the mercy of the Divine.\(^{25}\) Primarily, thus, von Rothschild focused on the moral dimension of the Jewish religion, or of other monotheistic faiths based on the Bible. The speeches and prayers were designed to lead her daughters and other children to virtuous behavior and spiritual purity. The prayer following the talk on neighborly love accordingly stated: “Make me obedient and respectful to my parents, forbearing, obliging, and affectionate to my brothers and sisters, considerate and polite to all around me, compassionate and charitable to the poor.”\(^{26}\) Even in the essay entitled “The Precepts,” von Rothschild did not touch upon the ritual commandments of halakhic Judaism. Rather, she discussed broadly the obligations and responsibilities humans have toward each other (such as generosity), and she elaborated on the gratefulness everybody should feel toward the Almighty. In her work Thoughts Suggested by Bible Texts, von Rothschild thus offered a most universalist interpretation of Judaism, in which the moral codes and religious sensibilities of nineteenth-century bourgeois culture figured prominently. In the German translation of her publication, appearing two years after the original English edition, the translator indeed noted that von Rothschild’s text had “no confessional character, and therefore can be used by every religiously minded mother and every pious child.”\(^{27}\)

The translator of von Rothschild’s work was no one other than Leopold Stein. He may, in fact, have encouraged von Rothschild to publish her religious and moral essays in the first place. Stein not only translated her addresses to her children and issued them in German, but also published the work of one of Louise’s daughters, Clementine von Rothschild, Briefe an eine christliche Freundin (Letters to a Christian Friend). In this work, Clementine von Rothschild promoted a religiosity defined within the parameters of bourgeois morality, as her mother did in Thoughts Suggested by Bible Texts. Clementine von Rothschild declared the ennoblement of one’s soul to be the highest goal in life, lauded feminine virtues such as “patience, mildness, gentleness, and self-restraint,” and exalted a woman’s
duty to transform her family's home into a haven of happiness and morality. In other respects, however, Clementine's work differs significantly from Louise's publication. *Briefe an eine christliche Freundin* is a distinctly Jewish work and constitutes a serious piece of literature in the tradition of classic apologetic treatises. In fact, the work must have enjoyed a fair amount of popularity. It appeared in at least two German and two English editions within less than twenty years and was also translated from English into French and from French into Italian.

As the title indicates, *Briefe an eine christliche Freundin* consists of nine letters, in which the author expounds the principles of Judaism to a Christian friend. In the work, the fictional friend, Ellen, challenges the author with questions such as why Jews failed to proselytize if it was their faith that led to salvation, and what the Jewish Messiah stood for if not redemption from humanity's original sin. The Jewish correspondent, Esther Izates, in turn defines the mission of Jews in the Diaspora as a means of "bearing testimony to God and his great name." Jews refrained from proselytizing, Izates claims, because according to Jewish sources, all virtuous, morally upright, and God-fearing people could attain salvation, regardless of their faith. In the same thoroughly universalist interpretation of the Jewish tradition, von Rothschild lets Izates explain that messianic belief in Judaism did not focus on the appearance of a personal Messiah. Rather, the messianic era will begin, she says, "when all religions will have purified themselves." Then, facilitated by their degraded status, the Israelites will have led all nations to God. Religious strife will cease and peace and happiness will reign on earth. In a similar vein, Izates refutes her friend's suggestion that the Jewish concept of chosenness expressed disdain for Gentiles, and finally, she confronts the popular claim that Christianity introduced love into the world while Judaism was governed by the principle of justice. Emphatically, von Rothschild insists that love formed the basis of the Jewish religion too. God, she holds, indeed loves his people with the generous spirit of a caring father as well as with the feminine tenderness of a mother.

In direct and simple language, with skill, grace, and eloquence, von Rothschild discussed a range of issues central in contemporary Jewish thought. She not only repeatedly quoted from the Bible, but also referred to rabbinic literature and cited the Talmud. As Leopold Stein reported in the introduction to *Briefe an eine christliche Freundin*, von Rothschild had studied Jewish literature in its original Hebrew and had also enjoyed reading modern works such as Mendelssohn's *Phādon*. In fact, von Rothschild was familiar with the theological debates within the Reform movement and probably owed most of her competency in Jewish literature and Jewish thought to her teacher Stein. According to Stein, it was indeed he who sug-
gested that his student write the essays that he later published under the title *Briefe an eine christliche Freundin.*

*Briefe an eine christliche Freundin* appeared in 1867, two years after Clementine von Rothschild had died at the age of twenty. Von Rothschild, in fact, appears to have been sick for most of her life. From childhood on, she had suffered an illness that had often kept her bedridden. Stein regretted Clementine von Rothschild’s delicate constitution. Yet he considered her the brightest and most gifted of the Rothschild daughters, and not only admired her talent and “her clear, strong, independent thinking” as a teacher, but also found a true friend in her. Apparently, Stein loved reading the Book of Psalms, studying other Jewish texts, and even discussing his scholarly projects with his adolescent student. At least as much as Stein valued the intellectual exchange with von Rothschild, he also treasured her as a partner in the quest for moral purity. In her obituary, Stein praised von Rothschild’s “most tenderly feeling soul” and her sincere religiosity, which had touched him deeply. The hours spent with her, Stein claimed, “count among the holiest of my entire professional life.” Accordingly, in poetry and prose, Stein expressed his grief over the loss of his favorite student.

For Stein, so he asserted, being the teacher and friend of Clementine von Rothschild represented the climax of his career as a rabbi. He prized her fervent enthusiasm for Judaism, which she united “with female mildness, with kindheartedness beyond description, and with the purest, most sincere love for all humans.” As he declared in von Rothschild’s obituary, the deceased had embodied morality and virtue, and had possessed an extraordinary sensitivity for the sublime. In the spiritual connection with his female student, Stein found a fulfillment of his professional calling. The phenomenon is telling. Here we have come a long way from the rabbi as a *talmid hakham,* whose pride and virtue stemmed from his ability to extract truth from the Scripture and to provide guidance in the realm of Jewish law. For a nineteenth-century rabbi such as Leopold Stein, the male domain of Talmud Torah no longer stood at the center of his identity as a spiritual leader of his community. Stein loved preaching and teaching, and most of all he considered it his vocation to propagate enlightened religiosity, moral ennoblement, and cultural refinement. He published hymn collections and prayer books, composed plays and poetry, and strove to realize the values of bourgeois religiosity in his life. Stein and other German rabbis cultivated a culture of morality, sensitivity, and religious sentiment that not only included women, but in which women were believed to excel. Contemporaries highly valued what they considered to be the specifically feminine contribution to religion and culture; at least some rabbis sought the company of women in this world of nineteenth-century bourgeois re-
ligiosity, rabbis and women, who previously had operated on different intellectual and spiritual planes, could meet. Women could become students, friends, and allies of German rabbis.

**PREACHERS, RABBIS, MALE EDUCATORS, AND JEWISH WOMEN FOR KINDERGARTENS AND RELIGIOUS REFORM**

Gotthold Salomon was a veteran of the strand of modern Jewish thought that credited women, and in particular Jewish mothers, with guaranteeing the survival of Judaism. He belonged to the first generation of Jewish reformers who had begun lauding women's great mission in culture and society early in the nineteenth century. Salomon had pioneered in promoting a woman-centered program of religiosity in *Sulamith*; he had created the first modern devotional book for Jewish women; and in 1818, he had come to the newly founded Hamburg Temple to praise women in his sermons for making the Jewish home into a cradle of religiosity, morality, and civility. Thus, the women of the Hamburg Jewish community, among them Johanna Goldschmidt (née Schwabe), felt warmly for Salomon. Goldschmidt had been twelve years old when Salomon had assumed his position as a preacher at the Hamburg Reform congregation, which her father, the affluent merchant Marcus Hertz Schwabe, had helped to found. Still a child, Goldschmidt had attended courses of religious instruction taught by Eduard Kley, and as she grew up, she must have heard Salomon preach many times. In fact, in the late 1840s, after she had married into another Jewish family of the Hamburg commercial elite and had given birth to eight children, Goldschmidt and other Jewish women in Hamburg became involved in feminist movements whose ideas strongly resembled Gotthold Salomon's theology: the interconfessional women's movement in Hamburg and the German kindergarten movement, called the Fröbel movement. The leaders of these movements and Jewish preachers, educators, and rabbis such as Salomon, Kley, and Stein shared the belief that as mothers and female teachers, women played a crucial role in imbuing the young with the qualities necessary for becoming moral and useful citizens. These ideas on womanhood, motherhood, and education, propagated by Salomon and Kley, appear to have laid the ground for Goldschmidt's political involvement with maternal feminism.

Salomon's and Goldschmidt's families also cultivated personal ties, which in 1846 led to the marriage between Goldschmidt's daughter Henriette and Salomon's son Moritz Gustav, a physician. Three years earlier, Johanna Goldschmidt and four other women of her family had expressed their affection and respect for Gotthold Salomon in a remarkable present.
7.3. The album that a group of Jewish women presented to Gotthold Salomon (1784–1862) for his twenty-fifth anniversary as a preacher at the Hamburg Temple in 1843. Courtesy of the Staatsarchiv Hamburg. Collection Jüdische Gemeinde Hamburg, 571 b. Photo by Gerhard Faller-Walzer.

for their friend and spiritual leader. According to Salomon himself, the women had set him a “memorial of friendship,” which twenty years after still brought tears to his eyes. In 1843, during a ceremony in honor of Salomon’s twenty-fifth anniversary as a preacher at the Hamburg Temple, Goldschmidt and her female relatives had presented the Jewish leader with an album in red velvet, in which they had collected almost a hundred letters of congratulations to Salomon from friends and from personalities across the Jewish world.
Including letters from Christian dignitaries such as the Bishop of Potsdam and the Knight Carl Gottlob Albrecht, the album contained poems, eulogies, and expressions of friendship for Salomon from well-known rabbis such as Abraham Geiger, Ludwig Philipppson, Samuel Holdheim, Salomon Herxheimer, and Leopold Stein; from the physician and scholar Salomon Ludwig Steinheim in Altona; and from leaders of the Jewish community in Vienna. Salomon received greetings from London and St. Petersburg. From France, the lawyer and Jewish activist Adolphe Crémi eux, who later was to become Minister of Justice as well as president of the Al-
liance Israélite Universelle, sent his good wishes. From Frankfurt, the sister-
in-law of the German advocate of Jewish emancipation Gabriel Riesser—
Pauline Riesser—contributed a beautifully decorated note with a dried rose
from the grave of the much revered German Jean Paul.43 The rose was to
show Solomon, Riesser explained, that love for leaders such as himself and
Jean Paul never perishes.

From cities across Germany such as Breslau, Brunswick, and Dresden,
women and men had paid tribute to Salomon. Their notes were collected
and bound into the red velvet album, which had intricate and carefully ex-
ecuted embroidery on the front and side of its cover. The embroidery at
the front shows the Hebrew letters for God in an aureole above an eagle
carrying a tablet with the German inscription “His word is truth.” The first
page contains a dedication by the five women who created the album, and
the second page has a poem in rich and colorful calligraphy, comparing Sa-
lonom’s ability to inspire his community with religious enthusiasm to the
eagle who leads the way “through darkness and fog” to divine light. Joh-
nanna Goldschmidt and her female relatives put considerable effort into
assembling and decorating the album for Salomon’s anniversary, and they
were able to contact dozens of Jewish and some Christian men and women
throughout Germany and Europe. Evidently, they cared deeply for him
and with the album endorsed the Judaism that Salomon propagated. In
fact, Goldschmidt has been credited for advertising this reformed Jewish
religiosity herself in the book Rebekka und Amalia: Briefwechsel einer Is-
räelitin und einer Adligin über Zeit- und Lebensfragen (Rebekka and Amalia:
Correspondence between an Israeliite Woman and a Noblewoman about
Issues of the Time and of Life).

Rebekka und Amalia appeared anonymously in 1847 and the author-
ship of the work has at times been attributed to a Protestant minister
named Alexander Wilhelm Rudolf Sande. However, contemporaries and
friends of Johanna Goldschmidt in Hamburg considered her to have writ-
ten the book, a text that lauds the merits of a purified and modernized Ju-
daism and elaborates on the mission of women as mothers.44 The work is a
collection of fictional letters between a Jewish and a Christian woman who
meet at a spa and, sharing the same values, develop a close friendship. Not
unlike Esther Izates in Briefe an eine christliche Freundin, Rebekka—the
Jewish correspondent in Rebekka und Amalia—praises “the pure teachings
of our faith, [which, if] cleaned from antiquated customs, equip the heart
with strength and enthusiasm.”45 She rejects intermarriage and conversion.
Yet the book supports and propagates the integration of Jews into German
society, and it defends Jewish civil rights. Rebekka educates Amalia about
the civil disadvantages and social humiliations suffered by the Jewish pop-
ulation at the time, and she also expresses the hope that “the healthy sense
of the German people will surely fight for our [Jewish] rights.”46
Rebekka und Amalia provided a blueprint for Christian–Jewish rapprochement. Together, Rebekka and Amalia discuss the responsibilities of women as mothers for promoting social justice, moral perfection, and civil progress, and Amalia goes as far as to conceive the idea of “an association of excellent women and girls, led by noblewomen, burgheers, Protestants, Catholics, and Israelites! All should be inspired with the sublimity of the united effort” and believe in “complete and purest tolerance.”

Emma Isler reported in her memoirs that this call for an inter-confessional women’s group that would advocate social and legal equality for German Jews fell on fertile ground in Hamburg. Amalie Westendarp, the oldest daughter of a well-respected Christian manufacturer in the city, Heinrich Christian Meyer, read Rebekka und Amalia and contacted Johanna Goldschmidt as the author of the book. The two women took a liking to each other, and in the ensuing decades they worked together on numerous inter-confessional women’s projects. Goldschmidt herself was already involved in a women’s association that promoted religious tolerance when Rebekka und Amalia appeared. She had helped found the Frauen-Verein zur Unterstützung der Deutsch-Katholiken (Women’s Association for the Support of the German-Catholics), also called Women’s Club of 1847. The German-Catholics were a movement of rationalist-pietist dissenters, outlawed in some German states, which had established a congregation in Hamburg in 1846. In the politically independent city of Hamburg, free-thinkers and progressives liked to associate themselves with the sect, and social circles and clubs came to support the movement. One of these loosely connected associations was the Frauen-Verein zur Unterstützung der Deutsch-Katholiken, where Catholics, Protestants, and Jews mingled freely. The club offered Jewish women the rare opportunity to interact socially with non-Jews.

Westendarp had not been involved in the German-Catholic movement or its affiliated organizations even though her father played a prominent role in the dissident congregation in the city. Yet after she met Johanna Goldschmidt, they and other Christian and Jewish women (including Emma Isler and Henriette Salomon) in 1848 founded the Frauenverein zur Bekämpfung und Ausgleichung religiöser Vorurteile (Women’s Association for Combatting and Conciliating Religious Prejudice), which in turn led to the establishment of the Allgemeiner Bildungverein deutscher Frauen (General Educational Association of German Women). The Allgemeiner Bildungverein then founded the Hochschule für das weibliche Geschlecht (School of Higher Learning for the Female Sex) in 1850. Emma Isler and Henriette Salomon held seats on the board of this latter organization, along with non-Jewish women.

In all of these associations and institutions, women fulfilled their particular mission as women and mothers and exercised what contemporaries
considered to be the beneficial female influence in society. They used their
domestic roles as mothers, educators, and promoters of morality in order
to pursue larger political and social goals and thereby expanded their realm
of activity well beyond the domestic arena. This strategy became known as
maternal feminism.\textsuperscript{50}

The Frauenverein zur Bekämpfung und Ausgleichung religiöser Vorurteile,
was primarily a social club aiming to further cordial social relations be-
tween Jews and non-Jews. Established in the tumultuous year of 1848, the
association was committed to the equality of Jews in German society. In
their discussions, the members of the association came to the conclusion
that propagating and establishing kindergartens was the most appropriate
way of promoting a better, nobler, and more just civil order. Likewise, the
Allgemeiner Bildungsverein strove to create kindergartens and train kinder-
garten teachers as a means of easing poverty and social tensions. Thus, the
association established the Hochschule für das weibliche Geschlecht, which
came to play a central role in the history of the Fröbel movement in Eu-
rope. During the less-than-three years of its existence, the Hochschule ant-
icipated the seminars for female kindergarten and schoolteachers of later
eras.\textsuperscript{51}

The Fröbel movement owes its name to Friedrich Fröbel, an educator
who had studied in the first decade of the nineteenth century with the En-
lightenment pedagogue Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi and had since devel-
oped a theory and a method of early childhood education for kinder-
gartens. In their writings, Pestalozzi and Joachim Heinrich Campe had
emphasized the crucial function of the mother in the process of the moral,
religious, and social character formation of young children. Fröbel adapted
this mother-centered pedagogical program to the institutional setting of
kindergartens in which female teachers with specialized training gently en-
couraged children to develop their manual and intellectual abilities and to
interact with one another respectfully. In distinction to practices that were
prevalent in existing infant schools and nurseries, Fröbel emphasized a
healthy environment and creative play, including indoor and outdoor ac-
tivities. Fröbel kindergartens shunned punishment and restraining rules
and consisted of mixed-sex groups. Moreover, Fröbel aimed to decrease so-
cial and confessional differences in society by educating children of diverse
backgrounds together. In these classes, female teachers prepared the young
by means of “the greatest of all virtues, mother love,” for becoming truly
moral citizens.\textsuperscript{52} The Fröbel method simultaneously exalted women’s ma-
ternal and domestic functions, promoted women’s education, assigned
women a role in the welfare of the larger society, and was designed to over-
come social tensions and religious divisions. Thus, Fröbel’s educational
program suited the sensitivities, political orientations, and practical needs
of the women in Hamburg’s inter-confessional women’s movement superbly. It was particularly attractive to Jewish women. In fact, in a two-volume publication that appeared in the years 1849 and 1851, Johanna Goldschmidt propagated Fröbel’s ideas herself in writing.

With *Muttersorgen und Mutterfreuden: Worte der Liebe und des Ernstes über Kindheitspflege* (Motherly Concerns and Motherly Joys: Words of Love and Seriousness about Childhood [sic] Care) Goldschmidt had composed a comprehensive guide for German mothers of all religious convictions. Expanding on Fröbel’s teachings, she laid out how to raise moral, socially well adapted, and independent future citizens. *Muttersorgen und Mutterfreuden* won the approval of Adolf Diesterweg, a leading reform pedagogue of the era, and Goldschmidt and the inter-confessional women’s movement in Hamburg came to play an important role in popularizing Fröbel’s pedagogical principles in Germany. In Hamburg, the first of eight subsequent *Bürger-Kindergärten* (burgher kindergartens) opened its doors in 1850. A decade later, Goldschmidt co-founded the *Hamburger Fröbelverein* (Hamburg Fröbel Association), which offered comprehensive training in Fröbel pedagogy to hundreds of young women. Goldschmidt also led a kindergarten geared toward children of poor working mothers and, together with a Christian friend, founded a school for girls, the *Paulenschule*, which grew into one of the largest girls’ schools in the city. In the 1870s, when Goldschmidt was in her late sixties and had published another book on the role of the mother in German society, *Blicke in die Familie* (Looking into the Family), she became involved in the national organizations of the German women’s movement, which emerged at the time.53

Other Jewish women, too, stand out in the history of the Fröbel movement in Europe. Fanny Wohlwill-Guillaume was born in 1832 as the daughter of the director of the Jewish Free School in Seesen Immanuel Wohlwill (until 1823 he was called Joel Wolf), and she trained as a kindergarten teacher in Hamburg. Subsequently, she followed her husband Jules Guillaume to Brussels, where she founded the first Belgian Fröbel kindergarten in 1857. Although she soon had five children of her own, Wohlwill-Guillaume appears to have established a network of Fröbel kindergartens in Belgium. She directed one kindergarten in Brussels herself, trained kindergarten teachers, and held the post of *Inspectrice des jardins d’enfants publics* (inspector of public kindergartens) for many decades.54

In Berlin, Lina Morgenstern (née Bauer) played a leading role in the Fröbel movement. In the early 1860s, she headed the *Frauenverein zur Förderung der Fröbelschen Kindergärten* (Women’s Association for the Promotion of Fröbel Kindergartens) in the city, founded a seminar for kindergarten teachers, and gave lectures for mothers and other women. Moreover, Morgenstern made herself a name beyond the city by publishing exten-
sively on motherhood, childcare, family life, and women's domestic and social responsibilities. Only two years older than Wohlwill-Guillaumes, Morgenstern had grown up in Breslau, where Abraham Geiger had instructed her in the Jewish religion. In an article on women's history, Morgenstern explicitly referred to her teacher, and it may well be that Geiger's views on feminine religiosity and women's beneficial influence in the family and in society inspired and encouraged Morgenstern to get involved in the kindergarten movement and in the politics of maternal feminism. In fact, like Goldschmidt, Morgenstern combined religious, political, and feminist engagements. Morgenstern co-authored a Jewish prayer book, which appeared in 1863; during the Prussian-French war of 1870/71, she gained fame for her patriotic and philanthropic activities; and she became a prominent figure in the German women's movement.\(^55\)

The teachings of male Jewish religious leaders such as Salomon and Geiger appear to have provided some of the theological and ideological frameworks for female activists such as Goldschmidt and Morgenstern. Yet rabbis and Jewish pedagogues also supported the kindergarten movement and the cause of maternal feminism directly. In 1850, the scholar and educator Moritz Steinschneider, together with his wife Auguste (née Auerbach) belonged to the founders of the first Fröbel kindergarten in Berlin and, in his periodicals, Leopold Stein made space for the propagation of the German kindergarten and for women's issues. In the series on domestic education that the Reform rabbi Salomon Formstecher contributed to Der Freitagabend, Formstecher encouraged parents to entrust their offspring to modern childcare institutions. Likewise, Stein included an essay on "the women's question" by Morgenstern in Der Israelitische Lehrer (The Israelite Teacher), and in the same periodical, an author who signed "teacher Strauß of Göllheim," (a Jewish pedagogue from a small community in Lower Franconia) asserted that Friedrich Fröbel's method of kindergarten education "laid the foundation for everything good."\(^56\)

In a similar vein, when Leopold Stein issued Louise von Rothschild's Thoughts Suggested by Bible Texts in German, he published the volume "for the benefit of the local Pestalozzi-association."\(^57\) He thereby made von Rothschild's edifying and educational speeches available to German families, and at the same time supported an association that identified itself with Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi's ideas on education and motherhood. Isaac Marcus Jost, one of the founding fathers of Wissenschaft des Judentums, educator at the Frankfurt Philanthropin, and author of the first modern, scholarly, multi-volume opus on the history of the Jews, also translated a work of devotional literature by a female member of the Rothschild family from English into German and likewise published it for the benefit of an educational institution.\(^58\)
Jost transposed *Addresses to Young Children* by Louise de Rothschild from London into German and issued it in 1860 in Frankfurt as *Sabbath- und Festreden* (Talks for Sabbath and Holidays). Charlotte de Rothschild was the sister-in-law of Louise von Rothschild in Frankfurt, and the *Addresses to Young Children* closely resembled *Thoughts Suggested by Bible Texts*. In direct and simple language, the essays in both works aimed at edifying young readers and encouraged them to be gentle, modest, honest, grateful, and always well behaved. However, in contrast to Louise von Rothschild’s text, *Addresses to Young Children* included contributions on Jewish issues such as the main Jewish holidays. The proceeds of *Sabbath- und Festreden* were destined to support the girls’ school of the *Israelitische Frauen-Verein* (Israelite Women’s Association) in Frankfurt, a Jewish women’s benevolent society that Jost himself had been instrumental in founding in 1847. For more than a decade, Jost served as president of the men’s board of the association. Thus, committed to the educational work of this women’s society, the scholar and pedagogue supported the association by facilitating the publication of a woman’s work of religious literature in German.59

Isaac Marcus Jost, Leopold Stein, Charlotte de Rothschild, Louise von Rothschild, Johanna Goldschmidt, Gotthold Salomon, and other Jewish women, rabbis, preachers, and male Jewish educators formed part of a network of writers, translators, activists, and religious leaders who shared interests and beliefs.60 Their realms of activity overlapped and interconnected, as did the ideological and theological concepts that these men and women embraced and propagated. Jewish women and male Jewish pedagogues, preachers, and rabbis were engaged in educating the young, cooperated on pedagogical projects such as the kindergarten movement, and promoted nineteenth-century forms of Jewish religiosity in their writings. These male and female Jewish leaders and activists were friends and allies, as they shared a worldview in which the beneficial female influence on children and adults laid the foundation for civic morality, domestic happiness, and true religiosity.

This network of male Jewish leaders and Jewish women who knew each other, translated each other’s works, and supported each other in religious and educational endeavors reached well beyond Germany. First of all, the involvement of the Rothschild family gave the web of relationships an international character. The group of female authors belonging to the Rothschild family included Clementine and Louise von Rothschild in Frankfurt, Annie, Constance, Charlotte, and Louise de Rothschild in London, and Thérèse de Rothschild in Paris. These women’s works appeared in English, German, French, and Italian.61 In England, other Jewish women (such as the educator and activist Anna Maria Goldsmid), also cultivated
contacts to Germany and cooperated with German-Jewish scholars, preachers, and rabbis. Goldsmid corresponded with Ludwig Philippson and Leopold Zunz and translated Philippson’s *Development of the Religious Idea in Judaism, Christianity, and Mahomedanism* into English. In 1839, she transposed twelve sermons by Gotthold Salomon into English, encouraged her brother, Francis Henry Goldsmid, to deliver one of these edifying talks during worship services, and thereby contributed to a rift in the London Jewish community that, in 1842, led to the founding of Britain’s first Reform synagogue. Women, in fact, actively shaped nineteenth-century Anglo-Jewish identity, religion, and culture. Activists and writers including Anna Maria Goldsmid and Charlotte, Constance, and Annie de Rothschild helped to found modern Jewish schools in England, taught at the schools, and published textbooks for religious instruction. Moreover, Anglo-Jewish women such as Grace Aguilar, Celia and Marion Moss, and Judith and Charlotte Montefiore created a whole new genre of Jewish literature: family romances and historical novels that advocated religious tolerance, Jewish emancipation, and maternal feminism. The most prominent among these writers was Aguilar, a Jewish woman of Sephardic descent who died in 1847, at the age of only thirty-one, and gained considerable fame in England and North America with her historical romances, domestic novels, and religious writings.\(^{62}\)

This new English-language Jewish literature composed by women challenged the hegemony of the established male discourse of Talmud Torah. Aguilar, in particular, with her works *The Spirit of Judaism, The Women of Israel*, and the series of devotional poetry “Sabbath Thoughts,” undermined the authority of traditional Jewish scholarship and reformulated the hierarchy of domestic and public worship. According to her, a more private and distinctly feminine spirituality was to stand at the center of modern Jewish religious practice. Aguilar and other Anglo-Jewish female writers reenvisioned Jewish religiosity and forged a body of religious writings beyond the parameters of the male-dominated, Hebrew culture of rabbinic literature. These achievements were not matched by Jewish women in Germany. German-Jewish women neither composed a comparable body of Jewish literature nor did they rise to prominence within the Jewish community, as their British counterparts did.\(^{63}\) Yet in Germany, male Jewish religious leaders themselves refashioned Judaism and redefined Jewish religious leadership. The German rabbis of the mid-nineteenth century no longer presided over a religious culture in which the traditional genres of Talmud Torah reigned supreme, and in which only men had full access to the religiosity that the study of Hebrew-language rabbinic texts entailed. Like women, rabbis and preachers wrote plays, novels, and poetry in the German language and published entire libraries with volumes of sermons, edifying
talks, and modern-style devotions. Even the founder and leader of modern Orthodoxy, Samson Raphael Hirsch, focused his literary creativity on areas that, in pre-modern Jewish society, had not constituted manly realms of study. Rather than publishing in the genuinely male domains of Talmud commentary and halakhic responsa, Hirsch in his writings examined and interpreted texts that traditionally women read and recited, such as the Five Books of Moses, the Psalms, and the siddur.\textsuperscript{64} In Germany, it was not women who challenged the gender order of Jewish religious culture, but men themselves who withdrew from the modes of study that had for ages defined the rabbinate and that had constituted the primary form of virtue for men. Nineteenth-century German rabbis and preachers expressed their moral and religious excellence in non-Talmud Torah-centered literatures, and they sought moral perfection, closeness to the divine, and cultural refinement in ways that women did, too.

Already pre-modern, rabbinic Jewish culture had highly valued what it regarded as feminine means to achieve virtue and morality, other than Talmudic learning. In fact, there had always existed a tension between the prestige of rabbinic study practiced most eminently by the educated male elite and the religious merit that women and unlearned and often socially disadvantaged men could earn through acts of kindness, generosity, or outstanding trust in God.

The texts of rabbinic Judaism had maintained that women possessed a particularly close, specifically feminine, not Halakhah-based relationship to God. At times, Talmudic literature even declared the meritorious deeds of the weak and powerless (most of all from women), for superior in value to the religious merits of even supremely dedicated and meticulously observant Talmud scholars. This high regard for forms of piety that rabbinic culture considered feminine went hand in hand with the valorization of weakness, humility, and submissiveness for men and women in rabbinic Judaism.\textsuperscript{65} Nevertheless, throughout Jewish history, the rabbinate had been defined by Talmudic learning. Religious leadership, for Jews, had been inseparable from men studying religious law as an act of devotion and as a means to moral distinction. Women had held an inferior position in a religious economy in which halakhically commanded religious acts, mitzvot such as Talmud Torah and Hebrew prayer, played a sometimes overwhelming role.

In nineteenth-century Germany, \textit{Wissenschaft des Judentums} (secular scholarship) came to replace Talmud Torah, and the university rather than the yeshivah prepared young men for the rabbinical profession. Yet the transformation of the rabbinate in this period of crucial change entailed more than a secularization and a modernization of religious learning. Learning itself command over a body of knowledge, competence in navi-
gating multi-layered and complex literatures, and the ability to engage with texts of the past, no longer stood at the core of German Jewry’s understanding of what represented religious culture. The culture of Bildung that a young Jewish man absorbed at the Gymnasium and the university certainly included study as an intellectual pursuit. In its religious dimension, however, as a religious practice and a spiritual experience, the nineteenth-century Jewish religiosity of Bildung was not a culture of learning in the sense that pre-modern Judaism had been. Rather than on the grounds of their erudition, German rabbis and preachers possessed moral authority as religious leaders, because they cultivated modes of emotional sensitivity and served their communities as spiritual counselors. German-Jewish religious leaders taught children and took on pastoral functions. Rabbis and preachers were responsible for morally uplifting and inspiring congregants in edifying and aesthetically appealing synagogue services, and they fulfilled these new roles whether or not they and the men and women in their communities endorsed or rejected halakhically observant lifestyles.

Judaism had always known and prized modes of piety beyond the dominant culture of male learning. Yet now rabbis themselves, whose intellectual prowess and potency had been the pride of their communities, embodied such an alternative religiosity. Rather than studying Talmud Torah like men and among men, they cooperated with women in educational, literary, and spiritual matters, valued women as friends, and sought to teach girls.