

'Mein Eden, lieber Sigismund, öffnet seine Pforten nicht in Amerika': Dissenting Jewish Images in German Popular Fiction

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Germanists in the post-holocaust era have assiduously searched the canon of German literature for other images besides the conventional demonization of the Jew. The legacy of Gustav Freytag's Veitel Itzig and Wilhelm Raabe's Moses Freudenstein—two of the most famous of such demonizations—however, remain representative figures for the image of the Jew in nineteenth century German fiction, although in both novels, other Jewish figures appear which reveal further aspects of anti-Semitic stereotyping. In the case of *Soll und Haben* (1855), for example, three types of Jewish characters are presented, which, according to Hans Mayer's analysis, characterize the image of the Jew in German fiction from the seventeenth century to the emergence of liberalism in the nineteenth century: the "Hofjude, Kleinbürgertum im Ghetto, undurchdringliche deutsch-jüdische Unterwelt."¹ All of these characters are familiar anti-Semitic stereotypes, and yet they also show human qualities, sometimes even nobility. Yet it is Veitel Itzig who is most vividly remembered—the Jew *qua* monster who dares to imagine living in the German nobleman's manor. There have been several attempts to temper the severity of this judgment, but, as George L. Mosse writes, in German literature "we see the creation of a stereotype that in the end came to haunt Jews and Gentiles alike."²

Curiously enough in the German *Amerikaroman*, a form that had gained a wide readership and at the same time was highly regarded by contemporary critics, yet in the process of moulding the canon of nineteenth century German fiction was not awarded a recognized place (perhaps with the exception of Charles Sealsfield (1793–1864)), the image of the Jew occasionally takes on an enigmatic, even subversive quality which is almost never to be found in the more established novel forms of the period.³ The German *Amerikaroman*, as exemplified in the work of Karl May, of course, embodied traditional conceptions of culture and society in nineteenth century Germany, yet Jews do not figure prominently in May's opus. In the work of Sealsfield, Jews also do not play a significant role, although one of Sealsfield's most eagerly treated themes was the newly emerging *Geldwirtschaft*—a theme that was often linked to anti-Semitic caricature.⁴ In only one passage in Sealsfield's opus, which encompassed twelve novels and three travel books plus sundry short stories, do we find anything approaching an anti-Semitic figure, but this figure is then replete with all the familiar stereotypes. When the German visitor to the United States, Baron von Schochstein, attends a "caucus" of leading public figures in New York society to discover the real essence of American republicanism and democracy, he observes that these individuals

hardly conform to his ideals about the exemplary character of American political culture:

Die staubigen Schuhe [belonging to another plutocrat], ... befanden sich in unmittelbare Nachbarschaft einer stark geröteten Nase, die einen kleinen shylokisch aussehenden Manne mit einem paar Rattenaugen angehörte, der, obwohl äußerst fein und modisch gekleidet, und offenbar vom guten Tone, die sonderbare Nachbarschaft gar nicht übel zu nehmen schien, ...⁵

Still in the hands of some of the other, less famous practitioners of the *Amerikaroman*, alternative ways of perceiving popular stereotypes can be found. These writers are almost without exception unknown today, except to a few specialists. In the period we are discussing, the period of the *bürgerliche Roman*, they enjoyed successful careers—were best seller authors of a sort. How they occasionally managed to create divergent views of popular stereotypes within the limits of their chosen genre of the *Amerikaroman* remains an interesting question and the effect they had or did not have on their readership, considering the strength of anti-Semitic imagery in German popular culture, is even more tantalizing.

I

Friedrich Gerstäcker (1816–1872) has been, for the most part, neglected by students of German literature, but in the nineteenth century he was a commercially popular and influential personage who even played a role in German immigration policies.⁶ Gerstäcker, in fact, shared most of the prejudices of 19th century German culture towards Jews, but on occasion he surprisingly deviates from the established conventions.⁷ In *Nach Amerika. Ein Volksbuch, II* (1855), he has his Prussian aristocrat Herr von Hopfgarten go on a grand tour of the United States. The party gets caught in a storm with the stage coach unable to go any further when Hopfgarten notices a light in the woods. Asking who lives there, Hopfgarten re-

ceives a perhaps characteristic answer from his American companion: "Oh, hol's der Teufel," brummte der Mann, 'dort können wir nicht bleiben, das ist ein wüster Ort, mit dem Niemand gern Verkehr hat.'⁸ Of course the stage is set for something unpleasant. Asking why, Hopfgarten receives the following answer replete with the standard anti-Semitic prejudices of the period:

'Ein alter Jude wohnt dort mit seiner Mutter,' sagte der Amerikaner, einen scheuen Blick nach dem Licht hinüberwerfend, 'und handelt am Tag in der Gegend umher; die Leute sagen auch, er hätte eine Menge kostbare Waaren bei sich aufgehäuft, wo er die aber her und womit er sie bezahlt hat, weiß kein Mensch, und es mag auch Niemand seine Schwelle betreten.'⁹

Hopfgarten's adventure soon takes on the qualities of a *Schauerroman*—elements of which, as Leslie A. Fiedler and others have shown—were often linked to depictions of Jews and other minorities.¹⁰

Dabei lag das kleine Gebäude vor ihm, so still und versteckt unter ein paar hohen düsteren Bäumen, und das Licht, oder Kaminfeuer vielleicht, funkelte so matt und tod zwischen den Spalten der Hütte durch, daß unser Freund, schon ganz in der Nähe des Hauses angelangt, unwillkürlich stehen blieb und nach seinem Pistolen griff, um sich wenigstens von deren Vorhandensein zu überzeugen.¹¹

Hopfgarten himself sees very clearly that "es war jedenfalls ein Jude seinem ganzen Aussehen und Wesen nach," and soon the classic stereotypes begin to appear.¹² The owner of the house speaks "in schlechtem, vielleicht jüdischem Englisch."¹³ Further he is "geheimnisvoll", yet still preserves even in the backwoods of America his subservient ghetto posture ("für solchen feinen und wahrscheinlich auch reichen Herrn; aber ich bring' Euch gleich etwas zu essen").¹⁴ His wife is depicted as "der Typus des Häßlichen, Abscheulichen" who even in her old age still embodies the trait of "restlessness" commonly attributed to Jews in the nineteenth century:

, ...so zurückstoßend wirkt die Gestalt einer alten Frau in Schmutz und Lumpen auf uns, deren Scheitel die Jahre gebleicht und nichts von der Ruhe, nichts von dem Frieden darauf zurückgelassen haben, die dem Alter gehören.¹⁵

The fantasy of being in a Jewish Ghetto transplanted onto the frontier is further enhanced when Hopfgarten encounters a strange tongue, probably, as he recognizes, Hebrew.¹⁶

The classic image of being in a *Judenhöhle* is invoked, which obviously drew on the reservoir of anti-Semitic imagery latent or not so latent among Gerstäcker's readership. As von Hopfgarten is lying in bed, he begins to imagine that his host is planning to murder him, and once again anti-Semitic prejudice is conjoined with ingredients of the *Schauerroman*:

Wieder schloß Hopfgarten die Augen und suchte das fatale Bild, das ihm die dunkle Gestalt herauf beschwor, von sich zu schützen, als er die leisen, schleichenden Schritte des Mannes auf dem Boden fühlte—fühlte, wie er sich ihm mehr und mehr näherte—und als er die Augen nur halb und vorsichtig öffnete, um dem dunkeln Gesellen nicht zu verraten, ...¹⁷

Hopfgarten attempts to muster up all his *deutsche Tapferkeit* to withstand what he is convinced is the treacherous and imminent attack of his Jewish host, an attack which suggests familiar images of ritual murder (his Jewish host takes "ein langes blitzendes Messer von der Wand, dessen Schneide er flüchtig mit dem Daumen prüfte, während sein Auge die Entfernung zwischen sich und seinem Opfer abzumessen schien"¹⁸), the scene is suddenly metamorphosed into something quite unexpected:

Aber was zögerte der Alte so lange? ... Hopfgarten biß die Zähne fester and trotziger aufeinander, und sehnte sich fast nach dem Augenblick, der ihm zu eigenen Handeln rufen würde, als sich der dunkle Körper des Juden wieder zurückbog—die Hand mit dem Messer hob sich nicht, und der Mann, auch die Linke wieder zurückziehend, hielt in der rechten—Hopfgarten wußte nicht, ob er wache oder träume—dasselbe Brot, das er ihm

vorher schon hingelegt—trat wieder zum Kamin, schnitt sich mit dem langen furchbaren Messer ein großes Stück ab ... , und fing dann — ... ruhig an zu essen.¹⁹

The next morning the setting becomes even more benign. The old Jew bestows upon Hopfgarten generous hospitality without recompense. The old hag is metamorphosed into a tolerably pleasant elderly lady and then a young woman appears who was on the same ship with Hopfgarten on the ocean passage to America—*die schöne Jüdin*—who speaks polished German and displays her warmth and charm. The episode ends with Hopfgarten feeling guilt and shame for his suspicions and wanting to make amends to the Jewish family without knowing how.

Of course, Gerstäcker was not trying to reshape the prejudices and preconceptions of his readership—at least not with respect to Jews.²⁰ In a little known sketch "Wandernde Krämer" (1847), Gerstäcker reiterates a familiar thesis:

Der Handel ist das Lebensprinzip der Israeliten, davon liefert Amerika den unleugbaren Beweis; dort wird ihnen keine Schranken gesteckt, in der sie sich bewegen müssen; dort sind sie durch Vorurtheile oder Gesetze an keine Beschäftigung, an kein Gewerbe gebunden, sie stehen mit der ganzen übrigen Bevölkerung auf einer Stufe. Was sie aber auch im Vaterlande getrieben haben mögen, welches Handwerk, welche Kunst, es bleibt sich gleich: in Amerika, wo sie wählen dürfen, greifen sie nach dem Handel und werden mit sehr wenigen Ausnahmen Kaufleute, oder geht das nicht, Krämer und Hausierer, oder wie man sie dort nennt: 'Pedlars'.²¹

Even in his principal work, *Nach Amerika*, Gerstäcker conjures up the familiar dichotomy of the "good Jew" Wald (German, of course) who helps his fellow immigrants when they first arrive in America and in turn is accepted by them and the "bad Jew" (Polish, with the name Beitel and not Veitel, provided with ghetto attire and language) who uses his son as an object of making money and eventually brings about his death. It is also the "bad Jew" in Gerstäcker's

novel who has shady connections to the villain and who is bribed by the German hero which leads to the villain's downfall. Yet curiously enough, in the same work, in the guise of an exotic adventure as presented above, these familiar images are temporarily discarded, and the narrator can inadvertently reveal the irrational nature of these anti-Semitic phobias by showing them to be the mere projections of his German hero. At night his hero succumbs to the most horrible and typical anti-Semitic fears and in the light of day these fears are shown to be without substance. The result is that the German hero is left feeling an uneasy sense of guilt and shame, but of course not insight into his own anti-Semitic fears. This motif would have to wait at least until one hundred years later after these fears had already been exploited to their unholy limit in the culture at large.

II

Another more complex and even more contradictory image of the Jew is found in Ernst Willkomm's *Die Europamüden* (1838). Also largely forgotten, Willkomm (1810–1886) was a successful and perhaps even typical representative of *Junges Deutschland*.²² *Die Europamüden* marked a literary breakthrough for Willkomm and became the equivalent of a best-seller in that period. One of the central themes of this novel—one that was widely advocated by the writers of *Junges Deutschland*—was the complete emancipation of the Jews.²³ In the figure of Mardochai, *Die Europamüden* embodies the complex cultural dialogue centering around Jews in the *Vormärz*—a dialogue which, as the century progressed, became more and more virulent, tainted with the doctrines of biological racism and the threatening specter of the pogrom.²⁴

Mardochai is seen through the eyes of Sigismund, an artist, a nobleman, a *Zerissener*, a typical exemplar of the protagonists who inhabited the novels of *Junges Deutschland*. The belief in a moribund world—a world that seem-

ed degenerate and purposeless—which belongs to the essential credo of *Junges Deutschland*—informs all the characters in *Die Europamüde*:

Diese Impotenz ist entsittlichend und verweichlichend, . . . Bleibt wohl noch etwas übrig als Bardelohs verzweifelte Verachtung, Mardochai's auflösender Haß, des Mönches Wahnwitz, Friedrichs Blödsinn, oder Gleichmuts raffinierte Selbstentweihung?²⁵

It is significant that Mardochai's behavior is explained by the same forces acting upon the Christian protagonists in the novel; in other words, the Jew is not subject to special laws or rules. On the contrary, he is equally a victim of the *Europamüdigkeit* as are the Christian protagonists. In this fictional world everyone, including the Jew, becomes an outsider—everyone is ultimately disfigured by the loss of hope and the failure of political ideals which reflected the mood after the the Metternichean Restoration when the movement toward German unity and democracy seemed to be foiled.

Mardochai, however, is nonetheless depicted differently from the other characters. From Sigismund's perspective Mardochai is often referred to as "räthselhaft," "zweideutig," or "wunderlich," epithets which belong to the accepted folklore of prejudice against Jews. But Mardochai's *Räthselhaftigkeit* conceals an array of virtues that reflects the philo-Semitic biases of the period. Mardochai, to Sigismund's surprise, "war voll geistiger Regsamkeit . . . Er liebte die Kunst, namentlich die Poesie und Musik."²⁶ There is no indication as already adumbrated in Romanticism that the Jew was incapable of absorbing the culture of the *Abendland*.²⁷ But Mardochai in *Die Europamüden* as a representation of Jewishness transcends these philo-Semitic biases, since he never disowns or loses touch with his roots. His intellectuality has its foundations in his ethnic origins:

Mardochai war bewandert in den heiligen Büchern seines Volkes, er kannte genau die Lehren des Talmuds und hielt sich streng an die Vorschriften seiner Religion.²⁸

Mardochai is also endowed with the ability to interpret Nature's secrets. In contrast to the standard conventions of German fiction, Mar-

dochai is less deracinated than his Christian counterparts. In other words, he is not the urban, uprooted, "egotistical" individual who haunts the later novels of Freytag and Rabbe. Instead, he seems to possess an almost Goethe-like belief in the healing powers of Nature:

Auch habe ich an mir selbst schon erfahren, daß Einigung des geistigen und sinnlichen Menschen nicht denkbar, Scheidung beider aber vernichtend ist. Sollte es nicht weise sein, der Natur freien Lauf zu lassen und diese geschiedene Elemente für das Leben aufzufassen jedes zu seiner Zeit?²⁹

Instead of emerging as the symbol of cultural divisiveness, Mardochai surprisingly appears as the founder of a new morality, a morality which is more honest and real and which promises to return the individual to wholeness, as his *Jungdeutschen* advocates attempted to promulgate:

‘Sie müssen ein freier Sohn der Natur werden, der Alles thun kann, wenn er will, und Alles lassen, wenn er nicht will. Sie müssen auch Alles erprobt haben, weil Sie sonst in Diesem und Jenem irrige Ansichten Ihren Zwecken unterschieben könnten.’³⁰

At times Mardochai’s utterances assume an almost Nietzsche-like quality when he inveighs against bourgeois conventions and norms:

‘Sie werden erfahren in Ihrem späteren Leben,’ fuhr der Jude fort, ‘daß beinahe Alles Verbotene das Erlaubte ist, nur hingestellt, um den Mut des Menschen zu erproben.’³¹

Contrary to many novels of the period, *Die Europamüden* is also permitted to present the Jewish point of view. In the discussion with Sigismund on the alleged superiority of Jews regarding matters of the intellect, Mardochai answers,

‘Wie kommt es,’ sagte Eduard, ‘daß Ihr Juden Alle regsamer, spekulativer und in einem gewissen Sinne auch produktiver seid als wir Christen?’

‘Daher antwortete ich, weil wir gedrückt und gezeifelt von Euch, die Kraft in uns zusammentrafen und nur einen einzigen Zweck

bei allen unseren Handlungen haben, den Haß. Wir Juden setzen die Consequenz des Hasses dem Terrorismus entgegen, und dieser Haß wird siegen, weil er ein Kind der Liebe unserer sechstausendjährigen Nationalität ist. Ein Jude ist immer Jude, ein Christ aber nur Christ, wenn er Appetit dazu hat.’³²

However, Mardochai’s "hate" is not destructive, is not sullied by violence; instead it is connected with truth and with the subversive power of discourse. In typical *Jungdeutschen* fashion, Mardochai’s "hate" is paradoxically linked to "love": "Ich halte es für die Pflicht eines aufgeklärten Juden, den Christen ihre Ungerechtigkeiten gegen unseren Stamm zu vergelten durch Liebe."³³

In Willkomm’s novel the Jew becomes the *Ankläger* of a moribund world. Christianity in *Die Europamüden* comprises an array of empty rituals and pompous forms, and Mardochai, from his position as outsider, mercilessly exposes them. There is even a reversal of stereotypes common to German fiction (and German culture in general) when Mardochai assails Protestantism for its lack of spirituality:

Was Ihr sie [the Christians] nennt ist die Religion der Welt, wenn sie herabsinken wird zum bloßen Wechselgeschäft.³⁴

But Mardochai curiously enough not only becomes the *Ankläger* of Christianity, but also of modernity in general. In this instance he appears to use the same categories of thought employed later by the representatives of the so-called "völkish" school of thinkers to attack the modern world, especially the Jews:

Es dürfte überhaupt nichts Gedankliches mehr geduldet, alles eigentliche Lebendige müßte todgeschlagen werden, und heilig allein, tugendhaft und religiös wäre nur der Automat und die Maschine³⁵

In *Die Europamüden* it is Mardochai who—again reversing roles—contradicts the standard image of the Jew as it was portrayed in German popular culture in the nineteenth century when the image of the Jew began to become customarily associated with the rise of materialism and mechanization and the decline of the

organic and the vital. In *Die Europamüden* he emerges as the foremost critic of these tendencies.

The Jewish point of view also enables Mardochai to express with remarkable eloquence something that is missing in the philosemitic literature of the period—Jewish pride. Jewish pride also means in this case the dismantling of stereotypes and the assertion of a solid Jewish identity:

Ein Jude wird Alles zu Geld machen, weil er es muß. Er wird ein Hund sein, ist es seit Jahrhunderten gewesen und ist es noch, aber ein Schuft ist er nicht. Christen sind Apostaten geworden aus elenden Ehrgeiz, Geldsucht und anderen Erbärmlichkeiten, ein wahrer Jude aber wird als Held sterben, wenn ihm Jemand den Antrag macht, entweder seiner Religion zu entsagen, oder des elendesten Todes zu verbleichen. Ich bin stolz auf meinen Stolz.³⁶

Or again consciously using popular anti-Semitic imagery, Mardochai reverses the charges, accusing the Christians of the offenses which Jews have normally been alleged to have committed:

‘Mein Stamm handelt mit alten Lumpen, die es auf Erden gibt,’ sagte er ‘mit seiner Religion aber hat er noch nie gehandelt.’³⁷

The traditional image of the *Schacherjude* is repudiated. Instead, amid the world of the *Europamüden*, the Jew actually attains a degree of moral superiority: “Der Jude bleibt immer noch stolz auf sein armes verspottetes Bekenntnis; er mag nichts wissen von Eurer Religion der falschen Liebe.”³⁸

What is astonishing about this novel considering the period we are discussing is that Mardochai ultimately rejects assimilation for German Jewry, not because of what the critics of the time regarded as Jewish intransigence or backwardness, but because of Christian oppression and intolerance. Along with assimilation, the notion of conversion is also rejected. Instead of adhering to the desired norm of German Jewry à la Moses Mendelssohn, of becoming a Germanized Jew, Mardochai undergoes a remarkable metamorphosis in the novel

from Europeanized *Arzt* and healer to “morngländischem Handelsmann.” He repudiates what Hans Mayer has called

Verzicht auf den Ursprung zugunsten der Umwandlung, als Reduzierung eines Volkes schlimmstenfalls auf eine ‘Glaubensgemeinschaft’, möglichst jedoch auf eine totale Amalgamierung, wie sie auch der junge *Karl Marx* in seinen Gedanken *Zur Judenfrage* postulierte, hat diesen dialektischen Widerspruch nur verdrängt, nicht gelöst.³⁹

While the alternative of assimilation is rejected, the return and recovery of an original Jewish identity is treated in a positive light: “Und Mardochai war und blieb Jude, und wollte Jude sein, weil er Jude geboren war.”⁴⁰ In this sense Mardochai does not conform to the “abstract philo-Semitism” of Lessing and others in the German Enlightenment. Instead he becomes the self-proclaimed outsider who asserts his alterity with dignity and with knowledge.⁴¹

The *Emanzipationsdebatte* in this novel between Mardochai and Sigismund is unusual in the literature of the period, since it exposes the fallacies and shortcomings of the majority culture of Christian-dominated Europe. When Mardochai laments,

‘Was glauben Sie, muß ein Volk thun, das ohne Vaterland, ohne Staatsverfassung, zerstreut auf der ganzen Erde umherirrt, und dem es nicht nur Sache der Existenz, sondern auch des Herzens ist, sich ein Vaterland zu erringen, wenn ihm jeder Weg vermauert wird, der es zu einem solchem Besitzthum führen könnte?’⁴²

The position of Jewry is in fact championed in *Die Europamüden*, at the same time providing an explanation for what at the time was regarded as the anomalous aspects of Jewish culture. The Jews were not, according to the generally accepted argument, “capable” of creating a state. Discarding this thesis, *Die Europamüden*, argues instead that the possibility of state-making was not permitted to the Jews in Christian-dominated Europe.

Die Europamüden also attempts to provide an explanation for one of the central prob-

lems in Jewish culture—Jewish hate and self hate. As Sigismund observes, Mardochai undergoes a transformation—he suddenly appears to adopt the new identity of the "Shylockmuster"⁴³ In one sense he consciously conforms to the stereotype of the ghetto Jew, reflecting the attitudes and imagery of the dominant Christian world, while at the same time apparently rejecting his own progress towards assimilation. On the other hand, the hate of his environment is ultimately turned against himself, so that his "Shylockmuster" is at once a violent protest against assimilation as well as an attempt to efface what his environment regards as his positive, yet inauthentic identity of Mardochai the Jewish healer and *Arzt*.

Mardochai's "Shylockmuster", his hate and self-hate, his positive rebellion of returning to his roots and emerging at once as a critic of Christianity and a defender of Judaism as well as his negative rebellion of reflecting the anti-Semitic stereotypes of the period, illuminates the central perspective of the narrator—a perspective which is rooted in ambivalence. Sigismund, the narrator, cannot really separate the positive Jewish stereotypes from the negative ones. For example, Mardochai is "belesen," yet at the same time possesses "eine schlaue jüdische Intelligenz." Further in his evaluation of Mardochai, Sigismund repeatedly employs antitheses: "Mardochai ist ein Teufel unter den Göttern und ein Gott unter den Teufeln."⁴⁴ Or "Ein Mensch wie Mardochai kann nicht Jude und darf nicht Christ werden. Er hat zu viel Göttliches neben dem Dämonischen in sich."⁴⁵ Sigismund's feelings also vacillate between extremes: "Es ergeht mir, wie Jedem mit diesem Juden. Ich hasse ihn grimmig und liebe ihn doch mit erschütterndem Wehmuth."⁴⁶

It is hence significant that Mardochai cannot be neatly assigned neither by the narrator nor by the reader to the "good Jew-bad Jew" paradigm which became an integral part of the presentation of Jews in the German bourgeois novel. Mardochai has both *Bildung* (education) and *Besitz* (property)—the two prerequisites for the emancipation of German Jewry, yet he ultimately spurns them both. Further he embodies at once both the assimilated German Jew and the East European ghetto Jew,

recognizing the significance and pathos of both identities. In short, Mardochai—at least seen through the eyes of the *Jungdeutschen* literat Sigismund—reveals the welter of complex, oft contradictory conceptions of Jews in the *Vormärz*, containing elements of Heinrich Heine and Ludwig Börne, as well as at the imaginative level of the wise Nathan and the highwayman Spielberg.⁴⁷

Die Europamüden proves ultimately to be a pessimistic study of the *Judenfrage*, and Mardochai, its principal Jewish character, is finally a tragic figure. While America represents the haven for Europe's disillusioned (hence the title), the utopia which regenerates Europe's weary, for Mardochai America fails to be a source of promise and regeneration:

Mein Eden, lieber Sigismund, öffnet seine Pforten nicht in Amerika. Ich kenne jenes Land, denn ich war schon einmal dort. Es ist eben so wenig ein Land für die Juden, als Europa . . . —nur der irrende Sohn aus dem Stamme Jude ist von jenem Glück des freien Daseins ausgeschlossen.⁴⁸

Mardochai's quest is ultimately not assimilation, neither is it an embrace of the *Amerikamythos*. Instead, Mardochai returns to an ancient formula: "Ich gehe zurück nach dem Orient, nach Syrien, nach Jerusalem!"⁴⁹ In *Die Europamüden* the dream of Zion proves to be the only solution to the plight of European Jewry—the result of the failure of Europe to regenerate itself and realize its most laudable ideals. The antinomy that Hans Mayer poses for European Jewry—Auschwitz or Israel—is already anticipated in *Die Europamüden*.⁵⁰ Before Mardochai can realize his ancient dream, he is murdered by Pietists in a classically European pogrom. The final irony of the novel is that the "rachsüchtig" Moses-Shylock becomes the suffering, atoning Christ-figure. For Mardochai's final words are "Ecce-Homo."

III

The figure of Issak Hirsch in Otto Rupprius's novel *Der Pedlar* (1857) presents an even more enigmatic image of the Jew. Rupprius is another forgotten writer of the pre-*Gründerzeit* era. Forced to leave Germany in 1849 as a result of publishing a critical article on the dissolution of the Prussian National Assembly, Rupprius soon established himself in America and became a prolific novelist and a best seller writer of sorts.⁵¹ In *Der Pedlar* what initially appears to be a typical immigrant novel of a greenhorn trying to make his way in America soon shows marked disparities with this formula. In the first place, as the first encounter of the struggling hero, Herr von Helmstedt, a Prussian lawyer and 48er, with another German emigrant Seifert reveals, the world that Helmstedt has hoped to find asylum in is not a world steeped in morality, where individuals with Horatio Alger-like virtues can hope to achieve success. On the contrary, the world that Helmstedt encounters through Seifert is an amoral world, where the Protestant ethic no longer is important or appropriate. As the reader begins to discover gradually that *Der Pedlar* conforms to that type of the German *Amerikaroman* with the moral, virtuous, artistic, educated German struggling against the cold, philistine, materialist land of modernity—America—the figure of Issak appears—the mysterious Jew in ghetto garb.

Issak first appears as the classic stereotype of the Jew in this novel: "Er trat mit einem Bückling, ein alter Mann mit grauem Barte ins Zimmer, dessen Züge den Juden nicht verkennen ließen"⁵² From the very beginning of the novel, Issak is portrayed in the familiar guise as the *rätselfhafte Jude*, who suddenly appears at critical moments and speaks in strange parables. Further, as Helmstedt fears, Issak seems to represent dark, sinister forces which Helmstedt barely comprehends.

All this, of course, conforms to the familiar pattern of the image of the Jew in nineteenth century German fiction. When Helmstedt, the young, virtuous, educated German enters into a contract with the enigmatic Jew, the formula seems almost complete. Indeed Helmstedt's re-

mark concerning the contract seems to further the reader's expectations:

Zu welchem Zwecke kann ich freilich nicht erraten—und welches Interesse er an mir nehmen könnte, ist mir ebenfalls unbegreiflich.⁵³

It becomes, however, quite apparent that this contract does not resemble the one between Veitel Itzig and Rothsattel in Freytag's *Soll und Haben*, in which the ghetto Jewish usurer destroys his unsuspecting German partner. On the contrary, Issak becomes at once Helmstedt's mentor and protector.

The relationship of Helmstedt and Issak is probably unique in the German literature of the nineteenth century, since, instead of portraying the principle of "parallel lives," of "the antithesis of German/"Aryan" to Jewish lives," in which the good, virtuous German rises to become accepted in society in contrast to the Jew who suffers defeat and social decline, even "bourgeois death," *Der Pedlar* reveals the principle of consonant instead of dissonant "parallel lives" which we find almost a hundred years later in such a novel as Friedrich Dürrenmatt's *Der Richter und sein Henker* (1952).⁵⁴ In the first place the virtuous German hero, besieged by all the familiar forces of materialism and modernism ascribed to America in German-American literature, is rescued by the Jew who is traditionally depicted as the incarnation of all these forces. Secondly the German hero, instead of retreating somewhere to a pre-modern idyll, where his moral and poetic posture can be reinforced, is compelled for the time being to become familiar with the debased world of business (not with the honorable German *Comptoir* found in Freytag), and it is Issak who initiates him into this world.

After the apprenticeship the setting suddenly shifts from New York to Alabama—the antebellum South. But the peddler suddenly appears again—this time in an agrarian setting—an incongruous figure totally incompatible with the standard conventions of Southern fiction. The deviation from the traditional formula becomes discernible. The flight to the pastoral, to a timeless realm found so frequently in German fiction does not evoke a *Gartenlandschaft*, in which the head of the estate, as

in Stifter's *Der Nachsommer* (1859), leads the hero to acquire *Bildung* as an alternative to the greed and ruthlessness of the modern city. Instead Helmstedt finds himself in a society suffused with the values of commercial capitalism, where the same values he had repudiated in the city, reappear in the plantation economy of the antebellum South.

It is significant that in this seemingly fallen world of capitalist agriculture the Jew exerts a positive moral force. Issak's credo—"Treue und Gewissenhaftigkeit"—seem to be an affirmation of traditional German virtues.⁵⁵ Curiously enough in another reversal of the traditional conventions of nineteenth century German fiction, it is the Jewish peddler who manages the estates of the Southern planters and guarantees their solvency. Instead of being the mediator who is loathed by both lord and peasant, Issak is regarded with trust and respect by the planter class:

Er ist ein sonderbarer Mensch, ... aber bei den vielerei Arten von Geschäften, die er hier herum macht, hat sich noch Niemand über ihn zu beklagen gehabt ...⁵⁶

By contrast, it is the planters themselves who are tainted with moral flaws. For example, Eliot, the planter, whose daughter Helmstedt marries, has acquired his property from the Cherokees who were brutally dispossessed of their property. In fact, *Der Pedlar* and its sequel *Das Vermächtnis des Pedlars* (1859) raises the theme of legitimacy, of whether the sacrosanct rights of property, so often invoked in American culture, rest on a solid moral and legal foundation.

In this morally dubious world of the antebellum South, the virtuous German Helmstedt finds an ally and mentor in Issak, the Jewish peddler. Issak attempts to teach Helmstedt about the true nature of the American South,

denn es gibt auf der Welt nirgends Leute, die gegen Jeden so viel äußerliche biedere Höflichkeit zeigen als die reichen Pflanzer und Kaufleute der südlichen Staaten und darum lebt's sich auch nirgends besser als unter diesen Leuten. Aber man wird als Ausländer nicht gleichberechtigt angesehen. Verstehen

Sie mich wohl, ich sage Ihnen das alles nur, damit Sie den Boden kennenlernen, auf dem Sie hier stehen, und nicht zu Ihrem eigenen Schaden falsche Versprechungen machen.⁵⁷

Not only does the Jewish peddler possess moral integrity, but he also shows a strength and courage normally reserved for the German *Held*. Or more exactly he begins to resemble the Indian characters and sidekicks that appear later in the novels of Karl May—quite a remarkable reversal for the Jew to become the loyal and selfless helper of the Teutonic hero instead of his sworn enemy. This new role becomes clear when Issak and Helmstedt are pursuing the slave-robbers:

Der Pedlar voran, das wohlgeschützte Licht in seiner linken Hand, ging er durch Regen, Donner, und Blitz vorwärts—nach wenigen Minuten durch nasses Unterholz, bis sich ein schmaler Waldweg auftat. Der Alte schien eiserne Glieder zu haben.⁵⁸

At this point in the narrative the philosemitic bias is discernible. The Jewish peddler is elevated to a supernatural plane—like Winnetou, the stuff of myth or at least of fairy tale, his mortal qualities receding as he emerges as the avenger of moral injury.

Issak also exhibits other philosemitic biases. For example, he embodies the image of the Jew as *Leidtragende*. His fortune lost, impoverished, his daughter ruined by the Christian villain and as a result committing suicide, Issak assumes the role of the victim as we find the Jew customarily in post-holocaust fiction.

Interestingly enough, another important motif in the presentation of the Jew in nineteenth century German fiction is reversed. Instead of the theme of the Jewish villain stealing the fortune of the Christian hero and dishonoring his daughter, it is Issak the Jew who suffers this fate. Even more important, however, it is the Jew who becomes the victim of capitalist machinations, since Issak loses his fortune to speculation, to the vicissitudes of capitalism, of which he is traditionally regarded as the progenitor.

Issak as *Beschützer*, as *Rächer*, as *Leidtragende*—all reflect the philosemitic biases of

the novel. But there is also a basic ambiguity which pervades the novel. Issak's reason for recruiting Helmstedt, for befriending him, for initiating him into American life—all are called into question when Issak says,

Der Jud thut nichts ohne Profit und mit dem bloßen Danke ist nichts zu verdienen. Werden erleben, ob bei Ihnen mehr dahinter steckt als Worte.⁵⁹

Here the familiar anti-Semitic stereotype is invoked again, but it is never developed, contrary to the conventions of German fiction. Indeed Issak wants to recruit Helmstedt to provide the New York banking world with information about the solvency of the Southern plantations—hence the Jew as the symbol of modernity and materialism, the representative of sinister, invisible forces is present in inchoate form. But the additional aspect arises that these Southern plantations have been managing their property improperly and have caused the banking world losses of enormous sums of money. The virtuous German Helmstedt refuses Issak's offer, although he knows that corruption exists, both in the city and in the countryside.

Hence the familiar formula is again invoked without, as in Freytag, it being clear that the opponents are properly defined—plutocracy vs. gentry, materialism vs. *Geist*, modernity vs. the organic and the traditional do not assume the obvious dualisms that are present in in *Soll und Haben* or Raabe's *Der Hungerpator* (1864) Doubtless Issak is a representative of modernity. His aim is to move from a pre-modern local community to a complex, large scale capitalist nation-state. But he is not necessarily a threatening or sinister figure. His position, as he states it in the novel, is to enhance efficiency as well as morality, since it is the Southern planters who are not only finally inept, but also morally dishonest.

In *Der Pedlar* Helmstedt plays quite predictably the role of the virtuous German: "Mir widerstrebt ein Geschäft, welches das Vertrauen, das ich hier erlangen konnte, nur als Mittel zum Auskundschaften benutzt."⁶⁰ Helmstedt's moral character characteristic of the Teutonic hero is unassailable, but what about his moral intuition? In the clash between moder-

nity and tradition it is not made clear in the novel whether his moral code serves him well or even offers him an accurate interpretation of reality. For the issue here, the text implies, is not one of virtue vs. venality, but efficiency and order vs. backwardness and disorder. In *Der Pedlar* Issak seems to bestow upon *Finanzkapital*, which is normally treated negatively in German fiction, a positive moral value.

The trial scene, in which Helmstedt is unfairly accused of murdering one of the villains in the novel, ultimately illuminates the positive, heroic nature of the Jewish peddler. Helmstedt, the virtuous German, struggling against his xenophobic, philistine American environment, finds an ally in Issak the Jewish peddler. Mortally ill, coming from his sick bed, Issak delivers a defense of Helmstedt in eloquent, educated German (in contrast to the conventional discourse of ghetto Jewish characters) that recalls the pathos and melodrama of Cooper's *Leatherstocking*. In short, Issak Hirsch is Helmstedt's (*Schutzheilige*) who also cautions Helmstedt against assimilation:

Es kommt von einem Manne, der seine Leute kennt; gehen Sie nicht weiter, es thut nicht gut—und bringen Sie wirklich zu dem, was Sie Ihr Glück nennen, sie werden Sie noch an den alten Issak denken, den amerikanischen Hochmut des Alten besiegen Sie nicht, und ich habe noch niemals rechten Segen aus einer Verbindung von Leuten entstehen sehen, die mit verschiedenen Gefühlen geboren und mit verschiedenen Gewohnheiten erzogen worden, wie Deutsche und Amerikaner.⁶¹

As an interesting deviation from the conventional biases of nineteenth century German fiction, it is the Jewish peddler who attempts to help Helmstedt preserve his ethnic identity—his *Deutschtum*. In this endeavor Issak is also successful. Helmstedt divorces his American-born wife and marries his childhood sweetheart from Berlin, the widow of an American friend.

Der Pedlar then and its sequel *Das Vermächtnis des Pedlars* (1859) contain a curious deviation from the German bourgeois novel. Operating on the same principle of "parallel lives," its opposition lies in the fact that the two adversaries are no longer German and Jew,

but two Germans—one allegedly assimilated to American life and the other faithful to traditional German values. Instead of the Jew trying to corrupt the virtuous German, it is the German Seyfert who opposes the virtuous German Helmstedt's value system with the familiar amalgam of Mammon and amorality:

'Vom Standpunkt des deutschen Moralprinzips aus mögen Sie Recht haben!'—sagte er dann, 'ich huldige durchaus der Zweckmäßigkeitstheorie, der einzig in Amerika anwendbaren, und sobald nur der Erfolg am Ziele lohnt, ist die Art des Weges dahin, ob schmutzig oder trocken ziemlich gleichgültig. Ich kann Ihre Indignation vollständig verstehen, denn Sie sind noch ein Kind für Amerika; Sie werden mich aber anders beurtheilen, wenn Sie später den selben Grundsatz nicht allein im Geschäftsleben, sondern auch in allen Branchen unserer Staatsmaschinerie durchgeführt finden.'⁶²

At the end of the novel the good German, despite many reversals, succeeds in his initiation into American life, but it is an initiation which is wedded to his own culture and code of values. Resuming his law practice, which he was forced to give up when he emigrated, Helmstedt becomes a success in American society, while at the same time defending the principles of right and wrong as he understood them in his homeland. Seyfert, on the other hand, suffers the fate of many villains in the bourgeois novel. He becomes a criminal, is sent to prison (hence his "bourgeois death"), and eventually commits suicide. The formula is perfect, except that the ghetto Jew Issak assumes the role of the good *Oheim* (mentor-uncle) normally reserved for wise Gentiles. The standard duality of the spiritual German hero struggling against the crude materialism of American life (in some instances embodied by the Jew) is overcome by the old Jew who shows the German hero a point of entry into American life without sacrificing his *Deutschtum*. In this sense the figure of Issak provides a new solution to the dilemma of the German hero in America. Confronted with the familiar choices of rejection and return to Germany or assimilation, Helmstedt learns through Issak that cultural pluralism, even if it

is couched in the categories of nineteenth century German culture, is a possible alternative for the German in America.⁶³

IV

The *Amerikaroman* found an enthusiastic supporter in none other than Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Goethe, as confirmed by various sources, was vitally interested in America. His insights generally move from the enthusiastic endorsement of the *Europamüdigkeit* of the *Vormärz* in his sonnet, "Amerika, Du hast es besser als unser Kontinent, das Alte" to a perceptive recognition of the factor of expansion in the emergence of America as a world power.⁶⁴ Goethe was also interested in Jews. In *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (1811–1833) he describes, in what must have been a typical rite of passage for every sensitive European son of privilege in the nineteenth century, his journey through the Jewish ghetto in Frankfurt am Main. His response to the Ghetto is surprisingly conventional. Mixed with fear and curiosity and the unmistakable feeling of viewing a different race, Goethe surprisingly shows few traces of sympathy or understanding for the plight of the outcast. Instead Goethe notes the venality and foreignness and outrageousness and, in particular, exotic rituals which take place within the ghetto walls.⁶⁵ In designing his own *Amerikautopie* in *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* (1821), the following passage then appears:

An dieser Religion halten wir fest, aber auf eine eigene Weise; wir unterrichten unsere Kinder von Jugend auf von den großen Vorteilen, die sie uns gebracht hat; dagegen von ihrem Ursprung, von ihrem Verlauf geben wir zuletzt Kenntnis. Allsdann wird der Urheber erst lieb und wert, und alle Nachricht, die sich auf ihn bezieht, wird heilig. In diesem Sinne, den man vielleicht pedantisch nennen mag, aber doch als folgerecht anerkennen muß, *dulden wir keinen Juden unter uns*; [*italics mine*] wie sollten wir ihm den Anteil an der höchsten Kultur vergönnen, de-

ren Ursprung und Herkommen er verleugnet.⁶⁶

Goethe's injunction to exclude Jews from his *Amerikautopie* invoked one essential aspect of the German *Amerikautopie* which can even be found in a book of a very different kind—Fontane's novel *Quitt* (1890). In *Quitt* the German protagonist flees to America to escape punishment from a crime committed against the *Obrigkeit* only to end up in a Mennonite community in Alabama—in other words, a microcosm of an idyllic, premodern German community (although also containing one French Communiard) in the middle of America or as the narrator describes it "eine kleine preußische Kolonie."⁶⁷ This colony in which Fontane's hero finds refuge is, akin to so many nineteenth century German novels, a little enclave sequestered from the uncertainties of modernity. Firm order and hierarchy, dedicated craftsmanship and sincere piety form the cornerstones of Goethe and Fontane's American community. As the leader of the community in *Quitt* says,

Denn die Freiheit, deren wir uns hier rühmen und freuen, ist ein zweischneidig Schwert, und die Despotie der Massen, und das ewige Schwanken in dem was gilt, erfüllen uns, so sehr ich die Freiheit liebe, mit einer Unruhe, die man da nicht kennt, wo stabile Gewalten zu Hause sind.⁶⁸

Still in a very complex, even if not always conscious way, Jews and America were assigned a similar place in the German mind. Werner Sombart, the historian of capitalism and America (*Warum gibt es keinen Sozialismus in den Vereinigten Staaten* (1905)), notes in another work the curious thesis that "die ersten Kaufleute in dem neu entdeckten Amerika waren Juden." They were in fact, according to Sombart, the traders and merchants who made the advancement of capitalism possible.⁶⁹

Sombart's *Amerikabild*, while outside the historical framework of our study, touches upon some perennial themes in the German preoccupation with Amerika. For Sombart, "Die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika sind für den Kapitalismus Kanaan: das Land der Verheißung."⁷⁰ There is, however, a terrifying element in Som-

bart's view that capitalism could enjoy such an unquestioned hegemony over a boundless continent. All the forces in the Old World, Sombart implies, which could serve to temper the influences of capitalism or even bring about its renewal are missing in America. Instead America consists of a "geschichtslosen Kolonialbevölkerung, die im Grunde ganz aus 'Einwanderern' bestand und besteht, in der die Traditionen des Feudalismus (mit Ausnahme einiger südlicher Sklavenstaaten) fehlen..."⁷¹ In effect, for Sombart, America becomes the incarnation of all the enigmas and perils of modernity—all of which were ravaging German political culture.

Dafür ist aber alles Institutionelle, ist vor allem auch der Charakter des Volkes von einer geradezu verblüffenden Uniformität...

Unzweifelhaft und wohl anerkanntermassen gewohnt das Leben in einem kapitalistischen Milieu den Geist daran, die in der Sphäre des Wirtschaftslebens durch dessen Organization erheischte Reduktion aller Vorgänge auf Geld auch auf außerwirtschaftliche Verhältnisse zu übertragen, d. h., insbesondere bei der Wertung von Dingen und Menschen den *Geldwert zum Maßstab* zu nehmen...

Es verschwindet der Sinn für das unermessbar Einzigartige der Persönlichkeit, für den Duft des Individuellen.⁷²

Sombart is touching on a firmly established strand of German thought which—as Ernst Fränkel notes—was indelibly shaped by Romanticism.⁷³ This, of course, explains the unbridled enthusiasm for America, the longing for faraway places, the glorification of America's forests and native peoples, the belief in freedom and the regeneration of humankind. But something deeper in the Romantic posture moulded the image of America for German culture. America became the negative mirror image of everything Germany was fortunately allegedly immune to or should be immune to. Where Germany embodied *Geist*, America represented cold science. Where Germany possessed true *Kultur*, America could only boast of mere *Civilisation*, where Germany contained a *Volk*, organically rooted in the soil and in tradition, America could only show a hybrid pop-

ulation, deracinated, without history, tied together only by the love of Mammon. This list of polar opposites could be extended further to show that America provided a very important function in the development or invention of German nationhood, more specifically in the ideology of the German *Sonderweg*.⁷⁴

Only one other symbol provided the same function for German culture and nationhood in the nineteenth-century that America did—the Jew. For it was the Jew, namely, who was equated with Mammon and liberalism, cold science, the absence of faith and feeling, the contempt for tradition, art, and nature. It is not surprising then that the Yankee and the Jew in German popular culture have occupied the same ground, even if the Jew, of course evolved into the more notorious *Feindbild*. Probably the consummation of this symbolic development occurs in the *Sturmerpresse* in the Third Reich when Americans were represented as *die jüdischen Yankees*.

Thus it appears in the three texts examined in this essay almost anomalous that alternative, even dissonant interpretations of popular stereotypes can be detected. Like all popular literature, the *Amerikaroman* was deeply formulaic and traditional, serving to reinforce accepted beliefs and values. This thesis can be amply documented by examining other texts in German-American fiction.⁷⁵ Still curiously enough, despite its conservative bias, the *Amerikaroman*, permits new possibilities for conventional scenarios than in the more familiar *bürgerlichen Roman*. In trying to entertain, the exotic novel on occasion can have a dismantling effect of rewriting established formulas in new and apparently innocuous ways. That these narratives are couched in an exotic world give more possibilities for what may be defined as a slipping-out effect, which means that both the author and the reader, because of the novel's exotic background and express desire to entertain, unconsciously conjure up and tolerate unexpected, disturbing, imagery which in fact runs counter to popular myth-making and stereotyping. Certainly placing an adventure about Jews in Berlin or Warsaw would have demanded closer adherence to popular norms and sensibilities. The leap into an

exotic world could possibly mean that the author possessed a certain poetic licence to tamper with the hitherto perceived reality, to introduce to the reader new images that now and then confounded the reader's conventional wisdom. In this sense the *Amerikaroman* presents dissonant images in a tradition that otherwise accepted and reinforced ancient belief.

NOTES

1. Hans Mayer, *Außenseiter*. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1981), p. 330. As Mayer writes, this imagery was based on the historical situation of German Jewry in the seventeenth century which continued to exercise an influence on popular culture, even though by the nineteenth century German Jewry had already established itself within the middle class. Besides these familiar figures, *Soll und Haben* also contains the familiar image of the Jewish cosmopolite-intellectual, a figure which embodied in German fiction all the horrors and evils of modernity in contradistinction to the good German burgher. See *Außenseiter*, p. 384.
2. George L. Mosse, *Germans and Jews: The Right, the Left, and the Search for a "Third Force" in Pre-Nazi Germany* (New York: Schocken 1970), p. 62.
3. On the development of the literary canon in nineteenth century German fiction and the fate of the so-called *Unterhaltungsliteratur*, which of course included the *Amerikaroman*, see Volker Neuhaus, "Der Unterhaltungsroman im 19. Jahrhundert," in Helmut Koopmann, *Handbuch des deutschen Romans* (Düsseldorf: Bagel, 1983), pp. 404–417.
4. In Sealsfield, the most popular representative of the *Amerikaroman* before Gerstäcker and May and the most critically praised, Jews do not make any official appearance at all, unless one wants to claim that the demonic usurer Lomund in *Morton oder die große Tour* (1835) is a Jewish figure. Of course the term "doppeldistillirte Jude" occasionally appears in Sealsfield's work to characterize the Yankee, which is a recurring image in German culture, even finding its way into the rhetoric of the Third Reich.
5. Charles Sealsfield, *Die deutsch-amerikanischen Wahlverwandschaften* (1839–40 rpt Hildesheim: Olms Presse, 1982), II–III, p. 261.

6. Günter Moltmann, "Überseeische Siedlungen und Weltpolitische Spekulationen: Friedrich Gerstäcker und die Frankfurter Zentralgewalt 1849," in Alexander Fischer, *Russland—Deutschland—Amerika: Festschrift f. Fritz T. Epstein zum 80. Geburtstag* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1978), pp. 56–76.
7. Gerstäcker is capable of creating positive Jewish figures. In fact, his work reveals the paradigm of the good and the bad Jew which Hans Mayer asserts characterizes the so-called *bürgerliche Roman*. In his collection of stories and sketches entitled *Mississippi-Bilder. Licht- und Schattenseiten des transatlantischen Lebens* (1847; rpt Jena: Hermann Costenoble 1872–9), Gerstäcker describes a Jewish businessman named Rosenberg: "... er hat mir so eine krumme Nase und schwarzes, krauses Haar,—..." (373) Still the same figure in *Nach Amerika*—the peddler Wald—can become a figure of great nobility and compassion.
8. Friedrich Gerstäcker, *Nach Amerika. Ein Volksbuch*, II (1855; rpt Jena: Hermann Costenoble, 1872–9), p. 190.
9. Gerstäcker, *Nach Amerika. Ein Volksbuch*, II, pp. 190–191.
10. Leslie A. Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (New York: Dell, 1966).
11. Gerstäcker, *Nach Amerika*, II, 192.
12. Gerstäcker, II, p. 194.
13. Gerstäcker, II, p. 192.
14. Gerstäcker, II, p. 193.
15. Gerstäcker, II, p. 195.
16. Gerstäcker, *Nach Amerika*, II, p. 195.
17. Gerstäcker, II, p. 200.
18. Gerstäcker, II, p. 201.
19. Gerstäcker, II, p. 203.
20. In much of his writing Gerstäcker attempted to create a more balanced view of the *Amerikamythos*, showing in a quasi-realistic way the trials of German immigrants and the virtues necessary for success in America. In the work just cited Gerstäcker creates one of his most enduring characters—the immigration agent who fabricated false hopes and expectations about the New World and duped his unsuspecting victims.
21. Gerstäcker, "Wandernde Krämer," in *Mississippi-Bilder. Licht und Schattenseiten des transatlantischen Lebens*, p. 188.
22. The novel was originally criticized for exaggerating some of the typical characteristics of *Junges Deutschland*.
23. The emancipation of the Jews was a gradual, hesitant process in Germany in contrast to France. The complete emancipation of the Jews significantly enough took place at the same time the German Empire was founded in 1871, although the consolidation of German power did not ultimately bode well for the Jews. After the initial euphoria of the *Reichsgründung* with its liberal patina, the end of the 1870s, along with the full effects of the depression, also brought with them a backlash, especially with the rise of anti-Semitic movements which reached their culmination in the so-called *Hofpredigte* of Adolf Stöckler in the 1890s. This backlash, however, was not merely the resurgence of the old religious anti-Semitism, but the creation of the modern, virulent form which then proceeded to become a serious political force. See Reinhard Rürup, "Emanzipation und Antisemitismus : historische Verbindungen," in Herbert A. Strauss, et al., *Antisemitismus. Von der Judenfeindschaft zum Holocaust* (New York, Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 1985), pp. 89–98.
24. For a discussion of the transformation from religious to "racial" anti-Semitism in Germany after the *Reichsgründung*, cf Werner Jochmann, "Struktur und Funktion des deutschen Antisemitismus 1878–1914," in Herbert A. Strauss, et al., *Antisemitismus. Von der Judenfeindschaft zum Holocaust*, pp. 99–142.
25. Ernst Adolf Wilkomm, *Die Europamüden. Modernes Lebensbild*, I, (Leipzig: Julius Wunders Verlag, 1838), p. 211.
26. Wilkomm, *Die Europamüden*, I, p. 210.
27. On the connection between Romanticism and anti-Semitism, see George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Schocken, 1981).
28. Willkomm, I, p. 217.
29. Willkomm, I, p. 221.
30. Willkomm, I, p. 327.
31. Willkomm, I, p. 225.
32. Willkomm, I, p. 183.
33. Willkomm, II, p. 327.
34. Willkomm, I, p. 198.
35. Willkomm, I, p. 226.
36. Willkomm, I, p. 343.
37. Willkomm, I, p. 342. It is important to note that *der Schacherjude*, here invoked, became a familiar image of Jewish identity in anti-Semitic thought in the nineteenth century, often equated with the destructive elements of capitalism.
38. Willkomm, I, p. 198.
39. Hans Mayer, *Außenseiter* p. 329.
40. Willkomm, I, p. 344.

41. On the philo-Semitism of the Enlightenment, see in Hans Mayer's *Außenseiter*, "Der Weise Nathan und der Räuber Spiegelberg," pp. 327-349.
42. Willkomm, II, p. 179.
43. Willkomm, I, p. 236.
44. Willkomm, II, p. 57.
45. Willkomm, II, p. 58.
46. Willkomm, II, p. 58.
47. On the schema of "the good Jew" and "the bad Jew," see Hans Mayer, *Außenseiter*, pp. 327-349.
48. Willkomm, II, p. 236.
49. Willkomm, II, p. 236.
50. Hans Mayer, *Außenseiter*, p. 340. Mayer is not arguing from the perspective of a radical Zionist here. For Mayer Auschwitz and Israel are two elements of what he terms the "Dialektik der Aufklärung," which in fact defines the existential and historical situation of the Jew in European culture. Expressed another way, they are the modern variations of the central predicament which defines the Jew as outsider—*bürgerlich-deutscher Emanzipation* and *jüdischem Messianismus* (p. 340).
51. An important historical footnote to Rupprius's career as well as an indication of his popularity is the fact that his novel, *Ein Deutscher. Roman aus der amerikanischen Gesellschaft* (1861) was the first serial novel published by the renowned liberal journal *Die Gartenlaube*. See Volker Neuhaus in the above cited essay "Der Unterhaltungsroman im 19. Jahrhundert," p. 409.
52. Otto Rupprius, *Der Pedlar. Roman aus dem amerikanischen Leben* (Leipzig: Philip Reklam, 1857), p. 41.
53. Rupprius, *Der Pedlar*, p. 41.
54. Mayer, *Außenseiter*, pp. 381-391.
55. Rupprius, *Der Pedlar*, p. 59.
56. Rupprius, p. 59.
57. Rupprius, p. 71.
58. Rupprius, p. 123.
59. Rupprius, p. 68.
60. Rupprius, p. 202.
61. Rupprius, p. 192.
62. Rupprius, p. 7.
63. It is, however, important to remember that in the final book of the trilogy *Heimchen* (1861), the stereotypes reassert themselves when Helmstedt travels to New York and meets the pawnbroker Meyer.
64. Goethe, in his talks with Eckermann, already anticipates the frontier thesis and the *Empiregedanke* in 1827 when he predicts America's push to the Pacific and eventually the importance of trade with China in Johann Peter Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens* (Wiesbaden: F.A. Brockhaus, 1959), p. 454.
65. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Aus meinem Leben. Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1971). As an example of Goethe's reaction to the Frankfurt ghetto, he writes, "Die Enge, der Schmutz, das Gewimmel, der Akzent einer unerfreulichen Sprache, alles zusammen machte den unangenehmsten Eindruck, wenn man auch nur, am Tore vorbeigehend, hineinsah" (p. 162).
66. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre oder Die Entsagenden* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag, 1982), p. 405.
67. Theodor Fontane, *Quitt, Unter Birnbaum* (München: Nymphenburger, 1969), p. 121.
68. Fontane, *Quitt*, p. 118.
69. Werner Sombart, *Der moderne Kapitalismus*, I (München und Leipzig: von Duncker und Humblott, 1919), p. 902.
70. Werner Sombart, *Warum gibt es keinen Kapitalismus in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika*, in Ernst Fraenkel, *Amerika im Spiegel des deutschen politischen Denkens* (Köln und Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1959), p. 205.
71. Sombart, *Warum gibt es keinen Kapitalismus in den Vereinigten Staaten*, p. 208.
72. Sombart, p. 205.
73. Ernst Fränkel, *Amerika im Spiegel des deutschen politischen Denkens*, pp. 19-20.
74. Despite the many valid objections to the simplicity of the *Sonderweg* explanation as a guide to German historical development and its profound catastrophes, nevertheless we can still argue that the *Sonderweg* ideology (think of Thomas Mann's *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*) exerted an important influence on German political culture in the 19th and 20th centuries. In the *Sonderweg* ideology more emphasis has been placed on the antinomies with Jews, the French Revolution and the *Erzfeind* France and the Enlightenment. What I would like to maintain is that America has also been a significant, yet often neglected antinomy in this *Sonderweg* ideology, as important as the above-mentioned antinomies and related in this paradigm with Jews and more obviously with the Enlightenment. For a more recent discussion of the *Sonderweg* question, see Bernd Faulenbach, *Ideologie des deutschen Weges: Die Deutsche Geschichte in der Historiographie zwischen Kaiserreich und Nationalsozial-*

ismus (München: Beck, 1980), pp. 122-177.

75. Horst Dinkelacker points out in his study of Balduin Möllhausen, another popular representative of the *Amerikaroman*, how Möllhausen reflected and reinforced established patterns of belief among his middleclass readership, also with regard to Jews. In the 1870s when Jews, in addition to liberals, were made responsible for the severe economic depression, Möllhausen's fiction contains some of the most obscene anti-Semitic stereotypes contained in German popular fiction. When the economy improved in the 1880s, the anti-Semitic imagery, according to Dinkelacker, disappeared complete-

ly, and Möllhausen's work contained more philosemitic images. It is, however, also important to note that the "slipping out" effect is also present in Möllhausen. In his novel *Das Finkenhaus* (1872), he shows that once the ghetto Jew is exposed to the American environment, there are no innate qualities that lead to the celebrated Jewish type, but on the contrary, the Jew can become an independent, morally virtuous American citizen. See Horst Dinkelacker, *Amerika zwischen Traum und Desillusionierung im Leben und Werk des Erfolgschriftstellers Balduin Möllhausen (1825-1910)* (New York: Lang, 1990), pp. 142-147.