The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West, 1450 to 1800

EUROPEAN EXPANSION AND GLOBAL INTERACTION

GENERAL EDITORS
Pieter Emmer, Institute for the History of European Expansion, Leiden University
Karen Ordahl Kupperman, New York University
H. G. Roeber, Penn State University

Published in association with the Forum on European Expansion and Global Interaction

VOLUME 1
The Language Encounter in the Americas, 1492 to 1800
Edited by Edward G. Gray and Norman Fiering

VOLUME 2
The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West, 1450 to 1800
Edited by Paolo Bernardini and Norman Fiering

The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West, 1450 to 1800

Edited by

Paolo Bernardini

and

Norman Fiering

Berghahn Books

NEW YORK • OXFORD

Published in 2001 by

Berghahn Books

www.berghahnbooks.com

© 2001 The John Carter Brown Library

All rights reserved.
No part of this publication may be reproduced
in any form or by any means
without the written permission of Berghahn Books.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The Jews and the expansion of Europe to the west, 1450 to 1800 / edited by Paolo Bernardini and Norman Fiering.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references (p.) and index.

ISBN 1-57181-153-2 (alk. paper)

1. Jews—Latin America—History. 2. Jews—North America—History. 3. Jews—Migrations. 4. Europe—Emigration and immigration. 5. Latin America—Emigration and immigration. 6. North America—Emigration and immigration. I. Bernardini, Paolo. II. Fiering, Norman.

F1419.J4 J52 2000

980'.004924—dc21 99-044924

This collection of essays derives, selectively, from a conference of the same name held at the John Carter Brown Library, 15–18 June 1997. The John Carter Brown Library is an independently funded and administered center for advanced research in history and the humanities, located at Brown University since 1901. For 150 years the Library has been collecting books relating to the Americas, North and South, printed before ca. 1825. In order to facilitate and encourage use of the collection, the Library offers fellowships, sponsors lectures and conferences, regularly mounts exhibitions for the general public, and publishes catalogues, bibliographies, and other works that interpret its holdings. For further information, write to: Director, John Carter Brown Library, Box 1894, Providence, Rhode Island 02912, or visit www.JCBL.org.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed in the United States on acid-free paper.

Contents

List of Illustrations viii
Preface *by Norman Fiering* xi

A Milder Colonization: Jewish Expansion to the New World, and the New World in the Jewish Consciousness of the Early Modern Era 1
Paolo Bernardini

I. The Old New World: Ideas and Representations of America in European and Jewish Consciousness and Intellectual History

1. Biblical History and the Americas: The Legend of Solomon's Ophir, 1492–1591 27
James Romm
2. Knowledge of Newly Discovered Lands among Jewish Communities of Europe (from 1492 to the Thirty Years' War) 47
Noah J. Efron
3. Jewish Scientists and the Origin of Modern Navigation 73
Patricia Seed
4. The Hope of the Netherlands: Menasseh ben Israel and the Dutch Idea of America 86
Benjamin Schmidt
5. Israel in America: The Wanderings of the Lost Ten Tribes from *Mikveigh Yisrael* to Timothy McVeigh 107
David S. Katz

II. Identity at Stake: Concealing, Preserving, and Reshaping Judaism among the *Conversos* and Marranos of Spanish America

6. New Christian, Marrano, Jew 125
Robert Rowland
7. Marrano Religiosity in Hispanic America in the Seventeenth Century 149
Nathan Wachtel

8. Crypto-Jews and the Mexican Holy Office in the Seventeenth Century 172
Solange Alberro

9. The Participation of New Christians and Crypto-Jews in the Conquest, Colonization, and Trade of Spanish America, 1521–1660 186
Eva Alexandra Uchmany

10. Crypto-Jews and New Christians in Colonial Peru and Chile 203
Günter Böhm

III. The Luso-Brazilian Experience: Jews in Portuguese Latin America

11. Marranos and the Inquisition: On the Gold Route in Minas Gerais, Brazil 215
Anita Novinsky

12. Outcasts from the Kingdom: The Inquisition and the Banishment of New Christians to Brazil 242
Geraldo Pieroni

IV. From Toleration to Expulsion: Identity, Trade, and Struggle for Survival in France and Caribbean French America

13. The Portuguese Jewish Nation of Saint-Esprit-lès-Bayonne: The American Dimension 255
Gérard Nahon

14. Atlantic Trade and Sephardim Merchants in Eighteenth-Century France: The Case of Bordeaux 268
Silvia Marzagalli

15. Jewish Settlements in the French Colonies in the Caribbean (Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Cayenne) and the "Black Code" 287
Mordechai Arbell

16. New Christians/"New Whites": Sephardic Jews, Free People of Color, and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue, 1760–1789 314
John D. Garrigus

V. Blossoming in Another World: The Jews and the Jewish Communities in Dutch America

17. The Jews of Dutch America 335
Jonathan I. Israel

18. The Jews in Suriname and Curaçao 350
Wim Klooster

19. An Atlantic Perspective on the Jewish Struggle for Rights and Opportunities in Brazil, New Netherland, and New York 369
James Homer Williams

20. Antecedents and Remnants of Jodensavanne: The Synagogues and Cemeteries of the First Permanent Plantation Settlement of New World Jews 394
Rachel Frankel

VI. "The Brokers of the World": American Jews, New Christians, and International Trade

21. Jews and New Christians in the Atlantic Slave Trade 439
Seymour Drescher

22. New Christians and Jews in the Sugar Trade, 1550–1750: Two Centuries of Development of the Atlantic Economy 471
James C. Boyajian

23. New Christians as Sugar Cultivators and Traders in the Portuguese Atlantic, 1450–1800 485
Ernst Pijning

24. The Jewish Moment and the Two Expansion Systems in the Atlantic, 1580–1650 501
Pieter Emmer

VII. The Jews in Colonial British America

25. The Jews in British America 519
Jonathan D. Sarna

Notes on Contributors 532
Name Index 537
Place Index 554
Subject Index 561

List of Illustrations

Figures

(Unless otherwise indicated in the figure captions, all of the figures are from the collection of the John Carter Brown Library.)

1.1	T-O map showing continents identified with the three sons of Noah	35
1.2	Ethnographic map of Benito Arias Montano	38
1.3	Detail of Montano map in Fig. 1.2	39
2.1	Abraham ben Mordecai Farissol, [*Iggeret orhot 'olam*] (Venice, 1586)	51
2.2	Abraham ben Mordecai Farissol, *Itinera Mundi* (Oxford, 1691)	52
2.3	David ben Solomon Gans, [*Sefer Nehmad ve-Na im*] (Jessnitz, 1743)	62
2.4	David ben Solomon Gans, [*Sefer Nehmad ve-Na im*] (Jessnitz, 1743), a sketch of the Ptolemaic universe	63
4.1	Frans Post, *Sacrifice of Manoah*, 1648	87
4.2	Claes Cornelisz. Moeyaert, *Sacrifice of Manoah*, ca. 1649	89
4.3	Frans Post, *Varzea Landscape with Plantation*, 1652	90
5.1	Menasseh ben Joseph ben Israel, [*Sefer Mikweh Yisrael*] (Amsterdam, 1697)	109
6.1	The inquiry	129
6.2.	"A man condemned to be burnt but hath escaped by his confession"	139
6.3	The "samarra" worn by those sentenced to the stake	140
6.4	An auto-da-fé	141
10.1	Royal letters patent establishing the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Chile. Madrid, 25 January 1569	204
10.2	Title page of a pamphlet relating to the auto-da-fé in Lima, 23 January 1639	211
20.1	Remains of the synagogue Bracha veShalom, Jodensavanne, Suriname	395
20.2	Map showing "Jews" on the upper reaches of the Suriname River, 1667	396
20.3	Solomon's Temple according to Jacob Juda Leon Templo	399
20.4	Southwest view of Amsterdam's Esnoga, inaugurated in 1675	400
20.5	View from the west of the synagogue Bracha veShalom	401
20.6	Interior view, facing east, of Amsterdam's Esnoga	403

20.7	Plan of the Amsterdam Esnoga complex	405
20.8	Plan of the extant remains of Bracha veShalom	406
20.9	View of Jodensavanne with Bracha veShalom	407
20.10	*Ohelim* (prism-shaped) tombstones at Cassipora cemetery	410
20.11	Tomb at Cassipora cemetery with two graven images	411
20.12	Map of Suriname and Commewine Rivers, with "Joodese Synagoge" noted	412
20.13	Tomb at the second Jewish cemetery in Suriname	414
20.14	Tomb at the second Jewish cemetery, with Portuguese text	415
20.15	Courtyard entrance gate posts and the remains of the west wall of Bracha veShalom	417
20.16	Preliminary interpretative drawings of the plan and section of the synagogue Bracha veShalom	418
20.17	Looking west at the cemetery and east façade of the synagogue of Jodensavanne	421
20.18	Shops in Suriname, painted by Benoit, 1839	424
20.19	Exterior view of the south and west façades of the synagogue Neveh Shalom, Paramaribo, Suriname	427
20.20	Interior view of the synagogue Neveh Shalom, Paramaribo	428
20.21	Exterior view of the north and east façades of the synagogue Tsedek veShalom, Paramaribo	429
20.22	Tomb with *sankofa* (or *akoma*) on horizontal gravestone from Jodensavanne's "Creole" cemetery	430
20.23	Vertical grave marker with *sankofa* from Jodensavanne's "Creole" cemetery	431
20.24	Tombs with horizontal gravestones, vertical wooden markers with *sankofa* finials, and *akoma* heart symbols, Paramaribo	432
20.25	Vertical wooden post with *sankofa* finial and Star of David	433
23.1	"Brasilise Suyker Werken." The different stages of sugar production in Brazil	490

Tables

12.1	Banishment to Brazil	246
12.2	Exile to Brazil by Century	246
17.1	The Inter-American Trade of Curaçao and St. Eustatius	347
18.1	Urban Settlement Patterns, Curaçao, 1789	355
18.2	Urban Distribution of Social Groups, Curaçao, 1789	355
21.1	Coerced African Migrants Leaving for the Americas by National Carrier	440
21.2	Estimated Traffic and Destination of Slaves Delivered by the Dutch to Curaçao, 1658–1732	451
21.3	Jewish Population Centers in the Western Hemisphere, 1500–1800	460

23.1 New Christians' Professions, According to the Pernambuco Visit of the Inquisition, 1593–1595 492
23.2 Professions of New Christians in Salvador, Bahia, 1618, According to Inquisition Records 493
23.3 Professions of Male New Christians Found Guilty by the Inquisition, Bahia, 1700–1749 (According to Place of Birth) 494
23.4 Professions and Places of Birth of Male New Christians Prosecuted by the Inquisition, Rio de Janeiro, 1700–1749 494
23.5 Professions of Partners of Carioca Female New Christians Prosecuted by the Inquisition, 1700–1749 495

MAPS

1. Europe and the Mediterranean
2. South America
3. North America
4. Caribbean Basin
5. West Africa
6. Indian Ocean
(Maps 1–6 follow Preface)
7. Expulsion of the Jews in Europe
(on page 124 in Chapter 6)
8. Lands of the Saint-Domingue Company, 1698–1720
(on page 315 in Chapter 16)
9. Depas Family Properties, Saint-Domingue
(on page 318 in Chapter 16)
10. Growth of the Atlantic Slave Trade
(on page 441 in Chapter 21)
11. Participation of Amsterdam's Jews in Dutch Trade in the Seventeenth Century
(on page 449 in Chapter 21)

PREFACE

THE PRECISE ORIGINS of the international conference held at the John Carter Brown Library from 15 to 18 June 1997, from which this collection of essays is derived, are impossible to specify. Over the course of six or seven years, various stray ideas, influences, and trends coalesced, until finally we knew what we wanted to do. I will sketch out here some of the elements that contributed to the concept of this book.

The basic idea of approaching the subject of "Jewish" history in the early modern period from an Atlantic and a hemispheric perspective was one that itself had diverse sources. The first Touro National Heritage Trust Research Fellow at the John Carter Brown Library, Judith Laikin Elkin, who arrived in 1990, was also the founder, as it happens, of a new scholarly group, the Latin American Jewish Studies Association. It was evident from talking to Dr. Elkin that the history of "Jews" in Latin America was relatively undeveloped territory, especially for the colonial period. The subsequent Touro Fellows in continuing succession, all concentrating in their research on some aspect of the history of the Jewish experience in the Americas, North or South, prior to ca. 1825, increased our awareness of the validity of a hemispheric approach.

In general, students of the discrete and bounded subject areas of Spanish America, Portuguese America, French America, Dutch America, and English America, which incorporate, as well, diverse populations of African Americans and American Indians, need encouragement and inducement to broaden their horizons. Some fifteen years ago, the Library established a Center for New World Comparative Studies, the purpose of which is to encourage specialists in the colonial period of the Americas to peek over the wall of their academic confinement and try to incorporate the findings of Americanists in geographic areas other than their own.

Jews were settlers throughout the Western Hemisphere and participants (often as *conversos*) in the Spanish, Portuguese, French, Dutch, and English empires. This breadth of involvement, which uniquely cut across the Protestant/Catholic divide, was accidental rather than by

design, but the dispersion of the New Christians and Jews—sometimes tolerated, sometimes persecuted—offers unusual opportunities for comparative study.

From 1977 to 1997, a team at the Library—headed initially by John Alden and then for seventeen years by Dennis C. Landis—compiled and edited a massive chronological guide to European books about America printed before 1750. This work, *European Americana* (New Canaan, Conn.: Readex, 1980–1997), available in six hefty volumes, is by far the best bibliography of European commentary about America in the first 250 years following the great Encounter. The work includes books published in seventeen different languages, Hebrew among them, but the editors of the series know that its record of titles in Hebrew is far from complete. Rectifying this particular deficiency was another factor behind the "Jews and the Expansion of Europe" project at the John Carter Brown Library.

In 1991 the Library sponsored a conference, "America in European Consciousness, 1493–1750" (also subsequently published as a book, edited by Prof. Karen Ordahl Kupperman, University of North Carolina Press, 1995), which addressed the question of the development of European awareness of the New World in the three centuries after the Discovery. In that instance, no one formally asked, "What did the Jews of Europe, generally segregated in ghettos and everywhere marginalized, know about the New World, or think about it?" But it was a question that remained to be considered and one pregnant with implication, because, among other things, it was Jewish destiny to find freedom and fulfillment in America as nowhere else.

The John Carter Brown Library was instrumental in the founding in 1994 of the Forum on European Expansion and Global Interaction, as an American counterpart to the Institute for the History of European Expansion at Leiden University. The idea behind this new scholarly organization, FEEGI, is that the contention between so-called "multiculturalists" and "eurocentrists" in the historical profession misses the great point that the global European expansion beginning in ca. 1400 was the single most consequential fact of modern history and deserves close study as a comprehensive, coherent phenomenon, regardless of how that expansion may be morally judged and subdivided.

Giving early modern European expansion its due has the peculiar effect of considerably rearranging the standard European History curriculum in the United States, by compelling academic departments to pay far more attention to the history of Spain, Portugal, and the Netherlands and far less to Germany and Russia than is now customary. As it happens, one cannot study Portugal and the Netherlands without taking into account their significant populations of Jews and of Christians descended from Jews.

In both 1992 and 1993, the Library organized and sponsored four-week-long summer institutes on early modern maritime history, funded

by the National Endowment for the Humanities. At the 1993 institute, Jonathan Israel of the University of London delivered a lecture on marginal "in-groups" that had an important impact on Atlantic trade in the colonial period, citing individual merchant networks of Portuguese New Christians, Jews, Huguenots, and Armenians (the last functioning mostly in the Portuguese empire in the east), which made possible trade that crossed conventional political boundaries. Professor Israel's work on this subject—because of its originality and high scholarly merit, and its linking of an aspect of Jewish history to the larger network of world commerce—has been something of an inspiration to the Library.

The problems posed by the conference on the Jews and expansion were not unlike those dealt with at another conference, "Scotland and the Americas, 1600 to 1800," which took place in June 1994 at the John Carter Brown Library. The goal of that conference was manifestly not to celebrate isolated Scottish contributions, as an exercise in "heritage," although the Scots were enormously involved in trade, empire, war, and education. But certain questions arose from the conference quite naturally, such as: Did it make any difference that Scots as a group were participants in any particular event or string of events? The practice of historical research and writing is in good part the development of precise tools for analyzing and describing the past. All of the participants in the conference on Scotland came away with a much more developed sense of who the Scots were and what they did and did not do. Our ambition in collecting essays on the Jews was similar.

The 1997 conference "The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West," then, and this resulting book were both founded on three principles that are not commonly applied to "Jewish" history and indeed go against current academic conventions: that when it comes to the study of Jews in the Americas in the early modern period, (1) European history and American history should not be separated; (2) one should also not separate North American history and South American history; and (3) "Jewish" history for this period and this place must include also the thousands of Christians who were descended from Jews (known as New Christians, *Cristãos novos*, in the Portuguese empire and *conversos* in the Spanish empire) for the precise reason that despite their conversion, however far back it occurred and regardless of their actual practices, these people continued to be commonly regarded as "Jewish."

In compiling and editing this book, Dr. Bernardini and I have striven to produce a work that not only contributes to Jewish history but also is illuminating about the New World in general in this period. By making every effort to transcend filiopietism and parochialism, we hope that these essays will be useful and suggestive to a wide range of historians of the Americas who have no particular interest in Jewish history per se.

As is evident from all of the above, this book has numerous origins. We did have, however, for the 1997 conference an informal planning committee whose advice and suggestions were essential to the organization of

the program and hence to the contents of this volume. The committee consisted of Mordechai Arbell of the Ben Zvi Institute, Hebrew University; Seymour Drescher of the University of Pittsburgh; Judith Laikin Elkin of the University of Michigan; Jonathan D. Sarna of Brandeis University; and Paolo Bernardini, who has been affiliated with a number of institutions in Europe and the United States, including recently the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey.

Dr. Bernardini's enthusiasm for this project, above all, was the key factor in our moving ahead. Moreover, the Library's alliance with him, I can say here with pleasure, is not yet over. Dr. Bernardini is compiling the data for an exhibition of books, drawn entirely from our distinguished collection, that will be illustrative of the central theme of this anthology, the Jews and the expansion of Europe to the west. This exhibition has been under consideration for some time, but from the beginning Dr. Bernardini and I believed that the publication of these essays was a necessary prerequisite, since only with this work behind us would it be possible to bring out in an exhibition all of the dimensions of this complicated and largely unrecorded subject.

Numerous agencies and individuals provided grant money and gifts that underwrote the conference and the later editing and production of this volume. We received major support from the Lisbon-based Fundação Luso-Americana para o Desenvolvimento, from InterAmericas/Society of Arts and Letters of the Americas/Sociedad de Artes y Letras de las Américas, from the Rhode Island Committee for the Humanities, and from the Lucius N. Littauer Foundation. In addition, we were helped substantially by the Touro National Heritage Trust, the Abramson Family Foundation, Dr. and Mrs. J. Allen Yager, Joseph F. Cullman III, the Joseph and Rosalyn Sinclair Foundation, the Charles and Donald Salmonson Foundation, and the Ira S. and Anna Galkin Charitable Trust. Mr. Bernard Bell, representing the Touro Trust, was the Library's ally beyond the call of duty in helping us to find the needed funding. Our fondest hope is that these generous supporters are gratified by the material accomplishment seen here, which is of course far outweighed by the intangible results and ramifications.

In the concrete editing of the manuscript and its preparation for the publisher, Dr. Jennifer Curtiss Gage was of indispensable help. In the final stages of formatting and proofreading this complex book, Ms. Shawn Kendrick played a stellar role.

Finally, it would be a mistake to leave the impression that this venture by the John Carter Brown Library into Jewish history in the Atlantic world of the early modern period is now over and done with. A forthcoming exhibition has been mentioned. The Touro National Heritage Trust Fellowship, also mentioned earlier, which was supported formerly by annual grants, has recently been fully endowed by a combination of matching gifts from the Dorot Foundation and the Touro Trust. Hence, Touro Fellows will be coming to the Library in perpetuity. Moreover, in

the area of acquisitions, the Library's incentive to collect relevant Judaica has been much enhanced by the revelations in this book.

The John Carter Brown Library's mission is to collect and preserve books, maps, and manuscripts, and to promote research. The entire history of the Americas—from Hudson Bay to Patagonia, from the time of Columbus to the attainment of independence from European domination—falls within the Library's purview. No element of that history is beyond our interest, and the Library has been collecting Judaica-Americana for more than a century. But this field needed definition and consolidation within the larger enterprise of the Library's work, a definition which we feel has been achieved with this publication.

Norman Fiering

Editorial Note

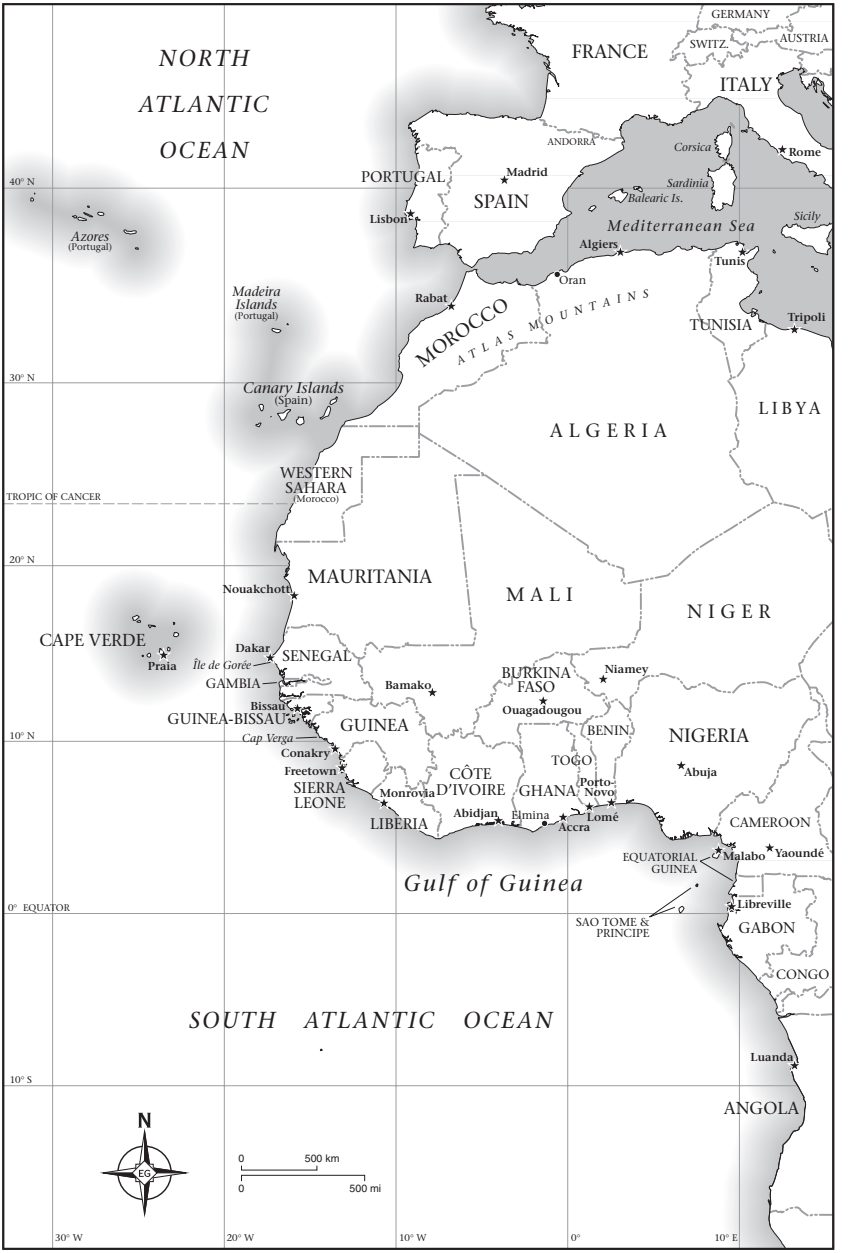
The editors of this volume have attempted to bring as much stylistic and orthographic consistency to the book as a whole as has been practicable. There are some differences among the authors' contributions, however, that we have permitted to remain. For instance, there are numerous ways to transliterate Hebrew letters into English spelling, and we have allowed each author discretion in this matter. Also, systematic use of accents in Spanish names was not common in early manuscripts. In the seventeenth century, the name "Perez" might have appeared without an accent, whereas today it would be written as "Pérez." In these instances as well, we have simply let each author follow his or her preferred practice.

MAP 1 Europe and the Mediterranean

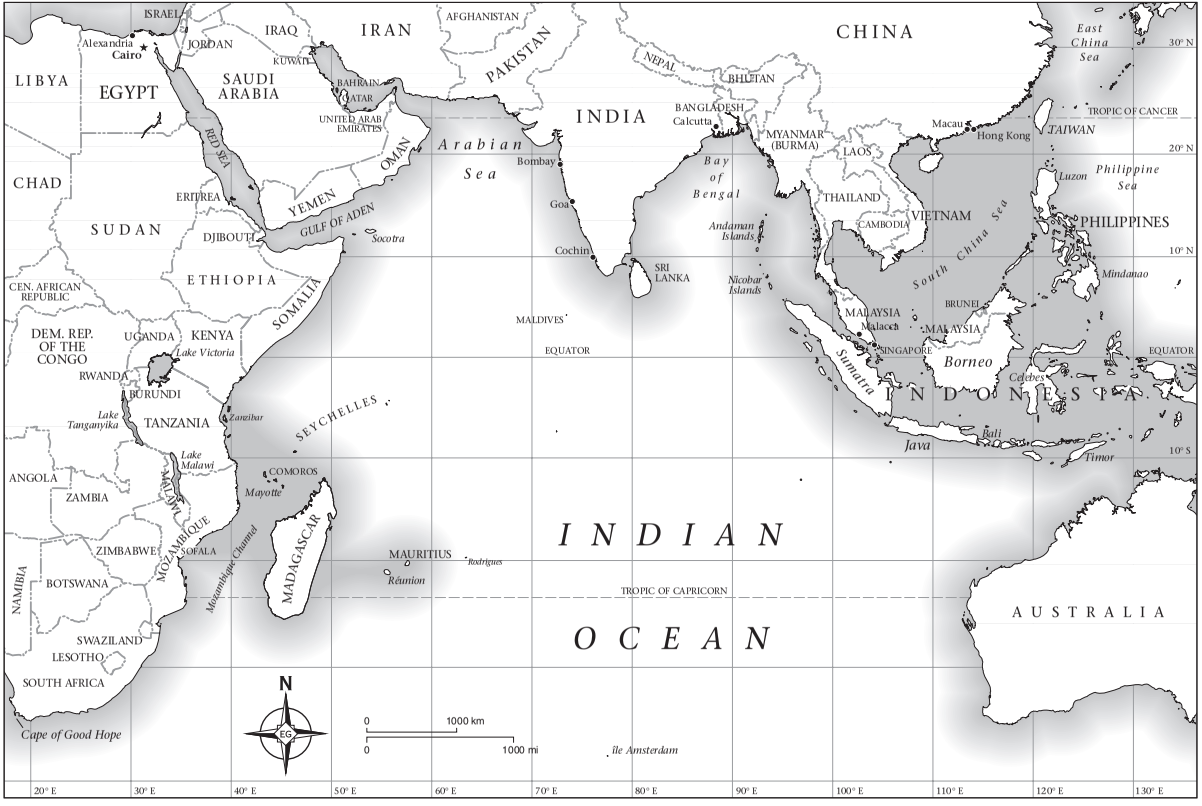
MAP 2 South America

MAP 3 North America

MAP 4 Caribbean Basin



MAP 5 West Africa



MAP 6 Indian Ocean

A Milder Colonization: Jewish Expansion to the New World, and the New World in the Jewish Consciousness of the Early Modern Era

Paolo Bernardini

It is both an honor and a pleasure to write the introductory pages to a book that includes essays written by the major international specialists in the field.[1] In the following pages I attempt to offer the reader a frame of reference for entering the fascinating and complex worlds examined in these essays. Every one of them offers an uncommon perspective and is the result of a major scholarly effort. This volume provides not only a broad overview of the complex encounter(s) between a European ethnic and religious minority and an entire continent newly "discovered" and immediately colonized, but also enlightens us with single, seemingly minor episodes that took place in the shadow of this major encounter. These essays—written by specialists in economic, social, political, and Jewish history, as well as in anthropology and geography—tell a story that has been scarcely told thus far, at least in its entirety. Since the time of the conquest, the Jewish presence in the Americas—North, South, and the Caribbean, as dealt with extensively in this volume—has been extremely meaningful. It is not an exaggeration—as will become clear by reading these essays—to state that Jews, both real Jews and crypto-Jews, marranos and *conversos*, have contributed deeply to the shaping of the political, social, and economic patterns of the New World. The contrary will also prove to be true; the New World has deeply influenced the destiny, as well as the character, of the Jewish "Nation," especially in liberal North America, but also in Central and South America and in the Caribbean islands.

The *terminus ante quem* of the essays presented in this book is set by the revolutions for independence in South America, in the early decades of the nineteenth century. For this reason, the most important chapter in the socioeconomic and demographic history of the American diaspora—the migration flood in the last decades of the nineteenth and the early decades of the twentieth centuries—is not touched upon. The book deals with the very first encounters, the first "colonization" by European Jews in the New World. For the most part these were Jews who were free to profess their own faith in the British and Dutch Americas, to a certain degree also in French America, and crypto-Jews, marranos, and *Cristãos novos* in Spanish and Portuguese America.

The "Jew" Christopher Columbus

Jewish involvement in the discovery and "conquest" of America begins as early as Columbus's enterprise. His daring esprit, his constant uneasiness with the Catholic establishment, and his twofold if cunning dealings with the highest political authorities of his time has turned Cristoforo Colombo, in the eyes of historians and writers, into a quasi-archetypal embodiment of the Renaissance taste for free, individual inquiry, intellectual freedom, and skepticism. Notwithstanding his personal uncertainties, actual difficulties, and greed, he cherished for a long time a dream that was eventually to be realized, even though in the end it turned out to be a *felix error*, for he aimed at opening up a new route west to reach the East Indies.

In a certain sense, Columbus was the first American, long before any white person settled in the vast if untamed landscapes of the Western Hemisphere. Not surprisingly, his quite extensive if utilitarian knowledge of contemporary sciences, as far as they were relevant to his enterprise—astronomy, geography, navigation—combined with his taste for action and adventure, lead some historians today to identify him as a perfect Renaissance man. Moreover, he faced the destiny of being identified as a Jew, or, at least, as a descendant of an Italian Jewish family only recently converted to Christianity. Undoubtedly, the "Jewish" factor in Columbus's personality is almost one with his peculiar Renaissance character: individualism, skepticism, willingness to challenge the powers that be while at the same time pleasing them.

The historiographical assumption about the Jewishness of Columbus and his family—from Hermann Kellenbenz in the late nineteenth century to Sarah Leibovici in the 1980s, and including Salvador de Madariaga—has been fiercely attacked by historians, on the grounds of substantial, if incomplete, documentary evidence to the contrary. Columbus does incarnate, however, a kind of adventurous and learned man, who challenges the established authorities, both political and intellectual, to reach into the unknown. If not a Jew, he was certainly a man of the Renaissance,

as much as Lorenzo de Medici, Leonardo da Vinci, and Michelangelo, all of whom dared to venture where others would or could not.

Although Columbus's "Jewishness" can be questioned and regarded as a myth, the very fact that the question is raised is worthy of reflection. The Renaissance, in its "spirit of initiative"—to paraphrase Felipe Fernández-Armesto—owes something to the Jewish spirit of inquiry and "skepticism." The most daring scientists and philosophers of the Renaissance, such as Marsilio Ficino and Pico, were decisively influenced by Jewish mysticism, and scholars are beginning just now to understand and reappraise the role of Kabbalah, prominent and so far neglected, in late Renaissance authors, such as Giordano Bruno. This is probably only the beginning of what is bound to become a major reassessment of Christian Renaissance thought.

An Old New World: Biblical Geography and the Impact of the New World on the Old

The idea of a "new world" was difficult to understand, even in the Renaissance. Time and space were somehow intertwined, leaving little or no room for novelty. The world was conceived of, according to a Classical paradigm, as getting older and older with the course of time. New beginnings in either space or time were not considered. According to the authority principle, to the unchallenged voice of the *auctoritates*—whether Jewish, Greek, or Latin—new lands had to be identified with those lands belonging to Classical geography. As is well known, Columbus himself set off to discover a new route to the Indies and never realized that he had in fact discovered a route to altogether new lands. The authority of the texts was rarely attacked, even in the intellectually daring context of the Renaissance, as Professor Anthony Grafton has brilliantly demonstrated. Thus, Columbus well epitomizes the spirit of his time. Daring, but not daring enough even to understand the full potential of his discoveries, the full meaning of the fruits of his spirit of initiative.

The first section of the present collection of essays deals with this set of problems. It offers the reader a prehistory of Jewish settlement in the New World. At the same time, this first part provides a wide intellectual framework, which will prove useful to better understand and assess the future role of the Jewish factor in the colonization of the New World, as well as the multiple relationships (social, economic, religious, intellectual) between Old and New World.

James Romm,[2] an expert on the geography of the "extremes," provides, in the opening essay, a learned and revealing reading of Columbus's and his contemporaries' geography, as it was related to biblical and Classical scholarship and sources. As was common in European biblical interpretation—at least until the time of Richard Simon, who began the tradition of critical and philological interpretation of the Scripture in the

second half of the seventeenth century—Columbus and his contemporaries treated the Bible as a unique and unchallengeable source of knowledge. Biblical geography offered not only names but even "clear" coordinates to locate places. When he landed on Hispaniola's wild shores, Columbus thought he had landed on Ophir, the mythical shore of King Solomon's travels (Gen. 1: 29, but especially I Kings 9: 28). Unfortunately, deeper readings of the Bible demonstrated that those geographical coordinates were far from precise—they were even vague and contradictory. It was therefore empirical investigation, along with more accurate readings of the text, that helped establish a better identification and naming of the known and unknown worlds after Columbus's path-breaking voyages.

Cosmography and the art of mapmaking acquired, slowly but definitively, the status of science. The process of undermining the ancient authorities had just begun, but the weight of those millennial authorities remained heavy nonetheless. Even the boldest freethinkers, anarchists of philosophy and philology such as Guillaume Postel and Isaac La Peyrère, had to come to terms with those *auctoritates*, and all their works seem entangled in this never-ending, potentially devastating confrontation. For even after the novelty of geography was eventually established and conventionally accepted, what about the ethnography? Where did those bizarre peoples come from? In what way did their existence confirm, or deny, the prophetic books of the Old Testament and the Second Coming announced by the prophet Daniel? Could we convert them all to Christianity, in order to fulfill the prophecies and make the Second Coming come faster?

James Romm's essay raises questions that are historically fundamental, the answers to some of which can be found in David S. Katz's and Benjamin Schmidt's essays, the first devoted to the "wandering of the lost ten tribes in America" from Menasseh ben Israel to present-day millennialism, and the second to "Menasseh ben Israel and the Dutch Idea of America." Here, biblical geography and ethnography—the myth of the Lost Ten Tribes—become matters of religious enthusiasm and political concern. In the seventeenth century, an era obsessed and fractured by religious fanaticism, millennialism, and judeophobia, Menasseh ben Israel made good use of the argument that the Lost Ten Tribes could be identified with the Native Americans—as support for the cause of the readmission of the Jews into England, a goal that he partially achieved.

Benjamin Schmidt[3] offers, in a highly informative essay, an original interpretation of America in Dutch history, politics, arts, and imagination during Menasseh ben Israel's time. Schmidt places Menasseh in the context of contemporary Dutch culture and Dutch proto-Americanism. The idea of applying a "Dutch republican dimension" to the "Sephardi profile" proves to be fertile and heuristically groundbreaking. In the early modern Jewish vision of the New World, the "republican," "freedom" factor plays a fundamental role, along with millennialism and other

peculiar adaptations of the "revelation" of the New World to particular, politically oriented visions and aims. What Schmidt says about Menasseh could be applied to other outstanding figures of the contemporary Sephardi community of Amsterdam, including the fascinating baroque poet Miguel Levi de Barrios (1635–1701), who traveled to Tobago in his youth and constantly kept the image of the New World in his poetic mind while at the same time praising Dutch republicanism and independence.

David S. Katz, the major international authority on Anglo-Jewish history, and the author of a fundamental book about the "readmission" of the Jews into England under Cromwell[4]—where the role played by Menasseh ben Israel in this context is somewhat reduced—offers a daring perspective on the offspring of millennial thought, from Menasseh to the contemporary fanatical sects haunting the United States and, to a lesser degree, Europe. Menasseh's *Hope of Israel* (*Mikveigh Yisrael*), in which millennialism plays a positive role in presenting the Jews in the most favorable light, in the Old as well as the New World, turns into an ill-fated, ill-starred nightmare when the Bible undergoes misleading, distorted interpretations by fanatical sects, rabble-rousers, anti-Semitic groups, and pseudo-pagan cults, such as the notorious "Children of Satan." Katz carefully describes four centuries of evolution/involution of millennial thought, showing how biblical exegesis, especially the exegesis of the prophetic books, is far from being a dead letter or just a matter for academic disputes.

The other two essays in the first part of the volume are concerned with what we could label the "view from within." Patricia Seed's and Noah J. Efron's essays offer a view of Jewish "technical contributions" to the discovery of the New World and of Jewish views and interpretations of America in the early modern era, respectively.

Patricia Seed, the author of an acute volume on the symbolic European "conquest" of the Americas,[5] offers a brief overview of the "Jewish" cosmography and sailing technology behind Columbus's and Vasco da Gama's enterprises. Without the first mariner's astrolabe, assembled by the Jewish astronomer Abraham Zacuto, who presented it personally to Vasco da Gama in 1497, not only da Gama's voyages but also subsequent travels to America would have been much more problematic.

Noah Efron's essay illuminates an area fairly neglected by previous scholarship. He analyzes the ways in which Jewish scholars, writing mainly in Hebrew and thus aiming at a Jewish public, understood and interpreted the discovery of the New World. The overall picture we get is more shaded and differentiated than that we can draw from contemporary non-Jewish authors. Millennial and apocalyptic veins are present, as well as the identification of the New World with the biblical Ophir, especially in Azariah de' Rossi and David Gans, but there are other, peculiarly Jewish, aspects that are not to be found in Christian authors. Often Jewish geographers and scientists saw in the New World an unexpected resource for their hopes of a better life, more or less theologically or

eschatologically founded. They perceived that the discoveries meant that the world was changing. For a people oppressed from time immemorial, a New World implied a new set of expectations, possibly a way out from disgrace and suffering. In this, the Jews were no less fascinated by the New World than other European minorities. In fact, they often anticipated and occasionally cherished an American, *the* American, dream. Like contemporary Christian scholars, Jewish geographers and historians tended toward a utilitarian, often parochial, vision of the New World. As Efron brilliantly demonstrates, Jewish understanding of the New World was closely related to Jews' understanding of their own biblical past as well as their dire contemporary plight. "Pure" science—interest in the natural world for its own sake—was hard to be found at that time, even in contemporary Christian thought. Erasmian *utilitas* and scriptural evidence were the keywords in humanist interpretation and in Renaissance thought in general. Efron's essay contributes in a special way to the long overdue rediscovery and reappraisal of Jewish science—in its positive, open-minded, and reciprocal relationships with gentile science—throughout the early modern period. This relationship has brilliantly emerged in recent scholarship, notably in the path-breaking works of André Neher, David B. Ruderman, and Raphael Patai, among others.

The Question of Identity: Marranos, New Christians, *Conversos* in Spanish and Portuguese America

While the first section of the volume addresses questions pertaining to intellectual history, the history of science, and theology, the second section approaches themes belonging more properly to socio-anthropological history. Whereas in British, Dutch, and to some extent French America the Jews could openly profess their faith, protected by toleration and, after the War of Independence, granted the full rights of citizens by the American constitution, the Jews in Spanish and Portuguese America had to conceal their identity. Their legal status and social condition mirrored exactly that present in the Iberian Peninsula after 1492 (for Spain) and 1497 (for Portugal). The Jewish migration to what we now call "Latin America" should be renamed, more precisely, the "New Christian migration." The fact that the New Christians in Latin America in the colonial era by far outnumbered the "daylight" Jews in North America makes the treatment of New Christian identity almost compulsory in this book. Before analyzing the prominent role that New Christians played in American society and economy, it is necessary to investigate who they in fact were, and how they represented themselves—or more often, *were* represented—by external sources (the Spanish civil and ecclesiastical authorities, the surrounding society).

Threatened by the Inquisition—"tribunal de los infiernos," according to a contemporary marrano poet, Antonio Enríquez Gómez (ca. 1600–63)—

and regularly surrounded by the hostility of the "pure blood" population, the New Christians in the New World often succeeded, nonetheless, in securing for themselves a stable position and a sound income by engaging in trade with Europe and North America, and by coming to terms with the hostile social and natural environment.

Robert Rowland, an international expert in historical demography and early modern social European history,[6] provides in his essay the methodological coordinates needed to identify, as well as to further analyze, the phenomenon of "marranism" and the figure of the marrano in the Iberian Peninsula before and after the expulsion of 1492. Rowland, partially accepting I. S. Revah's seminal definition of marrano religion as a "religion of will," describes the complex shape taken by Judaism in the practices and self-understanding of the New Christians. Marrano Judaism was primarily a religion constructed according to remembrance, to recollection, even to the image and understanding of it held and propagated by the Inquisition itself, occasionally labeled by historiography and New Christian popular opinion alike as a *fábrica de judeus*.

Referring to the Iberian Peninsula, Rowland deals with the key problem of "dual identity" (Catholic in the external world, Jewish in the secrecy of home and in familial networks) that characterized marranos well before the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 or their forced, even tragicomic, conversion in Portugal in 1497. Marrano identity thus becomes a sort of schizophrenia, although neither Rowland nor Nathan Wachtel in the following essay arrives at this extreme conclusion. The social and intimate conflicts that shaped marrano identity and conscience in the Old World were reproduced, with subtle differences, in the New World when the Inquisition was reproduced there with all its power, which was diminished only by the vastness of the territory. Marranism has certainly been a developing rather than a static faith. Even well-rounded faiths, such as Catholicism and Judaism, often unthreatened by social forces and much easier to grasp and define, were far from being frozen in the early modern era. Both were affected by reformatory streams, Protestantism in the first case, and Karaitism, Sabbateanism, Hassidism, Frankism, and other heresies in the other. Catholicism and Judaism underwent, at a theological and a social-individual level, major changes from 1400 onward.

Finally, Rowland correctly emphasizes the primary role played by Portuguese New Christians, both in Spain—to which they emigrated massively after 1580, the year of the union of the Spanish and Portuguese crowns—and in the New World. Their impact was felt not only in Brazil, of course, but also in the Spanish dominions, where they maintained for a long time a key role in trade.

Nathan Wachtel's essay should be read in close conjunction with Rowland's. Wachtel, whose most recent work, written together with Lucette Valensi, has shed a new, keen light on Judaism, memory, and identity in modern and contemporary Europe,[7] widens Rowland's concept of

"dual identity" to encompass the cognate one of "dual sincerity." Wachtel's unsurpassed knowledge of Andean historical anthropology[8] guides his masterly reconstruction, on the basis of selected cases, of marrano religious practices and beliefs in the seventeenth century. He demonstrates the complex syncretism of marrano religiosity—well exemplified by the awkward cult of "Saint" Moses—and the ways in which contemporary identity mingled with memories of the past (original Judaism) and messianic and political expectations (as in the hopes that arose among Portuguese New Christians, at home and in Hispanic America, regarding the reconquered independence of Portugal in 1640). The way in which marranism slowly lost its religious meaning and helped to bring about, in a certain sense, through memory and recollection, the reconstruction of a Jewish national identity is particularly interesting. Both Rowland's and Wachtel's essays invite a closer, serial as well as analytical investigation of marrano religiosity using the huge and invaluable sources of Inquisitorial trials and other external records. It is in the spirit of this book not only to offer a vast amount of new historical evidence and interpretation, but also to stimulate new research in uncommon directions and from original perspectives.

Solange Alberro's essay is based on her previous, extensive research on the Inquisition in New Spain.[9] Alberro describes the complex and fascinating ways in which the New Christians reconstructed and changed their own social and religious identity in Mexico during the seventeenth century. Outwardly acting as Spanish Christians—even singing the poems of Lope de Vega, an author who was certainly not a philosemite—they practiced their own version of Judaism at home. Alberro's essay illuminates the twofold interaction between New Christians and the Inquisition in New Spain. Belonging to the same social elite, Inquisition officers and New Christians to a certain extent shared a range of values; they even had reciprocal social intercourse on a friendly basis. Crypto-Judaism often could be so cryptic as to escape even the keen eyes of the Inquisition. The New Christian community in New Spain proved hard to destroy, and the Inquisition was frequently too weak to destroy crypto-Judaism.

After 1640, however, the situation changed for the worse. The newly reacquired independence of Portugal, after sixty years of Spanish domination, helped to create a web of suspicion in the Spanish American empire against the New Christians, most of whom were of Portuguese descent (at a certain point "portuguese" became another name for Jew, along with marranos and *conversos*). The New Christians were accused of being part of the *complicidad granda* ("Great Plot") to subvert the Spanish crown. From the point of view of the history of political thought, this is one of the first appearances of the conspiracy theory on a vast scale, long before Augustin Barruel (1741–1820) assigned it a firm status in political thought. The persecutions of the 1640s accelerated the process of assimilation of the New Christians, at the same time enlarging the gap between New Christian social layers, and, paradoxically, bringing about the

decline of the Inquisition itself, due to the dissolution of its major targets. Alberro's essay shows how the Inquisition followed a political formula, the creation of *Sozialdisziplinierung (*social discipline)—according to Otto Brunner's seminal definition—which was its main task in Europe (including Italy, as has been recently demonstrated by Adriano Prosperi).

Eva Alexandra Uchmany, the author of a lavishly illustrated and highly informative book on the New Christians in Spanish America,[10] offers in her essay a narrative description of the New Christians' and crypto-Jews' involvement in the colonization of Spanish America from the early sixteenth century until 1660. Uchmany's essay closes with an overview of the development of the New Christian community from 1660 to the late eighteenth century, almost on the eve of the Wars of Independence that freed Latin America from Iberian rule. Her approach, encompassing political, social, religious, and economic history, is most useful for understanding particular phases and aspects of New Christian history as they are dealt with in the essays that follow. Uchmany draws a distinction between the New Christians of Spanish and of Portuguese origins—to help us better identify the changes that affected the marrano presence in the New World—while analyzing in detail some peculiar, individual personalities. The profile and destiny of those New Christians belonging to economic and social elites is particularly striking. While they constituted an upwardly mobile social cluster, because of their (concealed) faith they were at the same time subject to constant fear, blackmail, and pressure exerted by authorities as well as by the surrounding community. Their future was often doomed, and their lives uneasy. Uchmany's views of the New Christian experience in Spanish America is less positive than that offered by Alberro. At the same time, the two perspectives can—if carefully read and understood—co-exist.

The last essay in this section of the book, by Günter Böhm, deals with the experience, in the long term, of the crypto-Jews and *conversos* in colonial Peru and Chile. Professor Böhm,[11] a leading authority on this subject and a follower of the masterly scholarly tradition inaugurated by José Toribio Medina, offers a brief account of the problem of historical sources for the study of the New Christians in Chile. At the same time, through some individual examples as well as a serial overview of the Inquisitorial trials, Böhm demonstrates how the evolution of marranism in Chile paralleled the trend throughout Spanish America, with an increased number of trials in the 1630s and 1640s during the time of the "Great Plot." That New Christians did not emigrate to Chile before a comparatively rich economy had emerged bears a certain typicality. New Christians and crypto-Jews tended to migrate where the economy was already flourishing, or where at least it showed promise of growth. New Christians and Jews alike were rarely pioneers in wastelands, where everything, including trade and markets, had to be built. This fact differentiates those minorities from other religious sects—such as Quakers, Mormons, and Hutterites in North America—endowed with a more

"pioneering" spirit and more able to start in an undeveloped land the primary economic activity needed to make it grow: agriculture.

The Jews in Portuguese America

Anita Novinsky,[12] a well-known expert on Brazilian-Jewish history, discloses a new chapter in the history of the New Christian community in Brazil. Focusing on a relatively late time period, the first half of the eighteenth century—a time of decline for the New Christians in Spanish America—Novinsky offers a detailed view, based on extensive archival research, of the marranos in the vast Brazilian region of Minas Gerais. The results of this case study show interesting differences between the New Christian experience in Spanish America and that in Portuguese America. In the latter, for instance, a still vigorous New Christian community proved to be more daring in colonization and participated, along with some 300,000 Portuguese, in the rush for gold that exploded at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Novinsky's essay casts new light also upon the process of secularization undergone by the New Christians in the first half of the eighteenth century, which can be fruitfully compared with the same occurrence in Europe among professing Jews. Skepticism—not as a philosophy but as a way of life—and agnosticism became common among the Minas Gerais New Christians in this period.

Novinsky discerningly discusses both current and classical (Max Weber) interpretations of the social and economic meaning of religion. Of particular interest is the assumption, shared by some contemporary historians, including Novinsky herself, that the introduction of the Inquisition in Portugal was "a reaction to European economic growth, namely, the development of a competitive and upwardly mobile mercantile middle class, which inserted itself into the spheres of power, thereby threatening the aristocracy's political and financial hegemony." Can this theory be applied to Brazil as well? In her brilliant and massively documented essay, Novinsky addresses this fundamental question. The competition between New and Old Christians in Brazilian markets seems to have offered the latter a comparative advantage over the former, in that New Christians could be accused of crypto-Judaism, which had the effect of diminishing their economic power. Religion and economy play, in this context, a role even subtler than that conferred on them in Max Weber's or Werner Sombart's classical analyses. Finally, the process of secularization led the New Christians slowly to attach to Judaism not a religious but an ideological, "national" meaning. From this perspective, Novinsky's conclusions seem to coincide with the interpretation of marranism put forward by Nathan Wachtel in his essay.

Geraldo Pieroni's essay deals with the prehistory of New Christian settlement in Brazil, namely the banishment of New Christians from Portugal to Brazil, and is mainly derived from his in-depth analysis of the

phenomenon presented initially in his doctoral dissertation.[13] Pieroni gives a substantial account of Portuguese trials and the subsequent exile to America. He shows how this form of punishment fit into the legal and theological schemes of the Inquisition and was conceived of as a kind of "purgatory" to prepare for full conversion to Christianity and the return home. It was a purgatory that turned into hell for many, but also into a paradise for quite a few, who decided not to return home and to settle in the bountiful New World. Pieroni's essay is in conformity with the most recent European historiography about the Inquisition, which includes such works as Francisco Bethencourt's pioneering research on European Inquisitions in comparative perspective.

The New Christians in French America

The fourth section of this book deals with a subject that has so far received very little scholarly attention: the history of the Jews and the New Christians in the French colonies in the Americas. Gérard Nahon,[14] a leading authority on Sephardi and French-Jewish history, offers a precise overview of the "American dimension" of the Jews in Bayonne. Contrary to Bordeaux, which has been studied in depth, Bayonne, a relatively minor harbor on the French Atlantic coast, has been generally neglected by scholars, at least with relation to its Portuguese Jewish community. The Portuguese Jews of Bayonne, whose religious identity (Jews? New Christians?) was socially and legally unclear until the French Revolution, played an important role in commerce with the Americas. As so often happens—and Fernand Braudel has once and for all demonstrated—trade at the same time implied and fostered cultural exchanges. This is true not only at the level of elite culture—and the case of Daniel Lopez Laguna, the author of a splendid translation of the Psalms into Spanish (1720), seems quite isolated—but especially at the level of cultural practices and imagination. Bayonne Jews cherished a certain kind of "American dream" which "pervaded conversations and thoughts"; as Nahon presents it, they "interiorized" American spaces in a peculiar way. Some of them once again brought credibility to the myth that the Lost Ten Tribes were located in America. Nahon, focusing mainly on the eighteenth century, solidly demonstrates how the American dimension was also instrumental in enabling Bayonne Jews to strengthen their own socioeconomic position in France. This fact can be confirmed by the substantial weight carried by the French Atlantic Jewish community during the French Revolution.

Silvia Marzagalli[15] brings a new and fresh perspective to one of the most studied among the Jewish communities in France: that of Bordeaux. Focusing once again on the eighteenth century—when Bordeaux rose to national prominence as a port of trade—Marzagalli analyzes the commercial and familial *réseaux* that gave to the Sephardi merchants of Bordeaux

a comparative advantage in Atlantic colonial trade. By using Zvi Loker's argument to identify this advantage that the Jews possessed in comparison to non-Jewish merchants—namely, "family networks," "higher geographical mobility," and "knowledge of foreign languages" —Marzagalli sketches out a line of continuity and evolution in the economic history of the Bordeaux Jews. She demonstrates that the comparative advantage was to be found especially in the "tertiary" sectors of the economy: banking and insurance. She also most appropriately regards political and social history as deeply intertwined, while presenting some notable examples of Jewish mercantile families. Marzagalli takes into account both the direct and the indirect (investments, finance, insurance) participation of Jewish merchants in the Atlantic trade. Her conclusion goes against any typicality in the Bordeaux case. On the basis of the evidence, and for a variety of historical reasons, the case of Bordeaux appears to be unique. Only some comparisons can be made—though merely in quantitative terms—with the Jewish merchants of Bayonne, studied by Nahon.

Mordechai Arbell[16] provides, in his long and detailed study, a most useful mapping of the social, legal, and political conditions of the Jews in the French Caribbean colonies. Arbell shows how the conditions under which the Jews lived were altered by the passage from the overtly tolerant regime of the Dutch to French rule. The legal entitlements of the Jews became unclear and shifting, and the restrictive power of the Catholic Church often overwhelming. Arbell clearly describes the various economic activities practiced by the Jews in the Caribbean area, especially sugar production and trade. He also stresses the political weight of the coalition of Jesuits and French planters—how a mix of social envy and religious hatred blended and resulted in the expulsion of the Jews from Guadeloupe and Martinique. The relationship between the political events in France and those occurring in the colonies is of particular interest. Often, policy toward the Jews in the French Caribbean mirrored and followed developments at home; occasionally, it went its own way. The situation in Haiti is of particular interest, especially after the revolution, when a large number of Jews married freed slaves, gradually constituting the Haitian middle class—a phenomenon not easily found elsewhere.

A gem of scholarship, John Garrigus's[17] essay addresses the complex question of citizenship in Saint-Domingue in the quarter-century preceding the French Revolution. The flow of racial, geopolitical, and religious ideas from France into the colonies—from Montesquieu to Buffon and Grégoire, from the Enlightenment to revolutionary ideology—is analyzed here with a particular reference to the evolution, in terms of social standing and legal status, of all the social and ethnic components of colonial Saint-Domingue: Jews, free people of color, French whites. The first lines of the essay—which somewhat epitomize its main points—are worth quoting in full:

> The case of Saint-Domingue's Sephardim illustrates that the story of the Jews in Europe's expansion westward is about more than the survival or mutation of deeply rooted family traditions. Old World questions about Jewish political identity did not disappear in the Americas. Rather, these persistent issues forced colonists and their children born in the New World to reconcile new European philosophies with American conditions. In the case of the largest slave colony in the Caribbean, Saint-Domingue's Jews helped translate emerging French nationalism into an attack on racial prejudice that eventually produced the Haitian Revolution. By raising complex issues of national identity and citizenship in French America after 1763, Sephardic merchants and planters provided a model for another group whose place in colonial society was equally ambiguous: Saint-Domingue's free people of color.

Garrigus's essay sets methodological guidelines that can be fruitfully applied to other situations, such as those of the Jews in Dutch and British America. Legal status, social aspirations, and economic positions interact in this analysis, and it appears clearly that a precise picture of the New Christian plight cannot be gained without simultaneously taking into account all of these factors. Saint-Domingue became the playground for ill-fated attempts at racial integration and for the formation of a "New White" elite with racial (and not necessarily religious) connotation. Finally, it was there that Jews and free men of color cooperated in the creation of Haiti, in 1804, "a new American nation with a racial identity all its own."

The Jews in Dutch America

Jonathan I. Israel, the author of a recent and comprehensive survey of Dutch history,[18] as well as several other groundbreaking works of socioeconomic and political history[19]—among them, the most challenging account of the social role of European Jewry in the early modern age[20]—opens the fifth section of this volume. His essay deals with the Jewish experience in Dutch America in its entirety, offering a panoramic view of the subject. Israel's essay shows how Jews could flourish in the Caribbean colonies under Dutch rule, constructing a powerful trade network and engaging in the production of sugar cane and other colonial goods. While the Caribbean Jews gained an overwhelming economic weight in the eighteenth century, the Jews in Dutch Brazil—for the relatively short span of time during which Brazil was under Dutch control, before returning to the Portuguese flag—thrived in the 1630s and 1640s. This period, studied by Israel mainly from a socioeconomic perspective, appears to be extremely interesting if also approached from a religious and social point of view. Under Portuguese rule, New Christians could not legally and openly practice their Jewish faith, whereas during the brief though intense period of Dutch control over Brazil, New Christians had the possibility of reverting to open Judaism. Did they do so? How many made this choice? The subject is of particular interest because this

kind of sudden change of political rule is quite unique in Latin American history.

Israel's essay is mainly concerned, however, with economic matters. It depicts in great detail the differences between the two main Jewish communities in the Dutch Caribbean, namely Curaçao—the "Amsterdam of the Caribbean"—and Suriname, while offering also a brief sketch of Barbados and Jamaican Jewry. Its conclusions are of the greatest significance. In the first place, it appears clearly that in religious matters the Dutch were far less tolerant in the colonies than at home. The flourishing of Jewish trade was thus due more to a socioeconomic conjuncture than to a peculiarly liberal toleration policy. Furthermore, with pertinence to the Jews both in the brief Dutch-Brazilian period, and to the Caribbean Jews under Dutch rule, Israel highlights the ways in which Jews in "another environment" (to quote Robert Cohen) built a new kind of Jewish society, based on economic activities—such as tropical agriculture—quite different from any European model.

A closer analysis of the Jews in Dutch Suriname and Curaçao is provided by Wim Klooster, to whom we owe two outstanding recent publications on the colonial Dutch experience in the New World.[21] Klooster's essay—based on a vast amount of archival materials—portrays in detail the life of Jews in Suriname and Curaçao. The former constructed a remarkably solid agricultural colony, based on sugar cane; the latter instead developed, during the same period, a strong mercantile economy, originally based on smuggling. The experience in Suriname contradicts ipso facto the latent judeophobic assumption, commonly held in Europe at that time, that Jews could not practice agriculture and did not like it. It comes as no surprise that the Surinamese Jews sent a note of thanks to the Prussian writer Christian Wilhelm von Dohm, who, as late as 1781, published in Berlin a strong plea in favor of the betterment of the civil and legal conditions of the Jews in Europe. In that work Dohm maintained that the Jews could indeed be good farmers, as they were in biblical times. The case of Suriname and Curaçao Jewry well demonstrates the truth of all pro-Jewish literature from Simone Luzzatto in the early seventeenth century to Henri Grégoire in the late eighteenth: if granted a certain degree of toleration and liberty, Jews could substantially contribute to any kind of state economy. The staple market of Curaçao and the sugar plantations of Suriname were a convenient outlet for investments from Holland, when investment opportunities had decreased in the homeland. Well into the eighteenth century, these two Dutch-Jewish colonies flourished, starting to decline only in the last third of the eighteenth century in conjunction with a major decline in the world (and especially European) economy. Those colonial societies offered a splendid testing ground for daring businessmen and adventurers. Klooster's essay closes with a biographical sketch of one of these men (Felipe Henriquez, 1589–1656), who moved from marranism to international diplomacy, from smuggling to high society.

James Homer Williams's essay opens still another chapter in the history of the Jews in Dutch America. His perspective is comparative in its methodology and highly enlightening in its results. Williams takes into account side by side the development of the legal and social position of the Jews in Amsterdam and that of the Jews in New Amsterdam and Dutch Brazil. If compared to the situation in Amsterdam, the plight of the Jews in Brazil, and especially in New Amsterdam, appears to be far less happy. Especially in New Amsterdam the Jews faced a twofold hostility: on the one hand, they entered a market where Dutch merchants already held a prominent position; hence, there was no empty space for Jewish traders to conquer. At the same time, New Amsterdam's governor Peter Stuyvesant was a fierce enemy of the Jews—whom he constantly defined as a "deceitful race"—along with all faiths other than the Reformed. After 1664, when New Amsterdam fell into British hands, and was renamed, *faute de mieux*, New York, things started to change, and the Jews began to enjoy a much more tolerant regime. Williams carefully describes the parallel evolution of British policy toward the Jews at home and in the colonies; as a result, it seems clear that in New York Jews enjoyed a toleration even more advanced than was the case in London.

A different economic situation—namely, a broader array of opportunities—was to be found by the Jews in Dutch Brazil. Williams underlines the different personality of Brazil's governor, Johan Maurits, who was no less a Calvinist than Stuyvesant but far more oriented toward a pragmatic form of toleration. The West India Company encouraged Jewish migration to Brazil, where Jews could serve—as Williams describes it with a most acute definition—as "cultural brokers" with the Portuguese. The Calvinist zeal of Stuyvesant—at a time and in a city affected by a peculiar religious laxity that touched upon almost every faith and believer—prevented the Jews from blossoming in New Amsterdam. The moderate open-mindedness of Count Maurits, on the other hand, made Brazil a place where Jews were able to reach a remarkable degree of well-being. The "force of personality"—evoked here with the utmost opportunity by Williams, and a for a long time considered as a *quantité négligeable* by historiography—clearly played a major role in the two different destinies faced by the Jews in Brazil and New Amsterdam respectively.

The final essay of the "Dutch" section brings us a new and fresh perspective on Surinamese Jewry. Rachel Frankel offers here the fruits of her long-lasting, passionate involvement in the architectural history of "Jodensavanne," the flourishing Jewish colony on the Suriname River. The essay shows all the potential of architectural history as a form of, inter alia, historical anthropology of space. The focus is on the synagogue and the cemetery of the Jodensavanne. Though the model remained that of Dutch religious and civic architecture, the Jodensavanne Jews, freed from any external pressure and free to confer on public and private spaces new meanings and functions, erected their own synagogue in 1685, ten years after the construction of the main Sephardic temple in

Amsterdam. The synagogue, ideally located at the very center of a very linear village, served as a symbol of faith and social cohesion.

The differences characterizing this building, internally and externally, in comparison with the Amsterdam model are full of meaning; they point toward a new appraisal both of the social significance of faith in Suriname and of the social structure of the community. Here, Jews were not only free, but also at the top of the social hierarchy. Though a minority, they constituted the ruling class. The population counted an overwhelming majority of black slaves, few whites, and some Ashkenazi and even black Jews, the latter newly converted to the faith of the elite. Jews found themselves for the first time in a situation of privilege, certainly not shared by their co-religionists in even the tolerant United Provinces. For the first time in the Jodensavanne, according to Frankel's fascinating account, "Jews had the opportunity to design virgin landscape and construct it according to their needs, beliefs, and hopes."

Frankel's detailed description of Jodensavanne architecture provides a clear view of what this meant at a practical level. Of utmost interest also is the interaction—expressed even in architectural terms—between Jewish and African culture. There is evidence, such as in Paramaribo's (the capital city of Suriname) Jewish cemetery, that the two different cultures and religions found points of contact, especially anthropologically, for they took place in the exceptionally symbolic terrain of death and remembrance. Frankel's essay closes with an analysis of other important Surinamese synagogues, those of Paramaribo built in 1723 and 1735 respectively. Here, the space seems to lose, in its squared essentiality, all the messianic hopes and sense of freedom present in the Jodensavanne synagogue.

The Jewish Factor in the Atlantic Economy

The opening essay of this section, devoted to Jewish involvement in the Atlantic economy during the colonial era, is a definitive reassessment of the role played by Jews and New Christians in the Atlantic slave trade. This subject—which carries an enormous meaning not only at the historiographical, but also at the "ideological," public opinion level—has been addressed by a leading specialist in the history of the British involvement in the slave trade, and in the history of slavery in general. Seymour Drescher[22] provides a detailed analysis of the Jewish and New Christian participation in the Atlantic slave trade from the beginning until the late eighteenth century. His study takes into account not only purely economic factors, but also the ways in which those factors were interrelated with social background and legal distinctions using the classical division (in three phases) of the Atlantic slave trade: the first phase, from 1500 to 1640, during which a relatively minor number of black slaves were exported to the Americas; the second phase, from 1640 to 1700, which

saw the number of slaves forcibly embarked to the New World triple in number; and the final phase, between 1700 and the British abolition of 1807, when the number of slaves exported from Africa reached a peak (6,686,000, according to the most accurate estimate, outnumbering by far the sums in the forced migrations of the two previous phases).

Drescher demonstrates that only in the second phase did Jews play a major role in the trade, especially in the Dutch Caribbean colonies. As for the first phase, he concludes that "the only accounts of prominent Jewish presence in this initial process of oceanic exploration and trade are related to the scientific and cartographic experts mobilized by Prince Henry the Navigator to track his African exploratory expeditions." The matter was different for the New Christians. They had a large share in the Iberian slave trade, which was never to be matched by that played by observant Jews, not even in the second phase of the Atlantic slave trade. According to Drescher, they could count on "trustworthy interlocking agents and trained apprentices," vital in this kind of trade. Furthermore, in broader terms, "if their quasi-pariah religious status kept them at least once removed from institutional power, that same status tended to make them most effective in a world where opportunities for long-term credit were dependent upon kinship and trust." Drescher also analyzes the function of the Jews in the French slave trade, identifying the Bordeaux Gradis family—an extremely interesting though rather unique case of extraordinary Jewish socioeconomic success—as one of the major slave traders in eighteenth-century France. In the last and massive phase of African slave traffic, however, the Jewish role was much constricted by the competition of other mercantile, often quasi-government, networks, and Jews clearly played a minor role in this trade.

On the other hand, Jews, and especially New Christians, played a very substantial part in a milder and less risky trade, that of sugar. James C. Boyajian, a leading authority on Portuguese economic history, particularly in its international dimension,[23] offers a carefully documented picture of Jewish and New Christian involvement in the sugar trade from 1550 to 1750. The essay shows how and why Jews and New Christians achieved a prominence in this particular trade. The New Christians had developed a production-trade cycle, financing sugar cane production through the slave trade, but also through the trade of sugar itself.

At a certain point between 1650 and 1750, when sugar consumption lost its luxury character and became, along with other colonial products, a staple consumed massively in Europe, its producers reached the peak of wealth. Boyajian highlights the international dimension of New Christian trade in the American colonies, the ways and routes that linked the West and the East Indies, and the value of the import of Oriental luxury commodities, such as silk, which became fashionable not only in Europe, but also among the New Christian elites in the New World. In general, the commercial activities of the New Christians followed the ebb and flow of Atlantic trade throughout the early modern era. At a certain point,

with the possessions of Angola, Brazil, and Goa, the Portuguese could have—and indeed had—control over a large portion of international trade. It comes as no surprise that New Christians took advantage of this fortunate situation.

Ernst Pijning's[24] essay provides a close description of the New Christian sugar cultivators and traders in Brazil until ca. 1800. Here economic history is fruitfully intertwined with social and religious data. Pijning's study, which includes a detailed survey of the terminology that identified the social layers in Portuguese Brazil, is revealing of the social plight and mobility of the New Christian elite of traders and planters. New Christians generally wanted to be seen as Old, in order to ascend the social ladder and integrate into the majority. This was true especially for the elites: a phenomenon that broadly mirrored what was happening in Europe between 1750 and 1900, when socially prominent Jews, in order to increase their prestige and enter public careers, converted to Christianity. New Christians, already more or less forcibly converted for generations, had on the contrary to demonstrate to the external world that they could be considered in toto as Old Christians.

Pijning offers a fascinating view, almost from within, of Portuguese colonial society. He demonstrates that the Inquisition acted with the concealed aim of attacking an upwardly mobile socioeconomic cluster and that religious dogmatism served as an external justification. He also shows that, in spite of legal restraints, New Christians surprisingly succeeded in acquiring public office, which was a means of protecting themselves from the Inquisition and securing a firm place in the social hierarchy. Finally, it is of particular interest to learn that sugar cultivation, although less economically rewarding, enabled cultivators to gain much more prestige than they could have obtained by engaging in trade, a situation that once more reflects, in the New World, a common European mentality deeply rooted in the European upper class well into the nineteenth century.

Closing this section of the book, Pieter Emmer's study skillfully locates the "Jewish moment," from 1580 to 1650, in a broad, world-history context of the two expansion systems in the Atlantic. Emmer,[25] an authority on Dutch colonial and economic history, provides an international and comparative framework that enables us to understand the Jewish role in the Atlantic economy from a macro-historical perspective. His views, which could arouse vigorous debate among historians, help us to understand better the contents and general implications of what has been written by the other authors in the section. The essay displays in chrono-geographical detail the differences between the Iberian and the British-Dutch-French expansion systems, and the reasons that the Spanish economy never reached the prominence it could well have gained thanks to its immense possessions. It also shows why and how the Portuguese reached international prominence, which was later lost owing to the relative backwardness of their political and religious systems. Finally, the

essay deals with the felicitous momentum of the Dutch economy between 1600 and 1650, and with the emergence of the British to international prominence in the late seventeenth and particularly in the eighteenth centuries. The role the Jews played in those macro-systems was dependent upon, and subordinate to, the trends of development and decline of those systems themselves. Rather than determining them, the Jews were, as individual economic agents, almost completely conditioned by them. The Jews, normally very flexible, could not adapt, however, to the new, global economic international system that emerged in the eighteenth century. In their capacity of economic actors, as were the Genoese, the British, the Germans, and so on, the Jews were affected by historical ebbs and flows. Their economic importance occasionally reached the highest peaks; occasionally, also, the global economic momentum was unfavorable to them: as in England before the expulsion of 1290, or during the Genoese prominence in world trade until 1600, or, to cite but another example, in Germany before and during the Weimar Republic. It is against this background of world history that the Jewish (and New Christian) socioeconomic factor must be located and understood.

The Jews in Colonial British America

The final section of this book contains a single essay. The research that has been done on the Jews in colonial British America is—relative to the actual number of Jews living in North America before 1800—immense. No more than two thousand were in North America before 1800, a figure comparable to the Jews living in the Italian Ghetto of Mantua alone at the same time. From Salo Wittmayer Baron to Jacob Rader Marcus, scholars of Jewish history have offered multiple accounts of this subject. They have dug out from archives and other repositories a huge number of documents, and published some of them. The flood of publications on the subject seems unlimited, and even major scholars normally more engaged with other subjects, such as Arthur Hertzberg, have devoted volumes to the Jewish experience in Anglo-America before and after the birth of the United States.

Still, as is always the case in historiography, a much plowed field has not, for that reason alone, to be deserted. The Jews in North America were far from isolated, and the vertical line of their trade to Central and South America, often involving New Christian partners, for instance, is fascinating, although not comparable, in scope, to the Atlantic "horizontal" routes.

It is a matter of pride to conclude this volume with an essay by Jonathan D. Sarna. His commitment to, and his knowledge of, American-Jewish history, from the colonial time to the present, is unsurpassed. Sarna's research encompasses a wide variety of aspects of this history, from the relationship with Israel to single case studies, such as Jewish communities (Cincinnati, Boston) and Jewish personalities. They are too

numerous to quote in a single footnote.[26] His constant effort to overcome a parochial approach to Jewish history has become a model for scholarship. Attention to the interactions among cultures—and not only between a majority and a minority (concepts themselves particularly risky in the American "melting pot")—is heuristically and methodologically the most rewarding way not only to approach Jewish history but also to understand other histories, other stories.

Sarna's essay leads us back to the religious dimension of the Jewish experience in colonial America, that is to say, to the core of Judaism, for it can be argued that Judaism is first and foremost religion, faith—much more than the "ethnic" or "racial" or later "national" character, insofar as these factors can ever be separated from "religion." It is traditional religious observance that explains the unique bond of the people of Israel (at least from the Middle Ages, if not from 70 A.D.) that Sarna painstakingly traces, the peculiarities of North American colonial Judaism, and the multiple ways in which it "was becoming increasingly distinctive from its European counterpart." Jewish religion had to confront a new environment and a new society, and at the same time, the first Jews who migrated to the New World in the seventeenth century aimed at preserving Judaism, in its religious and messianic dimension, against the potential threat of this new, wild, and untamed environment. This was also true of the spiritual leaders of every religious minority that migrated to the New World. Thus, the leaders of the Jewish communities acted more in the religious than in the social and legal spheres. They did not maintain the overwhelming power of the European *kahal*, the communal organization that served as a guild, dominating every aspect of the life of families as well as individuals. Because of this difference in America, the violent confrontations between single individuals and Jewish communal authority, which we find in eighteenth-century Euro-Jewish history, did not take place in the Western Hemisphere.

Nothing comparable to a Jewish "state within the state" took root on American soil. Before and especially after the American Revolution, American Jewry tended to rely on the laws of the secular state for every aspect of their social life, whereas religion itself became an intimate way to preserve tradition and to adore God. Still, as Sarna brilliantly demonstrates, there were tensions between the "demands of Jewish law and the norms of the larger secular or Christian society in which Jews moved." "Religious laxity" was also very frequent. "Diversity" was a peculiar mark of distinction in American religious life in a more radical way than was the case in Europe, at least for the same period: "Within every community, even within many individual families, a full gamut of religious observances and attitudes could be found, a spectrum ranging all the way from deep piety to total indifference." At the same time, American colonial Jews—probably, but not necessarily, because of this phenomenon—"felt more comfortable interacting with Christians than Jews did in most parts of the world." Intermarriage between Jews and Christians—

a phenomenon not infrequent in Europe, but which required preliminary conversion to Christianity of the Jewish partner—was impressively recurrent, for 10 to 15 percent of all Jewish marriages in the colonial period were intermarriages, a figure not found anywhere else in the Jewish world.

A Milder Colonization

Jews and New Christians came to America along with all the other "nations," at the very beginning of the colonization. Contrary to the other nations—Spain, Portugal, France, Holland, Britain—they had no fleet or army, no West India Company or major public support, for they had no *state* of their own. In some of its peculiar traits their colonization of the New World followed the main character of every national colonization. Yet the fact that they did not have a nation-state at home fostered in them the desire to settle if not in their *own* state at least in a free country that could eventually become a secure haven to protect their faith and existence. This is precisely what happened in North America. In South America, after the revolutions of the nineteenth century, freedom of conscience was allowed, but anti-Semitism was and is still present to a degree unknown in North America. Jews came to America full of hope. Menasseh ben Israel's messianic and political work, *Hope of Israel*, which helped bring about the readmission of the Jews in Britain, also became (though without probably any direct or implicit reference to that work) the name of two important early synagogues in two major centers of American Judaism, Curaçao and Philadelphia. It is in the hope that this volume will help bring about better understanding and offer valuable insight into American Judaism—in its multiple interactions with Europe and the rest of the world—that I would like to close this introduction and invite the reader to approach the text.

Notes

1. This essay is dedicated to the memory of Antonello Gerbi and Giuliano Gliozzi. It was completed during my stay at The Institute for Advanced Study (Princeton) as a Member of the School of Historical Studies in the academic year 1998–1999.
2. James Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought: Geography, Exploration and Fiction* (Princeton, 1992); *Herodotus* (New Haven, 1998).
3. Benjamin Schmidt, *Innocence Abroad: The Dutch Imagination and the Representation of the New World* (Cambridge, forthcoming).
4. David S. Katz, *The Jews in the History of England* (Oxford, 1994); idem, *Philo-Semitism and the Readmission of the Jews to England 1603–1655* (Oxford, 1982).
5. Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of The New World* (Cambridge, 1995).
6. Robert Rowland and Isabell Moll Blanes, eds., *La demographia y la historia de la familia* (Murcia, 1997); Robert Rowland and Renzo Derosas, eds., *Informatica e fonti storiche* (Bologna, 1991); Robert Rowland, *Antropologia, historia e diferenca: alguns aspectos* (Porto, 1987).
7. Lucette Valensi and Nathan Wachtel, *Memoires juives* (Paris, 1986) (English translation, Berkeley, 1991).
8. Nathan Wachtel, *Le Retour des ancêtres: les indiens Urus de Bolivie, XXe–XVIe siècle: essai d'histoire regressive* (Paris, 1990); *La Vision des vaincus: les indiens du Perou devant la conquête espagnole 1530–1570* (Paris, 1971) (English translation, New York, 1977).
9. Solange Alberro, *La actividad del Santo Ufficio de la Inquisición en Nueva España* (Mexico, 1981); *Inquisition et société au Mexique 1571–1700* (Mexico, 1988); *Les Espagnols dans le Mexique colonial. Histoire d'une acculturation* (Paris, 1992).
10. Eva Alexandra Uchmany, *La vida entre el Judaismo y el Cristianismo en la Nueva España 1580–1606* (Mexico City, 1994).
11. Günther Böhm, *Historia de los Judios en Chile* (Santiago, 1984); *Judios en el Peru durante el siglo XIX* (Santiago, 1984).
12. Anita Novinsky and Diane Kuperman, eds., *Iberia judaica: roteiro de memoria* (São Paulo, 1996); Anita Novinsky, *Inquisicão: rol dos culpados: fontes para a historia do Brasil (seculo XVIII)* (Rio de Janeiro, 1992); *Cristãos novos de Bahia* (São Paulo, 1972).
13. Geraldo Pieroni, *Les exclus du Royaume: l'Inquisition portugaise et le bannissement au Brésil, XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1996). See also his *Purgatorio colonial: inquisicão portuguesa e degredo no Brasil* (Lisboa, 1994).
14. Gérard Nahon, *La Terre sainte au temps de kabbalistes 1492–1592* (Paris, 1997); *Métropoles et périphéries séfarades d'Occident: Kairouan, Amsterdam, Bayonne, Bordeaux, Jerusalem* (Paris, 1993); *Inscriptions hebraiques et juives de la France médiévale* (Paris, 1986). Nahon, together with Henri Méchoulan, has also provided the contemporary reference edition of a work most relevant to this text, *Hope of Israel* by Menasseh ben Israel (Paris, 1979). The introductory essay and the commentary by Nahon and Méchoulan have been translated into English, in the reprint of the 1652 English translation of the *Esperança de Israel* by Moses Hall (Oxford, 1987).
15. Silvia Marzagalli, *I negozianti delle città portuali in età napoleonica. Amburgo, Bordeaux e Livorno di fronte al blocco continentale 1806–1813* (Ph.D. diss., EUI) (Florence 1993).
16. Mordechai Arbell, *La Nacion. The Spanish and Portuguese Jews in the Caribbean* (Tel Aviv, 1981) (bilingual, English-Hebrew account of Arbell's archeological trips to the Caribbean islands); Mordechai Arbell, comp., *Spanish and Portuguese Jews in the Caribbean and the Guianas: A Bibliography* (Providence and New York, 2000).
17. John D. Garrigus, *A Struggle for Respect: The Free Coloreds of Pre-revolutionary Saint-Domingue 1760–1769* (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University) (Baltimore, 1998).
18. Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness and Fall 1477–1806* (Oxford, 1995).
19. Jonathan I. Israel, *Dutch Primacy in the World Trade 1585–1740* (Oxford, 1989); *Empires and Entrepots: The Dutch, the Spanish Monarchy and the Jews, 1585–1713* (London, 1990);

Conflicts of Empires: Spain, the Low Countries and the Struggle for World Supremacy 1585–1713 (London, 1997).

20. Jonathan I. Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism 1550–1750* (Portland, 1998).
21. Wim Klooster, *Illicit Riches: Dutch Trade in the Caribbean 1648–1795* (Leiden, 1998); *The Dutch in the Americas: A Narrative History with the Catalogue of an Exhibition of Rare Prints, Maps and Illustrated Books from The John Carter Brown Library* (Providence, 1997).
22. Seymour Drescher, *From Slavery to Freedom: Comparative Studies in the Rise and Fall of Atlantic Slavery* (New York, 1999); *Capitalism and Antislavery: British Mobilization in Comparative Perspective* (London, 1986); *Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition* (Pittsburgh, 1977).
23. James C. Boyajian, *Portuguese Trade in Asia under the Habsburgs 1580–1650* (Baltimore, 1993); *Portuguese Bankers at the Court of Spain 1620–1650* (New Brunswick, 1983).
24. Ernst Pijning, *Controlling Contraband: Mentality, Economy and Society in Eighteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro* (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University) (Baltimore, 1997).
25. Pieter C. Emmer and Femme Gaastra, eds., *The Organization of Interoceanic Trade in European Expansion 1450–1800* (Aldershot, 1996); Pieter C. Emmer et al., eds., *Wirtschaft und Handel der Kolonialreiche* (Munich, 1988); Pieter C. Emmer, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Economy 1580–1880: Trade, Slavery and Emancipation* (Aldershot, 1998).
26. But see, e.g., Jonathan D. Sarna, ed., *The American Jewish Experience* (New York, 1997); Jonathan D. Sarna and Nancy H. Klein, eds., *The Jews of Cincinnati* (Cincinnati, 1989); Jonathan D. Sarna, *Jacksonian Jew: The Two Worlds of Mordechai Noah* (New York, 1981); *Hebrew Sources in American History* (Cincinnati, 1981).

Part I

The Old New World: Ideas and Representations of America in European and Jewish Consciousness and Intellectual History

– Chapter 1 –

Biblical History and the Americas: The Legend of Solomon's Ophir, 1492–1591

James Romm

One can only imagine how delighted Columbus would have been to know that his discoveries would one day be studied in a city called Providence. To him, and to many of his contemporaries, the geography of the New World could best be understood within the framework of the Holy Bible, and within the historical scheme of a Divine Providence that had determined the fate of humankind from the moment of its creation. Moreover, the names of places were immensely important to Columbus and his age as signposts of how those places fit into biblical mythology—or into the body of myth and science inherited from Classical antiquity. Indeed, one wonders what he would have thought of the fact that this essay was first presented in a place called Salomon Hall. As I shall show in what follows, he would almost certainly have taken this name as proof that King Solomon had sent ships to the New World long before Spanish caravels went there, and would assert, as he did in fact believe, that his own travels were only a reprise or a reenactment of the voyages described in the Bible to the rich trading port of Ophir.

The name Ophir occurs at various points in the Hebrew Scriptures, though in two very different contexts. First, in an important chapter of Genesis (10:29) tracing the lines of descent begot by Noah, Ophir is named as one of the sons of Yoktan, a descendant of Noah's eldest son Shem. Later, in parallel passages of the books of Kings (1 Kings 9:26–28, 10:11, 10:22) and Chronicles (2 Chronicles 8:17, 9:10, 9:21) concerning the reign of King Solomon, the same name designates a place, the land from which Solomon's ships had brought back gold, silver, exotic animals, and a precious variety of wood called almug. Probably no connection should be drawn between

the personal name and the toponym, as though the Ophir of Genesis were a settler of the land that bore his name[1]—though such links were commonly made by early interpreters in the cases of other Noachic descendants listed in the same passage of Genesis (indeed, the three sons of Noah were identified throughout the Middle Ages with the three parts of the Old World, a scheme we shall return to below). Significantly, the authors of the Septuagint and early commentators often write the name of the place as "Sophir" or "Souphir," whereas the name of the person never takes this form. However, Renaissance scholars who were unaware of this linguistic distinction made much of the apparent homonymy, as we shall see.

Incidental references elsewhere in the Bible (Is. 13:12, Job 28:16) speak of the "gold of Ophir" as a very fine gold, and an eighth-century B.C. Hebrew inscription found on a potsherd also contains this phrase in a similar context,[2] showing that the land of Ophir was well known in biblical times for its mineral wealth. Modern attempts to locate "King Solomon's mines" have been unsuccessful, though speculation has generally centered on southern Africa, Arabia, or the western coast of India. The trading port of Sofala in East Africa was recognized as a possible correlate as early as the sixteenth century (see below), while the Indian city called Souppara by Ptolemy (7.1.6) and Arrian has been championed by more recent interpreters.[3] The modern state of Israel, in an effort to link its own topography to the biblical past, assigned the name Ofira to the Red Sea port of Sharm el Sheik after capturing the Sinai Peninsula in 1948; but this was in fact the region where Solomon built and docked his treasure fleet, not the destination of its voyages.

Our purpose here, however, is not to join the modern debate over the location of Ophir but rather to survey its early history and examine how it figured into later thinking about the significance of the Americas. Already in the first few centuries A.D., Josephus and other commentators on the Bible placed Ophir in India, based on inherited notions about the riches of that fabled land. The Greeks had associated gold with India since the time of Herodotus, and Classical geographers sometimes imagined that an island called Chryse (Golden) lay opposite the mouth of the Ganges; Josephus seems to have equated this Chryse with Ophir.[4] Jerome, in his Latin translation of the Bible, once translates the phrase "gold of Ophir" to "gold of India." This tradition was not universally followed by later mapmakers, however, who seem to have been troubled at the thought of ancient vessels sailing so far. The author of the Hereford Map, for example, gives the name Ophyr to one of four imaginary islands in the Red Sea, a much closer destination for Solomon's vessels, docked as they were at the tip of the Sinai. However, Martin Behaim, whose 1492 globe is thought to have been known to Columbus, drew Ophir as an island in the mouth of the river Ganges, following the identification with Chryse first established by Josephus.[5]

Columbus himself took a strong interest in the question of Ophir's location, and, perhaps well before the Behaim globe was created, used the Book of Kings and the Book of Chronicles to support the hypothesis that

he could reach Asia by sailing west. Columbus made many references to Ophir in his annotations to Pierre D'Ailly's *Imago Mundi* and Pius II's *Historia rerum ubique gestarum*, and on several occasions he quotes either the relevant passages of Scripture or the learned discussions he had looked up in Josephus and other commentaries.[6] None of these postils can be dated with any certainty, but some scholars believe they predate the first voyage to America; if this is the case, they show that passages from the Hebrew Bible helped convince Columbus that such a voyage was possible.[7] That is, according to how Columbus saw it, one could reach the east by sailing west—and the first place one would thereby arrive at would be the easternmost point of Asia, Solomon's Ophir. The Hebrew Bible thus should be counted among the ancient texts that informed the discovery of the Americas, as well as the more familiar Classical sources such as Aristotle, Ptolemy, and Seneca along with their medieval redactors.

Not only Ophir, moreover, but another then mysterious biblical locale, Tarshish, figured into Columbus's calculations concerning the feasibility of a voyage across the Atlantic. In one of his postils to D'Ailly's *Imago Mundi*, for instance, Columbus discusses the import of 2 Chronicles 9:21: "Solomon's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram; once every three years the ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, peacocks, and apes." The Tarshish referred to here may be identified as the city of Tarsus in Asia Minor, or, alternatively, the Iberian port the Greeks called Tartessus.[8] But Columbus was more inclined to equate it with Ophir, especially since he had read elsewhere in the Bible (I Kings 22:48) that "ships of Tarshish" (meaning, perhaps, ships sturdy enough to reach Tartessus) were ordered to sail to Ophir for gold. Indeed, the two trade routes, already partly confused in the Hebrew Scriptures, came to be entirely conflated in Columbus's mind, as we can see from his notes to the *Imago Mundi*. Here Columbus cites two learned Bible commentators, Nicholas of Lyra and Jerome, who placed "Tarshish" neither in Asia Minor nor on the Atlantic coast of Spain but on the eastern fringe of Asia, based presumably on the fact that all the exotic trade goods mentioned in the *Chronicles* passage could be found there. Then, carrying the discussion further, Columbus cites Josephus, once again, for the idea that Ophir, too, belonged in India. The juxtaposition of the two hypotheses shows clearly the direction of Columbus's thinking: Both Tarshish and Ophir were in the Far East, and thus could be considered more or less the same place. Further speculation along these lines emerges from a presumably later work, the *Libro de las profecias*, in which Columbus (as we shall see below) argues strenuously that the Tarshish of the Bible is an island, just as Ophir was thought to be, and thus a different place than the city of Tarsus in Cilicia.

The crucial verse from Chronicles, therefore, with its mention of fleets returning from Tarshish "every three years," told Columbus something remarkable about the eastward extension of Asia. Interpreting this "three years" to mean the *duration* (not the frequency) of the round-trip voyages of the ships of Tarshish, Columbus concluded that the Asian land mass

must be so vast as to require more than a year's travel between Jerusalem and its eastern edge (more precisely, a year and thirteen days, the figure he cites elsewhere in the *Imago Mundi* based on the biblical commentary of Jerome).[9] With so much of the globe taken up by Asia, he reasoned, the space left for the Atlantic Ocean must be narrow indeed. The same verse from Chronicles, moreover, is quoted by Columbus in a postil to the *Historia rerum*, along with a long excerpt copied out of Josephus's discussion of Solomon's fleet and its voyages to Ophir. Evidently, Columbus had done considerable research on the location of Ophir and Tarshish in an effort to prove to himself that the two places were one and that they lay so far to the east that a ship sailing westward could reach them.

After he had himself made that westward crossing, moreover, Columbus remained focused on King Solomon and Ophir in his thinking about where he had gone and what he had found. According to Peter Martyr, Columbus identified the island of Hispaniola with Ophir very early on in this thought process, perhaps at the first moment of discovery.[10] And other evidence attests that the idea stayed with him over the course of his life. In an undatable postil he wrote in his copy of Pliny's *Natural History*, he spoke of the first place he had found in the New World as "Feyti, or Ofir, or Cipangu, to which I have given the name Spagnola."[11] This note reveals Columbus's remarkable ability to entertain numerous diverse and conflicting geographic hypotheses at the same time; Ophir, traditionally located near India, could hardly be the same place as Cipangu, the name Marco Polo had given to the island of Japan. Moreover, the idea that either place would need to be renamed by Columbus—since both were well known and written of under their original names—also raises troubling questions. But what concerns us here is his readiness to identify as Ophir the island called Feyti by its inhabitants (the origin of the modern name Haiti). Moreover, in a letter to the Pope dated February 1502, Columbus repeats the identification of Hispaniola as both Ophir and Cipangu, and also adds two new identities, "Cethia" or Cethim and Uphaz—two more placeless biblical toponyms, the former an obscure island (Isa. 23:1–2, 23:12, Jer. 2:10–11), the latter, more significantly, a land from which gold is brought (Jer. 10:9).[12]

Columbus's ten-year insistence that Hispaniola was really Ophir, or Uphaz, or Cipangu—all places which were known to be rich in gold or other rarities—were on one level good public relations; after all, the sovereigns who were financing Columbus's journeys, Ferdinand and Isabella, had to be convinced that their efforts were worthwhile even though very little precious cargo had in fact returned to their shores. But it would be wrong to see Columbus as a mere self-promoter in his use of biblical names for his own discoveries. He was, after all, a man of deep piety and Christian faith who earnestly desired the universal triumph of the Catholic Church under the leadership of the Spanish monarchs—monarchs who had already struck a great blow on behalf of the Church by reconquering Granada from the Muslims, just before the first voyage to the New World.

Throughout his life Columbus exhorted Ferdinand and Isabella, and the Pope, to the further propagation of the faith and even the reconquest of Jerusalem from the infidels in a new crusade.[13] The gold he sought in the New World, or at times claimed he had found, was to serve as the endowment of this Christian mission. In this context, the legend of Ophir loomed large indeed in Columbus's mind, for it had not escaped the admiral's notice that, in the Books of Chronicles and Kings, Ophir's gold was used to finance the building of Solomon's temple in Jerusalem, and its precious almug wood actually served as the supports[14] for that holy structure.

The treasure from the new Ophir in the Americas, then, would serve to build a new temple in a newly sanctified Jerusalem. Such are the implications of the letter Columbus sent to Ferdinand and Isabella from his fourth voyage, the so-called *lettera rarissima*, dated 7 July 1503. In a famous passage of this letter, Columbus extols the power of gold to further the mission of the Christian faith. "O, most excellent gold!" Columbus writes. "Who has gold has a treasure with which he gets what he wants, imposes his will on the world, and even helps souls to Paradise." There follows a brief ethnographic note about the burial of gold among the Indians, and then, abruptly, Columbus turns his thoughts to King Solomon. Invoking yet again the well-worn passages from Chronicles and Kings, together with Josephus's commentary on them, Columbus reckons the golden treasure that Solomon collected from Ophir, the place Josephus had called Aurea, or "Land of Gold." "Josephus says that this gold was obtained in Aurea; if so, I declare that those mines of the Aurea are but a part of those in Veragua," Columbus writes, speaking of the South American coast he was then exploring. "Solomon *bought* all that gold, precious stones, and silver; but you may send orders to collect it if you see fit."[15] Then, citing a new biblical passage concerning the legacy of Solomon's father, King David, Columbus asserts that the gold used in building the Temple had come from the Indies, that is, from the lands known to Josephus simultaneously as Aurea and Ophir.[16] The endpoint of this convoluted train of thought suddenly becomes clear in the next sentence, startling in its clarity and conviction: "Jerusalem and the Mount of Zion are now to be rebuilt by Christian hands," as foretold in a psalm that, Columbus goes on to imply, foretold his own leading role in this enterprise.

Nor was this the largest of the spiritual implications Columbus saw in his supposed rediscovery of Ophir. For the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, as Columbus knew from his readings of Scripture, was one of a series of events that would lead to the End of Days, the Apocalypse, and the universal reign of Christ on earth. Columbus's apocalyptic or messianic fantasies have been well documented in several recent studies, but the specific role within them of his thinking about Ophir has not as yet been fully explored. That role can be discerned not only from the *lettera rarissima* but also from the unfinished manuscript called the *Libro de las profecias*, compiled during the years 1501 to 1503 by Columbus, his son Ferdinand, and a Carthusian friar by the name of Gorricio.

In the final section of this work, Columbus and his collaborators trot out the familiar verses from Kings and Chronicles describing Hiram's treasure fleet and the voyages to Ophir, together with a new set of citations referring to Tarshish, the land from which Solomon brought silver.[17] Columbus, in his marginal annotations to these quotes, insists over and over on the insular character of this silver-bearing Tarshish, distinguishing it carefully from the city Tarsus in Asia Minor, so as to bolster the claim made in the postils to the *Imago Mundi* and repeated here in the *Libro* that Tarshish and Ophir are one and the same place. Columbus further identifies both places with yet another biblical island, Cethim, as he also does in his February 1502 letter to the Pope (written during the same period as the composition of the *Libro*). Though he does not here make any attempt to equate these places with Hispaniola, as he does in that letter, the implications of his thinking are clear within the messianic context of the *Libro* as a whole.

As noted in an important article by Pauline Moffitt Watts, many of the citations in this complex work speak of the recovery of Mt. Zion and the conversion of all humanity to one universal faith as signs of the coming Apocalypse.[18] In both cases, historical time is conceived of as returning to its beginnings as it comes to its end, uniting alpha and omega in one eternal circle. Columbus presumably thought of his voyages to Solomon's Ophir in similar terms: If a modern mariner were to recommence trading with ports forgotten since the ninth century B.C., the world would in some sense be restored to its biblical condition. Columbus becomes an avatar of the ancient past as well as a forerunner of the apocalyptic future—exactly the same combination of roles he took upon himself in his reinterpretation of a passage from Seneca's tragedy *Medea*, as I have discussed elsewhere.[19] Whereas, in his references to the *Medea*, Columbus identifies himself with Tiphys, the navigator who had once piloted Jason's epochal voyage and who (according to a spurious reading in the manuscripts of Seneca's play) would ply the seas once again at the end of that epoch, he seems in his treatment of biblical legend to have seen himself as a latter-day King Hiram, supplying naval wherewithal to a noble monarchy and collecting the riches required for a rebuilding of the ancient Temple.[20]

Columbus's idea of his discoveries as both a return to earliest biblical history and a step forward toward the Apocalypse assumed its most dramatic form during the third voyage, just before the compilation of the *Libro de las profecias*. In a justly famous passage of a letter to the Spanish sovereigns recounting this voyage, Columbus claims to have arrived at the very outset of biblical time, that is, at the earthly paradise of the Book of Genesis. He was in fact off the coast of the South American continent, at the mouth of what is now the Orinoco River—a river whose breadth and volume of fresh water, as Columbus realized, surpassed what was possible for any ordinary "island." His ideas about Ophir and Tarshish being thus inapplicable, Columbus began a new line of speculation about the geography of the earth. In his letter he explains to the Spanish monarchs that the globe is not quite spherical, as Ptolemy had believed, but

rises to a summit in its Southern Hemisphere—a summit he compares, in a sublime pair of similes, to the stalk of a pear or the nipple of a woman's breast. Ptolemy had been oblivious of this elevation because he knew nothing of the Southern Hemisphere; Aristotle had speculated about it but had not known where to place it. Now Columbus claims to have found it, as proved by the immense flow of fresh water spilling down from its slopes. Then, in another awesome leap of mythic thinking, Columbus links this immense river with the four rivers said in Genesis to flow out of Paradise—another locale sought but not found by ancient authorities, though agreed by all to lie somewhere in the east.

Columbus then reasons that he is in fact sailing upward toward the summit of Paradise, which lies atop the stalk of the global pear or at the nipple of the breast, and that, though he can never approach the top, the river he has found must be flowing directly from that distant place. Whether or not the Admiral was aware that in medieval mythic geography the garden of Eden stands directly opposite Jerusalem on the other side of the earth, his "discovery" of Paradise on the third voyage seems closely connected with his growing apprehension of the coming End of Days. The return to the starting point of human history, in the biblical scheme that Columbus clearly adopts in the *Libro de las profecias*, signals and perhaps even initiates the approach of its close; the ends of the time line would be joined to form a circle, and the ancient kingdom of Jerusalem would be resurrected as the Christian New Jerusalem.[21]

Columbus, as many students of his writings can attest, had an astounding ability to find resonance between his own circumstances and the narratives of ancient myth, whether those of the Bible or of Greco-Roman antiquity. The legend of Solomon's treasure fleet was only one of the many tales that figured into his understanding of his life and discoveries, but an important one, given the support it lent to his presentiments of the Apocalypse and to his understanding of his own role in Christian eschatology. As a new Hiram, voyaging once again to Ophir and supplying the wealth needed to rebuild the ancient temple, Columbus saw himself taking part in a grand reenactment of a glorious moment in the biblical past; and such returns to early mythic patterns confirmed his belief that the ancient prophecies were being fulfilled and that history was at last reaching its end.

Ophir and Ethnography—the Later Sixteenth Century

Columbus indicates in the *Libro de las profecias* that the biblical prophets had foreseen not only his crossing of the Atlantic, but also his efforts to convert the inhabitants of the Americas to Christianity; but who were these inhabitants, in biblical terms? Columbus seems not to have been troubled by this question, since in his eyes the natives of the Americas were simply inhabitants of the Asian littoral or of the islands offshore—subjects, in other words, of the Great Khan (who had already become a

target of Christian missionaries in the fifteenth century). Though preoccupied throughout his life with the *geography* of Scripture, Columbus had little interest in its relevance to *ethnography*; indeed, he seems not to have noticed, or not to have cared, that Ophir is not only a place but a person—one of the descendants of Shem, listed in the great roll call of Noah's offspring in chapter 10 of Genesis. Had he remarked on this homonymy, his lines of inference might have gone far indeed; as Samuel Eliot Morison has remarked, for Columbus, two plus two did not equal four, but rather twenty-two. It was left instead to those who followed Columbus, and who tried to assimilate his discoveries to their understanding of the world, to wrestle with the question of how the natives of the Americas fit into the biblical scheme of the peopling of the earth. Though few went as far as the Portuguese artist Vasco Fernandes, who in the early sixteenth century painted a Brazilian Indian as one of the three wise men adoring the Christ child, most had their own theories as to how the American natives were connected to the peoples of the Bible—theories that were hotly debated for more than a century after Columbus's death and that have continued to inform religious and racial mythology right up to the present day.[22]

Let us return for a moment to the interpretive dogma that underlies this debate. Since only Noah and his sons had survived the Flood, all the peoples of the earth had descended from them, according to the "family tree" of humankind in Genesis 10; only heretics like La Peyrère claimed that other, non-Noachic or Pre-Adamic peoples were included among the nations known to sixteenth-century Europeans. But the three sons of Noah had traditionally been linked to the three continents of the Old World, before the discovery of the New (Fig. 1.1).[23] How, scholars and clerics wondered, had one of Noah's descendants traveled into the New World so as to fill it with his offspring? And from which line had that ancient colonist come—from that of Japheth, Ham, or Shem? All the new tools of Renaissance humanism were brought into play in an effort to answer these questions. In the new age of printed books and of the revival of Classical learning, scholars and theologians had an immense array of material on which to draw in formulating their theories of Indian origins; and since all educated men were now being trained to read Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, a kind of pseudo-science of spurious linguistics and false etymologies came into play in support of these theories.

Guillaume de Postel, for example—a French scholar who had traveled to the East in order to learn and record Asian languages—showed in the treatise *Cosmographicae Disciplinae* (1561) how a little linguistic expertise could go a long, long way.[24] Postel constructed a bizarrely detailed scheme of the migrations of Noah's progeny across the face of the globe, and correlated these wanderings with the early human history recorded by Classical Roman mythologists like Cato the Elder. Noah, claims Postel citing Cato, was the same person known to the Romans as Janus, since Janus had traveled to Italy from Armenia, which is the landing place of Noah's Ark, and had been accompanied by a tribe called the Galli, whose

FIGURE 1.1 T-O map showing continents identified with the three sons of Noah, from 1472 Augsburg edition of Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum sive originum libri XX*. (Courtesy of The Newberry Library, Chicago)

name Postel derived from the Hebrew *gal* meaning "flood."[25] Having thus traced Noah, a.k.a. Janus, to Rome, Postel gives him a third name, Hattal, a Hebrew alias meaning "dew" or "mist," and derives the word "Italy" (or Hattal-y) from this name. The linguistic contortions get carried even further as Noah orders his son Japhet, who had accompanied him to Europe, to spread the three Hebrew letters of his name Hattal throughout the rest of the world. Thus Japhet, as he moved south into Africa and west beyond the shores of Spain, had named both the *Atl*as Mountains and the island known to Plato as *Atl*antis. It was but a short step from there to the New World, since the residents of Atlantis, according to Plato, had been great sailors and navigators who had explored the "true continent" lying to the west of their land. So the Atlanteans had colonized the *Atl*antic coast of the New World, spreading the seed of Japhet, along with the linguistic sign of his father, into the Caribbean and North America.

But Postel did not stop there, for he had yet to include the famous Ophir in his ethnographic scheme—and Ophir was, after all, a son of Shem, not Japhet. In yet a further extension of his etymological fancies, Postel traced Ophir to the Pacific shore of the New World, to Peru, or "Pheru," as Postel names it in an alternate spelling, presumably to bring the name into closer association with Ophir. Thus, whereas the line of Japhet had traveled west to reach the New World, the line of Shem had gone east, beyond the furthest shore of Asia. "Nam ex altera parte, nempe ab ortu, ex Semia Ophir in suam Pheru vel Peru possessionem venerat, qui rebus sacris praeesset" [For from the other direction, that is from the east, from Asia, Ophir came into his estate, Pheru or Peru, in order to be in charge of Divine matters], Postel wrote.[26] From this dual ethnography, Postel derives a remarkable Christian theology. The line of Shem, he explains, being descendants of Noah's blessed and first-born son, had been charged by their father with the Divine mission of spreading monotheistic faith throughout the world; their descendants, after all, had become the first Jews, many generations later. Thus, it was part of God's plan for the propagation of faith that the Shemites, too, had made it to the New World—"in order to be in charge of sacred matters," as Postel puts it.

Again turning to Roman mythology for confirmation, Postel notes that the great prophetess of ancient Rome, the Sibyl, had predicted the eventual triumph there of the Christian faith, another case in which an Asian and a descendant of Shem had spread monotheistic faith beyond the borders of his ancestral homeland. Noah, or Janus as he was known to the Romans, had evidently made his plan for the spread of monotheism clear to the Sibyl before his death. The arrival of Ophir in Peru had thus been an early forerunner of the journey of Christ's apostles to Europe and other pagan lands, and part of God's plan for the proselytization of His faith. "Nec enim fieri aliter potest, quin summus ille seculi aurei minister et institutor Ianus ita instituisset ut ubivis in toto orbe esset unus minister ex Semi auctoritate.… Sic in Atlantide est credendum ut ex Iectani filliis aliquis una cum Iapetitis fuerit missus, ita ut Peru posset esse Ophiri pars" [It cannot be otherwise but that that greatest overseer and founder of the Golden Age, Janus, thus established that everywhere in the whole world would be a single overseer from the high office of Shem.… Thus in the Atlantic region, it must be believed that someone from the sons of Jectan (i.e., the grandsons of Shem) was sent along with the Japhethites, in such a way that Peru became the inheritance of Ophir].[27]

The project of Postel's *Cosmographicae Disciplinae*—the tracing of all the wanderings and settlements of the sons of Noah in an effort to explain the location of the earth's races—was taken up ten years later by the learned Spanish humanist Benito Arias Montano in a treatise titled *Phaleg*. This treatise (named for one of the descendants of Noah—*phaleg* meaning "division" in Hebrew—because, according to Genesis 10, "in his days the earth was divided") was then included in Arias Montano's learned 1572 work, *Antiquitatum Iudaicarum*. Arias Montano had earlier

learned Hebrew and had directed the immense Spanish Polyglot Bible of 1572 with its detailed commentary on many abstruse questions about biblical times.[28] In *Phaleg* he used his knowledge of Hebrew to assert not only that Ophir had founded Peru, which thereafter (as Postel implied) bore a metathesized version of his name, but that this South American land was known to the Old Testament under the name Parva'im. Parva'im, mentioned in the 2nd Book of Chronicles, is another unlocatable biblical toponym like Ophir or Uphaz, and, not surprisingly, another land from which gold was brought to Jerusalem in the days of Solomon. Arias Montano noted that the "-im" portion of this word could be understood as the Hebrew dual ending, and hence understood the name to mean "the two Parvas" or "the two Perus," and further interpreted this to mean "the two Americas." He writes, "Ophir… secundum abyssi magnae littora genus nomenque produxit suum, ad duas regiones angusto terrarum, sed longo Isthmo interiecto distinctas, quae ad Salomonis usque atque ulteriora etiam tempora integrum retinuere vocabulum Ophir; quod paulo post inversum utrique parti seorsum adscriptum est, atque alterutra pars Peru; utraque autem simul dualis numeri pronuntiatione Pervaim sive Parvaim dicta est" [Ophir … carried forward his name and his race along the shores of the great abyss, and to the two regions of these lands separated by a long isthmus between; and these retained intact the name Ophir up to the times of Solomon and even afterward; but the name was shortly afterward reversed, and assigned to both portions of this region on their own; and so each part was called Pervaim or Parvaim, using the pronunciation of the dual number].[29]

In good scholarly fashion, Arias Montano illustrated the ethnographic scheme of *Phaleg* with a map (also published in his Polyglot Bible)[30] showing with numbers and letters the places to which each of Noah's sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons had migrated (Figs. 1.2 and 1.3). One can see from this map that he has postulated a land bridge across the Bering Strait (known to the Renaissance as the Straits of Anian), so as to make the intercontinental journey of Ophir possible. He has also been careful to give *two* locations for the number nineteen, designating Ophir's settlements in North and South America, to account for the dual form of the Hebrew word *parvaim*. This beautifully drawn map represents the first detailed attempt, so far as I know, to use cartography as a tool for investigating historical anthropology, and is also the first to posit a land bridge across the northern Pacific—the very route by which, as most scientists now believe, humankind crossed into the Americas.

But Arias Montano was not satisfied with merely tracing Ophir into the New World as Postel had done. He seems to have assumed that the descendants of Noah were listed by Genesis in geographic order, moving from west to east, and that therefore Ophir's eastward travels had been surpassed by those of his brother Iobab, represented as number twenty-one on the map, the last mentioned and therefore the easternmost Shemite. (An intervening brother, Havilah, represented by number

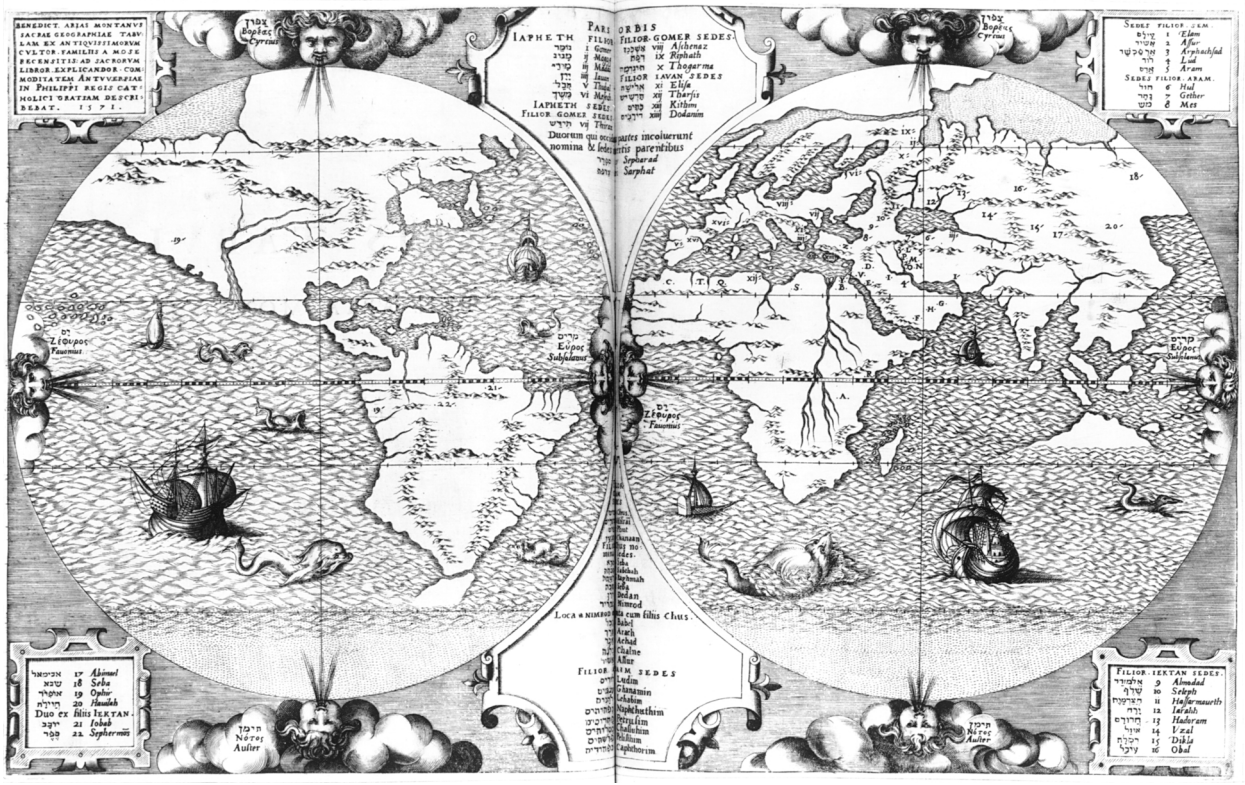


FIGURE 1.2 Ethnographic map of Benito Arias Montano, *Antiquitatum Iudaicarum Libri IX* (Lugduni Batavorum 1593).