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## Editors' Introduction

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WHEN IN 1889 ISRAEL ABRAHAMS and Claude Montefiore launched the *Jewish Quarterly Review* as the first English-language journal of Jewish studies, their avowed aim was twofold. “One prominent portion of our new quarterly,” they wrote, “will be devoted to the past—to the better knowledge of Jewish history, literature, and theology in bygone days.” The editors, both Englishmen entering their fifth decade, added, however, that while the past would “receive its due share of attention, the present, in which we live, and through which the future is determined, must not be neglected.” Moreover, they expressed the hope that even the knowledge of the past offered in the pages of their journal would be not only “attractive and valuable to the pure scholar” but also presented “in such a form as to prove interesting as well as novel to the ‘general reader.’” It was their sincere belief that “these two objects are not by any means necessarily inconsistent.”

As part of their commitment to the present, Abrahams and Montefiore published during their first year essays by Heinrich Graetz on “The Significance of Judaism for the Present and Future” (the lead article of the inaugural issue) and Israel Zangwill on “English Judaism.” At the same time, they published sober scholarly meditations like S. R. Driver’s article on “The Origin and Structure of the Book of Judges” and David Kaufmann’s note on “The Word for Unhappy in Later Hebrew.”

When, after twenty volumes, the founding editors decided “with much reluctance” to discontinue serial publication of *JQR*, they expressed greater satisfaction with its contribution to the study of “Biblical and later Jewish literature and theology” than with the degree to which it had served as a “medium for a living Theology.” Consequently, the nonacademic side of the journal was abandoned by the editors of the new series, Solomon Schechter and Cyrus Adler, who assumed responsibility for *JQR* in 1910 after publication rights were acquired two years earlier by the recently founded Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning in Philadelphia (of which Adler was president and Schechter a member of the Board of Governors). “The fact that the REVIEW has passed from the hands of private individuals into those of a learned institution with a strict academic character,” they explained somewhat haughtily, “makes it incumbent upon the Editors to formulate their policy according to the

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model of academic publications. This will necessitate the exclusion of all matter not falling within the province of Jewish history, literature, philology, and archaeology, though popular articles on these subjects, if they are conceived in a scientific spirit and bear the marks of original research, will be readily admitted."

For nearly a century, *JQR* has followed this charge, serving as a bastion of scholarly excellence—indeed, as a home to work “conceived in a scientific spirit and bear[ing] the marks of original research.” Presided over by a line of distinguished editors extending from Adler and Schechter through Abraham Neuman and Solomon Zeitlin to Leon Nemoy to David Goldenberg, the journal has developed a well-deserved reputation for its meticulous scholarship and textual erudition in a number of important areas of study.

Our goal, as *JQR*'s new editors, is a challenging one: to preserve that attention to textual detail so unmistakably identified with the journal and yet to recapture the original aim of the first editors of reaching a wide and diverse audience. This means expanding the circle of contributors and readers of *JQR*, appealing to both the “pure scholar” and the “general reader.” With this in mind, we plan to publish innovative work that traverses the many disciplinary and chronological boundaries of Jewish studies. In the new *JQR*, the ancient will stand alongside the modern, the historical alongside the literary, the textual alongside the contextual, the past alongside the present—or perhaps to stretch the span to the point of most productive tension, the antiquarian alongside the postmodern. While remaining moored in the vast sea of Jewish studies, we hope to chart new directions in emerging areas of the field. In this regard, we are especially interested in hosting the perspectives of those proximate to, but not firmly within, the domain of Jewish studies: scholars of other fields, as well as writers, artists, and thinkers.

This is one sense in which we plan to revive the original editors' impulse to appeal to the “pure scholar”—here, the Jewish studies specialist—as well as to academics and laymen outside the field itself. But there is a second sense. We see *JQR* as a forum in which the pure scholar, to the extent that we can conjure her up, is encouraged to become more of a general reader. Looking up from close textual or archival analysis, the scholar is invited not only to revel in the joys of a careful parsing but also to read and think expansively in the company of others.

It is this last goal that prompts us to commence this third beginning of *JQR* with a series of reflections that do not usually find their place in a scholarly journal. Grouped under the title “Recoveries,” these reflections come from a distinguished array of authors who have been asked to rumi-

nate on a text, event, picture, or personality that has inspired, agitated, or exercised them over the years. Evocative of a brief homiletic *vort*, these reflections mark a kind of “return of the repressed,” but a return intended to summon up intellectual pleasure more than psychic pain—and we might add, a return that both parallels and gestures to the admirable breadth of the original *Jewish Quarterly Review* of 1889.

In a number of these reflections, the authors write not only of their work of recovery but also of the importance of fusing, or at least, attempting to fuse, “detachment and attachment” or “critical method” and “a sympathetic feel” for the text. At this moment in the history of scholarship, an ironic moment of increased self-reflection and more fragmented knowledge, it behooves us to rethink the sharply drawn lines of demarcation between the “pure scholar” and the “general reader,” between Jewish studies and contiguous scholarly terrain, between past and present. It is in that spirit of rethinking that we inaugurate the new *JQR* and encourage your participation in the shared work of intellectual recovery and rejuvenation.

While moving forward into an exciting future, we must take stock of the exceptional guidance that David Goldenberg has provided for the past fifteen years as editor of the *Jewish Quarterly Review*. We owe him a considerable debt of gratitude for his excellent labors and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

We also thank David Ruderman, director of the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, for inviting us to step into Dr. Goldenberg’s shoes. We particularly thank Professor Ruderman for introducing us to our new partners in publication, the University of Pennsylvania Press, as well as to our superb colleague *cum* executive editor, Dr. Natalie Dohrmann. Along with Natalie, the Penn Press, and the fine *JQR* staff, we are poised to embark upon the journey toward a “better knowledge” of the manifold Jewish experience with a sense of excitement, anticipation, and high expectation.

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