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# Painting a People

*Maurycy Gottlieb and Jewish Art*



E Z R A M E N D E L S O H N

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He took ill and, in the summer, died—a sudden and unexpected event that has given rise to all manner of speculation. Waldman writes that Gottlieb died in hospital, after an operation, from complications arising from an ear infection.<sup>159</sup> All contemporary accounts of Gottlieb's death attribute it to natural causes. Matejko, in a letter to his wife, names angina as the reason for his death; other sources also blame a disease of the throat, and diphtheria.<sup>160</sup>

Such sudden deaths from what are today trivial illnesses were certainly not unknown in those days. Still, this sudden end inevitably gives rise to suspicions of suicide. Laura, the woman who rejected him, was convinced that he had done so. This may be a consequence of her own inflated sense of importance, of course, but her views cannot be ignored.<sup>161</sup> Whatever the truth of the matter, it is clear that what we know of Gottlieb's personality does not rule out such a drastic step. His was, by all measures, a remarkably successful life, but there was a dark side to his personality, exacerbated, no doubt, by the strain of living in a world hitherto virtually closed to Jews. His early death confirmed his status as a tragic, romantic figure, a seeker of love and reconciliation cut down in his prime.

Mauryc Gottlieb was buried in the new Jewish cemetery in Cracow. His life was over, but he was to enjoy, if that is the right word, a rich posthumous career, to which Chapter 4 of this book will be devoted. It is time now to look at the artistic world in which he grew up, and at the paintings that are his legacy.

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## Artistic Contexts

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### History Painting, Orientalism, and Religious Art

The 1870s, so far as relations between Jews and non-Jews in Eastern Europe were concerned, were characterized by a relative calm that was swept away by the storms of the early 1880s. Something similar might be said, *mutatis mutandis*, of the artistic scene. In Central and Eastern Europe, at least, the academies held sway and the art world had not yet been transformed forever under the impact of French Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, German Expressionism, art nouveau, and other developments associated with the emergence of modern art. As the product of several such academies, Gottlieb may be considered an “academic artist,” a term that conveys an allegiance to tired realism and the odor of old-fashioned dullness and conformity, thankfully swept away by the new wave. Many leading practitioners of academic art of the 1870s, among them Gottlieb's own teachers, suffered a disastrous decline in reputation with the triumph of the new artistic trends of the 1880s and 1890s, and they have never recovered. Who today recalls the names of Pilory and Angeli, and even Makart? How many, outside Poland, know the name of so eminent an artist as Jan Matejko?

It is useful to remember, however, that if this was a period that produced a good deal of lifeless and artificial, theatrical paintings, many artists—including even some history painters—continued to maintain a profound concern with the individual and with achieving psychological insight into the subjects of their art. The romantic movement, though past its heyday, was not dead, and it had its links with the powerful nationalist ideology that was sweeping over the Austrian empire. Gottlieb was the contemporary of Antonín Dvořák and Bedřich Smetana, whose music was often understood as representing the essence of the Czech soul.

The greatest of all Polish composers, Frederic Chopin, had died in 1849, but his mazurkas and polonaises lived on as representations of Polish romanticism and nationalism. Polish art, as we shall see, preserved something of this emotional, sometimes inward-looking tradition.

It was, however, certainly the case that in Gottlieb's time, and at the academies where he studied, rather bombastic history painting occupied central stage. When Leopold, his younger brother, was interviewed in Cracow upon the occasion of Maurycy's 1932 retrospective, he remarked, "In my brother's day the spirit of Piloty and Feuerbach dominated painting. In those times historical themes played a fundamental role. Painting was reduced to history, perspective, and anatomy. It was lifeless, dead and anemic. . . . And we must remember, too, that in those days Makartism still reigned. Makart, the master at the Imperial court, the impresario of imperial festivals, imposed on everyone his decorative style and appealed exclusively to the visual senses of the masses."<sup>71</sup> Leopold Gottlieb was a modern painter, a member in good standing of the École de Paris, and his contemptuous remarks on the artistic scene of the 1870s must be read with this in mind. His own artistic language was as far removed as can be imagined from that of Piloty and Makart, and he also wished to demonstrate to his interlocutors that his brother had succeeded, almost miraculously, in freeing himself from their nefarious influence. It is true enough, as we already know, that Maurycy Gottlieb was not happy at the Vienna academy, whose course of study bored him. Yet we also know of the tremendous impression Polish history painting made on him, and there is no doubt that, generally speaking, this genre played an important role in his formation as an artist.

History painting could mean both themes taken from classical antiquity and the depiction of events of importance in the history of the nation. Sometimes these two aspects could be conflated, as in the painting by Karl von Piloty entitled *Thusnelda in the Triumphal March of Germanicus* (1869-1873) (fig. 9). The work depicts a first-century C.E. triumph of the Romans over the German "barbarians," represented by Thusnelda, wife of the German hero Arminius. Like many history paintings, it was obviously related to contemporary events. According to one authority the artist had in mind "a confrontation between things German and things Roman, a confrontation which at the time of the Franco-Prussian War had assumed special relevance."<sup>72</sup> Makart, who had been Piloty's pupil, also painted historical scenes, among which his 1877-1878 *The Entrance of Charles V into Antwerp*, a celebration of one of the greatest of the Habsburg monarchs, is a typical example (fig. 10).

Interest in the past was by no means limited to artists. This was, after all, the time when Russia's greatest composers, seeking to create a new and authentic Russian musical style, were producing their magnificent



FIG. 9. Karl von Piloty, *Thusnelda in the Triumphal March of Germanicus*, 1869-1873, oil on canvas, 490 × 710 cm, Neue Pinakothek, Munich.



FIG. 10. Hans Makart, *The Entrance of Charles V into Antwerp*, 1877-1878, oil on canvas, Hamburger Kunsthalle, © Elke Walford, Hamburg.

historical operas, of which Modest Musorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, the first version of which was completed in 1869, is the best known. In the early 1870s Musorgsky and his friend Vladimir Stasov began working on an opera based on historical documents of the seventeenth century: *Khorovodshchina*.<sup>3</sup> The painters, writers, and musicians who worked in this genre had clearly imbibed the nationalist spirit of the day, and often wished to make statements concerning national identity. Pilory and other Central European artists had been influenced by the Belgian school of history painting, which drew inspiration from the struggle for Belgian independence.<sup>4</sup> The nexus between nationalism and history painting was especially obvious in late nineteenth-century East Central Europe, since in this region, where many nations still lacked states of their own, the national question was particularly acute and had a particularly strong impact on the creative arts. It was essential to demonstrate that the nation in question, in order to qualify for statehood, possessed a long and glorious past, and numerous artists took up this task with enthusiasm, if not always with great talent. The visitor to the Hungarian National Gallery in Budapest, a city to which Gottlieb traveled in 1877, encounters a seemingly endless series of large, dark paintings of scenes from the heroic history of the Hungarian nation. Typical is Gyula Benczúr's *The Recapture of Buda Castle in 1686* (1896). This work manages to combine the themes of Hungarian nationalism and loyalty to the Austrian empire, which in the post-1867 era had conceded to the Hungarians a status of near independence. Benczúr, like other Hungarian academic artists of the time, had also studied at Pilory's academy in Munich.<sup>5</sup>

Such canvases—so popular then, so antithetical to the modern sensibility, not least because of the bad odor in which nationalism finds itself in our times—are to be found in the museums of every East European capital. The Czech artist Václav Brožík, also a product of Munich, celebrated Czech history in his works, and in particular the glorious Hussite period. In Romania Theodor Aman painted such works as *Vlad the Impaler and the Turkish Messengers*, while Serbian artists depicted scenes of their nation's martyrology. Russia, unlike the smaller nations of the region, had long enjoyed national independence, but here too dramatic moments in Russian history inspired numerous works of art, as in the canvases of Vasilii Surikov and Ilya Repin. In Northern Europe, too, history painting was very popular. In Sweden, Gustaf Cederström's *Bringing Home the Body of King Karl XII of Sweden*, completed in 1878, is a famous example. The great Swedish artist Carl Larsson decorated the national museum in Stockholm with murals depicting patriotic scenes, including *Gustav Vasa's March into Stockholm in 1523*.

Along with its association with nationalism, history painting was also linked to the new, "scientific" way of writing history. Its practitioners

thus took pains to get historical details right, including, most obviously, details of period costume. Gottlieb's interest in the *opus magnum* of the Jewish historian Heinrich Graetz, the leading Jewish representative of the new German school of history writing, should be understood in this context. In his projected work on Casimir the Great and the Jews Gottlieb hoped to enlist the aid of Matejko, whose concern with historical accuracy, at least in matters of dress, was well known.

Another important genre in European art of the second half of the nineteenth century, one that is particularly relevant to Gottlieb's oeuvre, was "orientalism"—the depiction of life in the exotic and mysterious East, by which was usually meant North Africa and the Ottoman Empire (including the Holy Land). The vogue for things oriental in nineteenth-century European culture reflected the dramatic European conquests in the Moslem world. It is therefore hardly surprising that English and French artists set the tone.<sup>6</sup> Some of them actually traveled to the East. Eugène Delacroix's journey to North Africa in 1832 is an important event in nineteenth-century art history.

But orientalism in the arts in general, and specifically in painting, was by no means restricted to Western Europe. Artists living and working in lands that did not play a role in the colonization of Islamic territories also depicted the East, as they imagined it or as they had seen it in their travels. In the Central Europe of Gottlieb's day orientalism was extremely prevalent. A good example is the Viennese artist Leopold Carl Müller's painting *Market in Cairo* (1878) (fig. 11).<sup>7</sup> Hans Makart visited the East and painted oriental scenes, among them *Cleopatra's Voyage on the Nile*, as did another major Central European artist, the Munich-based Franz von Lenbach, who traveled to the Orient in 1875 and made a number of sketches of Arab life.<sup>8</sup>

Orientalism was also a strong presence in the art world of Eastern Europe. One leading Russian artist, Vasilii Polenov, traveled to the Holy Land in the early 1880s and made a series of paintings based on what he had seen in that part of the world. Among them was *The Temple of Omar*, made in 1882, which depicts Jerusalem's most celebrated building.<sup>9</sup> Surikov also made a number of orientalist works. In this part of the world orientalism drew not only on English and French models, but on a long tradition of intimate contact with the Moslem world. Some East European nations had suffered under Mongol or Ottoman domination and had developed, over the centuries, close economic and cultural links with their oriental adversaries. For them the Orient was not a distant, exotic phenomenon but a place closely intertwined with their own history and national consciousness. In Russia, for example, the powerful orientalist impulse in music—as in the work of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov—signified, among other things, a declaration of independence from "western" (that



FIG. 11. Leopold Carl Müller, *Market in Cairo*, 1878, oil on canvas, 136 × 216 cm, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna.

is, German) music and an assertion of a unique local style. It was, claimed the critic Vladimir Stasov, a defining characteristic of Russian music.<sup>10</sup> Poland, a country bordering on the Ottoman Empire, was also familiar with the world of Islam, and this was no doubt a source of its artists' considerable interest in orientalist themes.

The European artistic world of the 1870s was also much occupied, as it had been since time immemorial, with religious themes. Of these two types are particularly relevant to us: biblical subjects, and the depiction of contemporary religious life. The vitality of the Christian component in nineteenth-century art is demonstrated by the great popularity of Gustave Doré's illustrations of the Bible (see fig. 80), and by the flourishing of two important artistic movements: the German Nazarene school of the early nineteenth century, whose members resided for a time in Rome, and the English Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood of mid-century. A fine example of the religious art of the Nazarenes is Peter von Cornelius's *The Entombment of Christ* (1813–1819), which reflects this school's interest in returning to the ideas and artistic techniques of the early Renaissance (fig. 12).

Paintings of New Testament scenes by the old masters had often emphasized Christ's oriental milieu, but the new accessibility of the East, and the new knowledge of its inhabitants and their customs, led some nineteenth-century practitioners to attempt to place the early history of



FIG. 12. Peter von Cornelius, *The Entombment of Christ*, 1813–1819, oil on wood, 34 × 47.1 cm. Courtesy of Thorvaldsens Museum, Copenhagen.

Christianity more firmly in its authentic oriental setting. In such cases religious art intersected with the new orientalism. A striking example is a well-known work of the Pre-Raphaelite master William Holman Hunt, who resided for a time in Jerusalem. His *The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple* (1854–1855, 1856–1860) (fig. 13) is an obvious effort to present the Jewish context from which Jesus emerged. The oriental Jews surrounding Jesus, though not the Messiah himself, were presumably modeled on local types that Hunt had encountered during his stay in the Holy Land.<sup>11</sup> Another example, somewhat closer to home so far as Gottlieb is concerned, is the *Ecce Homo* (1895–1896) of Hungary's leading artist, Mihály Munkácsy (fig. 14), in which some of the men gathered to hear the decision of Pontius Pilate are shown in Arab dress.

Common to some artists' depictions of Christ in this time was an emphasis on his human attributes rather than his divinity. A well-known example is the Russian artist Ivan Kramskoy's *Christ in the Wilderness* of 1872. This work was criticized by his colleague Ilya Repin for going too far in its depiction of the Christian savior as a suffering human being.<sup>12</sup> Kramskoy's *Christ* was more Russian than oriental, but in order to understand this tendency we must take into account not only the new familiarity with the East but also the new scholarship on the history of the

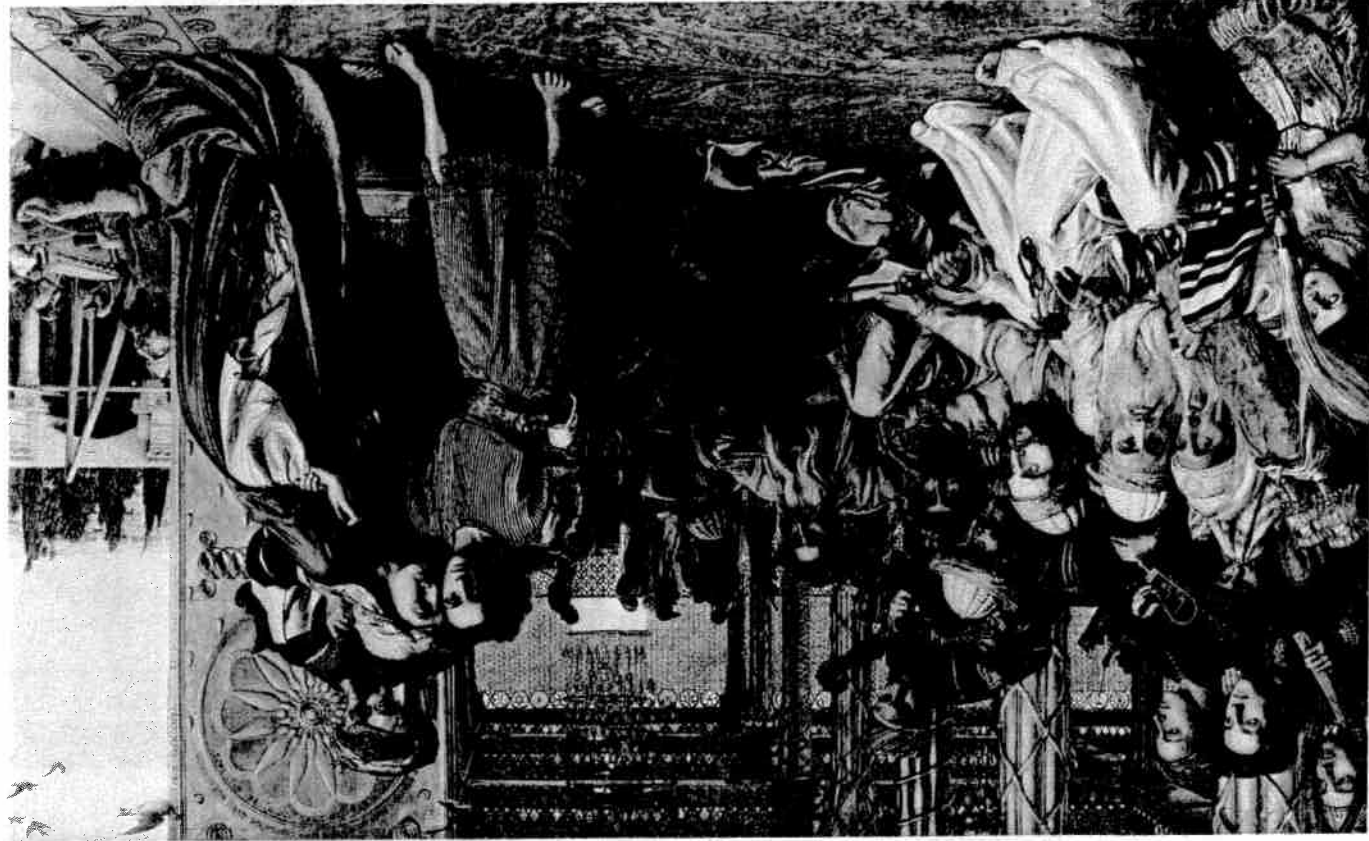


FIG. 13. William Holman Hunt, *The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple*, 1854–1855, 1856–1860, oil on canvas, 33  $\frac{1}{4}$   $\times$  55  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches, Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery.



FIG. 14. Mihály Munkácsy, *Ecc Homo*, 1895–1896, oil on canvas, 403  $\times$  650 cm, Déri Museum, Debrecen, photo by Lukács Tihamer ARNHUHB 05236899.

Holy Land and on Jesus himself, such as Ernest Renan's best-selling study *The Life of Jesus* (1863). There can be no doubt that efforts by Jewish artists around this time, including Gottlieb, to reclaim Jesus for the Jewish people should be linked to the tendency in European art of this period to concentrate on his human aspect and to place him in his historically authentic oriental and even Jewish world.

Scenes of contemporary religious life were also common in the art of Gottlieb's time. A classic example is Jean-François Millet's *L'Angélus* (1838–1839), that depicts two peasants pausing from their arduous labors in the fields to attend to their devotions (fig. 15). Another is the remarkable painting by the German master Wilhelm Leibl entitled *Three Women in the Church* (1878–1881) (fig. 16). This painting, begun in the very year that Gottlieb made his painting of Jews praying on the Day of Atonement, depicts the pious world of rural Germany.<sup>13</sup> Yet another fine illustration of this genre is Adolph von Menzel's *Early Mass* (c. 1852), a dark, moving scene of six figures at prayer in a church (fig. 17). These works (many others, of course, might be added) demonstrate a strong interest in the spiritual life of the common people, a hallmark of so-called "Jewish art" of the late nineteenth century.

Along with history painting, religious art, and orientalism, European art of the second half of the nineteenth century also maintained a traditional interest in such genres as landscape and still life, neither of which attracted the interest of Maurycy Gottlieb. The widespread use of literary



FIG. 15. Jean-François Millet, *L'Angeélus*, 1838–1839, oil on canvas, 55 × 66 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

themes as sources for artistic inspiration is more relevant. One of Karl von Piloty's most famous paintings, *Seni at the Side of the Dead Wallenstein*, took its subject from the play by Schiller, and Makart, along with countless others, was inspired by Shakespeare. Nor should we ignore portraiture, including the self-portrait. Virtually all artists, of course, painted portraits. Lenbach depicted dozens of famous politicians and cultural figures of his day, and Makart was also much in demand as a portrait painter. A significant percentage of Gottlieb's works were either portraits (including portraits of members of his family) or self-portraits. In this, as in his interest in history painting, orientalism, religious art, and literary subjects, he was only following the fashions of his day.

### Polish Art

Poland, a poor and partitioned country, was and remains today a virtually unknown province in the realm of European art. This may be attributed



FIG. 16. Wilhelm Leibl, *Three Women in Church*, 1878–1881, oil on mahogany, 113 × 77 cm, Hamburger Kunsthalle, © Elke Walford, Hamburg.



FIG. 17. Adolph von Menzel, *Early Mass*, c. 1852, oil on canvas, 36.4 × 68.3 cm, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna.

not only to its peripheral geographic status and its political weakness, but also to the relative lack of artistic activity by Poles prior to the second half of the nineteenth century. In the enlightened age of Stanislaw August, the last king of Poland, court artists had been imported from abroad — Bernardo Bellotto, known in Poland as Canaletto (he was a nephew of the great Venetian artist), was the most prominent example. But Bellotto had few worthy Polish heirs. Adam Mickiewicz, writing in 1844, addressed himself to this issue, and came to the conclusion that the Slavs in general had no great interest in the plastic arts. His views were seconded by the writer Julian Klaczko, who as late as 1857 was capable of writing that “We are Slavs and we can be only masters of the word!”<sup>14</sup> The art historian Stanislaw Witkiewicz was of the opinion that the Polish national genius was expressed first in poetry, then in music, and last in art.<sup>15</sup> The idea that the “national genius” may find expression in some areas of creativity and not in others has long enjoyed considerable currency. It has been claimed, for example, that the Irish and the Hungarians too had little gift for the visual arts, while the English in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were castigated for their lack of musical genius, thereby making necessary the importing of such composers from the continent as Handel, Haydn, and Mendelssohn. All this is reminiscent of the theory, of central importance to the career of Murycy Gottlieb, that the Jewish people possessed no talent for art, as opposed to their undeniable brilliance in the realms of literature and religion.<sup>16</sup>

By the 1850s, however, Polish artists were busy disproving the notion that they belonged to a nation with no talent for the plastic arts. True, no Polish artist had yet emerged to challenge the renown of a Mickiewicz in literature or a Chopin in music, but the groundwork was being laid for the appearance of a group of remarkably talented painters, who were destined to play a major role in Polish cultural life and in the preservation of Polish national consciousness in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Polish art in Gottlieb's time shared both the artistic language and the thematic preoccupations of contemporary Central European art. As we already know, many leading Polish artists learned their trade in foreign lands, especially in Munich and Vienna, though also in St. Petersburg (as in the case of Gottlieb's mentor in Rome, Henryk Siemiradzki). They constituted a vital part of the Polish cultural diaspora, which had included both Mickiewicz and Chopin and was enlarged and invigorated as a result of the failure of the 1863 revolt against Russian rule. As in the Jewish case, Polish culture in this period was very much a culture of exile.

The Polish art historian Feliks Kopera has detected, in the history of his nation's art, two opposing tendencies, one emphasizing the ideal of painting the glorious and tragic history of the Polish nation, the other,

more introspective, concentrating on the individual and on the beauty of the artist's surroundings, in the tradition of Rembrandt.<sup>17</sup> The leading representative of the first path was, of course, Matejko, while the second was followed by such important artists as Piotr Michałowski and the Girymski brothers, Maksymilian and Aleksander.

Granting the existence of these two camps, it is difficult to deny that Polish art in Gottlieb's time, and continuing into the 1880s, was dominated by a preoccupation with the Polish past. This is hardly unexpected, given the popularity and high prestige of history painting everywhere in Europe, and particularly in Eastern Europe, and the special circumstances of the Polish nation, stateless and therefore all the more eager to preserve the memory of its once exalted position. A Polish coffee table book, *The History of Poland as Depicted in Art*, demonstrates that all the great episodes in Polish history, from the legendary origins of the Piast dynasty onwards, served as inspiration for Poland's leading nineteenth-century artists.<sup>18</sup> Matejko himself created, in the late 1880s, a series of twelve paintings devoted to the history of Polish civilization, commencing with the conversion to Christianity in the tenth century and concluding with a scene from the last years of the state.<sup>19</sup> Matejko was almost exclusively a history painter. His most celebrated painting, *The Battle at Grunwald* (see fig. 99), presents the essentials of his craft — attention to historical detail (which, however, the artist occasionally embellished), a huge cast of identifiable historical characters, a remarkable sense of high drama, and an obviously didactic purpose. Matejko, like so many East European history painters, believed that art should serve the nation, and that history, if correctly interpreted, held important lessons for posterity.

We have already discussed the dramatic impact of Matejko's painting of 1866, *Rejtan*, on the young Gottlieb. In another key canvas of the 1860s, *Skarga's Sermon* (1864) (fig. 18), he depicts the celebrated court preacher of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Piotr Skarga, whose warnings concerning the collapse of Poland from within are ignored by the assembled dignitaries. In 1888, toward the end of his career, he painted a scene from the first Polish revolt against Russia, led by Tadeusz Kosciuszko (who had earlier taken part in the American revolution). This painting, entitled *Kosciuszko at Racławice*, portrays a notable Polish victory in the heroic but (as usual) unsuccessful struggle against impossible odds (fig. 19).

Matejko “created a vision which up to this day — thanks to all-present reproductions in school textbooks, on banknotes, and postal stamps — shapes the vision of history cherished by the average Pole.”<sup>20</sup> He was joined in this project by many other prominent Polish artists, among them Gottlieb's admirer Wojciech Gerson (whose interesting rendition of Casimir the Great and the Jews will be discussed in Chapter 5), Artur Grottger,





FIG. 18. Jan Matejko, *Skarga's Sermon*, 1864, oil on canvas, 224 × 397 cm, Royal Palace, Warsaw, photo by Maciej Bronarski.



FIG. 19. Jan Matejko, *Kościuszko at Racławice*, 1888, oil on canvas, 465 × 897 cm, National Museum, Cracow.

the artistic chronicler of the failed revolution of 1863,<sup>21</sup> and Juliusz Kossak, whose *The Entrance of Jan III into Vienna* of 1883 was painted to commemorate the bicentennial of the victory over the Turks at Vienna, in which the Polish king Jan Sobieski played a decisive role.<sup>22</sup>

Nineteenth-century Polish art also reveals a strong interest in oriental themes, in keeping with the general European trend and also reflecting the fact already noted, that Poland had long possessed a volatile frontier with the Moslem world and had maintained a long association with Mos-

lem culture.<sup>23</sup> Polish historical art often featured oriental figures, such as Tatars, usually fighting against Poland but not always (at Grunwald, for example, a Tatar detachment was allied with the Polish-Lithuanian forces). One Polish artist, Stanisław Chlebowski, was a renowned specialist in orientalist themes. He went so far as to take up residence in Istanbul during the 1870s, and produced many paintings of daily life in that great Moslem city.<sup>24</sup> Gottlieb's friend, the Galician-born Franciszek Żmurko, who also took an interest in Jewish subjects, created in 1884 a typical orientalist work entitled *The Nubian* (fig. 20).

Given the extremely powerful Catholic tradition in the Polish lands, and the role of the church in the preservation of the Polish nation in its struggle against the Orthodox Russians and the Protestant Prussians, it is hardly surprising that Polish artists took an intense interest in religious art. Many of them, including Matejko, decorated churches. Like their European colleagues, they sometimes depicted biblical scenes and renditions of early Christian history. Henryk Siemiradzki painted scenes of early Christian martyrdom such as *The Torches of Nero* (1876) and works based on the life of Jesus, for example *Christ in the House of Martha and Mary* (1886).<sup>25</sup> Particularly interesting in this connection is a lesser-known Polish artist, Wilhelm Kotarbiński, like Siemiradzki a resident of Rome. His remarkable work *The Resurrection of the Son of the Widow of Nain* (1879) presents us with Christ in a clearly oriental and Jewish setting (fig. 21).<sup>26</sup> Jesus is portrayed in Jewish guise, head covered and dressed in what might be a *talit* (prayer shawl), while several of the onlookers are given not only oriental-style earrings but also *peyes*, long sidelocks traditionally worn by orthodox Jewish men whom Kotarbiński must have observed in Poland. This painting was made at the same time as Gottlieb was working on his two paintings based on the life of Jesus in which the Christian Messiah is clearly portrayed as a Jew.

Polish artists also depicted scenes of contemporary religious life. Artur Grottger includes, in his series on the events of the early 1800s, a moving scene of women and children at prayer called *The People in Church* (fig. 22). Another fine example is Leon Wyczółkowski's 1910 *Prayer at a Church in Bochnia* (fig. 23).<sup>27</sup> Jewish genre art should be understood in the general context of such religious paintings, although it is interesting that both these works depict women at prayer, whereas most portrayals of Jews at their religious devotions, including those made by Gottlieb, highlight the role of men.

History painting, orientalism, and an interest in religious subjects were sometimes conflated in Polish art. Thus Matejko's emphasis on the religious aspects of Polish history in his cycle of paintings on the history of Polish civilization, which includes the Christianization of Poland and the conversion to Christianity of the Lithuanians. A further example is the

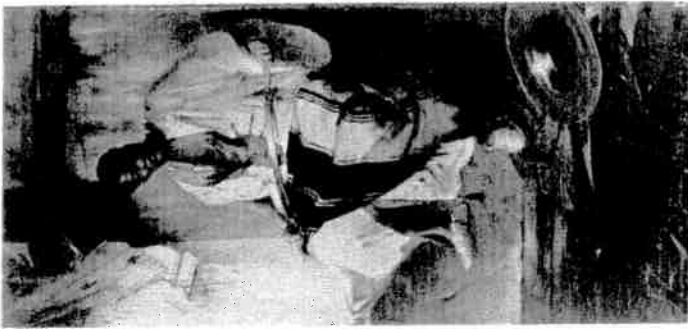


FIG. 20. Franciszek Żmurko, *The Nubian*, oil on canvas, 69 × 33 cm, Lviv Art Gallery.

impressive painting by Tadeusz Ajdukiewicz, *Prayer in the Desert* (1887), which reveals to the Western eye the exotic religious practices of the men and women of the East (fig. 24).

An interest in literature and the illustration of national literary classics were also hallmarks of nineteenth-century Polish art. Especially popular as sources of inspiration were the writings of Adam Mickiewicz, Poland's national poet, and in particular his epic poem on Polish life in Lithuania in the Napoleonic era, *Pan Tadeusz*, whose best-known illustrator was Michał Elwiro Andriolli.<sup>28</sup> Andriolli also illustrated a famous Polish novel dealing with an explicitly Jewish theme, Eliza Orzeszkowicz's *Meir Ezofowicz*.<sup>29</sup> Like their West European colleagues, Polish artists also took inspiration from Shakespeare. In 1872, a few years before Gottlieb painted *Shylock and Jessica*, Aleksander Gieryski also produced a painting based on *The Merchant of Venice* (see fig. 76).

Most Polish artists of Gottlieb's time were advocates of the national cause, and this is clearly reflected in their art, even when it is not engaged with scenes from Poland's turbulent past. Landscapes and religious subjects can also be read as contributing to the effort to preserve the Polish nation at a time of political impotence, as can portraiture. Jan Matejko's 1892 *Self-Portrait*, painted at the very end of his life, shows us a man who



FIG. 21. Wilhelm Kotarbiński, *The Resurrection of the Son of the Widow of Nain*, 1879, 149 × 222 cm, National Museum in Warsaw, photo

FIG. 22. Artur Grottger, *The People in Church*, ill. 14 from the cycle *Warsaw*, National Museum in Wrocław.



FIG. 23. Leon Wyczółkowski, *Prayer at a Church in Bochnia*, 1910, oil on canvas, 70.5 × 52.5 cm, private collection. Photograph from Elzbieta Charazinska, Ewa Mücke-Broniak, and Anna Tyczynska, *Malarstwo polskie w zbiorach prywatnych* (Warsaw: 1995).

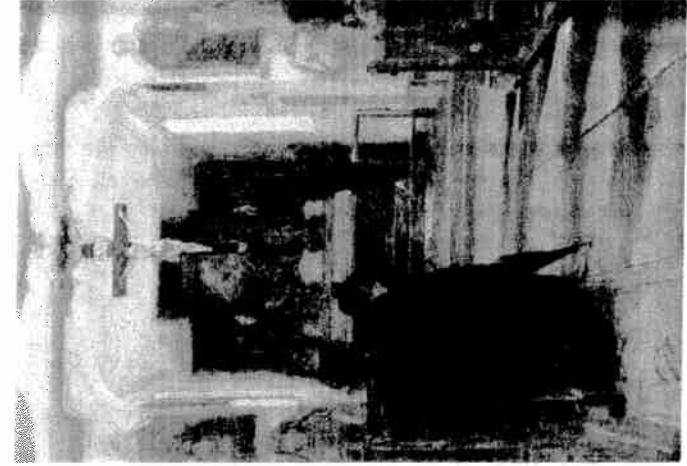


FIG. 24. Tadeusz Ajdukiewicz, *Prayer in the Desert*, 1887, oil on canvas, 142 × 202 cm, Lviv Art Gallery.

has exhausted himself in the service of his people (fig. 25). But it also provides us with a window into a more private realm of Polish art, far removed from the master's bombastic and theatrical historical works. Gortlieb may have been entranced by *Rejtano*, but in his own work he was much closer to the Matejko of this late *Self-Portrait* and to the work of those artists, soon to be encountered, who represented, in Kopera's typology, the Rembrandtian tradition.

### Jews and Art, Jewish Artists, "Jewish Art"

Solomon Maimon, the eighteenth-century Jewish philosopher, tells us that in his youth in Lithuania he dreamed of being an artist. "I had from childhood a great inclination and talent for drawing. True, I had never a chance of seeing a work of art in my father's house, but I found on the title-page of some Hebrew books woodcuts of foliage, birds, and so forth. These woodcuts gave me great pleasure and I tried to imitate them with a bit of chalk or charcoal."<sup>30</sup> We may assume that many other Jews of Maimon's time and before had such artistic impulses, but it is customary to believe that they were stifled by traditional Judaism's implacable hostility to the plastic arts. Several cases of Jewish fathers battling against



FIG. 25. Jan Matejko, *Self-Portrait*, 1892, oil on canvas, 160 × 110 cm, National Museum in Warsaw.

their sons' artistic impulses have already been mentioned. A further proof-text for this claim is to be found in an autobiographical novel by the great Yiddish writer Isaac Bashevis Singer, who was born and raised in Poland. As a child, he tells us, "I was not allowed to draw or paint a person — that violated the Second Commandment."<sup>31</sup> A recently published brief account of Maurycy Gottlieb's life maintains that as the offspring of orthodox Polish Jewish parents he was obliged, in order to become an artist, "to break a number of taboos that prevailed in his immediate orthodox milieu."<sup>32</sup> We are informed that the distinguished Russian philosopher Aleksei Khomiakov attributed the dearth of Jewish artists to "their lack of regard for the earthly form of man."<sup>33</sup>

It is true enough that the Second Commandment of Moses prohibits the making of graven images, and the idea that Jews are hostile to image-making is based on the conviction that Jews have remained, over the centuries, more or less loyal to this central doctrine of Judaism, much like the equally iconoclastic Moslems but very much unlike most varieties of Christianity. It is also true that it took some time before notable Jewish artists, or rather notable artists of Jewish origin, made their appearance in the exclusive club of European high art. No similar taboo, if that is what it was, fell on music; in fact, the Jewish tradition honors and reserves

an important place for music in religious life. This, it might be argued, was why, in the first half of the nineteenth century, there were many more distinguished musicians of Jewish origin than there were artists (think only of Felix Mendelssohn, Joseph Joachim, Anton Rubinstein, Giacomo Meyerbeer, Jacques Offenbach, and Fromental Halévy).<sup>34</sup> It comes as no surprise that the most famous attack on the "invasion" of Jews into European high culture — written by Richard Wagner in 1850 — was directed chiefly against the growing influence of men and women of Jewish origin in musical life.<sup>35</sup> King David is beloved in Jewish tradition as a great and potent musician, but there is no equivalent figure in the realm of the plastic arts (Bezalel, the biblical craftsman who built the Tabernacle, was transformed into an important figure by the Zionists, who wished to create a "national Jewish art" and who named the first Jewish art school in Palestine after him). When Joseph Roth, the German Jewish writer of Galician origin, created a fictional character whose genius took him from the horrendous poverty of Eastern Europe to fame in the new world, he made him a musician, not an artist.<sup>36</sup>

Ernest Renan, the distinguished French orientalist, made a trip to the Holy Land in the mid-nineteenth century, where he investigated among other things the remains of Jewish synagogues. In his biography of Jesus he wrote that the Jews had no talent for architecture, but rather borrowed their ideas on the construction of synagogues from diverse sources and demonstrated a complete lack of originality.<sup>37</sup> He therefore added his voice to those who claimed that the Hebrews, in contrast to the Hellenes and to their Roman and European heirs, were indifferent or even hostile to visual aesthetics. It is possible, of course, to make such claims in a spirit of objective inquiry, but it is apparent that such views supplied ammunition to those who included in their anti-Jewish arsenal the argument that Jews were cultural foreigners in Christian Europe. Wagner, after all, had claimed that even in the case of music Jews could not produce men of true genius, and a strange book signed, if perhaps not written, by Franz Liszt repeated that accusation.<sup>38</sup> The Jews, it was said, were incapable of playing a creative role in the ongoing drama of European culture, since theirs was a faith and way of life that was basically inimical to Western cultural ideals. European art, derived ultimately from Greece and thought by many to represent the most sublime expression of Western genius, was a closed book to the sons and daughters of Judea.

We know, today, that the assumption that Jews have always demonstrated a deeply rooted hostility to visual images is sheer nonsense. The great Byzantine art historian Kurt Weizmann, who did subscribe to this common view, was obliged to admit that "by and large, Judaism had been hostile to the representational arts, notwithstanding that, as the discovery of the frescoes . . . of Dura has proved, the laws against images were not

always strictly enforced.<sup>39</sup> In other words, law is one thing, reality another. Not long ago Israeli archeologists uncovered a remarkable mosaic floor of a fifth-century C.E. synagogue at Sepphoris (Tisipori), an important city in northern Palestine. The mosaic includes representations of human and animal figures. Where is the famed Jewish iconoclasm here (and, it might be added, in other Palestinian synagogues of this period, such as Beth Alpha and Na'aran)? What of the numerous beautiful synagogues erected by Jews throughout the ages, including the impressive structures established in Eastern Europe in the nineteenth century?<sup>40</sup> What of the magnificent Temple in Jerusalem, destroyed by the Romans in 70 C.E.?

The American scholar Kalman Bland has suggested that the idea of Jewish indifference or even hostility to icons (he terms it "aniconism") is really an ideological construct, the work both of antisemites and of nineteenth-century German Jewish intellectuals. The latter actually took pride in the presumed refusal of the sober, monotheistic Jews to succumb to the pagan worship of beauty that had entered Christianity via Hellenism and the Roman world. To cite one highly relevant example, Heinrich Graetz expressed antipathy toward Hans Makart and his "sensual colors of flesh."<sup>41</sup> Other leading lights of German-speaking Jewry, including Heine and Freud, agreed that the Jews were an aniconic people. But their views, like those of Wagner and Renan, derived from preconceptions, apologetics, and prejudice, not from an objective study of Judaism and Jewish history.

The Jews of the pre-modern age, then, did not disdain art, although it is true that the mosaics on synagogue floors in Palestine of the fifth century are not as visually enticing as the mosaics of sixth-century Ravenna. Nevertheless, the belated arrival on the European scene of notable artists of Jewish descent is also a fact, and cultural attitudes based on what were imagined to be age-old prohibitions were not entirely absent even in the nineteenth century. In 1863 the Danish-born artist of Jewish origin, Geskil Saloman, wrote to the editors of the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Juden-tums*, German Jewry's leading newspaper, to inquire as to whether it was permissible for religious Jews to engage in the artistic profession.<sup>42</sup> He did so after reading the book of the Jewish traveler Israel Joseph Benjamin (known as Benjamin II), who reported therein on his objections to the plans of the Sephardic congregation of New Orleans to erect a statue in the courtyard of the synagogue to honor the Jewish benefactor Judah Touro. Benjamin, a pious Jew of Romanian origin, insisted that this act was "clearly against the principles of our holy religion." He was, however, told by the preacher and cantor (*hazan*) of the congregation that such prejudices had existed "in ancient times. Now, however, we live in the nineteenth century."<sup>43</sup> Benjamin's protests could not, however, be

ignored, and the views of several prominent European rabbis were solicited. Of particular interest is the reply of Zecharias Frankel of Breslau, one of the leading lights of modern German Judaism and a founding father of Conservative Judaism. Frankel noted that in ancient times Jews had never been willing to countenance the existence of statues in their midst, but that painting, at least in some places (such as Palestine), was permitted. He concluded that the erection of a statue to honor Touro was definitely forbidden. When confronted with the question, "Is it lawful for an Israelite to devote himself to the art of sculpture, or to any mechanical trade, in which the manufacture of images cast, moulded, or graven, not made for the purposes of idolatry, forms the principal occupation," the rabbi responded: "The practice of the art of sculpture, comprising that of human forms, is prohibited, of other beings is not prohibited. . . . The art of engraving is lawful."<sup>44</sup> No less strict was the response of Rabbi Nathan Adler, chief rabbi of Great Britain, who ruled that "It is not lawful for an Israelite to devote himself to the art of sculpture or to a mechanical trade, in which the manufacture of images of cast, moulded, or graven images, forms the principal occupation, in so far as it relates to *human* images, the sun and moon."<sup>45</sup>

These learned opinions did not forbid painting, but they also take the second commandment very seriously. No wonder that Saloman was convinced, as he wrote to the editor of the *Allgemeine*, that he was dealing with a crucial question (in his words, a *Lebensfrage*, a question of life or death).<sup>46</sup> The Danish artist wished to believe that the biblical prohibition applied only to images that might be worshipped as idols, like the golden calf. Moreover, he noted that times had changed—paganism had been routed, and with it the fear of idol worship. Portraits of great rabbis abounded, and even Benjamin himself, the presumed enemy of images, had affixed his portrait to the cover of his book. Not only did Saloman continue to pursue his artistic career, but he also expressed the belief that art might play a role in strengthening Judaism, since the Jewish artist possessed the ability, in his "representations of Jewish history and of the religious customs of the Jews, to highlight their poetic character, to preserve among Jews a feeling for our religious ceremonies and to secure for them the respect of other faiths."<sup>47</sup> Here is a Jewish argument for the use of images, one that we shall encounter again later on in this study. We are obliged to keep in mind, however, that it was made in the context of a serious debate, very much alive among both Jews and non-Jews in Gottlieb's time, as to whether Jews might become artists.

If the Jewish presence in the world of high European art was certainly not striking in the first half of the nineteenth century, especially when compared to both music and literature, men of Jewish origin were not entirely absent. Among the very first, fittingly enough, were two grand-

children of the founder of the Jewish enlightenment movement, Moses Mendelssohn. These were the Veit brothers, Johannes and Philipp, both affiliated with the German Nazarene school. The Veits, like many members of culturally ambitious Jewish families of their period, were Christian by religion. Philipp Veit participated in the work of the Nazarenes in Rome, in particular in the decoration of the house of the Prussian consul there. The subject of this joint project, begun in 1816, was the biblical Joseph story, to which Veit contributed two scenes: *Joseph and the Wife of Potiphar* and *The Seven Fat Years*.<sup>48</sup> Eduard Bendemann, a contemporary of the Veit brothers and, like them, a convert to Christianity, also painted biblical scenes, and is best known for his rendition of Jeremiah mourning against the backdrop of the ruins of Jerusalem.

The Veit brothers and Bendemann were Christian Germans of Jewish origin whose subject matter included the Jewish Bible, but it would be impossible to prove, and probably absurd to argue, that their “Jewishness” had any impact upon their work, just as it would be difficult, if not absurd, to maintain that Felix Mendelssohn’s Jewish ancestry had anything to do with his compositions based on Jewish sources, for example his oratorio *Elijah* and his settings of the Psalms. The case of another early artist of Jewish origin, the Englishman Simeon Solomon, is rather different and more complex. Solomon was associated with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and he too painted scenes derived from the Bible, but he also depicted contemporary Jewish religious life—for example, a wood engraving entitled *The Circumcision* (1866).<sup>49</sup> This interest in aspects of modern-day Jewish life links Solomon to the general European interest in religious ceremony, but it also associates him with what came to be known as Jewish genre art. This is true, also, of the illustrious Dutch artist Jozef Israëls. Israëls’s interest in Jewish material came to the fore rather late in his long career. It is well represented by his *Jewish Wedding* of 1903 (fig. 26).<sup>50</sup>

By the second half of the nineteenth century important European artists of Jewish origin were no longer a rarity. Two names are particularly well known—Camille Pissarro, the pioneer French Impressionist, and the German Impressionist Max Liebermann. The careers of these eminent avant-garde artists can be related, in various ways, to their Jewishness: they did not convert to Christianity, and they suffered at various times from antisemitism. But, again, it requires considerable ingenuity to categorize them as “Jewish artists,” as the creators of “Jewish art.”<sup>51</sup> The same could be said of Isaac Levitan, an outstanding member of the Russian artistic scene of the 1870s and 1880s, and of Mark Antokolsky, the great Russian sculptor, who flourished in the same period, although it is doubtless the case that certain works by both of these artists do take up Jewish themes, and it can also plausibly be claimed that other works cannot fully

FIG. 26. Jozef Israëls, *Jewish Wedding*, 1903, oil on canvas, 137 × 148 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.



FIG. 27. Moritz Oppenheim, *Sabbath Afternoon*, 1866, oil on canvas, 52.5 × 63 cm. Photo © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

be understood without reference to their Jewish origins.<sup>52</sup> This is the case, too, with regard to Aleksander Lesser, the first Polish artist of Jewish origin to attain fame, whose large output included several paintings bearing a distinctly Jewish character. Lesser, the scion of a wealthy Jewish family from Warsaw, was above all a history painter, and an important precursor of Matejko.<sup>53</sup>

Along with the emergence, during the course of the nineteenth century, of important European artists of Jewish origin, some of whom took a certain interest in their Jewishness and in Jewish subject matter, there also appeared several artists who made a career of painting Jewish genre scenes. One was a Viennese artist of Hungarian origin, Isador Kaufmann (born in 1853), whose Jewish work was based on his observations of Jewish life in Eastern Europe.<sup>54</sup> He was preceded in this preoccupation by the German artist Moritz Oppenheim (born in 1800) who, like Solomon, was also associated for a time with a school of European art that placed emphasis on religious painting—in his case the Nazarenes.

Oppenheim has been called, in the catalogue of an exhibition of his work, “the first Jewish artist.” Unlike nearly all early artists of Jewish origin, Oppenheim “not only remained Jewish but also felt personally involved in the fortunes of the community and maintained personal contact with leading Jewish figures of his day.”<sup>55</sup> If Oppenheim was “the first Jewish artist,” it was not so much because he painted scenes of Jewish life—as we shall see, this was no Jewish monopoly—but rather because he advanced in his art a specific Jewish agenda that reflected the impact of the ideals of the Jewish enlightenment movement and the ongoing struggle for Jewish emancipation in the German lands.<sup>56</sup> I shall discuss in the Postscript his work of 1836, *Lavater and Lessing Visit Moses Mendelssohn* (see fig. 104), which portrays the Jewish sage in the company of the German philosopher Gotthold Lessing. Oppenheim’s highly successful series entitled “Scenes of Jewish Family Life,” demonstrated the beauty of traditional Jewish life and presented an exemplary vision of Jewish integration into general society. He also made portraits of several of the key figures in the drama of German Jewry in the nineteenth century, including Heinrich Heine, Ludwig Börne, Gabriel Riesser (a leader of the campaign for emancipation), Fanny Hensel-Mendelssohn (the sister of Felix Mendelssohn), and various members of the Rothschild family, who were among his patrons. His work, a good example of which is his *Sabbath Afternoon* of 1866 (fig. 27), was well known in Eastern Europe.

## The Depiction of Jews in Art

The depiction in Western art of “the other”—black, Jew, Gypsy, and so forth—is obviously a subject of considerable interest and complexity. Scholars of antisemitism have not neglected this particular aspect of their subject, and have naturally drawn attention to the longstanding negative portrayal of the Jew in Christian European iconography.<sup>57</sup> This tradition by no means faded away with the coming of the secular age, as is borne out by the virulently antisemitic illustrations that appeared in various French journals during the course of the Dreyfus affair.<sup>58</sup> One manifestation of this negative image was the so-called “wandering Jew” who, having rejected Jesus as the Messiah, was condemned to travel without repose over the face of the earth until the second coming of the savior. An important modern painting in which this Jew appears, pursued by demons (on the extreme left of the canvas), is Wilhelm von Kaulbach’s *The Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus* (1846) (fig. 28). Kaulbach was a leading artistic figure in Munich in the 1840s, and this painting, with its blatantly anti-Jewish message and Christian triumphalism, was surely known to Gottlieb.<sup>59</sup>

But not all depictions of Jews in European art and illustration were unsympathetic. There was, after all, the noble example of Rembrandt, whose portrayals of Jews (most famously *The Jewish Bride*) served as an inspiration for artists of Jewish origin in modern times. There were, too, the equally sympathetic renditions of Jews in the work of some of the orientalist. These include Delacroix’s celebrated paintings of North African Jews and, to cite an unusual American example, the painting of Jews praying at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem by the African-American artist Henry Ossawa Tanner.

We are interested, however, in the depiction of European Jews, and in particular of East European Jews. For obvious reasons it was precisely these Jews, the *Ostjuden*, who attracted the attention of numerous artists. In nineteenth-century Western and Central Europe, after all, Jews, with the exception of recent immigrants from the Pale of Settlement and Galicia, dressed and looked more or less like everyone else. In the east, on the other hand, many of them looked very exotic indeed, and they were also extremely numerous, a vital and vibrant part of the urban and village scene.

The depiction of “the other” in the art of Eastern Europe did not necessarily mean the depiction of Jews. It could also mean the depiction of Moslems or Gypsies, a highly visible and mysterious people, also of eastern origin. Some East European artists, responding to the variegated human scene in their part of the world, painted both Gypsies and Jews.



FIG. 28. Wilhelm von Kaulbach, *The Destruction of Jerusalem* by Titus, 1846, oil on canvas, 585 × 705 cm, Neue Pinakothek, Munich.

A case in point is the Romanian master Nicolae Grigorescu, who in 1872 painted *Gypsy Woman from Ghergani* (1872) (fig. 29). In the 1860s Grigorescu spent some time in Galicia, and his interest in the Jewish types he encountered there is expressed in his fine *Head of a Galician Jew* (c. 1860–1870) (fig. 30). We have here a portrait in which there is no hint of condescension or dislike, but rather an affirmation of the Jew's vitality and robustness, as well as his rootedness in his East European milieu.<sup>60</sup>

In Polish art, too, Gypsies sometimes figure as exotic subjects. A particularly beautiful example is Maksymilian Gierymski's *Gypsy Camp* of 1867–1868 (fig. 31), which portrays them in a romantic, rural setting.<sup>61</sup> But it is the Jews who occupy pride of place as the classic "other" of Polish art, hardly surprising given both their strange appearance and great significance in the Polish scheme of things. Their presence in Polish art may be fruitfully compared to that of blacks in American art: in both cases we are dealing with large, obviously different-looking minorities of foreign origin, long resident in the land and an inescapable, if rather curious and perhaps also threatening, part of the human landscape.<sup>62</sup>

FIG. 29. Nicolae Grigorescu, *Gypsy Woman from Ghergani*, 1872, oil on canvas, 105 × 100 cm, the National Art Museum of Romania, Bucharest.



FIG. 30. Nicolae Grigorescu, *Head of a Galician Jew*, c. 1860–1870, oil on wood, 34 × 24.5 cm, Craiova Art Museum.

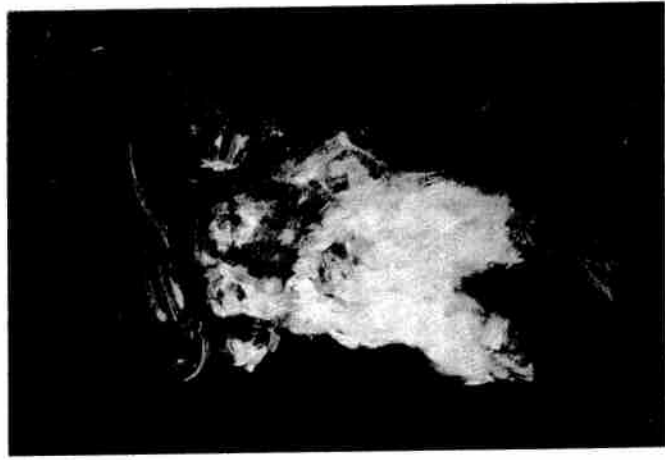






FIG. 31. Maksymilian Gierymski, *Gypsy Camp, I*, 1867-1868, oil on canvas, 40 × 63 cm, National Museum, Cracow, photo by A. Chęć.

Most distinguished Polish artists of Gottlieb's time depicted Jews, and some invested considerable time and effort in this subject. Interest began very early on, as indicated by a remarkable painting by Bernardo Bellotto (known in Poland as Canaletto), who during his sojourn in Warsaw was commissioned to produce a series of views of the capital. One of them, entitled *Miodowa Street* (1777), features, in the foreground, two Jews in traditional dress (fig. 32).<sup>63</sup> The distinguished Polish art historian Marek Rostworowski wishes us to believe that this painting serves as evidence of Polish liberalism and pluralism at a time when Jews were scarcely tolerated elsewhere in Europe. Here they are shown conversing in the Polish equivalent of the Champs Elysees, an elegant street featuring an important ecclesiastical building and the palace of a banker. The king of Poland himself, Bellotto's patron, voiced no objection to the hanging of this painting in his royal residence, therefore demonstrating his own enlightened attitude.<sup>64</sup> This is all a bit exaggerated—the fact is that Jews did not enjoy the legal right to reside in Warsaw in the 1770s, and were subjected to occasional expulsions. Legal restrictions on residence in parts of Warsaw remained on the books until 1862. Nonetheless, Rostworowski's reading is worthy of attention because it rehearses a commonly held attitude, also expressed in an interesting painting by Marejko (see fig. 101), that Poland deserves credit for her readiness to tolerate the Jews of Europe at

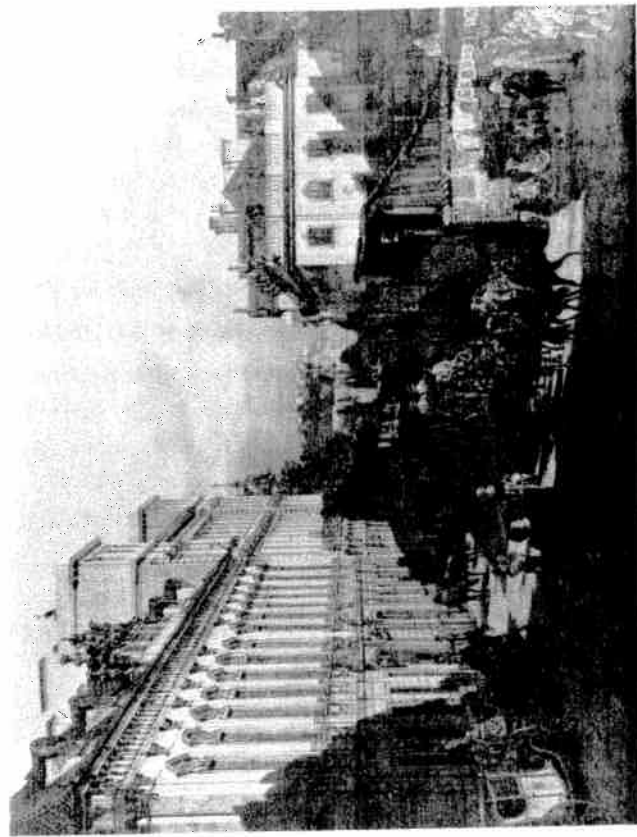


FIG. 32. Bernardo Bellotto (known as Canaletto), *Miodowa Street*, 1777, oil on canvas, 84 × 107.5 cm, Royal Castle, Warsaw.

a time when they were excluded from many European countries, and that in Poland the Jews, for all their otherness, were viewed as an integral part of the social order.

Nineteenth-century Polish artists represented the Jews in a great variety of ways, ranging from portraits of individuals to renditions of religious ceremonies and economic activities. The economic role of Polish Jews is made explicit in Józef Brandt's *Jews Travelling to Market* (1865), in which two powerful-looking figures, recognizable as Jews by their beards and *peyes*, are leading a convoy hastening through the Polish countryside on its way to some local emporium (fig. 33). Another work dealing with the economic side of Polish Jewish life is Aleksander Gierymski's *A Jewess with Lemons* (also known as *The Orange Seller*) of 1881 (fig. 34, see also plate 1). This artist is one of the finest representatives of the introspective, psychological, and Rembrandtian camp in nineteenth-century Polish art, and this canvas, portraying an old Jewish woman selling her wares in Warsaw (whose towers can be seen in the distance), is surely one of the most beautiful and moving of all artistic depictions of Polish Jews. The resigned look of sadness on the woman's face, contrasted with the bright colors of



FIG. 34. Aleksander Gierymski, *A Jewess with Lemons*, 1881, oil on canvas, 63.5 × 47.5cm, Museum of Silesia, Katowice.



FIG. 35. Piotr Michałowski, *The Jews*, c. 1845, oil on canvas, 72 × 118 cm, National Museum, Cracow, photo by A. Chęć.

through a little town.<sup>67</sup> Jews were also portrayed at prayer, both outside the synagogue and within its confines. There is, for example, the striking work by Antoni Kozakiewicz of 1882 entitled *Jews Praying* (Gottlieb's painting of Jews praying on the Day of Atonement was also known by this name) (fig. 36). The artist portrays two Jews in the synagogue, possibly on the Sabbath or on the Day of Atonement (the figure on the left appears to be beating his breast, an act performed many times during the course of Judaism's most holy day). This masterful painting, with its show of intense religious feeling, internalized in the case of the figure on the left, more expressively asserted in the case of the man on the right, reveals considerable familiarity with Jewish custom and dress—surely one could never know, simply by looking at it, that its creator was not Jewish.<sup>68</sup>

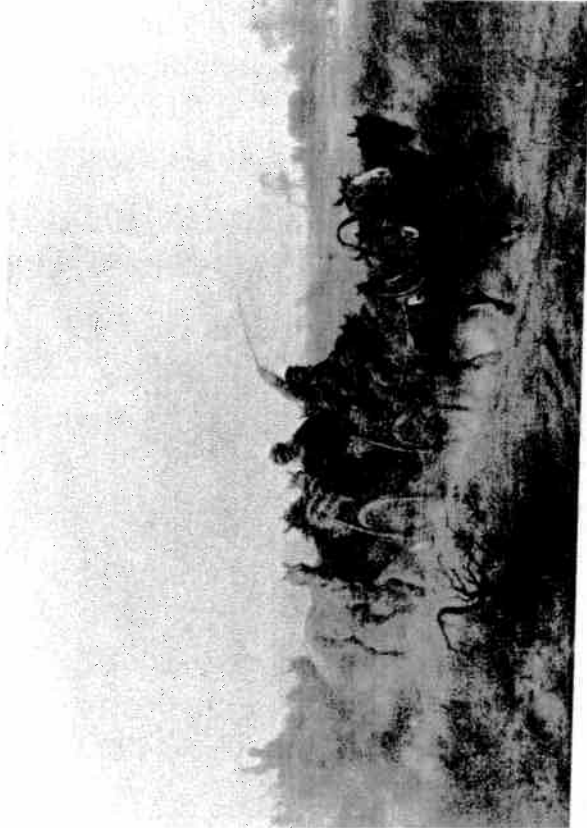


FIG. 33. Józef Brandt, *Jews Travelling to Market (Polish Peasants' Carriage)*, 1865, oil on canvas, 31 × 44 cm, Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich.

the fruit she holds in her basket, might well be taken to symbolize the offering of both the poverty-stricken lower classes of Poland's cities and the entire Jewish people.<sup>65</sup>

No less striking is an earlier group portrait by Piotr Michałowski called, simply, *The Jews* (c. 1845) (fig. 35, see also plate 2).<sup>66</sup> We are shown here five male faces, two large ones in the foreground representing orthodox, presumably hasidic Jewry, and three younger, more acculturated figures, in particular the man at the right of the picture, who is dressed in more modern fashion. Michałowski, like Gierymski, shows us the melancholy, even tragic visage of Polish Jewry, but he is also displaying an evolving Jewish community at a time when the forces of secularization and modernization were making inroads into Jewish life. This image was made at a time when Michałowski was living in Eastern Galicia, and could well be and as a portrait of the Gottlieb family.

In the eyes of both Jews and non-Jews Polish Jewry was above all a religious community, and the strange but also compelling practices of Judaism inevitably engaged the attention of Polish artists. The ceremonies connected with the Jewish wedding, often held outside and therefore easily accessible to non-Jews, were often portrayed, as in Wincenty Mokowski's *A Jewish Wedding* (after 1858), which displays a colorful procession of Jews headed by a klezmer band parading joyfully



FIG. 36. Antoni Kozakiewicz, *Jews Praying*, 1882, oil on canvas, 154 × 110 cm, private collection, photograph from *Malarsstwo polskie w zbiorach prywatnych*.

The same might be said of another remarkable painting of Jews at prayer, Tadeusz Popiel's *Holiday of the Torah* (1889) (fig. 37).<sup>69</sup> This is a depiction of the ceremony (in Hebrew, Simhat Torah), at the conclusion of the festival of the tabernacles (Sukot), when the Torah scrolls are paraded around the synagogue and when merriment is not only allowed but encouraged. Popiel shows us a young boy dancing before the Torah, held in the hands of a venerated elder, while on the right a Jew sits on a bench, apparently drunk. We should note, too, the beauty of the synagogue, with its ornamental rugs, its fine chandeliers, and its elaborately carved columns, effectively refuting the assumption that Jews in general, and certainly East European orthodox Jews, were blind to aesthetic considerations.

Yet another important Polish artist who rendered scenes of Jewish prayer was Wacław Koniuszko, like Gottlieb a native of Galicia and a pupil of Matejko's.<sup>70</sup> But surely the most striking and profound portrayal of this subject in Polish art is Aleksander Gierymski's *Holiday of the Trumpets*, of which several versions were made (the one shown here is dated 1890) (fig. 38, see also plate 3).<sup>71</sup> "Holiday of the Trumpets" refers to the Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashanah), when the *shofar* (ram's horn) is



FIG. 37. Tadeusz Popiel, *Holiday of the Torah* (Simhat Torah), 1889, oil on canvas, Museum of the Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw.

FIG. 38. Aleksander Gierymski, *Holiday of the Trumpets*, III, 1890, oil on canvas, 49 × 65.5 cm, National Museum, Cracow, photo by A. Chęć.



sounded in the synagogue. The ceremony here depicted is that of *tashlikh*, when, upon the advent of the holy day, pious Jews pray near a body of moving water—in this case the Vistula—and sometimes cast crumbs, repenting their sins, into it. The painting is dark, and perhaps the artist wishes to convey not only the intense religiosity of the moment but also the strangeness of the ritual, which is observed, probably with some astonishment, by a Polish woman, hand on hip, climbing the steps of the embankment with a jug of water in her other hand. This is a Polish scene, and much of the canvas is devoted to a depiction of Poland's greatest river, which plays so prominent a role in the history and culture of the

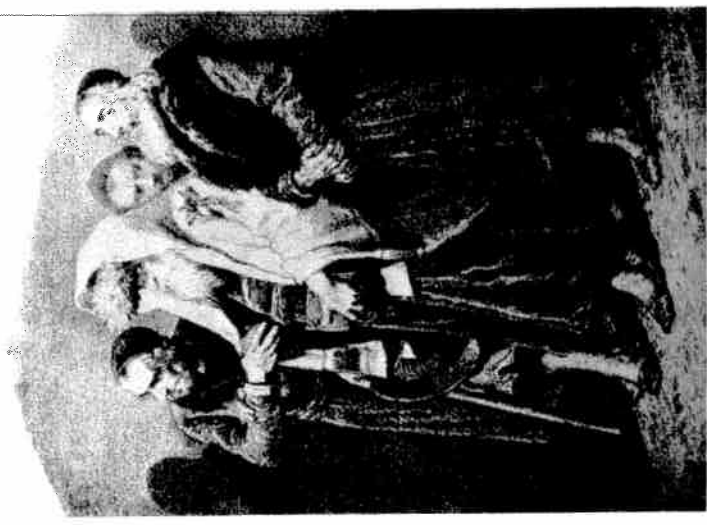


FIG. 39. Michal Andriolli, *Jankiel's Concert*, 1881, photo courtesy of the National Museum, Warsaw.

country; but it also serves to remind the observer of how “Jewish” Poland has become, how visible a presence the Jews are, and how, despite their exotic behavior, they are inextricably bound to Polish soil. This paradox—the coexistence of strangeness and belonging—lay at the very heart of the “Jewish question” in the Polish lands.

Even the briefest survey of the portrayal of Jews in Polish art (by which I mean art made by Christian Poles) would be incomplete without mentioning two additional aspects: the illustration of works of Polish literature in which Jews figure prominently, and the depiction of scenes based on the history of Polish Jewry. So far as the former is concerned, the *locus classicus* is Adam Mickiewicz’s masterpiece *Pan Tadeusz*, that features the most celebrated Jew in Polish literature, Jankiel, a loyal Jew, pious and true to the ways of his forefathers, and a fervent Polish patriot. Michal Andriolli, in one of his celebrated illustrations to *Pan Tadeusz* of 1881, depicts Jankiel playing on his dulcimer, a familiar folk instrument on which he was a master, Polish patriotic hymns—including the song that was to become the national anthem of the Poles. He has an appreciative crowd of onlookers, including the Polish general and military ally of Napoleon, Jan Dąbrowski (fig. 39). Here too we have a paradoxical situation:

FIG. 40. Artur Grottger, *Jews*, ill. 9 from the cycle *Warsaw*, National Museum in Wrocław.



the long-bearded Jew is reminding his Polish audience of Polish hopes and aspirations, and of their duty to serve the nation. Jankiel is proof positive that Jewishness and Polishness were not mutually exclusive categories, and his unusual, stereotype-breaking combination of characteristics inspired both “Polish” and “Jewish” artists, among them Cyprian Norwid, Wojciech Gerson, Maurycy Trębacz, and Maurycy Gottlieb.<sup>72</sup>

Finally, Polish artists took occasional interest in subjects drawn from the history of Polish Jewry. I shall consider, in a later chapter, two important canvases dealing with the very beginnings of Jewish history in Poland—one by Matejko entitled *The Reception of the Jews in Poland in the Year 1096*, which is included in his series of paintings on the history of Polish civilization, and another by Wojciech Gerson (see figs. 101, 102). The famous legend concerning the Jewish mistress of Casimir the Great, known in Polish as Esterka, was the subject of works both by Matejko and by Gottlieb’s friend Franciszek Żmurko (see fig. 79).<sup>73</sup> Another important figure in Polish Jewish history, the Jewish soldier and patriot Berek Joselewicz, was also depicted by Polish artists, for example by Henryk Pillati in 1867 his work *The Death of Berek Joselewicz at Kock*.<sup>74</sup>

The role of the Jews in the failed revolt of 1863 also attracted the attention of Polish artists. The Polish Jewish artist Aleksander Lesser's that preceded the burial of the five martyrs of the demonstrations in Warsaw same theme was taken up by Artur Grottger in his 1866 series of drawings on the uprising, that includes a study of four Jewish men attending the very same funeral (fig. 40). The inclusion of this drawing was doubtless intended to emphasize the Jews' sympathy for the insurrection.

It should by now be apparent that what is usually meant by "Jewish art" was regularly practiced by non-Jewish Polish artists. Indeed, in their country they were among the inventors and most brilliant practitioners of this genre. Also apparent is the highly sympathetic treatment of Jews in Polish art—the depiction of the beauty and tragedy of Jewish life in Eastern Europe was by no means the monopoly of Jewish artists. There is an obvious parallel here to the world of Polish literature. Mickiewicz, along with Orzeszkowa and Prus, were by no means exceptional in their interest in Polish Jewish life. In Cracow the local short-story writer and playwright Michał Bałucki, who played an important role in Gottlieb's posthumous reception, often addressed Jewish themes in his work.<sup>75</sup> So, for that matter, did Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, who wrote in German but was born in Lwów. Sacher-Masoch actually wrote a novella on the subject of a non-Jewish Galician artist, known as "The Jewish Raphael," who specialized in depictions of Jewish life.<sup>76</sup> The fact that Jewish life had become a legitimate subject in Polish (and German) culture in Gottlieb's time, even a popular subject, should be kept in mind as we go on to consider Gottlieb's Jewish artistic project.

## CHAPTER 3

# Maurycy Gottlieb's Artistic Project

### Gottlieb as European Artist

Maurycy Gottlieb owes his present renown to his status as a "Jewish artist" and as one of the fathers of "Jewish art," however this elusive category may be defined. But it is also the case that he tried very hard to win a place for himself within the world of art by producing works that, while perhaps sometimes possessing a Jewish subtext, were also very much in the general European mainstream.

At the beginning of his brief career Gottlieb attempted the kind of history painting practiced in Cracow, Munich, and Vienna, which his brother Leopold referred to with such contempt in 1932. As Benjamin Spira put it, "In 1874 he came to Cracow, where he studied at the excellent school under the direction of Matejko. To this period belong his works based on and glorifying the history of Poland." He adds, revealing his Zionist bias: "This was the age of the assimilation of our brethren among the gentiles, and the time was ripe to arouse in Gottlieb the idea of praising others and not his own people, whom he hardly knew, owing to the bad education that was the lot of most Galician Jews"<sup>71</sup> Waldman reproduces a sketch, made at the age of thirteen, of an unspecified historical scene, and a later drawing representing *Imperial Envoys before King Jan III (Sobieski)*.<sup>72</sup> A biographical note published in 1879 names three early historical works done under the direction of Matejko in Cracow: *Albert of Brandenburg Receiving His Investiture from King Zygmunt I* (completed in 1875 in Vienna); *A Scene from the Life of the False Dmitri*; and *The Knights of Livonia asking Zygmunt August for Protection Against Emperor Ferdinand*.<sup>73</sup> The first and third of these works are based on Polish history, the second on a dramatic period in early seventeenth-century Russian history known as the "time of troubles" that so fascinated and preoccupied Rus-

133. W. G. (Gerson), "Külka słów," *Kłosy*, no. 736, 1879.
134. Samuely, "Zikchronot," 194.
135. "Hochverehrter Herr Professor," undated letter, Schwadron Collection.
136. Rubin Bierer, "Moritz Gottlieb," *Selbst-Emanicipation*, no. 18, 1892, 177.
137. See his letter in Wiesenberg, *Maurycy Gottlieb*, 36–37, and Narkiss, *Igerot*, 50–52, and "Liebe theure Schwester," 29 Nov. 1878, Schwadron Autograph Collection. On Gottlieb in Rome see my article "Omanut vehistoriyah yehudit: 'Yeshu doresh behvar nahum' lemaurycy gottlieb," *Tsvyon*, vol. 62, 1997, 173–91.
138. Wiesenberg, *Maurycy Gottlieb*, 35; Narkiss, *Igerot*, 49–50.
139. "Liebe theure Schwester."
140. "Auszug aus einem Briefe Moritz Gottliebs," *Der Israelit*, 1879, 6; Wiesenberg, *Gottlieb*, 38; Narkiss, *Igerot*, 52.
141. The issue divided the Polish representatives to the Reichsrat in Vienna, with the delegate Otto Hausner, who represented Galicia, criticizing the invasion. See Stefan Kieniewicz, *Adam Sapielna 1828–1903* (Warsaw: 1993), 311.
142. The quotations are from Gottlieb's letter "Verehrtester Herr Doktor," of late 1878 or early 1879, in the Schwadron Autograph Collection, and from Wiesenberg, *Gottlieb*, 36, see also Narkiss, *Igerot*, 56–59.
143. Gottlieb's account is published in "Auszug aus einem Briefe Moritz Gottliebs," 6. See also Wiesenberg, *Gottlieb*, 41–43, and Narkiss, *Igerot*, 55–56. Waldman, *Gottlieb*, 66–67, publishes a similar version (for the Hebrew version see Narkiss, *Igerot*, 53–55).
144. I quote from Gottlieb, "Auszug aus einem Briefe Moritz Gottliebs." See also Wiesenberg, *Gottlieb*, 41. For excerpts published in the Polish press see "Matejko-Gottlieb," *Biesiada Literacka*, vol. 7, no. 157, 3 Jan. 1879, 15.
145. Gottlieb, "Auszug aus einem Briefe Moritz Gottliebs," *Der Israelit*, 1879, 6; Wiesenberg, *Gottlieb*, 42.
146. This term is actually used in the description of this event in the introduction by Moritz Scheyer to *Meisterwerke von Maurycy Gottlieb 1836–1879* (Vienna: 1923).
147. "Auszug aus einem Briefe Moritz Gottliebs," *Der Israelit*, 1879, 6; Guralnik, 51.
148. Gottlieb's letter "Verehrtester Herr Doktor," Schwadron Autograph Collection.
149. On the fate of this work, which was never completed, see Chapter 3, note 55.
150. Eugen Kolb, "Portrait of Laura Henschel-Rosenfeld painted by Maurycy Gottlieb," Guralnik, *In the Flower of Youth*, 77–91.
151. "Mein gutes M . . ." Schwadron Collection.
152. It is remarkable that several early observers of this painting render the inscription in different ways. Thus Samuely, "Zikchronot," reads the name as "Mordecai," not "Moshe," and Spira includes words that do not appear in the painting. The Hebrew text as published in the obituary of Gottlieb that appeared in "Nekrolog," *Der Israelit*, 14, 25 July 1879, is: "pazer nedavah lezikhron nishmat hamanoah kvod moreinu harav rav Moshe Gottlieb zikhron tsadik livrachah tarlah (1877–8) lefrat katan," meaning "Contribute to
- the memory of the soul of the late honored teacher and rabbi Moshe Gottlieb, may the memory of the righteous one be a blessing." An examination of the painting reveals a slightly different text: *k' l' (keter torah, Torah crown)*, rather than *pazer*.
153. Samuely, "Zikchronot," 194. I quote from his Hebrew text of 1894/5, which does not differ significantly from the German text of 1885. For a slightly different translation see Guralnik, *In the Flower of Youth*, 39–42.
154. Waldman, *Gottlieb*, 74; Narkiss, *Igerot*, 63.
155. "Liebe theure Schwester," Schwadron Autograph Collection.
156. Waldman, *Gottlieb*, 72; Narkiss, *Igerot*, 61.
157. S. G., "Maurycy Gottlieb," *Tygodnik Powszechny*, no. 33, 5 (17) Sept. 1879, 514.
158. Wiesenberg, *Gottlieb*, 33–34, 44–47; Spira, *Mauseret zikaron*, 14.
159. Waldman, *Gottlieb*, 85–86.
160. Matejko's letter is quoted in Waldman, *Gottlieb*, 86, and in Sołtysowa, "Dzielo," 156, whose source is *Listy Matejki do zony Teodory, 1863–1881* (Cracow: 1927), 174. Angina is also given as the cause of death in the obituary in *Israelitische Wochen-Schrift*, no. 32, 6 August 1879, which quotes from the Cracow newspaper *Czas*. See also *Przeegląd Tygodniowy*, no. 31, 1879, 37; *Der Israelit*, no. 9, 28 May 1880, names diphtheria as the culprit.
161. Kolb, "Portrait," 86.

## 2. Artistic Contexts (pp. 45–82)

1. *Nony Dziennik*, 13 March 1932. Anselm Feuerbach was a German artist who specialized in the depiction of subjects derived from classical literature.
2. Christian Lenz, *The Neue Pinakothek, Munich* (London: 1995), 72. For a detailed discussion see Klaus Lankheit, *Karl von Piloty: Thunhelda im Triumphzug des Germanicus* (Munich: 1984).
3. See the essay on this opera in Richard Turaskin, *Musorgsky: Eight Essays and an Epilogue* (Princeton: 1993), 313–24.
4. Lankheit, *Karl von Piloty*, 22–23; Horst Ludwig, *Münchener Malerei im 19. Jahrhundert* (Munich: 1978), 37.
5. Anna Szynyci Merse, ed., *The Hungarian National Gallery* (Budapest: 1994), 39; Antal Kamps, *The History of Art in Hungary* (Budapest: 1966), 268ff.
6. Lynne Thornton, *The Orientalists: Painter-Travelers* (Paris: 1994), 7.
7. This painting is discussed in *Österreichische Galerie Belvedere Vienna* (Munich and New York: 1996), 117. On Müller see also Thornton, *The Orientalists*, 140–41.
8. Brigitte Heinzl, *Hans Makart: Zeichnungen: Entwürfe* (Salzburg: 1984), 29–30; Hans Makart, *Entwürfe und Phantasien* (Vienna: 1975), 8ff. Sonja Mehl, *Franz von Lenbach in der Städtischen Galerie im Lenbachhaus München* (Munich: 1980), 29, 85–86.
9. Elizabeth Valkenier, ed. *The Wanderers: Masters of Nineteenth-Century Russian Painting* (Dallas: 1990), 133.

10. Vladimir Vasilevich Stasov, "Twenty-Five Years of Russian Art: Our Music," in Stasov, *Selected Essays on Music*, trans. Florence Jonas (London: 1968), 72–73. This essay was published in 1883.
11. See Malcolm Warner, "The Question of Faith: Orientalism, Christianity and Islam," in Mary Anne Stevens, ed., *The Orientalists: Delacroix to Matisse: European Painters in North Africa and the Near East* (London: 1984), 33. On Hunt and other European artists in the Holy Land see Yehoshuah Ben-Arieh, "Nofah shel erets-yisrael betsiyurei mikra shel hameah ha-19," *Kateadra*, vol. 60, June 1991, 116–140.
12. It is reproduced in Valkenier, *Russian Realist Art* (New York: 1989), 113. See also Tatiana Kurochkina, *Ivan Nikolaevich Kravskoy* (Leningrad: 1989), plates 18, 19. On Repin's criticism see Valkenier, *Ilya Repin and the World of Russian Art* (New York: 1990), 8.
13. It is discussed in Götz Czjymmek and Christian Lenz, eds., *Wilhelm Leibl zum 150. Geburtstag* (Munich and Cologne: 1994), 343–44.
14. The two writers are quoted, in the original Polish and in English translation, in Maria Poprzęcka, *Artyściela malarstwa polskiego* (Warsaw: 1997), 5–6. The word "Slav" sounds like the Polish for "word" (*słowo*).
15. Stanisław Witkiewicz, *Matejko* (Cracow: 1908), 13–14.
16. The Irish, it has been said, "at least since the demise of the manuscript illuminations, lacked an interest in, or adepts of, painting and sculpture." See Toby Barnard in *The Times Literary Supplement*, no. 4966, June 5, 1998, 31. On the Hungarians see Ilona Sarmany-Parsons, "Jewish Art Patronage in Budapest at the Turn of the Century," *Central European University History Department Yearbook*, 1994–1995, 113–14, who writes that early nineteenth-century Hungarian culture was "a culture of the word, not of the senses."
17. See his introduction to *Maurycy Gottlieb 1836–1879: 20 reprodukcje według obrazów mistrza* (Vienna: 1923).
18. Janusz Walek, *Histoire de la Pologne dans la peinture* (Warsaw: 1988).
19. For a discussion of the series see Sroczyńska, *Matejko*, 235–49. See also Ewa Suchodolska and Marek Wrede, *Jana Matejki Dzieje cywilizacji w Polsce* (Warsaw: 1998).
20. Poprzęcka, *Artyściela*, 134.
21. See his series of drawings entitled *Warszawa, Polonia, Litwania, Wójnia*, created during the years 1861–1867 and republished in 1994 under the editorship of Jan Karaskiewicz (Ciechanów: 1994).
22. This painting is reproduced in Walek, *Histoire de la Pologne*, 74.
23. See *The Orient in Polish Art: Catalogue of the Exhibition* (Cracow: 1992).
24. Thornton, *The Orientalists*, 48–49. Chlebowski was a pupil of the famous French orientalist painter Jean-Leon Gérôme.
25. *The Torches of Nero* is reproduced and discussed in *Museums of Cracow* (Milan: 1982), 107, 111.
26. See also his *The Three Marys at the Tomb of Christ*, also made in 1879 and also demonstrating the same tendency to place the story of Christ in its Jewish and Eastern setting.
27. Wyczółkowski's painting is reproduced and discussed in Elżbieta Charazińska,

- Ewa Mücke-Broniarek, and Anna Tyczyńska, *Malarstwo polskie w złotych latach prymitywów* (Warsaw: 1995), 106.
28. The first edition of these illustrations appeared in 1881. See Andrioli, *Illustracje do Pana Tadeusza* (Warsaw: 1955).
29. *Ibid.*, 5.
30. *The Autobiography of Solomon Maimon* (London: 1954), 27.
31. Isaac Bashevis Singer, *Szosha* (New York: 1978), 5.
32. *Galeria sztuki kocioł artystyczny*, (Cracow: 1996), a Polish gallery catalogue that features a painting by Gottlieb.
33. I quote from John Klier, *Imperial Russia's Jewish Question 1855–1881* (New York 1995), 387.
34. The greatest Jewish religious authority of eighteenth-century Eastern Europe Elijah the Gaon of Vilna, was prepared to allow for the beneficial impact of music, but had nothing to say about art. See Emanuel Etkes, *Yahid bedoro Hagoon minilua – dennut vedimui* (Jerusalem: 1998), 29.
35. See Mendelsohn, "On the Jewish Presence in Nineteenth-Century European Musical Life," Mendelsohn, ed., *Modern Jews and their Musical Agendas: Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, vol. 9, 1993, 3–16.
36. Joseph Roth, *Job, The Story of a Simple Man*, trans. Dorothy Thompson (Woodstock, New York: 1982). This novel was first published in 1930.
37. Ernest Renan, *The Life of Jesus* (reprint, Garden City, New York: 1900), 163–64.
38. Franz Liszt, *The Gypsy in Music*, trans. Edwin Evans, vol. 1 (London: 1926), 47–51.
39. Kurt Weizmann, "Loca Sancta and the Representational Arts of Palestine," *Dunbarton Oaks Papers*, vol. 28 (1974), 33. He refers to the third-century synagogue frescoes of Dura-Europos, now in Syria, that were only discovered in 1932.
40. Ze'ev Weiss and Ehud Netzer, *Promise and Redemption: A Synagogue Mosaic from Sephoris* (Jerusalem: 1996). See in general Lee Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven and London: 2000).
41. As quoted in Kalman Bland, "Antisemitism and Aniconism: The Germanophone Requiem for Jewish Visual Art," in Catherine Soussloff, ed., *Jewish Identity in Modern Art History* (Berkeley: 1999), 50. Gracetz's remark was made in 1889. Bland has recently published an important full-length study on this subject, *The Artless Jew* (Princeton: 2000).
42. Salomon and his inquiry are discussed in the important study by Fredric Bedoire, *Ett judiskt Europa: Kring uppkomsten av en modern arkitektur 1830–1930* (Stockholm: 1998), 431–33. My thanks to Professor Bedoire for supplying me with an English translation. For the inquiry see the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judeniums*, no. 8, 17 Feb. 1863, 113–116; no. 9, 24 Feb. 1863, 125–130.
43. I. J. Benjamin, *Three Years in America: 1859–1862*, trans. Charles Reznikoff, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: 1956), 321.
44. *Ibid.*, 332–33 (originally published in English in *The Occident and American Jewish Advocate*, vol. 19, no. 2, May 1861, 51–53).
45. *Ibid.*, 330 (Originally published in *The Occident and American Jewish Advocate*, vol. 19, no. 2, May 1861, 53–54).

46. *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, no. 8, 17 Feb. 1863, 113.
47. *Ibid.*, 116.
48. Hans-Joachim Ziemke, "Die Anfänge in Wien und in Rom," in Henri Derra et al., eds., *Die Nazarener* (Frankfurt am Main: 1977), 49; Klaus Gallwitz, ed., *Die Nazarener in Rom: Ein deutscher Künstlerbund der Romantik* (Munich: 1981), 267–69. See also the remarks in Richard Cohen, *Jewish Icons: Art and Society in Modern Europe* (Berkeley and London: 1998), 160.
49. It is reproduced in Cohen, *Jewish Icons*, 162; see in general 160–63, and also Simon Reynolds, *The Vision of Simon Solomon*, (Stroud, Glos.: 1984).
50. See Rivka Weiss-Blok, "Jozef Israels: Jewish Wedding," *The Israel Museum Journal*, vol. 15, summer 1997, 45–56, and Diewertje Dekkers et al., eds., *Jozef Israels 1824–1911* (Groninger, Amsterdam, and Zwolle: 2000), 268–71. See also Guralnik, *In the Flower of Youth*, 38.
51. For discussions of Liebermann's relationship of this Jewishness to his art see Irit Rogoff, "Max Liebermann and the Painting of the Public Sphere," in Ezra Mendelsohn and Richard Cohen, eds., *Art and Its Uses: The Visual Image of Modern Jewish Society. Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, vol. 6, 1990, 91–110, and Chana C. Schütz, "Max Liebermann as a 'Jewish' Painter: The Artist's Reception in His Time," *Berlin Metropolis: Jews and the New Culture 1890–1918* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: 2000), 146–63. On Pissarro see Linda Nochlin, "Degas and the Dreyfus Affair: A Portrait of the Artist as an Anti-Semite," Nochlin, *The Politics of Vision: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Art and Society* (New York: 1989), 142, and Nicholas Mirzoeff, "Pissarro's Passage: The Sensation of Caribbean Jewishness in Diaspora," Mirzoeff, ed., *Diaspora and Visual Culture: Representing Africans and Jews* (New York: 2000), 57–75.
52. Levitan painted one well known work on a Jewish theme; it is discussed in Mirjam Rajner, "Levitan's Jewish Graveyard," *The Israel Museum Journal*, vol. 12, summer 1994, 29–34. For remarks on Antokolsky's connections to Jewish matters see Rajner, *Russian Jewish Art 1862–1912*, M.A. thesis, Hebrew University (Jerusalem: 1985), and Kazovsky, "Jewish Artists." See also Susan Turkman Goodman, "Alienation and Adaptation of Jewish Artists in Russia," in Goodman, ed., *Russian Jewish Artists in a Century of Change: 1890–1990* (Munich and New York: 1996), 29.
53. Jerzy Malinowski, "Aleksander Lesser—malarz historyczny," *Żydzi w obronie Rzeczypospolitej* (Warsaw: 1996), 125–132. The same author has recently published an important monograph on Jewish artists in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Poland, *Malarstwo i rzeźba Żydów polskich w XIX i XX wieku* (Warsaw: 2000), which includes reproductions of Lesser's work (16–17). For a recent catalogue of his work see G. Tobias Natter, ed., *Rabbiner, Bocher, Talmudschütler: Bilder des Wiener malers Isidor Kaufmann, 1833–1921* (Vienna: 1995).
54. *Moritz Oppenheim: The First Jewish Painter* (Jerusalem: 1983); Cohen, *Jewish Icons*, 163.
56. See the analysis in Cohen, *Jewish Icons*, 163–66, and Ismar Schorsch, "Art as Social History: Oppenheim and the German Vision of Emancipation," in *Moritz Oppenheim*, 31–62. This important essay is included in Schorsch, *From Text to Context: The Turn to History in Modern Judaism* (Hanover, N.H.: 1994), 93–117.
57. For a useful survey see Amishai-Maisels, "The Demonization of the 'Other' in the Visual Arts," in Robert Wistrich, ed., *Demonizing the Other: Antisemitism, Racism, and Xenophobia* (Jerusalem: 1999), 44–72.
58. See Richard Cohen, "The Visual Dreyfus Affair—A New Text?" in Dreyfus Affair Exhibition at the Jewish Museum, New York," in Mendelsohn and Cohen, *Art and Its Uses*, vol. 6, 1990, 71–90.
59. This painting is discussed in Lenz, *The Neue Pinakothek*, 71, and in more detail in *Neue Pinakothek, Munich* (Munich: 1989), 148–49. See also William Vaughan, *German Romantic Painting* (New Haven and London: 1994), 218, and Norbert Huse, *Kleine Kunstgeschichte Münchens* (Munich: 1990), 139–40.
60. On this artist, and on these two paintings, see *Nicolae Grigorescu* (Bucharest: 1998), especially 49, 50.
61. It is reproduced in Halina Stępień, *Maksymilian Gierymski: Obraz i słowo* (Warsaw: 1983), plates 4 and 6. There are two versions of this painting, labeled I and II respectively.
62. The portrayal of Jews in Polish art is the subject of the book by Halina Nelken, *Images of a Lost World: Jewish Motifs in Polish Painting 1770–1945* (Oxford: 1991). See also the catalogue of the exhibition at the National Museum in Cracow, *Żydzi—Polscy* (Cracow: 1989), and the excellent book edited by Marek Rostworowski, *Żydzi w Polsce: Obraz i słowo*, part 1 (Warsaw: 1993).
63. See Alberto Rizzi, *La Varsavia di Bellotto* (Milan: 1990), 84–87; *Bernardo Bellotto 1720–1780: Paintings and Drawings from the National Museum of Warsaw* (Liverpool: 1957); Mieczysław Wallis, *Canaletto malarz Warszawy* (Warsaw: 1954).
64. Rostworowski, *Żydzi w Polsce*, 124. Bellotto's detailed and highly accurate representations of Warsaw are considered in Poland to be a national treasure, and were put to good use when the city was rebuilt after the devastation of World War II. See Stefan Kozakiewicz, *Bernardo Bellotto*, Mary Whittall, trans., vol. 1 (Greenwich, Conn.: 1972), 8.
65. This painting is reproduced on the cover of Zofia Krzykowska, ed., *Malarstwo polskie 1800–1939: Katalog zbiorów Muzeum Śląskiego w Katowicach* (Katowice: 1996).
66. This painting graces the cover of Rostworowski, *Żydzi w Polsce*, and is discussed on page 6.
67. As reproduced in Rostworowski, 36–57.
68. It is reproduced and briefly discussed in *Malarstwo polskie w zbiorach prywatnych*, 50–51.
69. It is reproduced and discussed in Rostworowski, *Żydzi w Polsce*, 26–27, and in *The Museum of the Jewish Historical Institute: Arts and Crafts* (Warsaw: 1995), plate 77.
70. For reproductions of his work see Nelken, *Images*, xxviii–xxix, see also Malinowski, *Malarstwo*, 36–37, and Rostworowski *Żydzi w Polsce*, 30, 38.
71. It is discussed by Rostworowski, *Żydzi w Polsce*, 22, and is praised as "among the outstanding works of Polish nineteenth-century painting" in *Museums of*



Cracow (Milan: 1992), 115. For a reproduction of another version of this painting, made in 1884, see *The National Museum in Warsaw: Painting* (Warsaw: 1994), plate 116.

72. Trębacz's rendition is to be found in Segel, *Stranger in Our Midst*, 74. See also Rostworowski, *Żydzi w Polsce*, 142–43.
73. On Matejko's sketch see Sroczyńska, *Matejko*, 35.
74. It is reproduced in Walek, *Histoire de Pologne*, 102.
75. See in general Segel, *Stranger in Our Midst*, and Magdalena Opalski and Israel Bartal, *Poles and Jews: A Failed Brotherhood* (Hanover and London: 1992).
76. *Der Judenrapphael*, reprinted in his *Der Judenrapphael: Geschichten aus Galizien* (Vienna and Bohlau: 1989), 38–157. It was originally published in 1882.

### 3. Maurycy Gottlieb's Artistic Project (pp. 83–149)

1. Spira, *Matsvet zikaron*, 5. Isaac Gottlieb confirms his son's interest in Polish history paintings: see "Öffentliche Danksagung," *Der Israelit*, no. 15, 8 August 1879, 7.
2. Waldman, *Gottlieb*, 83; the pencil drawing of Sobieski is reproduced in Guralnik, *In the Flower of Youth*, 69, and in the albums of Gottlieb's work published in conjunction with his exhibition in Cracow in 1923: *Meisterwerke von Maurycy Gottlieb 1856–1879* (Vienna: 1923), no. 5, in which it is called simply *King Sobieski*, and *Maurycy Gottlieb 1856–1879: 26 reprodukcji według obrazów mistrza* (Vienna: 1923).
3. St. M. Rż., "Maurycy Gottlieb," *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, no. 188, 1879, 74. See also Wiesenberg, *Gottlieb*, 15–16. Two of these paintings are also mentioned in *Pamiętnik odsłonięcia pomnika Maurycego Gottlieba*, 5. There is a discussion and reproduction of the first-named work in Waldman, *Gottlieb*, 19–20, and in Guralnik, *In the Flower of Youth*, 67. A photograph of the third is published in Malinowski, *Maurycy Gottlieb*, 7, and Guralnik, *In the Flower of Youth*, 69. It is also reproduced in Karol Bernhaut, ed., *Maurycy Gottlieb 1856–1879: 39 Reproductions of the Artist's Paints* [sic] (Tel Aviv: 1961), no. 31, where it is entitled *Honour of the Finnish Soldiers*. My reproduction is taken from *Meisterwerke von Maurycy Gottlieb*, where it is called *Huldigung der infantischen Ritter*. The article on Gottlieb in the *Słownik artystów polskich i obcych w Polsce działających*, vol. 3 (Wrocław et al.: 1975), 428, mentions several other historical works, including one dealing with Kościuszko.
4. "Lieber Colege," published in Gottliebowa, "Życie i twórczość," 221–222.
5. Matejko's painting is reproduced in Sroczyńska, *Matejko*, 115, and the similarity is pointed out in Guralnik, *In the Flower of Youth*, 68.
6. Malinowski, *Maurycy Gottlieb*, 8. Stattler's painting is briefly discussed in *Polish Painting* (Warsaw: 1997), 51. We are told here that "Biblical subjects were used in his work to express patriotic ideas." See also Guralnik, *In the Flower of Youth*, p. 67.
7. Rubinstein had been converted to Christianity in childhood, but remained interested in Jewish affairs. His opera was written in 1875.
8. This painting is mentioned by Wiesenberg, *Gottlieb*, 22. It is included in the

above-mentioned albums of 1923 (see note 2), where it is stated that the painting was then in the possession of Maurycy Gottlieb's most dedicated collector, Rudolf Beres of Cracow.

9. Guralnik, *In the Flower of Youth*, 150, gives it this title, while in the album of 1923 it is called simply *Odańska*. In Bernhaut, *Maurycy Gottlieb*, it is called *Dancer*. Gottlieb also made another painting now entitled *Shulamite*, of 1877, reproduced in Waldman, *Gottlieb*, 31, and in Guralnik, *In the Flower of Youth*, 135.
10. On the latter building, and on the controversy surrounding its establishment, see Benjamin Nathans, "Mythologies and Realities of Jewish Life in Pre-revolutionary St. Petersburg," in Mendelsohn, ed., *People of the City: Jews and the Urban Challenge. Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, vol. 15, 1999, 130–134.
11. Ismar Schorsch, "The Myth of Sephardic Supremacy," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, vol. 34, 1989, 47–66, reprinted in Schorsch, *From Text to Context*, 71–92.
12. Malinowski, *Maurycy Gottlieb*, 66–67, detects here the influence of a painting by Siemiradzki entitled *Sword Dance*.
13. It is reproduced in Guralnik, *In the Flower of Youth*, 116.
14. *Ibid.*, 74.
15. Opalski and Bartal, *Poles and Jews*, 136.
16. Malinowski, "Aleksander Lesser," 131; Malinowski, *Malarsztwo*, 16–18.
17. See Richard Hoops, "Vladimir Vasil'evich Stasov: The Social and Ethical Foundations of His Relation to Russian Music," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, vol. 34, no. 1, Spring 2000, 82.
18. This was also the case with Aleksander Gierymski's painting based on the same play. See Janusz Bogucki, *Gierymscy* (Warsaw: 1959), 173–75.
19. Theodor Billroth, *The Medical Sciences in the German Universities: A Study in the History of Civilization*, trans. William Welch (New York: 1924), 108.
20. "Tsary pele," *Keneset yisrael*, 162–63. This uplifting story, for which there is no further documentation, was also published by T. Nussenblatt, "Maurycy Gottlieb i Teodor Billroth," *Nony Dziennik*, 3 March 1932.
21. Wiesenberg, *Gottlieb*, 16, 22.
22. Sandel, "Maurycy Gottlieb," 134. Krywult donated Gottlieb's *Abasueris* to the National Museum in Cracow. See Feliks Kopera, *Muzeum narodowe w Krakowie: Wybór i opis cenniejszych zabytków* (Cracow: 1933), 36.
23. Wiesenberg, *Gottlieb*, 35.
24. Leopold Pilichowski, "Moritz gottlieb," *Renesans*, vol. 1, no. 1, Jan. 1920, 36.
25. Avner Holtzman, *Melchet nabasberet: tebiyat baumabi: Hasi frat baavrit lenochab baomanut haplastit* (Tel Aviv: 1999).
26. *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, vol. 38, no. 1, 1 Jan. 1874, 6.
27. Shatsky, *Geshichte fun yidn in varshe*, vol. 3 (New York: 1953), 328–31.
28. See Cohen, *Jewish Icons*, 155–56. See also Cohen, "Nostalgia and 'Return to the Ghetto': A Cultural Phenomenon in Western and Central Europe," Jonathan Frankel and Steven Zipperstein, eds., *Assimilation and Community. The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: 1992), 130–55.
29. David Kaufmann, "Etwas von jüdischer Kunst," *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 3 (Frankfurt: 1915), 150–53. This article was published in 1878.