# A Rabbi’s Impressions of the Oberammergau Passion Play: Joseph Krauskopf, Antisemitism, and the Limits of the Transnational Jewish Public Sphere around 1900

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In recent decades, the passion play at Oberammergau in Bavaria has become a byword for the allegedly timeless continuities of European and especially German anti-Jewish prejudice. One popular general history of antisemitism opens on the first page with a description of the Oberammergau performance as “typical of [the] uninterrupted flow of contempt for Jews” in western culture from the middle ages to the present.[[1]](#endnote-1) As Edna Nahshon has noted, passion plays “are generally relegated to the same camp as accusations of host desecration, ritual murders, and well poisoning.”[[2]](#endnote-2) What distinguishes Oberammergau is both the longevity it claims – the village’s passion-playing tradition has continued almost uninterruptedly since 1634 – and the enormous attention it has generated since the late nineteenth century. Performed every ten years, this amateur performance in the foothills of the Bavarian Alps charmed pilgrims and tourists alike as both a rare survival of the rituals that “enlightened” authorities had sought to eradicate from modern Europe and an apparent relic of prelapsarian Christian devotion and communal endeavor that transcended the divisions between Catholic and Protestant.[[3]](#endnote-3) While early versions of the play cast Satan as the main enemy, reforms in the early nineteenth century that aimed to expel superstition from the text saw the Jewish priesthood and population of Jerusalem effectively replace the devil as the villains of the piece.[[4]](#endnote-4) From 1811 until 2000, a centerpiece of Oberammergau’s performance was a spectacular crowd scene where hundreds of villagers, led by a rabbinate bedecked with horned headgear, howled “Crucify him!” at Pontius Pilate. At the first post-war performance in 1950, the Chancellor of West Germany Konrad Adenauer supposedly exclaimed “that was too much!” in horror at the anti-Jewish elements.[[5]](#endnote-5) From the 1970s until the 2000s, the community provoked further notoriety by pointedly resisting calls to reform the play from the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League, and the American Catholic Bishops Conference.

This debate has driven recent scholarship on Oberammergau to focus on the Nazi period and after, with a substantial critical literature on the debate over its antisemitism.[[6]](#endnote-6) But the volume of recent criticism stands in stark contrast to commentators’ near-silence on the question of the representation of the Jews during the first three centuries of the play’s performance. Rather than posing yet another variation of the question “how antisemitic was Oberammergau?” this article will instead ask when, where, and how audiences and critics in different national and faith contexts publicly criticized Oberammergau’s representation of the Jews. It does so primarily by exploring the development, reception, and translation of what remains one of the most strident critiques of the Oberammergau performance: Joseph Krauskopf’s *A Rabbi’s Impressions of the Passion Play*, first given as a series of sermons at the author’s synagogue in Philadelphia in 1900 and published the following year.[[7]](#endnote-7) While previous work on Oberammergau has tended to view Krauskopf’s book as the inevitable product of an educated Jew’s exposure to the play’s inflammatory content, I will instead argue that his attack on the play emerged from the specific context and debates of American Reform Judaism at the turn of the century. I then provide an account of Krauskopf’s limited success through an examination of his international reception, focusing particularly on the Jewish feminist Bertha Pappenheim’s abortive efforts to publish a German translation of his book. I show that the American Christians who were Krauskopf’s main target found his critique of Christianity too sweeping, while English and German Jews saw their political and social conjuncture as peculiarly inhospitable to popularizing a Jewish critique of Oberammergau. I conclude that Krauskopf’s arguments found limited sympathy outside his American Reform Jewish milieu and failed meaningfully to shift the discussion of Oberammergau in the following decades.

This article makes two central claims. First, I suggest that we can only explain why a debate emerged over the Oberammergau passion play’s representation of the Jews by attending to changes in its audience’s context, rather than simply examining its content. While the evolution of the play’s text and costumery had sharpened its contrast between Christian and Jew, the most important stimuli for Krauskopf’s intervention were exogenous to Oberammergau. The rise of political antisemitism in Germany and Austria during the 1870s, the wave of pogroms in Eastern Europe in the 1880s, and the Dreyfus Affair in France during the 1890s, had all prompted Jewish communities – many of which had only recently celebrated legal emancipation – to reflect on the question of whether anti-Jewish hatred was a more deeply engrained feature of European culture than they had hoped. While some continued to believe that the new self-professed “antisemites” constituted a fleeting phenomenon which would evaporate in the light of education and coexistence, others sought to expose what they saw as the deep roots of antisemitic prejudice in Christianity. Perhaps reflecting their own piety, American rabbis like Krauskopf put a marked emphasis on the role of religious factors in fostering anti-Jewish feeling. Exploiting the potential of new communications media and reflecting the diasporic nature of Jewish life, activists like Krauskopf also developed transnational networks of support, activism, and debate that affirmed the apparent interconnectedness of Jewish suffering. The fact of a rabbi from Philadelphia taking an interest in a Bavarian village to explain, inter alia, Russian communal violence exemplified this orientation. In confronting the subject of the passion, Krauskopf also addressed a broader debate over the correct Jewish attitude to Jesus. While this question had deep roots in nineteenth-century Jewish intellectual history, it was especially potent and divisive among American Reform Jews around 1900, where arguments for greater ecumenism had provoked concerns about Jewish self-definition.

My second argument addresses the intersecting themes of Jewish internationalism and transnational Jewish history in this period, both subjects of considerable recent interest. Historians have called attention to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a crucible for the rise of transnational Jewish communities of interest, activism, and publicity.[[8]](#endnote-8) These emerged in the context of successive waves of Jewish migration and integration that posed new questions about the relationship between different sorts of national and religious identity, for instance among German Jews in the United States, as well as producing a dense web of transnational connections between Jewish diaspora communities.[[9]](#endnote-9) Major Jewish newspapers, for example, emerged as transnational spaces connected by strong bonds between writers and editors, despite some mutual tensions and jealousies.[[10]](#endnote-10) Yet, as Nancy L. Green has noted in her recent appraisal of the state of transnational history, the celebration of agency and mobility has often taken precedence over the exposure of constraints and frustrations.[[11]](#endnote-11) In what follows I heed Moshe Rosman’s call for a Jewish history that is neither smoothly “transgeographical” nor incurably local, but rather considers both how Jewish communities transcended political entities such as the nation, and how local contexts continued to shape and constrain them.[[12]](#endnote-12) In many ways the Oberammergau passion play was a phenomenon that cut across social and political borders: a German Catholic performance that attracted Protestants, Jews, and foreigners. Krauskopf’s book was similarly mobile. Presented as an intervention in the debate over the origins of contemporary European antisemitism, it found its way back across the Atlantic to a European audience, and around a network of reform-minded Jews from London to Frankfurt. Yet the transit of Krauskopf’s arguments was far from frictionless, provoking a lukewarm reception in England, and generating a conflict between the desire for Jewish self-assertion and the constraints of political context in Germany. Even among Jews connected in private by common causes, shared languages, and overlapping experiences, pressures of self-presentation and self-censorship continued to pose fresh obstacles to the ideal of a free-flowing and integrated transnational public sphere.

## Joseph Krauskopf: From Germany to Philadelphia, and Back Again

To understand why Krauskopf took such an interest in Oberammergau, we need to understand his position within the context of American Reform Judaism at the turn of the twentieth century. Born in 1858 to a poor family in the Prussian town of Ostrowo (today Ostrów, Poland), Krauskopf migrated to the United States at the age of fourteen to join his brother, only to arrive and find he had died.[[13]](#endnote-13) Taken in by sympathetic families, in 1875 he entered the inaugural cohort of the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, the pioneering American seminary headed by Isaac Mayer Wise. Following graduation, he served as a rabbi in Illinois, Michigan and Missouri, before becoming head of Philadelphia's Keneseth Israel in October 1887. By the time Krauskopf arrived, this large urban congregation had already established itself as a pioneer of American Reform Judaism. Reform had originated in Germany, the birthplace of most leading American rabbis, among figures like Abraham Geiger who prioritized history, morality, and ethics over divine revelation, ritual, and law. Unhindered by the concern for legal emancipation, American Reform often grew more ambitious than its German forebears. In 1885, an influential group of rabbis called by Kaufmann Kohler, and including the young Krauskopf, agreed the “Pittsburgh Platform.” This began with the ecumenical declaration that all religions were “an attempt to grasp the infinite,” rejected all legal and dietary prescriptions that were better suited to life in biblical Palestine than to “the views and habits of modern civilization,” declared Jewry “no longer a nation, but a religious community,” and Judaism “a progressive religion” with a commitment to social justice.[[14]](#endnote-14) In addition to using the synagogue’s own Reform prayer-books, previous rabbis at Keneseth Israel had introduced vernacular sermons and musical instruments, abolished gender-segregated seating, and required men to pray bare-headed.

The energetic Krauskopf soon established himself as a major figure in the Reform network, and Keneseth Israel as the showcase for his ideas, although his relations with other leading Jews were sometimes difficult. Traditionalists tended to see him as something of a stalking horse for his teacher, Wise, who had ambitious visions for the transformation of Judaism, while others simply found him cavalier.[[15]](#endnote-15) Certainly he was eager to develop his public profile. One of the impetuses behind American Reform was to narrow the distance between Judaism and the majority culture, for instance by ending dietary restrictions that made it difficult for Jews and Christians to dine together. In a similar vein, one of Krauskopf’s first innovations at Keneseth Israel was to replace Friday evening services with Sunday sermons. In addition to offering a more honest accommodation with Jews’ working lives, he argued that these open sermons might convert “many a Christian to our way of thinking and believing.”[[16]](#endnote-16) Krauskopf undoubtedly attracted a substantial non-Jewish audience, while the rapid print dissemination and anthologizing of his sermons, as well as occasional touring speeches, brought them to a wide audience beyond Philadelphia. Sermons were advertised with precise times to facilitate ease of access for non-Jews who did not attend the surrounding services, while doors were locked during his talks to promote rapt attention.[[17]](#endnote-17) Memorized word-for-word, Krauskopf’s sermons were so successful with Gentiles, and strayed so far into non-religious topics, that they seemed to compete less with other religious institutions and more with the popular lecture circuit that had boomed since the 1870s. Notably, the Oberammergau passion play had been part of the non-religious lecture repertoire since at least 1880, when the godfather of modern travel lecture John L. Stoddard presented on the topic. In the year Krauskopf visited the play, Stoddard’s hugely popular successor Elias Burton Holmes was also in attendance preparing his latest series of “travelogues” (he invented the term): lectures on iconic foreign locations accompanied by his own photographs.[[18]](#endnote-18)

Beyond Philadelphia, Krauskopf’s Sunday sermons on Oberammergau grew out of two broader developments in American Reform. First, Krauskopf was one of a new generation of rabbis in the last decade of the nineteenth century who believed they had not just a right but a duty to address political and social matters from the pulpit. Anxious to demonstrate their assimilation to the American separation of church and state while also not alienating their Christian neighbors, nineteenth-century rabbis had long followed “an informal code of political abstinence.”[[19]](#endnote-19) At the turn of the century, however, Naomi Cohen has shown that immigrant rabbis became “more secure in the American setting and less afraid of the image they projected.”[[20]](#endnote-20) In tandem with this new confidence came the rise of the “social justice” movement within Reform Judaism, which drew on the Protestant “Social Gospel” and other contemporaneous progressive currents to argue that Jews had a moral obligation to seek remedies to social problems.[[21]](#endnote-21) Rabbis’ sermons began unapologetically to address issues like social welfare, temperance, and Jewish-Christian relations. Krauskopf was a typical representative of this shift. In addition to involving himself in local reform projects such as the construction of a model tenement in South Philadelphia, he gave sermons on a wide range of social issues, and was particularly active in speaking about foreign political causes: he spoke passionately at Philadelphia’s Mass Meeting for Irish Home Rule in March 1893 and gave a Sunday lecture on the French Dreyfus Affair in February 1898.[[22]](#endnote-22)

Second, Krauskopf’s treatment of the New Testament addressed a lively debate among Reform Jews around 1900 over the historical Jesus. The question of Jesus’ relationship to Judaism had been reopened by the lively critical literature that heterodox Christian scholars had written in the middle of the nineteenth century, most notably the lives of Jesus by the German Protestant theologian David Friedrich Strauss in 1835 and the French philologist Ernest Renan in 1863. While such new critical accounts tended to draw on Jewish sources and situate Jesus within a Jewish context, they were also anxious to accentuate his originality and departure from Judaism in order to preserve a unique ethical hero who could form a basis for a liberal Protestant or at least culturally Christian progressive religion.[[23]](#endnote-23) Against this, the German-Jewish scholar Abraham Geiger had argued in the 1860s that Jesus was simply a derivative Pharisee, while French Jews ridiculed Renan’s logical contortions over race; in each case, Jewish critics struggled to be taken seriously by their Christian colleagues.[[24]](#endnote-24)

Debates over the Jewish treatment of Jesus in America reached a high pitch in 1900, just as Krauskopf left for Germany.[[25]](#endnote-25) The end of the century had witnessed what George Berlin called a “blurring of the lines” between the twin (and often allied) movements of Reform Judaism and Liberal Protestantism in the United States.[[26]](#endnote-26) In the hands of ambitious reformers, both religions became less ritualistic in practice and less literalistic in theory, instead focusing on fundamental ethics. In movements such as Felix Adler’s “Ethical Culture,” or strands of Unitarianism, there were even demands that the two religions disband and merge.[[27]](#endnote-27) Krauskopf was a potent symptom of this blurring, whose approach to Americanizing Judaism included not only his Sunday sermons but also, for example, wearing a clerical collar.[[28]](#endnote-28) Anxious not to dissolve into one another, most reformers confronted the problem of marking the boundaries between the two religions. Since Liberal Protestants’ main claim to superiority over Reform Judaism was the inimitable ethical superiority of Jesus Christ, leading rabbis like Wise in Cincinnati and Emil Hirsch in Chicago (who went to study with Geiger in Berlin in the 1870s) strove to demonstrate not only the historical weaknesses of the Gospel story, but also the derivative quality of Jesus’ ethics. In the hands of Wise, criticism of orthodox accounts of Christian history became extremely vigorous and ironic, something he thought ought to be celebrated: “Thank Heaven we are in America, and in Cincinnati, where free thought and free speech are the birthright of every law-abiding person.”[[29]](#endnote-29) In his friendly vigor, Wise offered something of a model for what Krauskopf would attempt in his own sermons on Christianity. But these rabbis’ critiques of Christianity were not purely negative in intention: while men like Hirsch were concerned to avoid a mutual dissolution of Liberal Protestantism and Reform Judaism into Unitarianism, they also saw the two movements’ shared interest in biblical criticism and first-century history as a means to foster ecumenical intellectual exchange.[[30]](#endnote-30)

A scuffle on this question broke out in 1900 when the California businessman Harris Weinstock proposed to the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1900 that synagogues should teach children about “Jesus the Jew” at Sabbath School. Citing with regret the resentment his own childhood rabbis had poured on Jesus, Weinstock argued that since scholarship had shown that the historical Jesus operated within Judaism, and that Christianity was a posthumous Pauline invention, Jesus was the shared heritage of both religions and therefore a means of bringing them together.[[31]](#endnote-31) *The American Israelite* – the nation’s Jewish paper of record, founded by Wise in 1854 – took against Weinstock, while Krauskopf “most heartily” backed him.[[32]](#endnote-32) When the Conference discussed the proposal in July 1901, it rejected it unambiguously, affirming that despite his “beautiful moral teachings,” “the position of Judaism in respect to the founder of Christianity is altogether negative.”[[33]](#endnote-33)

Underpinning much Jewish debate over Jesus was a conviction that his story remained fundamental to contemporary anti-Jewish prejudice. Many Reform rabbis believed that the assignation of Jewish guilt for the crucifixion was the root cause of Christian hatred. Jewish sermons on the causes of European antisemitism tended to emphasize the importance of religious animosity, with economic jealousy a strong second.[[34]](#endnote-34) By contrast, when the *American Hebrew* surveyed fifty prominent non-Jews in 1890, just nine agreed that teachings on the crucifixion were the root cause of anti-Jewish feeling; most instead cited Jewish “exclusiveness,” business practices, and racial antagonism.[[35]](#endnote-35) As Cohen has suggested, arguing that contemporary developments were simply the recurrence of an age-old religious prejudice was in some ways a comforting move, since it allowed Jews to reassure themselves that they merely faced “more of the same.”[[36]](#endnote-36) And if, in a world of religious modernization, prejudice had religious roots, it was also bound eventually to fade.

As the Conference ruled against Weinstock, Krauskopf travelled to Europe as a special commissioner from the US Department of Agriculture, charged with assessing agricultural schools. Particularly since the “conversion experience of almost religious quality” that came from meeting Leo Tolstoy at Yasnaya Polyana in 1894, Krauskopf had become a zealous advocate of back-to-the-land movements and agricultural regeneration.[[37]](#endnote-37) One of Krauskopf’s lifelong missions was to encourage young immigrants (especially Jewish boys) to escape the squalor of the urban slums and become American farmers. Echoing various activist groups that foresaw an agricultural future for the Jews, most notably the Russian ORT, in 1896 Krauskopf founded the National Farm School (today’s Delaware Valley University) in rural Pennsylvania to train young men in modern farming. Alongside a fellow rabbi (whose identity remains unknown), Krauskopf apparently decided to visit Oberammergau by chance in August. They arrived at a village whose development into an international spectacle during the late nineteenth century was nearing its apex. The railway reached all the way to the village for the first time, facilitating an ease of transport that helped 174,000 visitors to attend the 47 performances in a newly expanded theatre.[[38]](#endnote-38) Christ was played by the twenty-five-year-old potter Anton Lang, who would go on to become an international celebrity, besieged by fans, knighted by the Pope, and feted on a tour across twelve American cities in the 1920s.[[39]](#endnote-39) Beginning at eight in the morning, after spectators had been roused to the theatre by the sound of cannon fire, the play took eight hours to complete, with a short lunch break, after which the four thousand spectators streamed back on foot, cart or rail to the Alps, Munich, or beyond. The action on stage reflected changes to the script that the village priest Joseph Alois Daisenberger had made in 1857. Like other popular nineteenth-century narrative treatments of Jesus’ life such as Ernest Renan’s *Life of Jesus*, Daisenberger drew heavily on the Gospel of John’s more evocative account of the passion.[[40]](#endnote-40) Written in the context of the early Christian church seeking to differentiate itself from the Jewish synagogue, this was also the most anti-Jewish of the New Testament sources, placing a strong emphasis on Pharisaic conspiracy against Christ.

On returning to Philadelphia, Krauskopf began writing a series of sermons on Oberammergau that drew together the politicization of the synagogue and the Jewish debate over Jesus. Despite his claims to have happened on the passion play unawares, he was clearly familiar with the theme having used it as the title for his sermon on the false accusation against the young Jewish man Leopold Hilsner in Bohemia a year earlier: “The Passion Play at Polna.”[[41]](#endnote-41) Krauskopf began his sermons on the passion at the Keneseth Israel’s Sunday service on 3 February 1901 and concluded on 7 April. The book followed from the publisher Edward Stern in June.

Right from the introduction, Krauskopf unapologetically stressed Oberammergau’s special role in popularizing Christian antisemitism:

I know of nothing that could have rooted deeper, among these people, the existing prejudice against the Jew, and spread wider, the world’s hatred of him, than this Passion Play of Oberammergau. There were moments, when listening to the play, when seeing one gross misrepresentation of the Jewish people after the other, I felt as if I had to rise, and declare aloud to the thousands that crowded the auditorium, that what they heard and saw, was, as far as it depicted or typified the Jew, unhistoric in fact, false in interpretation, cruel in inference.[[42]](#endnote-42)

Having purportedly arrived with an open mind, Krauskopf was enraged by the hypocrisy from the opening *tableau vivant* of the Garden of Eden, which blithely passed over the violence Christianity had justified against Jews and others to portray it as a religion of peace. He found himself interpellated: “The moment the play began … the tourist turned critic; the traveler, theologian; the cosmopolitan, Jew.”[[43]](#endnote-43) Throughout the play, he was bruised by the play’s portrayal of angry and malicious Jewish priests: “bloodthirsty hyenas” plotting and baying for Jesus’ blood, assisted by a Judas whose portrayal drew on the tropes of medieval and modern Jew-hatred.[[44]](#endnote-44)

Yet for all that the villagers’ performance enraged him, Krauskopf almost abdicated them of responsibility for the play’s objectionable contents. Meeting Johann Zwink, the villager who performed the caricatured Judas, he found that he had never met a Jew before and treated the rabbi with curiosity and respect. In general, Krauskopf portrayed the Oberammergauers as naïvely devout alpine Catholics who could hardly be accused of having a theological agenda. They were, rather, passive ciphers for the anti-Judaism that impregnated “the Gospels of the New Testament, *of which the Passion Play is but an elaboration*.”[[45]](#endnote-45) Where Oberammergau was specifically to blame was in giving this Christian slander a peculiarly moving and popular theatrical form for hundreds of thousands of visitors, who further disseminated its ideas through popular media abroad.[[46]](#endnote-46)

The danger Krauskopf sensed here was particularly that the charmingly naïve and straightforward image of the Crucifixion given at Oberammergau would reverse the intellectual progress offered by “Strauss, Renan and their noble confrères” during the last century.[[47]](#endnote-47) Many a spectator

had brought his craft of credulity into the dry-docks of Oberammergau, much the worse for its having been tossed and beaten by the tempestuous seas of modern research, and was having it overhauled, was having its leaky places pitched, its ropes stretched, its masts reset, its sails mended, its bolts tightened, ready for a cruise of another decade of years in the waters of blind belief.[[48]](#endnote-48)

This led to the core thrust of Krauskopf’s book: a comprehensive dismantling of the Gospels, where the progression of the Oberammergau play seemed sometimes only to serve as a narrative hook for his theological exposition. Krauskopf’s Jesus was resolutely Jewish, having never intended to preach beyond the existing Jewish law. The rabbi drew on biblical and narrative criticism to dispute the plausibility or consistency of individual moments, such as the cleansing of the Temple. More generally he disdained the New Testament’s superstitious origin myth and miraculous narratives, wondering aloud provocatively why these should be believed any more than the appearance of an angel with an ever-heavier statuette of the Virgin Mary to Ludwig the Bavarian at the neighboring convent of Ettal, or the nearby hut reputed to belong to Hunding from Wagner's Nibelung cycle.[[49]](#endnote-49) Most fundamentally, he argued against Christianity’s “blackening of the Sanhedrin and whitewashing of Pontius Pilate”: it was the Romans who had persecuted Jesus and his “deluded” followers, who had entered Jerusalem making grand claims like Russian peasants into Moscow with no idea of the reaction that awaited them.[[50]](#endnote-50) He concluded by demanding “the expurgation from the New Testament of so much of the story of Jesus as can not stand the test of reason, as cannot bear the analysis of historical inquiry and of scientific research.”[[51]](#endnote-51) This would in no way damage the meaning of Jesus, since it was his “humanity” and not his “divinity” that had “appealed to mankind”: “It is the religion of Jesus, the Jew, not the theology of Christ, the God, that has conquered the world.”[[52]](#endnote-52) While Krauskopf’s resolutely Jewish Jesus was wholly in line with Reform Jewish thinking from Geiger to Hirsch, his uncompromising description of the “deluded” early Christians also charted a much less conciliatory course than might have been expected, given the backing he had recently given Weinstock’s proposal to teach Jesus in Sabbath School.

In addition to its attacks on the Oberammergau play and Christianity’s ingrained anti-Jewish prejudice, I would argue that Krauskopf’s book aimed at a third target: mainstream American writing on the subject. The form of Krauskopf’s lectures suggests that he recognized the nature of the pull that the phenomenon of Oberammergau had on American audiences. Perhaps aware that Burton Holmes’ photographic lecture on Oberammergau toured Philadelphia that year, Krauskopf raised the specter of people “talking and preaching and lecturing on the Passion Play in all parts of the world, with the aid of magic lantern, cinematograph and panorama.”[[53]](#endnote-53) His own tour through Oberammergau relied on many of the same devices that drove such accounts: he opened with an elegiac description of the Alpine scenery, described feeling like he was transported to another world when overnight in the home of the performing villagers, and narrated his commentary on the play in tandem with the rhythm of the performance. But Krauskopf subverted all of these tropes. The villagers’ innocence and isolation became a source of dangerous and regressive ignorance, the assembled Christians’ religious devotion became a pretext for their violent prejudice, and a rapt audience beatifically absorbing a religious message was suddenly exposed as a mass of captive dullards passively absorbing a lesson in hatred.

## Krauskopf At Home: The American Reception

Krauskopf’s lectures thus had a triple function: critique of the Oberammergau passion play, assault on the biblical Jesus, and subversive travelogue. While this blend made for a compelling read, it also accounted for the book’s problematic reception. Krauskopf certainly succeeded in winning a Christian audience for his arguments: he received several letters from interested gentiles, some of whom had attended the original lectures. While Jewish readers were elegiac – one was so enthused that he invited Krauskopf to officiate at his (mixed) marriage – many Christians were predictably intractable and tried to convert him to the Gospel truth.[[54]](#endnote-54)

Krauskopf might have expected a rocky reception among many American Christians but hoped for a better reaction from their more liberal brethren. Krauskopf’s problem among sympathetic non-Jewish readers was that they objected to the book for reasons that were not explicitly doctrinal. Charles Wesley Reed, a lawyer in Sacramento who was friendly with Harris Weinstock, freely admitted that the book had corrected his opinions on Jewish culpability for the Crucifixion, yet still believed it a failure: “The book was written by a Jew to convince Christians and it offends Christians unnecessarily … The author constantly belittles Christ; he belittles the Christian religion; he belittles St. Paul. … Understand that I say this while fully admitting that he has proved his case.”[[55]](#endnote-55) Andrew Dickson White, the cofounder of Cornell University and current US Ambassador to Germany, was a broadminded Christian and enthusiast of biblical criticism who worried less about the tone of Krauskopf’s analysis. But White, who had been to Oberammergau, was not convinced by the claim that the play was anti-Jewish. He instead read it through the lens of his own profound anticlericalism, which had been sharpened by religious opposition to Cornell’s foundation as a nonsectarian college.[[56]](#endnote-56) The Pharisees’ behavior offered a universal lesson in the dangers of religious hierarchy, since it highlighted “the tendency to spiritual domination” that could infect “even the best of mankind” when it held “uncontrolled spiritual power.”[[57]](#endnote-57)

In general, Christian readers were unwilling to see a connection between the Crucifixion story and contemporary antisemitism. A good example was the Lutheran pastor Isaac K. Funk, who co-founded the Funk and Wagnalls publishing empire. Funk had an interest in Jewish history and would edit the momentous *Jewish Encyclopedia*, but he could not see why Krauskopf wasted his energy on rewriting biblical history. Even if the Jews *were* responsible for Christ’s death – and Funk was fairly sure they were, albeit only a few rotten apples – this was “as a grain of sand” compared to the incredible violence and discrimination persecuted by Christians against Jews in the ensuing centuries. “Were I a Jew, I do not think that I would take the trouble to deny the charges that the Jews, 1800 years ago, misunderstood Christ and put Him to death … but I would, with all the fire that in me lay, show how the so-called Christian *is to-day*, in countless instances, betraying and crucifying Him—this in the broad daylight of the twentieth century.”[[58]](#endnote-58)

It is an open question whether liberal Christians like Funk and White were simply blinkered to the connection between scriptural anti-Judaism and contemporary antisemitism that was so obvious to Krauskopf and his Jewish admirers, or whether Krauskopf overemphasized the deep religious foundations of modern prejudice. His approach likely also brought out a certain sectarian touchiness. One reader in Rochester, New York, was so troubled by Krauskopf’s accusations that she gathered four friends from different Protestant denominations, who all agreed that anti-Jewish sentiment was not taught in Sunday schools. She was nonetheless sure that “in Catholic countries such stupid ideas prevail,” and probably among Episcopalians.[[59]](#endnote-59) Krauskopf’s focus on scripture made antisemitism into a Protestant problem, and such readers may have been happier had he trained his condemnation of Oberammergau on its villagers’ Catholicism. Either way, such reactions showed the risk Krauskopf took in hitching such a swingeing assault on the foundations of Christianity to his critique of the Oberammergau play, and suggest that the former dampened the impact of his arguments about the latter.

## Krauskopf Abroad: The British Reception

Krauskopf’s fate among Jews on the other side of the Atlantic revealed even more clearly the tensions inherent in his approach. The most obvious foreign market for Krauskopf’s book was Britain, which had preceded the US in sending throngs of tourists to the Bavarian passion. A couple of these had even singled out its anti-Jewish character: in 1871 the Scottish lawyer Sellar reported (in words that seemed to bolster Krauskopf’s argument) that the play helped him understand why the Jews had been so hated throughout Christian history, whereas the globetrotting Richard Burton in 1880 thought it exaggerated Jewish guilt.[[60]](#endnote-60)

English Jews were likewise ahead of their American coreligionists in taking a critical interest in Oberammergau, but local context shaped a more cautious Jewish response than Krauskopf would take at the turn of the century. Following the removal of most legal barriers to their civil rights in the middle third of the century, middle-class English Jews were anxious to defend their status as an assimilated and enlightened minority who did not attract undue attention.[[61]](#endnote-61) English Jews were comparatively muted in their response to the pogroms of the early 1880s, preferring ‘deference to public opinion’ over communal activism.[[62]](#endnote-62) Likewise, while the flagship *Jewish Chronicle* was quick to investigate the emergence of the so-called “Judenhetze” in Germany in the 1870s and ‘80s, it was often ambivalent about apportioning blame.[[63]](#endnote-63) Its writers believed German Jews provoked further resentment in an already febrile atmosphere by magnifying every perceived slight into a public scandal.

When the *Chronicle* had sent a correspondent to Oberammergau’s performance on 18 May 1880, it affirmed both its commitment to understanding the foundations of anti-Jewish feeling in Europe and its skepticism towards the German Jews’ alleged hypersensitivity. The paper justified its review as an investigation into the “representation of events which form, from time immemorial, the excuse for the persecution of our race.”[[64]](#endnote-64) It also clearly argued that, aside from being dreadfully boring, the play accentuated the contrast between the Jews and Romans “in the most violent anti-Jewish spirit.”[[65]](#endnote-65) Yet the *Chronicle* then retreated to an aloof position that betrayed immense confidence in the educated European middle-class. Oberammergau’s negative message would only be dangerous “if the performance were likely to be taken seriously by succeeding audiences (which it is not)”: “But no fear need, we think, be entertained on this point. It is only the ignorant peasantry that are likely to be influenced, and our brethren are not dwellers, in Germany, amongst the villagers.”[[66]](#endnote-66) In other words, while Oberammergau was indeed a vehicle for anti-Jewish prejudice, anybody in the audience gullible enough to be taken in by it would also be rural enough never to meet a Jew. When the paper returned to the village a decade later, it noted confidently that the question remained moot, since the play’s appeal was on the brink of collapse under the weight of media interest and commercial speculation.[[67]](#endnote-67)

A decade later, Claude Montefiore’s review of Krauskopf’s book in the well-respected *Jewish Quarterly Review* followed a similar logic. Montefiore was a foundational figure of Liberal Judaism, a more radical wing of the Reform movement in England, who was well-versed in Christian scholarship and had some sympathy for Jesus and Paul.[[68]](#endnote-68) He was complimentary about the “genuine rhetorical power” of Krauskopf’s lectures, whose content “illustrate[d] the delightful freedom of the American Jewish pulpit.”[[69]](#endnote-69) With an eye to orthodox critics, he also stressed their “emphatically Jewish” orientation.[[70]](#endnote-70) Such liberality inspired envy: “Would that such free and fearless utterances, whether we entirely agree with them or not, were spoken from the pulpits of English synagogues as well as in America.”[[71]](#endnote-71) Yet despite Montefiore’s awe at Krauskopf’s uninhibited discourse he found little to admire in his biblical criticism, which he thought too sweeping and inconsistent to justify the bold tone.[[72]](#endnote-72) On a point of logic, Montefiore disagreed with those Jewish critics who tried to make Jesus an unoriginal and unproblematic Jew, since this only rendered his persecution more inexplicable.[[73]](#endnote-73) And if Jesus had rebelled against the Jews, then despite the Gospel’s inevitable narrative exaggeration, his rejection by the them was “neither antecedently improbable nor morally atrocious.”[[74]](#endnote-74)

While Montefiore found Krauskopf’s arguments stylistically engaging yet theologically questionable, his broader interpretation of the question bespoke a defensive minimization of antisemitism very much in line with the *Chronicle*’s position in the preceding decades. Montefiore believed that Krauskopf “exaggerate[d] the wickedness” that the Gospels attributed to the Jews, and also wondered “whether he does not exaggerate the effect of that representation in modern times in the more civilized countries of the West.”[[75]](#endnote-75) While he accepted that the accusation of Jewish deicide might play a role in contemporary pogroms in a backward country like Romania, he was certain that in England “a judicial murder (let us assume it to be so) committed nineteen hundred years ago” did not “prevent the most excellent fellow feeling and good will.” And he was sceptical that “even in Austria and Germany” such a historic motive could “be strong enough in its irrationality to secure the maintenance of an uncivilized and deplorable Anti-Semitism.”[[76]](#endnote-76)

## Krauskopf Abroad: The German Translation

Jewish defensiveness also characterized the response to Krauskopf in Oberammergau’s home context of Germany, yet here it took on a more anxious hue. The German literary market had made capital from Oberammergau’s passion-playing tradition since at least 1830, when Sulpiz Boisserée’s report of the play to Goethe was published.[[77]](#endnote-77) Yet despite the volume of writing on the play, no German writer had critiqued its representation of the Jews in anything approaching the manner of Krauskopf or even the *Jewish Chronicle*. This was doubly striking because German theatre critics had long discussed the proper depiction of the theatrical canon’s few Jewish characters, most notably Shylock and Nathan. The great Karlsruhe dramatist Eduard Devrient was symptomatic. He condemned a performance of *The Merchant of Venice* for portraying Shylock as “a grimace without any inner nature and crudely comedic,” with “a big fake nose” and a ridiculous stance, and his own father had played the first “tragic Shylock” at the Berlin Court Theatre in 1815.[[78]](#endnote-78) Yet his laudatory review of the 1850 Oberammergau passion offered no criticism of its representation of the Jews, instead praising the performance of Judas and celebrating the play’s imaginative reconstruction of Christ’s persecution by his Jewish contemporaries as its most powerful effect.[[79]](#endnote-79)

Even before Krauskopf had published his unabashedly critical sermons, German Jews offered to translate them into German. One Manhattanite in the audience at Keneseth Israel ranked them alongside Zola’s recent “J’Accuse!” as a cry for justice for the Jewish people. He argued that circulating the book in Germany was “almost an imperative duty of the Jew,” and would be “of monumental value in the removal of race prejudice.”[[80]](#endnote-80) While Krauskopf was enthusiastic, his publisher Edward Stern preferred to see how the book played in the States first.[[81]](#endnote-81) Once they proved successful, Krauskopf returned to the idea of publishing them in German, and eventually settled on Bertha Pappenheim as the translator. Born in Vienna 1859 to an Orthodox Jewish family, Pappenheim unknowingly featured as Sigmund Freud’s case study “Anna O.” following treatment for hysteria in 1895. Active in Frankfurt at the end of the century, she became known for her outspoken denunciation of the subjugation of women within Judaism and advocacy for Jewish women’s rights and cultural life. She co-founded the successful Jüdische Frauenbund in 1904, a volunteer organization that at its height counted perhaps a quarter of German-Jewish women as members, while also translating historic texts by Jewish women. For the final three decades of her life, Pappenheim largely dedicated herself to opposing the Jewish sex trade from Eastern Europe and supporting its victims. In 1907 she opened a house in Neu Isenburg for “fallen” women and their illegitimate children, where she worked until her death on 28 May 1936, remaining an opponent of both Zionism and Jewish emigration until almost the very end.[[82]](#endnote-82)

In the summer of 1901, Pappenheim was put in contact with Krauskopf by Julius Plotke, a lawyer and Jewish activist in Frankfurt. Krauskopf, Pappenheim, and Plotke shared a commitment to East European and international Jewish causes, which also entailed a common interest in analyzing and opposing contemporary antisemitism. They agreed with Krauskopf that the crucifixion story was at the root of a continuous history of Jewish persecution. Plotke believed the book helped a wide audience to confront “the root of a millennia-long misery,” while Pappenheim hailed its deconstruction of “the great injustice that has been inflicted on the Jewish people for 1900 years through the false conception and depiction of the life of Jesus in the Christian way of thinking.”[[83]](#endnote-83) For this reason, they thought it important to seek to disseminate Krauskopf’s work beyond a purely Jewish audience. Pappenheim saw publishing a single chapter in a German-Jewish journal as an aperitif that would “steer public interest towards the material,” to be followed by publication “in a non-Jewish German paper” such as the house journal of the Ethical Culture movement.[[84]](#endnote-84)

Pappenheim’s first step towards making Krauskopf’s book known to the German audience was to publish a review in the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums*, a well-established Jewish newspaper based in Berlin and known for its cosmopolitan outlook. Here, Pappenheim offered two further justifications for critically interrogating the Oberammergau play. First, she noted that Oberammergau had become part of the vernacular. It “belongs to those performances which ‘one’ watches, without any special inner reason, much as ‘one’ sees the Bayreuth Festival, without having a sincere musical motivation.” If Oberammergau was rising above confessional divides and religious devotion to become a normalized part of Germany’s cultural itinerary, then exposing its “noxious effects” was especially pressing. Second, Pappenheim drew (perhaps unconsciously) on a well-established German discourse about the peculiar efficacy of the theatre to imprint ideas on the audience. Exposing the distortions of Oberammergau was crucial because, through “its rudimentary effects on the masses, the play was particularly well-suited … to deepening feelings of hatred towards the Jews.”[[85]](#endnote-85)

Despite Pappenheim’s intense conviction that Krauskopf’s work should reach both the Jewish and greater German public, by November she wrote to him dejected: “To my great regret, I have failed at both purposes. There is no Jewish paper in Germany which would dare open its pages to your remarks.” Even if Krauskopf could find a well-endowed publisher to take on the printing costs of a full translation, she warned him that bookshops and their suppliers would not sell the book, so it “could only expect to be a flop.”[[86]](#endnote-86) Following Krauskopf’s intervention with the editor, a section of Pappenheim’s translation eventually appeared under a pseudonym in the May 1902 issue of a German-language American magazine *Die Deborah*, a monthly supplement to *The American Israelite*.[[87]](#endnote-87) *Die Deborah* was targeted at Jewish women readers, who were historically more likely to speak German than their husbands, and advocated women’s education and social action within a regime of gender complementarity.[[88]](#endnote-88) Rather than the more scholarly fourth chapter that Pappenheim had originally translated, which made a robust historical-critical assault on the Gospel’s anti-Jewish fabrications and compared Christianity to pagan superstition, *Die Deborah* opted to publish the introduction.[[89]](#endnote-89) Yet while Krauskopf’s lectures fit neatly into *Die Deborah*’s menu of Reform-minded religious discussion, travel literature, poetry, and fiction, they also arrived with dreadful timing. Due to two successes of American Jewish integration – the shrinking market for German-language writing and the integration of women’s issues into the main paper – *Die Deborah* folded in December 1902.[[90]](#endnote-90) Since the serialization of Krauskopf’s introduction never moved beyond his flattering first impressions of the village, it is unlikely that many German-speaking readers, whether in the US or Europe, ever encountered his arguments against the play.

Why did Krauskopf’s lectures never appear in Germany itself? We cannot be sure what chain of events had caused Pappenheim’s rapid disillusionment, although it seems likely that Gustav Karpeles, the editor of the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums* and a friend of Krauskopf’s, would have rejected the work.[[91]](#endnote-91) This was not a foregone conclusion. Although Karpeles was less focused on antisemitism than his predecessor Ludwig Philippson, he was nonetheless a founding member of the Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus or “Abwehrverein” – Germany’s leading Jewish self-defense and consciousness-raising organization – and “not a week went by” when his paper did not publicize the struggle against contemporary prejudice.[[92]](#endnote-92) But compared to the political outbursts and acts of everyday discrimination that the Abwehrverein and the *Allgemeine Zeitung* brought to press, Krauskopf’s attack on Oberammergau was doubly prone to scandalize German public opinion: on the one hand, it portrayed the Christian understanding of Jesus as a delusion, while on the other, it painted as malevolent a performance which had developed into a German national treasure. While we can only speculate on the motives of the editors such as Karpeles who rejected Pappenheim’s translation, Olaf Blaschke’s analysis of Jewish responses to Catholic antisemitism in this period has shown that when it came to religious phenomena, German Jews often sought to emphasize and publicize moments of apparent tolerance or benevolence towards Jews, trivializing anti-Jewish outbursts as individual aberrations or unfortunate errors.[[93]](#endnote-93) As well as representing a desire from German Jews not to come across as oversensitive, this pattern had “the function of an appeal”: Jews wanted to persuade their Catholic neighbors that “antisemitism was un-Christian.”[[94]](#endnote-94) In this context, arguments which painted not just Catholicism but Christianity as foundationally antisemitic ran counter to a dominant Jewish strategy.

Beyond questions of alienation and persuasion, anxiety over a potential backlash strongly colored German-Jewish concerns about publishing Krauskopf’s book. This chimes with Ari Joskowicz’s argument that while Jews had developed an assertive anti-Catholic tradition and literature during the nineteenth century, it was dampened by the rise of antisemitism and anxiety about political alliance-building in its closing decades.[[95]](#endnote-95) Writing to the *Die Deborah*’s editor Gotthard Deutsch, Krauskopf himself argued that the “present state of pietism, in some quarters of Germany, and Anti-Semitism in others” had blocked Pappenheim’s efforts.[[96]](#endnote-96) In March 1902, Plotke sought to give Krauskopf a fuller account of “why I believe that a translation of your brilliant book could at present only lead to misunderstandings over here.” He accentuated the dominance of the “clerical tendency” rather than antisemitism as such, although for him the two were clearly connected. He gave two examples, one Catholic – the creation of a Catholic history professorship at Strasbourg – and the other Protestant – the Greifswald Theology Faculty’s warm welcome to the antisemitic preacher Adolf Stöcker – in order to conjure a depressive vision of both halves of German Christian society taking a backward step into the mire of orthodoxy. Plotke wrote that “in such conditions a Lessing or a David Strauss would probably be needed to light the torch of enlightenment,” citing at other points Voltaire and the French historian Ernest Renan: all figures who epitomized the critique of Christian intolerance and doctrinal intransigence. Not only did contemporary Germany “lack such men,” but the stakes were especially high for a Jew: “A rabbi who appeared on the scene would be shouted down, and with him the religious community to which he belonged.” Krauskopf’s friends in Frankfurt were then anxious that what might make a rabbi’s reputation in the United States – critiquing Christian tradition – could arouse only hostility in Germany. As Plotke exclaimed to Krauskopf in frustration: “Conditions are different over there, in a land of real freedom! You cannot compare your situation to ours.”[[97]](#endnote-97)

The impact of ideas like Krauskopf’s on German writing on Oberammergau remained invisible throughout the following decades. Although the German-Jewish writer Lion Feuchtwanger created a minor storm in the Munich press following his 1910 critique of the play in the progressive theatrical magazine *Die Schaubühne*, he primarily ridiculed the hypocrisy of German Christian audiences for eulogizing a dreadful and disingenuous play in a money-grubbing village, rather than exposing its anti-Jewish elements.[[98]](#endnote-98) Likewise, while Oberammergau generated controversy in the interwar period, this was largely directed against its alleged price-gouging in a time of hunger and hyperinflation.[[99]](#endnote-99) In each case the reaction of the conservative press seemed to bear out Plotke’s earlier fears. While in 1910 journalists cited Feuchtwanger’s Jewishness to delegitimize his opinion of the play, the main way that antisemitism featured in 1920s German writing on Oberammergau was when right-wing newspapers accused shady Jewish financiers of profiteering on the backs of the naïve Catholic villagers.[[100]](#endnote-100)

## Conclusion

*A Rabbi’s Impressions of the Oberammergau Passion Play* was a powerfully original and strident attempt to redirect public opinion on a phenomenon which captivated millions of contemporary European and American tourists and readers. From a distance of over a century it also looks remarkably prescient. After the Second World War, Oberammergau was convulsed by an international debate over its allegedly antisemitic representation of the Jews that persisted until the director Christian Stückl succeeded in overhauling the play script in 2000. This hindsight can easily blind us to the contingent and surprising quality of the book. Krauskopf gave his sermons in a context where writing on Oberammergau was almost universally elegiac, where its passion play was lauded as an ecumenical triumph that brought Protestant visitors to a Catholic ritual, and where, despite 267 years of performing and at least seventy years of media scrutiny, no previous writer had extensively critiqued the play’s representation of the Jews.

Krauskopf’s outspoken intervention emerged from the specific context of American Reform Judaism at the turn of the century. His strident approach to the subject was made possible by the liberality of the American synagogue in a context of emancipated Jewry and deep-rooted freedom of expression, while his willingness to target Christians with discomfiting arguments was shaped by his experience of attracting a substantial non-Jewish audience to his Sunday sermons in urban Philadelphia. Although Krauskopf painted his interest in Oberammergau as a product of happenstance, the passion play provided a launchpad for him to intervene in two debates that were at the forefront of contemporary American Jewish writing: the role of Christian tradition in the antisemitism that was sweeping contemporary Europe and the position of Jesus within the ecumenically-minded theology of American Reform. Furthermore, Krauskopf both appropriated and subverted the tropes of the vibrant canon of public lectures and entertainment on Oberammergau to appeal to an interested lay audience.

Yet while the context of Krauskopf’s Reform milieu in Philadelphia shaped his ability to produce original writing on Oberammergau, it also constrained its appeal. The rabbi’s impressive rhetorical style won his book plaudits and an audience, but the Christian readers who were his real target found his sweeping condemnation of their religion’s failings excessive and wounding. Since the Oberammergau passion play attracted a cosmopolitan public, and given the strong bonds between German-American rabbis and their confreres over the Atlantic, Krauskopf could have hoped for a sympathetic international audience. But differences in national context produced divergent Jewish responses to his work. In England, where liberal Jews were keen to downplay cries of antisemitism, Claude Montefiore and the *Jewish Chronicle* saw religiously-inflected antisemitism as a backward phenomenon that had little to do with the harmonious and enlightened atmosphere that prevailed in England or German-speaking Europe. In Germany itself, a network of Jewish activists in Frankfurt disagreed, seeing Krauskopf’s work as an urgent proclamation that should be brought to press in translation. But they soon gave up, finding that Jewish publicists were fearful of provoking an unnecessary backlash in the reactionary political climate of fin-de-siècle Germany. In a final irony, the translation came to press in a German-language Jewish journal in Cincinnati that was so hamstrung by the successful integration of American Jewry that it folded before the serialization was complete. When it came to building communities of ideas across national, religious, and linguistic boundaries, the frictions and frustrations they produced could be just as significant as the new pathways and technologies that aimed to traverse them.

## Notes

I am grateful to Erin Corber, Michael Ledger-Lomas, Sarah Marks, and the journal’s two anonymous reviewers for their generous criticism on earlier versions of this article. I would like to thank the Friendly Hand and the Department of History at Royal Holloway for funding the archival research that underpins it, as well as the staff at Temple University Special Collections Research Center and the American Jewish Archives (especially Steve Collins) for help with their collections. All translations are my own.

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52. Krauskopf, *Impressions*, 148. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. Krauskopf, *Impressions*, 35. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. Unknown (Baltimore) to Joseph Krauskopf, n.d., Box 32, Acc. 98, Temple U SCRC. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. Charles Wesley Reed to Harris Weinstock, October 3, 1901, Box 32, Acc. 98, Temple U SCRC. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. Andrew Dickson White, *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*, 2 vols. (London, 1900). [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. Andrew D. White to Joseph Krauskopf, October 8, 1901, Box 20, Acc. 98, Temple U SCRC. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. Isaac K. Funk to Joseph Krauskopf, July 24, 1901, Box 8, Acc. 98, Temple U SCRC. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. Rose Lattimer Alling to Mrs. Landsberg, n.d., Box 32, Acc. 98, Temple U SCRC. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. Alexander Craig Sellar, *The Passion-Play in the Highlands of Bavaria* (Edinburgh and London, 1871), 42-5; Richard F. Burton, *A Glance at the “Passion-Play”* (London, 1881), 157-9. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. David Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991* (Cambridge, 1994), 75-6. [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. David Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture 1840-1914* (London, 1994), 136-7. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. Cesarani, *Jewish Chronicle*, 82-5. [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. “The ‘Mystery Play’ in the Mountains.—I.,” *Jewish Chronicle*, 582 (May 21, 1880). Given the destruction of the Chronicle’s pre-1940 archives, we have no way of tracing the review’s author. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. “The ‘Mystery Play’ in the Mountains.—II. ,” *Jewish Chronicle*, 583 (May 28, 1880). [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. “The ‘Mystery Play’ in the Mountains.—II. ,” *Jewish Chronicle*, 583 (May 28, 1880). [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. “Religion and the Drama,” *Jewish Chronicle* (June 13, 1890). [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
68. C. G. Montefiore, “Dr. Krauskopf on the Oberammergau Play,” *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 14 (Oct. 1901), 141-7; for Montefiore’s formation and ideas, see the excellent Daniel R. Langton, *Claude Montefiore: His Life and Thought* (London, 2002). [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
69. Montefiore, “Dr. Krauskopf,” 141. [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
70. Montefiore, “Dr. Krauskopf,” 141. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
71. Montefiore, “Dr. Krauskopf,” 147. [↑](#endnote-ref-71)
72. Montefiore, “Dr. Krauskopf,” 142-6. [↑](#endnote-ref-72)
73. Montefiore, “Dr. Krauskopf,” 146. [↑](#endnote-ref-73)
74. Montefiore, “Dr. Krauskopf,” 143. [↑](#endnote-ref-74)
75. Montefiore, “Dr. Krauskopf,” 143. [↑](#endnote-ref-75)
76. Montefiore, “Dr. Krauskopf,” 143. [↑](#endnote-ref-76)
77. Sulpiz Boisserée, *Briefwechsel mit Goethe*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 1862), 2: 542-6. [↑](#endnote-ref-77)
78. Eduard Devrient, *Aus seinen Tagebüchern*, ed. Rolf Kabel, 2 vols. (Weimar, 1964), 2: 498; Andrew G. Bonnell, *Shylock in Germany: Antisemitism and the German Theatre from the Enlightenment to the Nazis* (London, 2008), 13-14 and passim. [↑](#endnote-ref-78)
79. Eduard Devrient, *Das Passionsspiel in Oberammergau und seine Bedeutung für die neue Zeit* (Leipzig, 1851). [↑](#endnote-ref-79)
80. Frederick Michel to Joseph Krauskopf, April 30, 1901. See also following letter, May 3, 1901, Box 18, Acc. 98, Temple U SCRC. [↑](#endnote-ref-80)
81. Edward Stern to Joseph Krauskopf, May 7, 1901, Box 25, Acc. 98, Temple U SCRC. [↑](#endnote-ref-81)
82. Elizabeth Loentz, *Let Me Continue to Speak the Truth: Bertha Pappenheim as Author and Activist* (Cincinnati, 2007), statistic on membership at 6; Britta Konz, *Bertha Pappenheim (1859-1936): Ein Leben für jüdische Tradition und weibliche Emanzipation* (Frankfurt am Main, 2005); Gudrun Wolfgruber (ed.), *Bertha Pappenheim: Soziale Arbeit, Frauenbewegung, Religion* (Vienna, 2015). [↑](#endnote-ref-82)
83. Julius Plotke to Joseph Krauskopf, August 8, 1901, Box 32, Acc. 98, Temple U SCRC; P. B. [Bertha Pappenheim], ‘“A Rabbi’s Impression [*sic*] of the Oberammergau Passion Play” von Rabbi Jos. Krauskopf’, in *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums* (23 August 1901), 406-7. [↑](#endnote-ref-83)
84. Bertha Pappenheim to Joseph Krauskopf, November 26, 1901, Box 35, Acc. 98, Temple U SCRC; Julius Plotke to Joseph Krauskopf, August 8, 1901, Box 32, Acc. 98, Temple U SCRC. Plotke is referring to *Ethische Kultur: Wochenschrift für sozial-ethische Reformen*. [↑](#endnote-ref-84)
85. [Pappenheim], “A Rabbi’s Impression,” 406-7. [↑](#endnote-ref-85)
86. Bertha Pappenheim to Joseph Krauskopf, November 26, 1901, Box 32, Acc. 98, Temple U SCRC. [↑](#endnote-ref-86)
87. Joseph Krauskopf to Gotthard Deutsch, December 12, 1901, Box 2.22, MS-123: Gotthard Deutsch Papers, American Jewish Archives (AJA), Cincinnati, USA; “Der Eindruck eines Rabbiners vom Oberammergauer Passionsspiel,” *Die Deborah: Eine deutsch-amerikanische Monatsschrift zur Foerderung juedischer Interessen in Gemeinde, Schule und* *Haus* (May 1902), 147-50. [↑](#endnote-ref-87)
88. Benjamin Maria Baader, “Die Deborah,” *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*, March 1, 2009, Jewish Women's Archive, <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/die-deborah> (viewed on November 15, 2017). [↑](#endnote-ref-88)
89. Pappenheim’s manuscript translation of chapter IV is in Temple U SCRC, Acc. 98, Box 37. [↑](#endnote-ref-89)
90. Gotthard Deutsch, “An die Leser der ‘Deborah’,” *Die Deborah* (December 1902), 356. [↑](#endnote-ref-90)
91. While we know Karpeles wrote to Krauskopf about the book, unfortunately this correspondence cannot be found in the Temple U SCRC collection. [↑](#endnote-ref-91)
92. Knörzer, “In Schrift und Wort,” 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-92)
93. Olaf Blaschke, *Offenders or Victims? German Jews and the Causes of Modern Catholic Antisemitism* (London, 2009), partic. ch. 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-93)
94. Blaschke, *Offenders or Victims*, 157. [↑](#endnote-ref-94)
95. Ari Joskowicz, *The Modernity of Others: Jewish Anti-Catholicism in Germany and France* (Stanford, 2013), ch. 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-95)
96. Joseph Krauskopf to Gotthard Deutsch, December 12, 1901, Box 2.22, MS-123, AJA. [↑](#endnote-ref-96)
97. Julius Plotke to Joseph Krauskopf, March 16, 1902, Box 32, Acc. 98, Temple U SCRC. [↑](#endnote-ref-97)
98. Lion Feuchtwanger, “Oberammergau” and “Oberammergau 1910,” in *Die Schaubühne*, 6 (1910), 394-8, 424-8, 597-600. [↑](#endnote-ref-98)
99. Waddy, *Oberammergau*, 34-5. [↑](#endnote-ref-99)
100. Lion Feuchtwanger, “Der Retter Oberammergaus,” *Die Schaubühne* 6 (1910), 523-4; *Völkischer Beobachter* (March 15, 1922). [↑](#endnote-ref-100)