On the River, On the Road:
Lower Mississippi Peddlers and their Judaism, 1820-1865

Laura Newman Eckstein
Advisor: Dr. Molly B. Farneth

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS

BACHELOR OF ARTS PROGRAM IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION
HAVERFORD COLLEGE
April 18, 2016
Abstract

Scholars who study the Jews of the Southern United States often struggle to understand how Jewish identity affected the way in which Jews presented themselves, the way in which outsiders viewed them, and the extent to which they felt integrated into society. Many scholars believe that Jewish religious practice was not just adapted, but sacrificed, as part of the process of integration into Southern life and culture. Looking specifically at the region of the Lower Mississippi, this thesis offers a different approach to understanding Judaism in the context of adaptation and integration. This thesis begins with a historical review of the role of Jews as merchants in the United States and how social and economic factors in the early and mid-19th century encouraged their entry into American society as peddlers, creating the "typical peddler profile. More specifically, the thesis examines why the Lower Mississippi was a unique and advantageous setting during this time period for Jewish merchants. This thesis argues that in the Lower Mississippi during the early and mid-19th century, Jewish religious practices and spaces were not sacrificed, but rather reconceptualized. Judaism became integrated into the merchant profession, manifested through economic and familial networks that allowed Jews to practice their Judaism even in the most remote of locales. Judaism was also intertwined with the liminal position of Jews within Lower Mississippian society: not black, yet not seen as fully white, allowing Jews to sell to a customer base that was both black and white. With their economic and familial networks and adaptive Jewish practices, the Jews of the Lower Mississippi were able to become fully participating, though distinct, members of the larger society while maintaining a form of Judaism.
Acknowledgements

This thesis never would have come to fruition without the help of numerous people to whom I am eternally grateful. First, to the faculty of Haverford College for providing me with an outstanding education. More particularly, I would like to thank the Haverford College Religion Department, my fellow senior religion majors, and my thesis advisor, Dr. Molly B. Farneth. They read numerous drafts, offered invaluable advice, and are dear friends. Dr. Kenneth Koltun-Fromm and his course, reading sacred texts, were essential factors in my decision to become a Religion major; for this I am deeply grateful. Dr. Naomi Koltun-Fromm taught the first semester of the Religion major’s Senior Seminar course as well as numerous other courses that I have had the pleasure of taking. Her teaching has challenged me to think about history and the study of religion in new and exciting ways. In addition, Dr. Molly B. Farneth’s mentorship, compassion, promptness, intelligence, and accurate critiques were a gift during this thesis process. I am lucky to have had the privilege to work with such a phenomenal professor and scholar. I would like to acknowledge and thank the staff at Haverford College’s Magill Library for their help in finding sources and digitizing materials. I would like to thank the John B. Hurford ’60 Center for the Arts and Humanities for the senior research fellowship I was awarded last summer which allowed me to explore my interest in Southern Jewish familial and economic networks at the Jacob Rader Marcus Institute of the American Jewish Archives. On that note, I would like to acknowledge the American Jewish Archives and their staff for their help in procuring materials that formed the basis for this thesis. Gail Madden and Rabbi Tamar Duvdevani also were instrumental figures in my time at the American Jewish Archives, and I appreciate their support. I would like to thank Drs. Gary Zola, Jonathan Sarna, Michael Cohen, and Shari L. Rabin for their advice and council. Jamie Loeb, Herman Kohlmeyer Jr., and Joseph Friend aided me in finding sources and families from the Lower Mississippi. I would like to thank Rabbi Eliyahu and Rebbitzin Bluma Gurevitz for their support and caring throughout the thesis process. Finally, I would like to thank my family for their unwavering encouragement including my parents, Lisa Newman Eckstein and Jerome Philip Eckstein III, my grandmother, Melanie Goodman Eckstein, and my proxy-grandfather, Mike Katz. Thank you to my extended family including the Siegal-Dobscha’s, the Rosenthal’s, the Golub-Raven’s, the Martinez-Newman’s, the Sachtcher-Newman’s, the Issula-Newman’s, the Newman-Levy’s, the Newman-Fine’s, the Baum-Newman’s, M. Frances Eckstein, Dr. Martha Newman, and Cantor Nancy Kassel.
Dedication

For my parents whose unconditional love and generosity and unwavering integrity and work ethic are a model and a blessing everyday; I am thankful to be your daughter. From the deepest crevasses of my soul, I love you: Jerome Philip Eckstein III and Lisa Newman Eckstein

To my grandmothers whose tenacity I admire, whose courage I emulate, and whose love abounds:
Melanie Goodman Eckstein and Carol Spero Newman (z”l)

To my grandfathers whom I never met:
Jerome Philip Eckstein II (z”l) and Judge Jonathan Uhry Newman (z”l)

To my ancestors who settled along the banks of the Mississippi River and inspired this thesis: May their memories continue to be a reminder of the historical currents that still course through the muddy waters of our lives and serve as an inspiration to stay afloat despite the heavy weights of life.
Table of Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. ii
Acknowledgements ............................................................................................................... iii
Dedication ............................................................................................................................. iv
Table of Contents ................................................................................................................ v
Table of Figures and Maps ................................................................................................. vi
Preface: A Dead Woman’s Story ............................................................................................. 1
Introduction: The Muddy River of Names and Meanings ...................................................... 3
Cartoons and Correspondence: The (Jewish) Merchants .................................................... 6
Characteristic Advantages: The Typical-Peddling Profile .................................................. 10
Roads and Reimagining: Judaism and the Peddler ............................................................... 15
Land of Slavery, Land of Cotton: The Lower Mississippi ..................................................... 18
Land of Slavery, Land of Cotton: A Land of Jews and Judaism? .......................................... 24
Currents of Persecution: The Typical Peddler and Slavery ................................................ 25
Not Quite White: A Separate Stream of People .................................................................... 33
Conclusion: “Streamlets from a Common Head” ................................................................. 37
Bibliography .......................................................................................................................... 41
Appendix I .............................................................................................................................. 52
Appendix II ............................................................................................................................ 53
Appendix III ............................................................................................................................ 54
Table of Figures and Maps

Figure 1. Levering, A. “Broadway on a Jewish Holiday.” ......................................................... 7

Map 1. Hergesheimer, E. *Map showing the distribution of the slave population of the southern
states of the United States. Compiled from the census of 1860.* ............................................ 18

Map 2. Eckstein, L. *Inset of Map 1 by Edwin Hergesheimer, with focus on the Lower Mississippi,
the course of the Mississippi River, state boundaries, and the cities of Vicksburg, Natchez,
and New Orleans.* .............................................................................................................. 19
Preface: A Dead Woman’s Story

A Jewish folktale from the southern banks of the Mississippi River begins with a husband sitting by his wife’s bedside. Before her impending death, the wife requests that he bury her in the New Orleans Jewish cemetery, rather than the cemetery in their small, Mississippi River town. After his wife’s death, the newly widowed man attempts the journey to bury his wife down-river in New Orleans; however, there is not enough water in the river to make safe passage to the city. The widower, unable to travel to New Orleans, preserves his wife’s body in a barrel of alcohol for later burial. Even after the traditionally Jewish thirty-day morning period however, the river is still impassible. Travel by land is unsafe; the route passes through treacherous swamps filled with alligators. When rain finally arrives, the river is not high enough to carry a boat weighted down by the heavy barrel containing the wife’s body. The widower instead embarks (by water) on a business trip. While on business, the widower meets another woman and becomes engaged. By the time the newly engaged husband returns home with his fiancée, the river has become fully navigable, and the widower and his fiancé travel to New Orleans to bury the deceased wife. At the burial, the newly engaged widower is dressed in black; his fiancée is dressed in white. Two African American grave diggers bore holes in the side of the coffin and then put their weight on the coffin to ensure that it sinks into the depths of the water-filled grave. After the funeral, the African American grave diggers cover the tomb with a mound of mud.

In the context of traditional Jewish burial practice, this folktale is startling. Jewish burials, in accordance with Jewish law, occur one to two days after a death, and in extenuating

---

1 Both characters are Jewish.
2 As the graveyard is in New Orleans and with the city’s high water table, it is commonplace to find water even after digging a few feet below the ground (Trahan, “Soil Survey of Orleans Parish,” 56).
3 Koppman and Koppman, A Treasury of American-Jewish Folklore, 78.
circumstances, as soon as possible.\(^4\) Furthermore, laws concerning marriage of a widower and the prohibition of preserving the body in any fluid place this story further at odds with traditional Jewish practice.\(^5\) In addition, it is against customary Jewish burial practice to bury the dead in water.\(^6\) While the origins of the folktale are unknown, the limited transportation options suggests that the story is set in the early to mid-19th century. Regardless of the exact date, the folktale offers an invaluable illustration of the currents that had to be navigated by Jews who immigrated to and worked in the Lower Mississippi between 1820 and 1865. One way in which to interpret this story would be as example of a Jewish burial gone wrong, in violation of the “customary” Jewish burial rituals and laws as mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph. Alternatively, this tale can be viewed as an illustration of continuity coupled with adaptation in the face of environmental impediments in regards to the practices of “traditional” Jewish religious laws and customs. Although the merchant is not able to bury his wife quickly, he cares for her body and respects her wishes; although the casket and body will disintegrate in water, as is tradition, the body is covered by a mound of dirt. This folktale is not solely a burial story, but a Jewish burial story, about how culture and geographic forces seep into and alter the businessman’s Jewish practices.

---

\(^4\) Though “certain delays are unavoidable and funerals may not take place on the Sabbath or on the Day of Atonement, Jewish custom insists on prompt burial as a matter of respect for the dead” (Hillers and Kashani, “Burial,” 292).

\(^5\) Marriage laws concerning a spouse’s death: “During the first thirty days of mourning after the death [the mourning after the death begins after the burial] of a near relative no marriage may be entered upon. A widower may not remarry until three festivals have passed after the death of his wife” (Schechter and Greenstone, “Marriage Laws”). Burial in the earth: “Jewish tradition does not permit embalming or the use of cosmetics on the deceased” (“Preparation for Burial”).

\(^6\) Jewish tradition dictates that Jews are buried in soil. This is based on Genesis 3:19 where God speaks to man and says: “by the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken you are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:19).
Introduction: The Muddy River of Names and Meanings

What makes someone Jewish? This question has been asked and answered numerous times throughout history, with varying opinions on the matter. While it is much easier to answer this question with *halacha*, or Jewish law, a law does not necessarily reflect the belief nor the praxis of its supposed adherents, as demonstrated by the folktale above. *Halacha* does not give insight into the practices and adaptations of what Jewish communities observe in reality, both as a group and among individuals. Scholars have often grappled with how to categorize the Jews as a people and the qualifications necessary to be considered a Jew, as an individual within this body of a people: Are Jews an ethnicity, a religion, a race, a combination of some or all, or do Jews not fit into any of these categories?\(^7\)

The scholars who study the Jews of the Lower Mississippi also struggle to understand how a person’s identity as a Jew affected the way in which they presented themselves to the outside world, the way in which outsiders viewed them, and the extent to which they felt integrated into society.\(^8\) For example, in an article entitled “Jewish Religious Life” in the *New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, Jennifer Stollman summarizes the scholarship on Jews in the Southern United States. In a paragraph regarding Jewish religious adaptations to 19th century Southern culture Stollman writes: “Jews continued to observe Jewish holidays and maintain religious practices but most often did so in accordance with the South’s economic and social schedules and prescriptions. Southern Jews preferred to retain the elements of Jewish tradition

---

\(^7\) While this paper problematizes a general definition of a “Jew,” or “Judaism,” for analytical purposes, I must distinguish between the terms. “Jew” is any person who defines himself or herself by that identifier and also practices “Judaism” (see definition in the next sentence of this paragraph). “Judaism” is the practice of a Jew. While scholars have often defined it as the unique “religious” acts such as observing Jewish holidays, going to synagogue, and abiding by kosher dietary restrictions, this thesis problematizes this definition. Instead, “Judaism” is generally the practices of Jews that differentiate them within the broader society. “Judaism” is not exclusive to practices that have a basis in believing in a deity or are “faith based.”

\(^8\) The Lower Mississippi River Basin (Lower Mississippi) runs from Cairo, Illinois, to the Gulf of Mexico. This paper will use the term lower Mississippi to specifically define the area from Vicksburg to New Orleans along the Mississippi River, including the abutting river communities, and focuses only on this area.
that did not interfere with their secular lives.”9 While this thesis does not deny that Jews in the South as well as other places throughout the United States adapted their lifestyles to fit within the culture of their locale, this thesis argues against the sentiment of Stollman’s second sentence. Stollman separates the “economic and social” lives of these Southern Jews from their religious, “[non-] secular lives.” For Stollman, religious life functioned as the single site that contained the “elements of Jewish tradition.” Inherent in this differentiation between religious life and social and economic life is the idea that one’s Jewishness begins and ends at the gate of the synagogue or with the practice of specific religious customs. While Stollman’s summarization of the literature argues that the “majority of 19th century Jews understood that preserving their Judaism while succeeding in the South economically, politically, and socially required modifications,” she suggests that such modifications required the sacrifice of Jewish religious practice, rather than a new conception or imagination of Jewish religious practice that would understand the integration of Jewish principles into deeds as an inherent component of Jewish identity.

One example from an early immigrant to the region, the life of Judah Touro, refutes Stollman’s point regarding the innate separation of the secular and religious domains of Jewish identity. Like many Jews in the Lower Mississippi, Touro, a successful merchant, did not observe traditional Jewish practice. Bertram Korn writes in his Early Jews of New Orleans, in regards to the first synagogue in New Orleans that, “Judah Touro […] made [a small] contribution, […] but had no interest in joining or helping the congregation in any substantial way.”10 Yet, even his small contribution, and later larger contributions to this synagogue as well as other Jewish institutions in the United States and England, reflects a different way that Judaism manifested in Touro’s life. Korn quotes Rabbi Isaac Leeser as saying of Touro that ““it

was late in life when Mr. T. became impressed with the necessity of being an Israelite in more
than in mere words.”11 Leeser does not mean that Touro began to keep kosher or that he
attended synagogue regularly. Instead Leeser Touro became an “Israelite in more than in mere
words” when he gave generously to Jewish causes, which occurred “late in [Touro’s] life.”
While Leeser’s own definition of what constitutes a Jew, or as he terms “Israelite,” is
problematic in and of itself, what is clear is that Touro’s Judaism was not about synagogue
membership or traditional Jewish practices. Instead, Touro’s Judaism was manifested in
philanthropic giving that stemmed directly from his business success.

Touro adapted Jewish religious practice, as did the majority of Jewish merchants
discussed in this thesis. Unlike Touro, these Jews emigrated from the Kingdom of Bavaria and
German Confederation or the region of Alsace-Lorraine in France to the Lower Mississippi
between 1820-1865 and became peddlers. As they settled in a land that contained a miniscule
population of Jews and lacked the customary forms of Jewish religious infrastructure, such as
synagogues (except for in New Orleans), prayer books, and kosher meat, the Jews did not
“modify” their practice of Judaism in accordance with Southern customs, but *reimagined* and
*redefined* how and where to express their Judaism.12

No longer impeded by the blockades that faced Jews in Europe, the German-Jewish
immigrants to the United States saw the Lower Mississippi in particular as a place both rich in
opportunity and in monetary wealth. Through a close examination of Jewish peddlers in the early
and mid-19th centuries and factors that made peddling in the Lower Mississippi unique, I will
argue that Jews functioned in a space that was particularly advantageous to their trade, but also

11 Ibid., 217.
12 *Kosher* is an adjective used to describe foods that abide by the laws of *Kashrut*, or Jewish dietary law. Key components of *Kashrut* include abstaining from any shellfish or pork product as well as the prohibition against mixing milk and meat products during a meal.
required that they elevate certain aspects of Judaism at the expense of others in order to maintain their Judaism within the Lower Mississippi’s culture and environment. Together, these adaptations have strong implications for how we think about the relation of the “religious” and the “secular” in Jewish life.

I will begin with an overview of the patterns of Jewish immigration to the U.S. in the early to mid-19th century and then show how single, male Jewish immigrants adapted to their new environment through economic ties and kinship networks with more established Jewish merchants. I then will turn to the Lower Mississippi region to show how the unique Southern economy influenced Jewish identities and practices. Drawing on the memoirs of Julius Weis for a rich example of this process, I will argue that Southern Jewish identity and practice were indelibly shaped by the Lower Mississippi’s economy and that, in fact, mercantile activity became part and parcel of the construction of Jewishness in the region.

**Cartoons and Correspondence: The (Jewish) Merchants**

Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, American newspapers and magazines reshaped longstanding European stereotypes of Jews as moneylenders, misers, and merchants. On the whole, the Americanized versions of these European stereotypes did not manifest with the same violent anti-Semitic character and tone which pervaded European depictions of Jews. Instead, the American stereotype accentuated the large proportion of merchants who were identified Jews and, likewise, the large proportion of Jews who made their living as merchants in the United States. A cartoon featured in the August 1906 issue of *Puck Magazine* entitled “Broadway on a Jewish Holiday” (See Figure 1, or Appendix I), is a classic example of this
exaggerated characterization of Jews as merchants. The cartoon features Broadway’s business district with a multitude of storefront signs. The shops, all named after their owners, carry stereotypically Jewish names such as Katz, Spielbaum, and Kohn. Because it is a “Jewish Holiday” and these businesses are presumably Jewish-owned, the shops are closed: Broadway, a main thoroughfare of New York City, is devoid of people. Even the policeman is illustrated leaning against a lamppost yawning, one can presume, out of boredom due to this lack of street activity. The cartoon serves as an illustration of the observation that this section of Broadway is a business district dominated by Jewish-owned businesses. Though by its very nature the cartoon is an exaggeration, the embellishment is not in fact unfounded. In a 1907 article from The Missionary Review, Reverend Louis Mayer comments: “Along both sides of Broadway for a mile and a half, in the downtown business district Jewish names predominate upon the signs.”

---

13 Levering, “Broadway on a Jewish Holiday.”
14 Many names are exaggerated for satirical purposes, typical for the cartoon genre. Take for example Fiddeldink, Bingelbaum, and Piddlewitz.
15 The Missionary Review, 895.
While “Broadway on a Jewish Holiday” perhaps oversimplifies the profile of a business-owner whose shop is located on Broadway, Mayer’s statement demonstrates the truth behind the exaggeration.

“Broadway on a Jewish Holiday” not only offers a glimpse into the perception (and truth) of the prevalence of Jews in the mercantile industry on Broadway in the early 1900’s, but also demonstrates a perception of Jewish influence on business. As mentioned above, the street in the cartoon is devoid of people except for the yawning policeman, and the only street traffic is a lone trolley. The cartoon implies that because of the “Jewish Holiday” no business can occur. Given Reverend Louis Mayer’s account of this New York City business district during the same time period, a major Jewish Holiday would in fact probably cause the “predominat[ing]” businesses to shut down. “Broadway on a Jewish Holiday” not only illustrates the 1906 American cultural vision of a merchant on Broadway as a Jew, but demonstrates the perceived influence of Jewish religious practice on general business activity.

Though the cartoon offers a window into notions of Jews as the “predominat[ing]” merchants on Broadway in 1906, this perception was confined to neither this time period nor this locale. In fact, an 1865 letter to the editor of *The New Orleans Times* from Alexandria, Louisiana entitled “Red River Correspondence” is strikingly similar in its account of Jewish businesses and their monopoly on trade. “This is the first day of the Jewish New Year,” the correspondent writes, “and as a consequence all the stores with very few exceptions are closed, and county people wander about the town from place to place, vainly endeavoring to find some place to do a little trading; for you must know that all the principal dry goods stores in Alexandria are kept by Jews.”16 The “Red River Correspondence” clearly demonstrates the concentration of Jews in the dry goods business in Alexandria, due to the detail that “all the principal dry goods stores in

---

16 “Red River Correspondence.”
Alexandria are kept by Jews.” In addition, because it is “the first day of the Jewish New Year” and “all the stores with very few exceptions are closed,” according to the correspondent, it then follows that the non-Jewish “country people wander about the town from place to place, vainly endeavoring to find some place to do a little trading.” Thus “country people” depend on the Jewish business community in their town.

The amazingly uniform descriptions of business firms as predominately Jewish-owned, and the consequent influence of Judaism upon general business and trading practices, defies patterns of time and geography. Despite the fact that the “Red River Correspondence” was published 50 years before “Broadway on a Jewish Holiday,” though a letter to the editor instead of a cartoon, and though from a rural, frontier community in Louisiana as opposed to the large and populous New York City, both sources offer the same vantage: Jews as primary and influential merchants of their locale.

While it is impossible that Jews dominated every town’s businesses or every industry, statistics of American Jewish businesses from the mid-19th century do illustrate the prevalence of Jews in commerce. Rowena Olegario, in her article “‘That Mysterious People’: Jewish Merchants, Transparency, and Community in Mid-Nineteenth Century America,” supplies a table of statistics which illustrates the high proportion of Jewish-owned clothing businesses during the mid-19th century. In Springfield, Illinois, for example, between 1841-1869, “Jews owned more than half of clothing establishments.” In 1860 Cincinnati, “Jews owned 65 out of 70 clothing businesses.” And in Indianapolis during the 1860’s, “Jews owned 70 percent of all clothing stores.” Given these statistics, a Jewish holiday would have had similar affect on 1860 Springfield, Cincinnati, and Indianapolis as it would, approximately fifty years later, on Broadway in New York City, or five years later, in Alexandria, Louisiana. Wherever they were

17 Olegario, “That Mysterious People,” 166.
located, Jewish business were both pervasive in the mercantile sector and their owners’ religious observances influenced the trading practices of their locale.

**Characteristic Advantages: The Typical-Peddling Profile**

Jewish immigrants were particularly suited to the mercantile industry because of specific characteristics that stemmed from their Jewish identity; the amalgamation of these characteristics is what this thesis terms the “typical-peddling profile.” The majority of the Jews who arrived in America were drawn to peddling because it was familiar. In Europe, some of these men had been peddlers themselves, but some had not. Yet even with no personal experience, Jewish immigrants “would have known in their immediate families and in their villages many peddlers whose experiences and skills they could draw on.”

Additionally, unlike the members of other immigrant groups, the Jewish immigrants who arrived in the United States during the early and mid-19th century were overwhelmingly young, single, and male. Their demographic profile helps to explain their readiness to enter into certain professions that would be challenging or unappealing for immigrants with families. Though Jewish immigrants “account[ed] for only a tiny proportion of the overall German migration to the United States (2 to 3 percent of the more than 1.2 million Germans who arrived between 1820 and 1855, according to one estimate), Jews exhibited distinctive [migratory] characteristics. [...] Single male migrants predominated among Jews, whereas German Gentiles were more likely to travel in family groups.” With no wife or children to provide for in America, the single, male Jewish migrant was relatively free of obligations compared to the typical non-Jewish German immigrant. Diner aptly explains how the single Jewish peddler, free of the

---

18 Diner, “Entering the Mainstream of Modern Jewish History: Peddlers and the American South,” 93.
familial drains that came with the needs of wives, children, and parents, had a particular advantage in business: “If all family members had arrived together, dependent family—small children, women, and older parents—would have impeded the peddling venture. Dependents drained rather than created resources.”  

With no dependents, single Jewish men were able to move and transform with different economic trends comparatively quickly, filling niches and jumping at opportunities that allowed them to influence business industries throughout the United States.

Many of these peddlers took advantage of both their familiarity with peddling as well as their lack of dependents by filling a niche as rural peddlers and merchants. In rural and remote areas such as Alexandria, Louisiana from the “Red River Correspondence,” or Springfield, Illinois from Olegario’s statistics, the peddler could traverse the countryside going from house to house, with a captive market of customers as the only or one of the few peddlers in the area. “When Jewish young men discovered that a particular town or region lacked a general store, a dry-goods store, or perhaps something more specialized – at later stages of community development – they moved in,” Hasia Diner explains. Jewish immigrants used their familiarity with peddling and their single status in order to fill in a gap in the commercial infrastructure of the United States.

If we were to imagine one of these young, single Jewish men arriving in America, it would seem natural that he would experience feelings of homesickness as a result of his unfamiliar surroundings. The Jewish Bavarian-born peddler Abraham Kohn constantly reminds

---

20 Diner, Roads Taken, 56.
21 In 1860, Alexandria had a population of 1,461 residents (“Gemiluth Chassodim.”). At the same time, 9,320 resided in Springfield (Hart, “Springfield’s African Americans as a Part of the Lincoln Community.”). To offer a point of scale, New York City was the largest city in America in 1860, with a population of 813,669 residents (“Table 8. Population of 100 Largest Urban Places: 1860.”).
22 Diner, A Time for Gathering, 77.
the reader of his homesickness in his diary that he writes while peddling through rural New England: “My quarters are good, but poor business makes me feel bad. Depressed in spirit and with sad memories of home, I sit gloomily at the fireplace.”23 Far away from his homeland, his immediate family, his friends, and familiar language, customs, cultures, and food, Kohn, felt alone and vulnerable. The Jewish-American, Alsatian born, millenary merchant, Edmond Uhry, in his 1946 memoir, offers a helpful analogy in order to understand Kohn’s feeling of isolation. “Each mile of distance equaled a ton of today. Ocean travel was slow and dangerous and the expectations of a Wiedersehn [reunion] more remote then now.”24 As the immigrant sailed, each mile traveled equated to a wider and wider distance between himself and the familiar life of Europe.

To combat the vulnerability and feeling of homesickness, as well as to ensure employment opportunities for the newcomer upon his arrival, it was common practice for the soon-to-be Jewish-American peddler to have an already-made connection in America who would help the neophyte. Uhry recounts that “wherever one [person] from a town [in Europe] would settle, others from the same district would join him [in that American locale].”25 While immigrants often did “join [an established man]” “from the same district” in America, it was also common for those with another single male family member already established to use that as his connection to the new land. If no familial or European geographic connection was to be had, Diner states that “Jewishness was a sufficient link.”26 Thus, upon entering the United States it was a comfort to the newcomer to have a family member awaiting upon their arrival, or if not family at the least, other established Jews willing to help him with settling into American life.

24 Uhry, Galleries of Memory,146.
25 Ibid.
26 Diner, Roads Taken, 57.
For Jewish immigrants, their connections to American Jewish merchants served both social and economic purposes. These established merchants who helped the neophyte were at once links to the old and the new world of the freshly-arrived immigrant. These businessmen represented communities from Europe and shared a common background of religious, cultural, and ethnic customs and values; presumably a comfort to the homesick new arrival. At the same time, these established American Jews, with their ability to help the immigrant financially, by setting the newcomer up in business, also demonstrated the fruition of business opportunities in America, and provided a confirmation and inspiration for the immigrant hoping to also reap the monetary opportunities America purportedly offered.

Because of this dual role of the relatively established Jewish American merchant, he and the immigrant typically developed a complex and deep kin-like relationship, which thereby established a mutual trust between the two men. This trust was not only reflected in the way in which the immigrant expected to be set up in business by his contact in America, but also was reflected in the willingness of the established merchant to offer lines of credit to the immigrant. “Usually,” Diner explains, a “former peddler, […] now a shopkeeper, […] provided the immigrant with his first bundle of goods, fixed him up with a route, offered some pointers on the customers’ ways of life, [and taught him] a few basics of the language.”

Venturing out into the countryside, novice Jewish merchants often started as “pack-peddlers,” carrying their wares on their backs, reappearing in larger towns and cities when their supplies ran low. As these “pack-peddlers” established a clientele, found the best routes on which to peddle, and began to earn a living, it was common for them to buy a horse and cart and then, eventually, to establish a permanent storefront in one or many towns. After some success, the once newly-arrived

\[27\] Ibid.
immigrant would become a part of the community of the established Jewish businessmen who helped immigrants, just like he had once been, obtain credit and get a start in business.

As businesses grew, partnerships fluctuated, and different commercial ventures simmered, established Jewish businesses continued to satisfy nascent Jewish businesses’ needs for credit. Inherent to the concept of credit is the concept of debt. As the fledgling peddler received his “first pack of goods,” as well as other lines of credit he would be loaned throughout his lifetime, the creditor, usually a more established merchant, trusted the debtor, this neophyte, to repay the loan, establishing a kin-like relationship. In a documentary on the Jews of Oregon, Ellen Eisenberg speaks to these interwoven networks of kinship and credit: “So you have the guy in charge in San Francisco, and he sends his younger siblings or cousins out to gold mining towns and he supplies them and they extend credit to one another.” Credit, in other words, became interwoven with familial ties. An established merchant offers financial support to his younger, less established family members. Eventually, these family members become established merchants themselves, now able to extend credit to others. A discussion of the Jewish American garment industry within the volume Chosen Capital: The Jewish Encounter with American Capitalism likewise asserts “Jews [...] regularly relied on Jewish brethren for credit. That trend is described in the Dun and Bradstreet reports where the correspondents mention that a particular firm has good credit from brethren but was not trusted by non-Jewish acquaintances.” While it is unclear how pervasive the “[mis]trust by non-Jew[s]” was, Jews faced obstacles – whether anti-Semitic or purely economic – that made it advantageous for Jews to lend credit among their own “brethren.” This meant that for both Jews in America and non-Jewish observers, Jewish

---

28 The Jewish Frontier, 12:02-12:07.
29 Kobrin, Chosen Capital, 40.
businesses, cultivated by this typical-peddler profile, became sites for the creation of Jewish community and a reaffirmation of Jewish identity with implications far beyond a line of credit.

**Roads and Reimagining: Judaism and the Peddler**

The typical peddler profile, then, lent itself to Jewish involvement and influence in trade. Given this involvement and influence in trade, Jews frequently encountered other Jews on the road peddling, while restocking supplies, or as an owner of a neighboring shop. As Jews interacted with other Jews, primarily through business, their businesses functioned as the primary sites for at least the initial creation of Jewish community, particularly in rural locales. All the while, the act of peddling lent itself to a modified form of Jewish practice that made business interactions all the more important because they functioned as the sites of Jewish community for an itinerant peddler or a lone rural shopkeeper. Abraham Kohn offers a demonstrative example in his diary of the way in which Jewish religious practices could be affected by the peddling profession. Using the example of his friend and fellow peddler, Marx, Kohn recounts:

> This unfortunate man has been driving himself in this miserable trade for three years to furnish a bare living for himself and his family. O God, our Father, consider Thy little band of the house of Israel. Behold how they are compelled to profane Thy holy Torah in pursuit of their daily bread. In three years this poor fellow could observe the Sabbath less than ten times. And he is a member of the Jewish congregation in Albany. This is religious liberty in America.³⁰

In this passage, Kohn uses Marx’s lack of religious practice as a springboard in which to exemplify how Kohn himself views peddling as the impediment to Jewish religious practice, for not only Marx, but for the American Jewish peddler in general. This is evident in Kohn’s diction with his use of the plural pronoun, “they:” “O God, our Father, consider Thy little band of the house of Israel. Behold how they [sic] are compelled to profane Thy holy Torah in pursuit of

---

their [sic] daily bread.” “Thy little band of Israel” is the group of Jewish-American peddlers, that Kohn terms as the “they,” who are “compelled to profane [God’s] holy Torah in pursuit of their daily bread.” Kohn’s account is significant because he illustrates the tensions and a dichotomy between peddling life and Jewish practice.

Kohn’s dichotomy between Jewish religious practice and being a successful Jewish-American peddler problematizes a notion of the “American Dream.” Part of America’s lure for immigrants like Kohn or Marx was the promise of economic opportunities – opportunities that were, in theory, open to Jews, unlike in Europe. In a melancholy tone Kohn describes the lure and the reality of America: “Dreaming of such a fortune leads a man to depart from his home. But when he awakens from his dreams, he finds himself in the cold and icy night, treading his lonely way in America.” Immediately before this dreary image, Kohn laments:

O, that I had never seen this land, but had remained in Germany, apprenticed to a humble country craftsman! Though oppressed by taxes and discriminated against as a Jew, I should still be happier than in the great capital of America, free from royal taxes and every man's religious equal though I am!

While Kohn concedes that in Germany he would have “been oppressed by taxes and discriminated against as a Jew,” in America he is “free from royal taxes and [is] every man’s religious equal,” Kohn still longs for Germany. The passage from the above page, where Kohn describes Marx’s lack of religious observance as a direct result of his job as a peddler, Kohn states that “this is religious liberty in America.” Here Kohn is not just homesick for a different lifestyle; he is questioning the “fortune” that supposedly awaits in America for the persecuted European Jews. He is questioning at what cost to a man’s identity does one become successful

---

31 Ibid., 98.
32 Ibid.
33 The language Kohn uses and the feeling he laments alludes to Exodus 16:3, where the Israelites after having crossed the Red Sea and escaped Egyptian slavery complain to Moses and Aaron: “If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have
in America? Is it really worth it to have “religious liberty in America” when a peddler, like Marx, is so busy trying to earn a living that “in three years this poor fellow could observe the Sabbath less than ten times?”

Although from Kohn’s account it might initially seem like peddling in America and Judaism are irreconcilable, in fact this was not the case. Judaism had to be reimagined and adapted to fit the spaces that the peddlers frequented or where they happened find fellow Jews. For Jewish peddlers in a rural area it was true they could not attend synagogue regularly or gather a minyan. It too would have also been extremely difficult to obtain kosher meat. As Diner explains: “A peddler who adhered to dietary law should have said no to anything his customers offered. He should not have eaten off their plates, used their utensils, or consumed anything cooked or baked in their ovens. But life on the road made such punctiliousness difficult, if not impossible.” In America, Kohn, and other Jewish peddlers like him, would need to reimagine Jewish religious practice that was not solely confined to a synagogue, a Jewish cemetery, or a Jewish home. Judaism in America, in rural America in particular, would be expressed in the moments where Jews met other Jews, even if those moments occurred in spaces that were not in classically religious settings. For Kohn we can envision this reimaging of a religious space when he meets fellow Jewish peddlers, Marx (from above), and Lehman, on the road: “Last week in the vicinity of Plymouth I met two peddlers, […] Lehman and Marx. That night we stayed together at a farmer's house. After supper we started singing, and I sat at the fireplace, thinking of all my past and of my family…”

brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger” (Exodus 16:3). Just as Kohn is wishing he had stayed in Germany, even though there is no religious liberty, the Israelites want to return to Egypt because even though they were enslaved, they were not hungry.

A minyan is defined as ten Jewish men (historically), over the age of 13 required for public Jewish religious practice.

Diner, Roads Taken, 93.

Kohn, “A Jewish Peddler’s Diary, 1842-1843,” 100.
another, their Jewish identity instantaneously connects them: they “stay together at a farmer’s house,” eat together, and sing together. Judaism for the rural peddler, like Kohn, became the space where he met and communed with other Jews, a space that innately conjured “th[oughts] of all [his] past and of [his] family.” Indeed, for the rural Jewish peddler in America, for those longing for family, meeting any Jew in any place would feel familial.

Land of Slavery, Land of Cotton: The Lower Mississippi

The Southern United States presented a drastically different reality from that of any other place in the United States. This was largely due to the fact that though slavery was abolished in all northern states by 1804, the South continued the practice. While owning slaves was reserved to the Southern United States, the institution of slavery distinguished the South in a broader sense: in economic, in social, and in cultural domains. In order to begin to comprehend the wide breadth of slavery’s impact upon Southern society, it is useful to consult and briefly analyze a map drawn by E. Hergesheimer, engraved by Th. Leonard, and published by Henry S. Graham in 1861. This map, entitled Map showing the distribution of the slave population of the southern states of the United States. Compiled from the census of 1860.

---

37 Boston and Hallam, “Freedom & Emancipation.”
showing the distribution of the slave population of the southern states of the United States. Compiled from the census of 1860 (See Map 1, or Appendix II), offers a choropleth representation of the percentage of the total population that is enslaved for each county in the Southern states. Looking at Map 1, it is evident the largest clustering of counties with largest percentages of their populations that are enslaved is located in the dark region that includes counties in the states of Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

This inset map (See Map 2, or Appendix III), of Map 1 offers a close look at the largest cluster of counties with high percentages of their population enslaved. The map depicts an extreme characteristic of the Lower Mississippi as a whole; a large proportion of the population in 1860 is comprised of enslaved African-Americans. There is a clear correlation between those counties abutting the

---

39 Choropleth is a term used for maps to describe the way in which the map depicts areas, in this case using color, to demonstrate proportion. In the map above, the darker the color, the larger the proportion of the population that is enslaved in that county.

40 Eckstein and Hergesheimer, “Inset of the ‘Map Showing the Distribution of the Slave Population of the Southern States of the United States, Compiled from the Census of 1860’ with Focus on the Lower Mississippi, the Course of the Mississippi River, State Boundaries, and the Cities of Vicksburg, Natchez, and New Orleans.”
Mississippi River and those counties with higher percentages of their population that are enslaved. While there are other counties on the non-inset map and a few even included in the inset map which are darkly colored, which do not fit the pattern of abutting the Mississippi River, what is unique about the counties abutting the Mississippi River is that nowhere else in the Southern United States is there such a concentration of darkly-colored counties around one geographic feature. The reason the clustered counties along the Mississippi River have such a high percentage of enslaved people as a proportion of their total population is that cotton plantations and the cotton industry dominated this region.

A confluence of events in the late early to mid-19th century made the Lower Mississippi dependent upon the cotton economy. Among these events was the invention of the cotton gin in 1793 and its rapid adoption in the early years of the 19th century. Prior to the invention of the cotton gin, it could take hours to remove the seeds from a short-staple cotton flower, making the crop economically unsustainable. Though there had been attempts at creating devices which would lessen the manual labor and tediousness of removing the cotton seeds, none had been successful until Eli Whitney’s version in 1793, which “increas[ed] ginning productivity by a factor of fifty.”

In addition, availability of new land offered cotton producers a solution to another challenge posed by the cultivation of the cotton crop. Cotton mined the soil and “the same patch could not be used for more than a few years without either planting legumes on it or applying

---

41 Eckstein, “Class Notes for the Age of Jefferson and Jackson: Cotton Kingdom.”
42 While there was a small cotton industry in the United States before Whitney’s cotton gin, it was lowland cotton, which only grew “on the long, sandy islands off the coast of Georgia [and South Carolina].” This lowland cotton “could easily be separated from its black seed.” However, in the rest of the Southern United States, “only upland cotton could succeed, […] but it had shorter fibers that clung tightly to the seed, which made it difficult to clean,” hence the need for Whitney’s gin (Black, “Cotton”).
expensive guano to it.”

A cotton planter from Georgia in 1833 wrote in the Farmer’s Register: “we appear to have but one rule—that is, to make as much cotton as we can, and wear out as much land as we can…lands that once produced one thousand pounds of cotton to the acre, will not now bring more than four hundred pounds.”

With the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, new lands became available and the land along the Lower Mississippi happened to be ideal for growing cotton due to the soil’s alluvial deposits from the Mississippi River.

While technology developed and the cotton crop began flourishing in the alluvial soil of the Lower Mississippi, it became clear that the primitive transportation infrastructure of the Lower Mississippi region would not suffice for the burgeoning cotton industry. Steamboats were the solution. Among the steamboats’ advantages was their offer of relatively easy transport for the heavy cotton bales from the plantations and rural towns to the central port of New Orleans. The first steamboat arrived in New Orleans in January of 1812. Appropriately named the New Orleans, it only ran between Natchez and New Orleans, “because the shallow waters above Natchez prevented her from ascending beyond that point.”

Although that boat sank in 1814, the company responsible for bringing the New Orleans “added three other steamboats, the Vesuvius, the Aetna, and a second New Orleans, to their fleet.” By 1817, “17 steam-powered craft were in operation on the Mississippi River. By the close of 1818, 31 steamboats were at work on the great river, and 30 more were under construction. […] In 1820 the Mississippi River fleet rose to 69, by 1836 to 381, and by 1850 to 740.”

The new technology and transportation available to bring cotton to port was directly tied to cotton’s rise in popularity as a common

---

44 Ibid., 103.
45 “Extracts of Private Correspondence,” 490. Also see Beckert, Empire of Cotton: A Global History, 103.
46 Alluvial refers to a type of soil that is formed by the moving of sediment. In this case the Mississippi River would flood its embankments and deposit sediments on to the lands it flooded. These sediments created a soil that was particularly rich in nutrients and well suited for growing cotton.
47 Kane, The Western River Steamboat, 45.
48 Moore, The Emergence of the Cotton Kingdom in the Old Southwest, 158.
49 Ibid.
textile. In particular, the developing textile industry of the Northeast United States as well as the more established textile industry in Britain created an insatiable demand for cotton. In fact, by 1860, “nearly forty percent of Britain’s exports were cotton textiles. Seventy-five percent of the cotton that supplied Britain’s cotton mills came from the American South.”50

With these changes – the cotton gin, more fertile lands, steamboat transportation, and a voracious demand – the cotton trade boomed along the Mississippi River. The state of Mississippi alone went from producing 10 million pounds of cotton in 1821, to 535.1 million pounds, in 1859. Louisiana, too, had a large increase: from 10 million pounds, like Mississippi, in 1821, to 311 million pounds in 1859. Mississippi and Louisiana were ranked first and third, respectively, in cotton production among all the cotton-producing states in the Union.51 New Orleans also functioned as the main port from which cotton was exported, meaning that Louisiana was deeply connected to and dependent upon the cotton industry.52 With this fantastic growth in the production of cotton over a relatively short span of time, fueled by an increasing demand, it is no surprise then that cotton became a larger and larger percentage of the value of United States’ exports: cotton’s value accounted for a little over 57% of the value of total exports from the United States in 1860.53

This increase in cotton production, however, came with an increase in need for labor, leading to a large influx of slaves to the Lower Mississippi. Though Whitney’s cotton gin had substantially reduced the time needed to clean the cotton flower, picking the cotton remained a labor-intensive task. Sven Beckert, in his volume Empire of Cotton: A Global History, offers a

50 Dattel, “Cotton in a Global Economy: Mississippi (1800-1860).”
51 Bruchey, Cotton and the Growth of the American Economy, Table 3H.
52 Note that between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, as well as south of New Orleans there was also a significant sugar industry, with sugar plantations dotting the Mississippi River. However, in terms of wealth and affect on national and foreign trade, sugar did not come close to matching cotton’s power.
53 Benson, Brannen, and Valentine, “Slavery.”
concise summation of the way in which the cotton gin affected slave markets in the United States, as well as the migration of slaves from plantations in the Upper South to plantations in the Lower South.\(^{54}\)

The expansion of cotton production, as a result, reinvigorated slavery and led to an enormous shift of slave labor from the upper to the lower South. In the thirty years after the invention of the gin alone (between 1790 and 1820), a quarter million slaves were forcefully relocated, while between 1783 and the closing of the international slave trade in 1808, traders imported an estimated 170,000 slaves into the United States—or one-third of all slaves imported into North America since 1619. Altogether, the internal slave trade moved up to a million slaves forcefully to the Deep South, most to grow cotton.\(^{55}\)

For those peddlers who set up shop alongside these cotton plantations and those who trudged through the brackish waters of the Mississippi River’s swamps, and for those who sold their wares to slaves and saw the enormous wealth of the cotton-growing plantations, this region, with its acute concentration of slaves and the intertwined and booming cotton industry, would have offered a picture of America and what it meant to be “American” drastically different from any other American locale.

The unique economy of the Lower Mississippi, combined with its geography, meant that the Jewish peddlers needed to move up and down the Mississippi River in order to obtain supplies and sell their wares. Diner states that the “southern region of the United States […] was the least urbanized part of the country for the longest time, the most agrarian, and the one with the least articulated system of roads and railroads.”\(^{56}\) Located in this “southern region,” the Lower Mississippi, with the cotton boom, was particularly agrarian and rural, aside from New Orleans and a few river towns. Yet, with the cotton boom, the communities in these rural locales

\(^{54}\) “The Upper South includes most of the Piedmont area from Virginia to Georgia, the Ozark Mountains of Northwest Arkansas, Southern Missouri, and Western Oklahoma. The Lower South includes the Tidewater and Coastal plains of Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, the Gulf Plains of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Eastern Texas, and the Lowland areas of Arkansas and Western Tennessee” (“The Dialect of the South”).


\(^{56}\) Diner, “Entering the Mainstream of Modern Jewish History: Peddlers and the American South,” 93.
were rich in capital. In a businessman’s eyes, this area with its wealth and remote character, was an open opportunity just waiting to be captured. As I will show below, Jews took advantage of this open opportunity – even as it reshaped Jewish identity and religious practice in ways unique to the region.

**Land of Slavery, Land of Cotton: A Land of Jews and Judaism?**

In addition to the economic and social structures that made the Lower Mississippi region particularly unique, the Jewish communities of the Lower Mississippi also were different from the communities in the North and other parts of the South. In 1860, New Orleans was the largest city in the Southern United States, and held the title for the sixth largest city in the United States with a population of 168,675. New Orleans also boasted the largest population of Jews of any city in the Lower Mississippi and in the Southern United States. The Institute of Southern Jewish Life estimates that by 1860, the New Orleans Jewish population totaled 2,000 persons. Jews composed approximately 0.01% of the New Orleans population. In comparison, in 1860, New York City was the largest metropolis, both in the North and in the United States as a whole, with 813,669 residents. As in New Orleans, the Jewish population in New York City was still a proportionately miniscule number, with a total of 40,000 Jews, or approximately 0.05% of the population. However, although both the Jewish populations of New Orleans and New York were tiny in proportion to the entire population, New York City’s population of Jews was larger than the total number of Jews who lived in the Confederate States of America, estimated at fewer

58 Charleston had 700 Jews (“ISJL - South Carolina Charleston Encyclopedia”), and Savannah had 345 Jews in 1860 (“ISJL - Georgia Savannah Encyclopedia”). Louisville in 1860, had approximately 1,000 Jewish residents (Shevitz, *Jewish Communities on the Ohio River*, 36).
59 “ISJL - Louisiana New Orleans Encyclopedia.”
61 “ISJL - South Carolina Charleston Encyclopedia.”
than 25,000 persons. Because of this relatively small Jewish community in the South, with the exception of New Orleans, the Jews of the Lower Mississippi not only lived in a region that was particularly rural, but also in a region that was fairly devoid of other Jews.

Many of the Jews in this region arrived in the early and mid-19th century and non-New Orleanais parts of the Lower Mississippi: immigration did not take off until “the 1830’s and 1840’s, […] at which time nearly all the towns along the Mississippi River experienced a flux of Jewish families and businesses.” A majority of these Jews who arrived in the port of New Orleans and either settled and or ventured up-river were from Germany and France – and, in particular, the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. When the majority of these European Jews arrived in New Orleans, often bound for the rural locales in which they could peddle their wares to plantation owners, farmers, and slaves, they arrived in a region that was distinct from any other American, and for that matter Southern, locale with its high concentration of slaves, of cotton, and of wealth.

Currents of Persecution: The Typical Peddler and Slavery

Like the peddlers who traversed the West and the North, these Southern Jewish peddlers tended to follow a fairly uniform trajectory as they established and grew their businesses, namely what this thesis terms the typical-peddler profile. In their book, Jews in Early Mississippi, Evelyn and Leo Turitz describe the typical-peddler profile for a 19th century Jewish immigrant to that state:

---

62 Rosen, The Jewish Confederates, 265.
63 Ford and Stiefel, The Jews of New Orleans and the Mississippi Delta, 41.
64 Ibid., 42.
65 “Natchez in 1860,” for instance “had more millionaires than anywhere else in the United States” (“ISJL - Mississippi Natchez Encyclopedia”).
A typical young Jewish man in his late teens or early twenties, having made his way across the Atlantic and through the Port of New Orleans, would arrive at a Mississippi town and find a friend or a relative who had already gone through the peddler stage and was the owner of a store. The established merchant would give the newcomer the necessary pointers and would supply him, on easy credit terms, with an assortment of goods.\(^6^6\)

This peddling profile as described by the Turitzes in no way differentiates the 19\(^{th}\) century Jewish peddler of Mississippi from those 19\(^{th}\) century rural Jewish peddlers who sold their wares in the frontier towns of the West or those peddled throughout the New England countryside. Both profiles establish that the immigrant was usually a young, single man. The profiles share the concept of the new immigrant having some connection to an “established merchant” in the town or area in which the new peddler hoped to work. This connection was formed either through familial ties, a shared connection to a European locale, or even just Judaism. After the newcomer’s arrival, both profiles offer that the “established merchant” would give the immigrant assistance, like “the necessary pointers,” probably some basic English phrases, as well his first line of credit, “supply[ing] him […] with an assortment of goods.” Through this relationship, particularly the transaction in which with the more established merchant lent the neophyte a line of credit, a mutual trust and kinship-like relationship (if not already kin), formed and developed.

Nevertheless, the distinctive features of the Southern economy made their mark on Jewish identity and practice. The decision to peddle in the Lower Mississippi, a fairly rural region with the exception of New Orleans and a few scattered towns, along the river where Jews comprised a tiny portion of the population even by Northern standards, was not random. Their immigration to this region reflects the lure of economy opportunity as well the region’s cultural similarities to Europe. From 1820-1865, the typical Jewish peddler in the Lower Mississippi, like his Jewish immigrant counterparts in other parts of the U.S., was young, male, and single,

\(^{66}\) Turitz and Turitz, *Jews in Early Mississippi*, xvi.
allowing him distinct advantages as he traversed the rural roads and backwaters. This was a particular advantage in the starkly remote region of the Lower Mississippi. In fact, “the [entire] South’s persistent agrarianism, its fairly small commercial class, and its lag in industrial and urban development as compared with other American regions made it a particularly attractive magnet for young Jewish peddlers looking to gain a foothold in American commerce,” Diner writes. The Lower Mississippi, as demonstrated in a section above, was the locale of an extreme form of the South’s “persistent agrarianism” spurred by the cotton boom, which created a region that was particularly rural. This rural region, by definition had a fairly “small commercial class” and “lag[ged] in industrial and urban development.” Unless a person lived in or around New Orleans, or one of the few river towns, like Natchez or Vicksburg, the population was generally isolated from one another. This isolation was a result of the large plantations as well as natural boundaries that were common for the area such like bayous. The peddlers capitalized on this isolation, selling wares to those who would otherwise have to make a long and arduous trek to procure the goods they needed. Additionally, as discussed above, the majority of the immigrants who arrived in the Lower Mississippi from the 1820’s until the end of the Civil War were from the French region of Alsace and Lorraine, or from Germany. For those French Jews, Louisiana was particularly attractive because of its French culture and language, stemming from the state’s days as a French colony and the large Cajun population. Elliott Ashkenazi also adds that “for both French and German Jews, the feudal, agricultural society of the antebellum South was similar to the European society they had left.”

---

68 “Cajuns are descendants of French settlers who moved into modern day Nova Scotia. […] In 1755, those who refused to [pledge allegiance to the British government] were deported and scattered across various coastlines in the American colonies,” including parts of Mississippi and Louisiana (Melancon, “Cajun English”).
69 Ashkenazi, The Business of Jews in Louisiana, 1840-1875, 158.
European society [these immigrants] had left,” there was a major difference between the two “feudal” systems: namely, in America Jews were permitted to own land.

The difference between this “feudal” system, as Ashkenazi calls it, of Europe and America, reflects the larger contrast between the two continents in terms of the history of opportunities available to Jewish peddlers. In Europe, where Jews were prohibited from owning land, they were also blockaded from specific professions and opportunities that would give them economic autonomy. Julius Weis, an immigrant from Bavaria who became a successful merchant in Natchez, wrote in his autobiography that “[he] saw no prospects [in Europe] for either [his parents] or [him]self,” hence his desire to travel to America. Even though it was not a reality for all upon arrival or during their lives, America was envisioned, at least from afar, as a place of economic opportunity and freedom. For Weis, as a Bavarian Jew, the distinction between America and Europe would have particularly apparent. Bavaria in 1826, when Weis was born, was still feeling the reverberations from the violent anti-Semitic Hep! Hep! Riots of 1819. The Hep! Hep! Riots were pogroms carried out against Jewish communities in the Kingdom of Bavaria, which spread throughout Europe. They stemmed from a variety of complex political, economic, and social factors, including the call for Jewish emancipation in Germany and France. The press depicted Jewish emancipation as a way for Jews to “get ahead” and compete in an economy already stretched-thin by war and famine. Indeed, in a diary focused on the daily life and events of the Jewish community of Kassel, Bernhard Cahn wrote that in the wake of the Hep! Hep! Riots, “in many areas [such as Landau near Weis’s village] Jews were [still, in the 1840’s,] not allowed to join guilds, because Christians were afraid of Jewish competition.” Jews were also barred from holding public office and were not able to teach at universities.

---

71 Ibid., 3.
72 Cahn, *The Diaries of Bernhard Cahn*, 30.
Cahn’s Weis’s accounts demonstrate the long-lasting impact of anti-Jewish policies in Europe and the Hep! Hep! Riots: Jews felt distanced and separated from their gentile neighbors and communities, both socially and economically. 73

Although Weis was born seven years after these riots, his sense of possibility, like that of other peddlers who came to Lower Mississippi from this region, was shaped by the aftereffects of Hep! Hep!. Thus, by virtue of his birthplace, Weis would understand the way in which his identity as a Jew shaped his life. It functioned as a categorical definition to justify persecution and limit economic prosperity. At the end of his memoir, Weis says that as a seventeen-year-old boy he made three resolutions he hoped to fulfill by the end of his life. These resolutions reflect the importance of economic opportunities to Weis. They were “to rescue [his] poor parents from poverty, to assist his sisters, and to establish for [himself] a recognized place in the commercial world.”74 The Hep! Hep! Riots and resulting societal conditions in Germany would have made it almost impossible for a Jew, like the seventeen-year-old Weis, to carry out his resolutions and achieve economic success. For Weis, as for the majority of the peddlers who arrived in the Lower Mississippi during the early and mid-19th century, Jewish identity shaped his life goals and his definition of success. Like that of other peddlers, Weis’s definition of success was premised on monetary wealth and security, which he believed he could only achieve in America. Once in America, particularly in the Lower Mississippi, along those roads that ran beside fields of cotton, or in the parlor of the main house on a plantation, the peddler could literally see the manifestation of the wealth that one could acquire in this locale: this acquisition was not impeded by religious affiliation, and in fact was bolstered by the remote character of the region which, for peddlers, meant an untapped customer base.

73 Wasserman, “Hep! Hep!”
The rural quality of the Lower Mississippi and the consequent economic opportunities that made the region particularly alluring also differentiated the peddlers in the Lower Mississippi from other Jewish peddlers in the United States. They experienced a society with extreme social and cultural divisions that largely centered around the practice of slavery. As a whole, the Southern United States was a place in which peddlers “found a particular racial landscape, in which the black-white divide created a set of social practices not replicated in New England or upstate New York, […] that peddlers had to know about and deal with.” As illustrated in an above section, the Lower Mississippi was extreme even in the context of the Southern United States: an extreme percentage of the population was enslaved and an extreme percentage of the United States’ cotton crop came from the region. The Jews who came to the Lower Mississippi, therefore were confronted by a region with rigid divisions between black and white, between slave and free.

While Weis fits the typical-peddler profile initially, his experience as a peddler in the Lower Mississippi differentiates him from non-Southern peddlers insofar as he is confronted by slavery and the racial divide between black and white. During his second trip peddling through the countryside of the Lower Mississippi, Weis describes two incidents, reflective of the Lower Mississippi’s extreme nature. In one description Weis recalls accompanying a customer of his wares who also is a plantation owner, Mr. Jeffries, on a hunt for his twelve escaped slaves.

One night I stopped at the house of […] Mr. Jeffries. […] During the night[,] twelve of his slaves ran away. Next morning, he sent for a man named Ridel, who had twelve bloodhounds, and who made a business of catching runaway slaves. There were several in the party who were going in pursuit, and when they started off they asked me if I would go along, and as the sight was new to me I concluded to go. The dogs got on the trail of the negroes and we followed them for about five miles, and finally came upon them in a thick growth of brush where they were huddled together. Some of them had climbed up into the tress and the rest were on the ground, where the dogs jumped on them and tore them in such a manner that I was disgusted at the sight, and I started back to the

---

75 Diner, “Entering the Mainstream of Modern Jewish History: Peddlers and the American South,” 96.
house. When I had nearly reached the house, one of the negro women in the party who had gotten away from the rest, and was trying to make her way back home, came up to me and asked me to protect her from the dogs. I told her that I would if I could, but before we got to the house the dogs overtook her, jumped on her, and before the men arrived they had torn almost every thread of her clothing and bitten her severely. Altogether this was a very disagreeable and repulsive scene to me.76

The description is startling and gruesome. Weis is emotionally disturbed by what he witnessed, viewing the entire event as “very disagreeable and repulsive.” Yet he appears resigned to the fact that searching for runaway slaves in this manner is customary, a way of life in the Lower Mississippi where there is even a man, Ridel, who “ma[kes his] business of catching runaway slaves.” In describing a person who earns their living solely by catching runaway slaves, Julius Weis conveys how ingrained and entrenched slavery is within the economy; according to the logic of the slave-holding economy, a slave who escaped is lost labor and lost capital, in the sense that slaves were valuable commodities. They were so valuable, in fact, that a special person, Ridel, is employed to hunt and find runaways.

Immediately before this runaway anecdote, Weis offers another example of the societal practices with regard to slavery in the Lower Mississippi:

I remember particularly the first time I ever saw the punishment of a slave, a negro stripped naked and bound, and whipped upon his bare back by an overseer. The sight of a human being punished in this manner was very repugnant to me, though living in the midst of a country where slavery existed. I afterwards got somewhat accustomed to it, but I always felt a pity for the poor slaves. During the time from 1853-1857 I owned several slaves myself, but I never found it necessary to punish them in such a manner.77

In both descriptions -- the first, with catching the runaways, and the second, with whipping the slave -- Weis feels emotionally repulsed by the fate of the slaves, even expressly “feeling pity for [the punished slave].” Weis internally feels disgusted, he seems immobilized, unable to help the slaves he “pit[ies].” While Weis says that he will “help if [he] c[an]” to the escapee, before he

76 Weis, Autobiography of Julius Weis, 10.
77 Ibid., 9.
knows it, “the dogs overt[ake]” the woman and he is unable to help her. In the second description, Weis explains that while the whipping was “repugnant to [him],” because he “liv[ed] in the midst of a country where slavery existed, […] he got somewhat accustomed to it,” even owning slaves himself, though he “never found it necessary to punish them in such a manner.” Weis’s lack of action and complacency in the midst of these two events reflects the contrast in opportunity between America and Europe, and Weis’s priorities: economic and social success.

It does seem ironic that peddlers, like Weis, embraced a society in which cultural norms were intertwined with the persecution and subjugation of a group of people when the peddlers came to America to escape persecution themselves. It is indicative, too, that Weis never reflects on this irony either, even in 1926 when he writes his autobiography. In a sense, he acted like the non-violent gentile population in Europe during the Hep! Hep! Riots, who did not vocally oppose the violence against the Jewish communities and, by their silence, effectively consented to the violence acts, no matter how they felt internally.78 This is the largest conundrum in studying Southern Jewry, and particularly Lower Mississippi Jewry. Robert Rosen in The Jewish Confederates writes that there is no “evidence [to suggest] that Jews supported slavery as a result of intimidation or fear of reprisals. The Talmud taught the Jews that ‘the law of the land is the law,’ and slavery was the law of the land. Opponents of slavery, Jewish or Gentile, were a distinct minority, even in the North.”79 While there is no evidence that Weis’s inaction stemmed from this Talmudic teaching, Rosen’s analysis does offer a useful way to understand the Jewish-American psyche in regards to slavery during the early and mid-19th century. This psyche allowed Jewish peddlers to become accustomed to this cultural phenomenon; their main priority

---

78 This analysis is difficult to write without thinking about the Holocaust and all those European gentiles who turned a blind eye to the atrocities of the Nazi regime. Is Weis any different? Is the fact that Weis does not speak up made worse by the fact that he is a Jew, a person in a group that historically has been persecuted themselves?

79 Rosen, The Jewish Confederates, 37.
was to take advantage of the opportunities for prosperity that America offered and to embrace their freedom from persecution.

**Not Quite White: A Separate Stream of People**

In a region with an otherwise strict dividing line between white and black races, Jews functioned in the Lower Mississippi as racially liminal characters. On the one hand, Jews were not seen as full members of the white race, because they were not Christian; on the other hand, they passed as white and received the benefits of passing as white. “Being defined by law as white, [they were therefore] able to share in all of the privileges that went hand in hand with that color,” writes Diner. Yet, while legally white, Jews as a group were labeled a “race” or were defined as separate group apart from whites in many newspapers paper articles published in the Lower Mississippi during the early and mid-19th century. This is seen, for example, in an 1859 article entitled “Religious Ceremony,” which announces and details some of the customs for both the Jewish New Year as well as the Day of Atonement. In the article’s description of the Day of Atonement or the “holy day of Kipour,” the reporter mentions the customary all-day fast which is then broken in the evening. The break-fast, as it is termed colloquially, “is the occasion of many agreeable social and family gatherings; and is, with the Hebrews, indeed, what New Year’s day is to the generality of the civilized world.” What the writer here is saying is that these “Hebrews” are at once similar and dissimilar to Gentiles. They are similar in the sense that their New Year’s holiday customs, like Gentiles’, include “social and famil[ial] gatherings.” Yet these “Hebrews” are dissimilar because their New Year’s celebration is on a different day than that of the Gentiles and hence, they are not part of the “generality of the civilized world.”

---

81 “Religious Ceremony.”
82 Ibid.
Because the “Hebrews” are not included in the “generality of the civilized world” their social and familial realms are inherently separate from those of the Gentiles. Despite these realms of separation, the article gives a clue as to the purpose of the article: “Roush a Shona, which is kept for two days, […] stores [will] be closed, businesses suspended, and the synagogue constantly attended.” The purpose of the article, then, is to alert the Gentile population that Jewish businesses will be closed on the specific dates noted and for the reasons the article delineates. Thus, the main tie to the white Gentile-world for Jews, and the tie for the Jewish-world for white Gentiles, is then the mercantile realm.

The description of the Day of Atonement in the newspaper serves as a springboard to understand how the racial liminality of Jews affected Jewish business practices in terms of negotiating the racial divides of the Lower Mississippi. As Diner argues in a chapter specifically devoted to Southern Jewish peddling, “Wherever they [Jews] went and lived in these liminal situations, they functioned as ‘between-people.’ […] The Jewish peddler in the rural South may have been the only individual to enter the homes of blacks and the homes of whites with the same goal in mind: selling goods to anyone willing to pay.” In other words, through their economic activities, Jewish peddlers were able to move between white and black spaces. “The Jewish peddler could sell to African-American customers yet retain all the rights and honors that ipso facto accompanied whiteness.” The Jew as a “between-pe[rson],” meant that Jewish peddlers had a distinct advantage over their white gentile colleagues. A Jewish peddler’s liminal status allowed for a larger customer base, because he could sell his wares to both white and black

---

83 Ibid.
85 Ibid.
customers. This position also reflected the inability of the status quo to categorize Jews and fit them into the rigid society of white and black, free and enslaved.86

The article from the Day of Atonement suggests that the liminality of the Jews as a “between-people” permeated every aspect of their lives. The newspaper article notes that the Jews closed their businesses for these major Jewish holidays. The business closures, a similar situation to those depicted in the cartoon “Broadway on a Jewish Holiday” or written on in “Red River Correspondence” from the beginning of this thesis, reflect the intertwined nature of business and personal domains for Jews. Their businesses are built on and are bolstered by support from social and familial networks that are just as much a part of the break-fast celebration as they are of the typical-peddler profile.

These interwoven social and business practices, as discussed in the above section, were critical to the typical-peddler profile, and even more so in the Lower Mississippi due to the extreme remoteness and culture of the region. Julius Weis’s very successful cotton firm, Meyer, Deutsch & Weis, “similarly relied on a tight-knit family and ethnic network that was deeply intertwined with the cotton industry” Michael Cohen writes.87 The business, originally established in New Orleans by Weis’s cousin J. David and another Jew, Isaac Meyer, became very successful and grew beyond the New Orleans market. “Meyer established a New York branch of the business, […] which provided access to the goods and capital of New York. [The firm] developed a European presence as well. […] In addition to its New Orleans, New York, and European presence, the firm opened what would become its flagship branch in Natchez,

86 Though there were some free people of color, they were mostly concentrated in New Orleans and in 1860 made up six percent of the city’s population (Hirsch and Logsdon, Creole New Orleans, 192.). The culture of cotton was one that embraced the division between black and white, because it justified their treatment and enslavement of people who they could generalize as lesser. Free people of color problematized this generalization, in the same way that Jews problematized the idea of whiteness for the status quo of 1860 of the newspapers in that area.

Meyer and David needed help in Natchez, and so they brought on another partner, Joseph Deutsch. Deutsch had immigrated with David and was from the same town in Germany. After David died, Meyer and Deutsch had room for a third partner. They asked Julius Weis, the cousin of the now-deceased David, who was also from the same town as Meyer. Meyer also had immigrated to America with Weis’s brother Solomon (who had died shortly thereafter). These connections meant that the relationship between the men and the choice of a business partner was not solely about business acumen. The choice weighed heavily on the candidate’s familial and quasi-familial ties to the current partners, which would serve to establish and foster trust between the now, three men.

An important, and often neglected, implication of the intertwined business, social, and familial aspects of Southern Jewish life is that it challenges simplistic distinctions between “religious” and “secular” aspects of Jewish lives. If we return the resolutions that Weis makes as a seventeen-year-old -- “to rescue [his] poor parents from poverty, to assist his sisters, and to establish for [himself] a recognized place in the commercial world” -- we see the importance of economic and social success not only as a reaction to the persecution the Jews faced in Europe, but also, and more broadly, as a tool to shape and define Weis’s identity and experience as a successful American and as a successful Jewish American. This can best be seen in Weis’s autobiography through his mention, or lack thereof, of his Jewish identity and Jewish practice. Aside from a brief detail on his kosher diet in Europe, the only other clue to Weis’s identification as a Jew comes at the very end of his autobiography, right before he recalls his life resolutions, where he outlines a timeline of his philanthropy and service to solely Jewish institutions both in Natchez and throughout other parts of the Lower Mississippi. Marcie Cohen Ferris, in her book *Matzoh Ball Gumbo: Culinary Tales of the Jewish South*, explains that “these organizations,
rather than synagogue worship, became the central expression of Jewish identity in New Orleans. Jews in the city were not ‘indifferent to Judaism.’ Rather, they expressed their Jewishness outside the synagogue through a sense of peoplehood, rather than through religious ties.”

Weis, who lived outside of New Orleans, was similarly “not ‘indifferent to Judaism.’” Rather, like the New Orleanais Jews that Cohen Ferris describes, Weis saw his philanthropic works as his “expression of Jewish identity,” with every organization that he mentions being Jewish. However, Ferris Cohen’s claim that these philanthropic works reflected the donor’s “expression of Jewishness outside the synagogue through a sense of peoplehood, rather than through religious ties” is problematic. Ferris Cohen makes mutually exclusive those “religious” expressions of Jewishness reserved to the synagogue and those “expressions of Jewishness […] through a sense of “peoplehood” like charitable giving which are not “religious[ly] tie[d].” It is true, Jews were expressing a “sense of peoplehood,” but peoplehood is not mutually exclusive from the domain of the religious, or “religious ties.” The philanthropic efforts of the Jewish community of the Lower Mississippi was a result of their economic success. The businesses that made them successful had everything to do with their identity as Jews. The economic impediments Jews faced in Europe, which brought these future philanthropists to America, were rooted in a history of European Anti-Semitism that attacked Jews for their religious ideologies as well as their separate ethnicity. These peddlers’ identities as Jews, therefore, was not just a sense of “peoplehood” as Ferris Cohen suggests, it was a combination of many factors not excluding “religious ties,” which ultimately inspired their journeys to America.

**Conclusion: “Streamlets from a Common Head”**

[Jews] are peeled and scattered into fragments but, like broken globules of quicksilver, instinct with a cohesive power, ever claiming affinity, and ever ready to amalgamate.

---

89 Ferris, *Matzoh Ball Gumbo*, 94.
Geography, arms, genius, politic and foreign help do not explain their existence. Time, and climate, and customs equally fail to unravel it.

A Jew walks every street, dwells in every capital, traverses every exchange, and relieves the monotony of the nations of the earth. The race has inherited the heirloom of immortality, incapable of extinction or amalgamation. Like streamlets from a common head, and composed of waters of peculiar nature, they have flowed along every stream without blending with it, or receiving its flavor, and traversed the surface of the globe amid the lapse of many centuries, distinct – alone.  

This 1843 article from the New Orleans Daily Picayune newspaper that is credited to Fraser’s Magazine, entitled “The Jews,” suggests that Jews are a contradiction: “ever ready to amalgamate,” yet they are “incapable of [it];” “peeled and scattered into fragments,” yet “streamlets from a common head […] who have flowed along every stream without blending with it, or receiving its flavor.” In essence, the Jew is a marvel, who continues to exist despite adversity and disparity, and whose survival is “perhaps the most striking seal of the truth of the sacred oracles.”

The peddlers who made the Lower Mississippi their home during the early and mid-19th century were seen as those “streamlets from a common head […] flow[ing] along every stream […] blending with it, [and] receiving its flavor.” They were pack-peddlers who traversed the countryside with its cotton fields, the immigrants with broken English who sold random assortment of wares to small farmers; they were the men who beckoned customers into their shops located in small river towns, and the investors in New Orleans who helped other young men get their starts in business. The peddler came to America with a notion that he could prosper and do better than he would otherwise in Europe. The Lower Mississippi, in particular, with its high concentration of slaves, the enormous wealth from the cotton boom, its French-speaking citizens and European practices beckoned immigrants starting in the late 1820’s. These Jews

---

91 Anonymous, “The Jews.”
92 Ibid.
adapted to a culture that was an extreme even for the South, a culture that shaped their typical-peddling profile into a unique peddling profile whose impact reached far beyond a customer base.

Jews in this region functioned in a liminal space; they passed as white, yet were not considered fully white. This liminal space allowed them to sell their wares to a larger customer base of both blacks and whites. The liminal space in combination with part of the typical-peddler profile meant that the Jewish-owned businesses were inherently Jewish, not white or black, in nature. As a separate group, Jewish business networks formed that were at once economic and familial. Scholars are often quick to judge the Southern Jew in general as one that has assimilated or adapted to the Southern culture thereby sacrificing their religious practices. While it is true that Jews and Gentiles went to the same schools, participated in the many of the same activities, and befriended one another, this did not change the fact that whites and Jews considered each other separate groups. Though synagogues were not abundant and kosher meat was hard to come by, Jews had pattern of life, centered around business, that tied them together through their familial linkages and their definition as “Jews” by outsiders. Yes, those who lived in the Lower Mississippi had different and seemingly “uncustomary” practices, very different from their Northern or Western counterparts. Yes, a woman may in fact have had to be preserved in a bottle of alcohol so she could be buried in the cemetery of her choice. Yes, a woman may have been buried in water in lieu of dirt. Yes, a man may have become engaged to another woman before his first-wife was buried due to environmental impediments. However “uncustomary” these practices appear, these were still Jews, and we still call them Jewish. They identified as Jews, traded with other Jews, aided other Jews in business, and developed relationships with fellow Jews based on their shared place of birth or their kinship tie, however
remote. They were Jews in the sense that they had Jewish business partners, they closed their stores on major Jewish holidays, and they sold to both blacks and whites, not caring about skin color, focused instead on the profit from the sale. They were Jews in that they believed America was a land of opportunity in which they could prosper and live free from the impediments that made European Jewish life so inhospitable. For those who lived in the Lower Mississippi, Jewish identity was not separated in distinct categories as “religious” or “secular:” Judaism was Jewish identity intermingled with peculiarly Jewish networks and practices. Judaism became something beyond the prayer book, something beyond the laws that did not fit their lifestyles, something beyond a specific burial practice. Instead, Judaism became a life that was marked by their role as accepted outsiders who maintained their Jewish identity through family and business. This life, this peddling life, with its family networks and adaptive Jewish practices allowed the Jewish peddlers of the Lower Mississippi to become fully-participating, though distinct, members of Lower Mississippi society, and to maintain a form of Judaism that could continue to flourish.
Bibliography


“A Jewish Divorce.” The Times-Picayune. November 2, 1851.


“All Wrong!” New Orleans Daily Crescent., December 28, 1860.


“Caballistic.” *The Times-Picayune*. August 30, 1858.


“Communicated.” *The Times-Picayune*. December 12, 1856.


“Death of Alex Weil.” *Times-Picayune*, May 27, 1900.


“Eighty Years Old. Leon Cahn Celebrates His Birthday With the Nation, And Still Raises His Voice in Sacred Songs, Sturdy and Strong as of Yore.” *Times-Picayune*, July 4, 1900.


“Extracts of Private Correspondence.” *The Farmer’s Register*, 1834.


“[Hebrew; Passover; Atonement; Misapplication].” *Times-Picayune*, October 6, 1843.


“Jewesses.” *The Times-Picayune*. February 17, 1837.

“Jewish Ceremony.” *The Times-Picayune*. July 20, 1850.


“Jewish Day of Atonement.” *Times-Picayune*, November 1, 1839.

“Jewish Emigrants to America.” *Jeffersonian Republican*, August 7, 1846.


“Jewish Holiday.” *Times-Picayune*, September 14, 1855.

“Jewish Holiday.” *The Times-Picayune*. September 15, 1855.

“Jewish Holiday.” *Times-Picayune*, September 15, 1855.

“Jewish Marriage Divorce.” *The Times-Picayune*. June 1, 1839.


“Jewish Negroes.” *The Times-Picayune*. March 6, 1853.

“Jewish Passover.” *Jeffersonian Republican*, April 17, 1846.

“[Jewish Passover; Commences].” *Times-Picayune*, April 4, 1857.

“[Jewish; Resolutions; Ceremonies; Almighty].” *Times-Picayune*, October 1, 1854.


*Jubilee Souvenir of Temple Sinai, 1872-1922*, 1922.


“Leon Godchaux Borne To His Rest.” *Times-Picayune*, May 20, 1899.


Louisiana Historical Records Survey. *Inventory of the Church and Synagogue Archives of Louisiana. Jewish Congregations and Organizations*. University, La.: The Dept. of archives, Louisiana State University, 1941.


“[Macon; Hebrew; Mr. E. Issues; Charleston].” *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, September 18, 1862.


Mississippi Historical Records Survey, B’nai B’rith, United States, Work Projects Administration, and Division of Professional and Service Projects. *Inventory of the Church and Synagogue Archives of Mississippi: Jewish Congregations and Organizations*. Jackson, Miss.: Mississippi State Conference, B’nai B’rith, 1940.

“Mobile Items.” *The Times-Picayune*. March 27, 1858.


“Passover Bread and Meal.” *Times-Picayune*, March 1, 1849.


“Red River Correspondence.” *The New Orleans Times*. September 27, 1865.

“Religious Ceremony.” *The Times-Picayune*. October 1, 1859.


“Religious Toleration.” *The Times-Picayune*. June 8, 1839.

“[Requested; Hebrew; Orphans; Association; Howard; Protection; Benevolent].” *Times-Picayune*, October 16, 1853.


“[Soldiers; Hebrew; Pensacola; Permission; Atonement].” *Times-Picayune*, October 2, 1861.


“The Coming Jewish Festival.” Times-Picayune, September 12, 1860.


http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85038518/1861-03-29/ed-1/seq-3/#date1=1836&index=5&date2=1865&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0
&words=Passover+passover+proxdistance=5&state=Arkansas&state=Louisiana&state=Mississippi&state=Ten
nessie&rows=20&ortext=passover+matzah+matzoh&proxtext=&phrasetext=&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1.


“To the Editors of the Picayune.” *The Times-Picayune*. May 20, 1850.

“To the Israelites of New Orleans.” *Times-Picayune*, February 27, 1853.

“To the Israelites of New Orleans.” *Times-Picayune*, March 2, 1853.

“To the Israelites of New Orleans.” *Times-Picayune*, March 5, 1853.

“To the Israelites of New Orleans.” *Times-Picayune*, March 7, 1853.

“To the Israelites of New Orleans.” *Times-Picayune*, March 8, 1853.

“To the Israelites of New Orleans.” *Times-Picayune*, March 9, 1853.


“[Untitled].” *The Times-Picayune*. September 6, 1849.

http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83016951/1859-08-24/ed-1/seq-1/#date1=1836&index=1&date2=1865&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0
&words=Jew+meat&proxdistance=10&state=Louisiana&state=Mississippi&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=jew+meat&phrasetext=&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1.


“[Untitled].” *The Times-Picayune*. June 8, 1865.
http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045160/1858-09-05/ed-1/seq-2/#date1=1836&index=3&date2=1865&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&words=Jews+meats&proxdistance=10&state=Louisiana&state=Mississippi&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=jew+meat&phrasetext=&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1.

http://search.ancestryinstitution.com.ezproxy.haverford.edu/cgi-bin/sse.dll?gss=angsgnew=1&rank=1&msT=1&gsfn=a&gsfn_x=0&gsln=zodiac&gsln_x=0&mswpn__ftp=New+Orleans%2c+Orleans%2c+Louisiana%2c+USA&mswpn=34322&mswpn_PInfo=8&%7c0%7c1652393%7c0%7c2%7c3246%7c21%7c0%7c2249%7c34322%7c0%7c&MSAV=0&catbucket=rstp&uidh=us3&pcat=ROOT_CATEGORY&h=754662675&db=USDirectories&indiv=1&ml_rpos=62.

http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CCX2587508766&v=2.1&u=have19984&it=r&p=GVRL&sw=w&asid=732798c43c8a79b983c14e815876.


“Whitsunday, or the Feast of Pentecost.” *The Times-Picayune*. June 8, 1862, sec. The Daily Picayune.


*American Citizen*. October 12, 1865.  
http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83016736/1865-10-12/ed-1/seq-1/#date1=1836&index=1&date2=1865&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&words=atonement+day&proxdistance=5&state=Mississippi&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=day+of+atonement+&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1.