

## CHAPTER 14

### THE GERMAN THEOLOGICAL TRADITION

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The Pharisees have long served as a metonymy for Judaism in Christian scholarship, so that studies of their history and beliefs have presented the Pharisees as the Jews par excellence, an essence of what Judaism, especially rabbinic Judaism, proclaims and practices. As a result, scholarship on the Pharisees by Christians in pre-World War II Germany was often infused with political and cultural biases toward Judaism, just as Jewish scholarship on the Pharisees often functioned apologetically.

Interest in the Pharisees on the part of German Protestant scholars<sup>1</sup> was prompted in particular by issues related to the gospels and the origins of Christianity, especially the question of Jesus' relationship to the rabbis of his day. Did Christianity arise as a Jewish—even Pharisaic—religion, taught by Jesus, or as a movement in opposition to it? Jesus' relation to the Pharisees was the pivotal point in arguing not only for the nature of Jesus' own religiosity, but also for the relationship between his faith and the Christianity that subsequently developed concerning him. For Jews, Pharisee scholarship constituted a defense of rabbinic Judaism against Christian hostility, but the scholarship also was intricately bound to the newly arising reforms of Judaism, especially Jewish law. Whether Jews advocated Orthodoxy or Reform, Pharisaism was claimed as the justification and inspiration for their theological position.

Abraham Geiger, whose work on the Pharisees “set the terms for the debate in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries,”<sup>2</sup> inaugurated modern scholarship in the field not only because of his radically new conceptualization of the nature of Pharisaism, but because he introduced a new set of primary sources, the Mishnah and the Targumim, and claimed to find references to Pharisee-Sadducee

debates in apocryphal and pseudepigraphical literature. His redefinition of Pharisaic Judaism as a liberalizing, progressive movement and of Jesus as a representative of that movement combined both to undermine claims to Jesus' originality and to assert a Pharisaic spirit of liberalization as guiding contemporary reforms of Jewish law. Although his conclusions were accepted by most subsequent Jewish scholars, they won almost universal dismissal by German Protestants, including Wellhausen, Schürer, Bousset, and Meyer, who presented the Pharisees as legalistic and religious materialists against whom Jesus protested. Rejecting rabbinic literature as a basis of information about the Pharisees, Protestants adhered to Josephus and the gospels as the primary reliable sources and used those texts to describe what they claimed was the negative and often degenerate nature of Pharisaism.

Few nineteenth- and twentieth-century Christian scholars in Germany applied the rigorous historical-critical methods common to scholarship in other fields to their analysis of sources regarding the Pharisees. The testimonies of Josephus concerning the Pharisees were accepted without skepticism, and the gospel texts, despite their polemical and theological nature, were allowed to define the nature of early first-century Pharisaism, despite problems with dating those texts. For example, the Pharisees were assumed to be identical to the rabbis; no historical development within Pharisaic Judaism was described; Pharisaism was presented as identical with postrabbinic Judaism; and the Pharisees were described using adjectives drawn from modern anti-Jewish literature. Little suspicion was brought to the later rabbinic texts or to the Christian literature that claimed to reveal the origins and nature of Pharisaic concerns. Few Christian scholars cited rabbinic texts or constructively engaged the work of contemporary Jewish scholars. Most Christian scholarship made Pharisaism representative of Judaism and characterized it as superficial, legalistic, materialistic, and religiously degenerate. A typical example is the comment of Gustav Volkmar, one of the leading figures in the Tübingen school of the nineteenth century, who wrote in 1857, "The Pharisees represent a wish to deceive oneself and, on top of it, God, [a wish] which turned out to be no more than an ever-growing despair; the tighter and more hardened the shackles of the idolatrous power, which one hoped to evade through hypocrisy."<sup>3</sup>

Given the sharply historicist commitments of the Tübingen school, which dated the gospels' composition very late and viewed their claims not as historical but as theologically tendentious evidence, Volkmar's comments are particularly disturbing.

Most important among the issues debated in pre-World War II Pharisee scholarship was whether Mishnaic texts constituted a usable source for first-century Pharisaism, and how to weigh evidence that conflicted with the gospels and Josephus. Given the importance of studies of the Pharisees not only for the reconstruction of Second Temple Judaism, but also for Christian origins, the influence of scholarly conclusions was broad. The many histories of the New Testament era that began to be published in the 1860s included chapters on Pharisaic religion, as did gospel commentaries, so that even the more rarified scholarship trickled down to pastors and their congregants.

The hostile appellations given to the Pharisees in certain gospel passages and repeated in Christian classics were generally accepted without question by modern Christian scholars. Pharisaic religion was described as rigid, petrified, degraded, cankered, disfigured, wrathful, violent, and even as a cadaver; Pharisaism was alleged to be a religion of materialism, deception, hypocrisy, abomination, and shackles; it murders the conscience, gentleness, and the true religious spirit and, in the end, persecutes Jesus with enraged frenzy, to cite just a few of the adjectives used in modern Christian scholarship.<sup>4</sup> There was little deviation in Christian and even in some early Jewish historiography from the view that the Pharisees were the bitter opponents of Jesus who were ultimately responsible for his trial and death, and that as a religious group they typified insincerity.

One example is an early book-length German Protestant study of the Pharisees, published in 1824 by Michael Wirth, which spoke of the Pharisees' hidden inveterate evil (*Krebsschaden*)<sup>5</sup> and warns: "These shadows, which exalt the glory of our Lord, are the Pharisees. In them, however, and through us a repellent picture is set up, which strongly warns against hypocrisy, which is an abomination in the eyes of God."<sup>6</sup> In 1848 the theological encyclopedia edited by Georg Winer, the *Biblisches Realwörterbuch*, a standard reference work, defined the Pharisees as hypocritical, ambitious, and zealously legalistic. Arising after the return to Palestine from Babylonian exile, the Pharisees, according to Winer, took

shape during the Maccabean era and had the support of the masses and, particularly, Jewish women. Winer cited Christoph Friedrich von Ammon (1766–1850), professor at Erlangen and court preacher of Saxony, in blaming the Pharisees' opposition to Jesus on their character traits of "hypocrisy" and "ambition."<sup>7</sup>

Similar conclusions are found in the 1846 *Encyclopedia* of Ersch and Gruber, a nontheological academic publication, which defined the Pharisees as a theological-political faction, not a religious sect, whose fiery nationalist zeal encouraged their heated resistance to the Romans and whose religious views placed them in bitter opposition to Jesus.<sup>8</sup>

Such views recapitulated the views promoted by eighteenth-century scholars, such as Buxtorf, Cappellus, and Hottinger, as well as those of early nineteenth-century scholars, including August Neander, Matthias Schneckenburger, and August Gfrörer.<sup>9</sup> Neander, himself a Jewish convert to Christianity, presented the Pharisees without reference to any Hebrew-language sources, and described them as persecuting the early Christians because of their "hostile tendencies." They taught a syncretistic religion that combined Mosaism with speculative mysticism, yet were unable, according to Neander, to accept anything new beyond the law.<sup>10</sup> The New Testament scholar Matthias Schneckenburger viewed the Pharisees as narrow-minded, legalistic ascetics who sought political power, and he emphasized the bitterness, fanaticism, and murderous hatred of the Pharisees toward Jesus, the apostles, and Paul.<sup>11</sup> Gfrörer (1803–1861), a librarian in Stuttgart who had studied with F. C. Baur in Tübingen, changed the terms of the discussion, presenting the Pharisees not as a sect, but as a theological-political faction that originated with the return from Babylonian exile. Pharisaic ideas not found in the Hebrew Bible were assumed to have been developed under Babylonian or Persian influence, and because the ideas were foreign, the Sadducees objected to them and set themselves in opposition to the Pharisees.<sup>12</sup>

One early Jewish historian, Isaac Jost, spoke in the 1820s of the Pharisees' legalism and narrow-mindedness (*Spitzfindigkeit*) and blamed their hostility toward Rome for kindling the revolt, holding them responsible for its failure.<sup>13</sup> Jost writes of the Pharisees' blind rage and its destructive consequences: "If the accusation falls to the Jews, that they destroyed themselves, then the Pharisees carry the greatest blame. History will show us their conduct."<sup>14</sup> Levi Herzfeld,

whose three-volume political history of the Jews appeared between 1847 and 1857, used milder language but still spoke of Pharisaism as a routinized religion.<sup>15</sup>

Scholarly depictions of the Pharisees were inflected by a range of theological and political concerns and were also affected by changing standards of historical investigation during the nineteenth century. Gfrörer was hailed by G. F. Moore as marking the advent of modern Christian studies of Judaism.<sup>16</sup> Yet, although Gfrörer considered the emancipation of the Jews a “duty of humanity,”<sup>17</sup> he also expected Jews to bring an end to Judaism, a point Moore fails to note. Presumably, his often harsh description of the Pharisees was intended to discourage Jews from continued attachment to Judaism. Despite Gfrörer’s extensive use of rabbinic literature and contemporary Jewish scholarship, his depiction of Judaism, elaborated at length in his two-volume work, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, published in 1838, remained consistent with the stereotypes of Christian theological polemics.<sup>18</sup> For example, he writes, “That our Lord healed the sick on the Sabbath, that his disciples plucked branches on these days, the Pharisees needed as the reason for furious persecution. They hated with all their hearts a teacher who lifted up substance over form, love and true convictions over outward appearances.”<sup>19</sup> In Gfrörer’s view, the Pharisees are worse than the Catholics: “The Pharisees closed the gate of the tradition much more eagerly than did the papacy; they plugged the fountains from which any kind of renewal in their church circles might flow.”<sup>20</sup> By contrast, the Sadducees are described, by Gfrörer and others, as proto-Protestants.<sup>21</sup> Throughout, Gfrörer cites rabbinic sources and warmly commends the recent work of Jewish scholars, including Geiger, but his work, in turn, was generally ignored by Jewish historians, including Geiger, whose own scholarship soon rendered Gfrörer’s work outmoded.

Serious German scholarship on the Pharisees began with the publication of Geiger’s *Urschrift und Übersetzungen der Bibel* in 1857. Prior to that time, the Pharisees were discussed, but without the critical methods that mark historical scholarship. The *Urschrift*, one of the seminal works of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, drew a complex portrait of the Pharisees and their antagonists, the Sadducees, based on a wide range of textual sources and on a theory of religion that integrated political, cultural, and cultic elements in its history of Judaism during

the years between 200 BCE and 200 CE. Geiger drew as sources for his history on redactions and translations of the biblical text, including the Samaritan, Septuagintal, Masoretic, and Targumic, arguing that what determines the nature of a religion is political and social context, not ahistorical points of dogma.<sup>22</sup>

Prior to Geiger, historians generally had accepted without question the gospels' depiction of the Pharisees and Josephus's reconstruction of the differences between the Pharisees and Sadducees, despite the lack of external corroboration by other sources from the same period. Josephus's claims were assumed to be accurate by modern historians as much as by the church fathers. Josephus's claim that the Sadducees accepted only the written law, while rejecting the oral law of the Pharisees, led Geiger to one of his central and most significant arguments: that the Sadducees as well as the Pharisees developed an oral law.<sup>23</sup> Priestly service in the Temple required interpretation and expansion of biblical law, leading to what Geiger called a Sadducean halakha. The Sadducees' halakha and that of the Pharisees operated on comparable principles; Geiger rejected the suggestion that the Sadducees were biblical literalists while the Pharisees were open to interpretation of the Bible. However, he argued that Sadducean halakha sought to preserve the prerogatives of the priests and to establish a hierarchy within Jewish religious practice, and was generally conservative and reluctant to implement change. Among the examples Geiger presented was levirate marriage; he argued that debates over it illustrated Sadducean and Pharisaic positions. Geiger argued that the Sadducees limited levirate marriage to cases of a virgin woman whose betrothed husband had died, whereas the Pharisees liberalized the circumstances to include cases in which the marriage had been sexually consummated.<sup>24</sup>

In early articles of the 1830s, Geiger portrayed the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes phenomenologically, as representing religious tendencies of rationalism, supernaturalism, and mysticism, respectively.<sup>25</sup> The Pharisees and Sadducees were not sects, according to Geiger, but national religious parties that expressed two basic tendencies within Judaism that had taken shape in ancient Israelite religion, and which represent conflicting tendencies existing within most religions. During the Babylonian exile, according to Geiger, the limitations of movement and distance from the Land of Israel brought

about a stagnation of religious life, and elements of both kingdoms, Israel and Judah, were united in the religious traditions that were consolidated there. Following the return from Babylonian exile, leadership was centralized in the Davidic kingly house and in the priestly family of Zadok. The Davidic dynasty declined with the loss of political autonomy, while the Zadokite priestly house rose and developed into priestly kings, suppressing the religious heritage of Judah. The spirit of Judah, however, remained alive among the common people, and eventually took shape in the Pharisaic movement, which Geiger describes as a liberalizing, democratizing effort that sought an equality of religious leadership and practice: "Pharisaism is therefore no term worthy of disgrace, it is a name of honor, in its circles it describes the principle that the entire history of the world moves as a progressive development."<sup>26</sup>

By contrast, Geiger's later studies of the Pharisees and Sadducees introduce sociological categories of analysis. Political interests and social position determine religious doctrines, he argued. According to the *Urschrift*, modern scholarship had relied too heavily on Josephus, the gospels, and the church fathers; Geiger gave priority to rabbinic texts, including the Mishnah, selected midrashim, and the Targumim, and also interpreted 1 and 2 Maccabees as Sadducean and Pharisaic texts, respectively. 2 Maccabees, he argued, was a Pharisaic text written during the middle of the first century BCE as an effort to undermine the legitimacy accorded the Sadducees, and in opposition to Roman rule. The priests are portrayed as neglecting their Temple duties in order to watch the Greek games, in violation of the divine commandments and the sensibilities of the people. In sharp contrast to the priests, the text stresses the sincere religiosity of the general populace, who are identified by Geiger as representing Pharisaic interests. The motto of the Pharisees, Geiger wrote, is proclaimed in 2 Maccabees 2:17: "To all is given the inheritance, the kingdom, the priesthood and its power of sanctification [*Allen ist gegeben das Erbe, das Königreich, das Priestertum und die Heiligung*]."<sup>27</sup> The distinctive attributes of Pharisaic belief identified by Josephus appear in 2 Maccabees, including reference to angels, miracles, a coming redeemer, devout observance of the Sabbath commandments even during times of warfare, strict adherence to the law, and what Geiger described as a polemical repetition of belief in resurrection of the dead. Belief in

resurrection of the dead is emphatic, as is strict adherence to Sabbath observance even in battle.

Geiger's definition of the Pharisees as liberalizers of Jewish law, influenced by cultural and social interests, became a definition promoted in subsequent years by most Jewish scholars with surprisingly little deviation, particularly those supporting reform of Judaism. By contrast, it became the object of unrelenting mockery by Christian scholars, who repudiated in particular Geiger's claim that rabbinic texts could serve as reliable historical evidence for the nature of Pharisaic religion. Their hostility was undoubtedly strengthened by their outrage at Geiger's subsequent claims, in his publications of the 1860s and 1870s, that Jesus was himself a Pharisee and that Pharisaic and Sadducean influences could be identified within the New Testament itself. Orthodox Jews, opposed to Geiger's advocacy of reforms of synagogue liturgy, accused Geiger of manipulating his scholarship to justify those reforms. In hindsight, the depiction of the Pharisees presented by Geiger, and by subsequent Jewish thinkers, such as Leo Baeck and Ismar Elbogen, reflect the influence of liberal Protestantism: the Pharisees are modeled after the images of the liberal Jesus. Indeed, Geiger stated the issue quite baldly: "Protestantism is the full mirror of Pharisaism, whereas Catholicism [mirrors] Sadduceism."<sup>28</sup>

In the several studies of first-century Judaism that were published by German Protestant scholars in the 1860s and 1870s, Geiger's work was invariably cited, occasionally with approval, but his conclusions were virtually always rejected. For example, while footnoting Geiger's work throughout, Theodor Keim (1825–1878), professor of theology at the University of Zürich and a student of both Heinrich Ewald and F. C. Baur, termed the Pharisees "pious Democrats" and cited Matthew 23 as reliable evidence for their character: "All these heavy burdens, an infinity of legal ordinances which not only occupied and diverted from higher moral pursuits every moment of life, but also filled life with a continual fear of omission, were imposed by the Pharisees upon themselves and upon the nation."<sup>29</sup> While citing Geiger's work in his footnotes, Daniel Schenkel (1818–1885), professor of theology at the University of Heidelberg, defined the Pharisees not in terms of their actions or beliefs, and rarely with reference to primary sources: "Thus Pharisaism undermined the conscience,



killed religion and morality at their roots. Under its influence all moral earnestness died away, and the marrow of the life and strength of the people perished. It was the religion of appearances and had the morality of a specious superficiality. It was the lean and Jesuitical pietism of the world before Christ."<sup>30</sup> By contrast, according to Schenkel, Jesus recognized that the Mosaic Law was irreconcilable with the conscience.<sup>31</sup>

Jesus' singularity was demonstrated for Schenkel not by his teachings, but by his triumph over Pharisaic religion. The Pharisees were Jesus' "dangerous and determined opponents," and because Jesus' exposure of their hypocrisy aroused the Pharisees' animosity, he was forced to flee to the Galilee.<sup>32</sup> As the ones ultimately responsible for the death of Jesus, the Pharisees, according to Schenkel, are "murderers of the new life which God sought to communicate to his people . . . enemies of God."<sup>33</sup>

A more complicated case was that of Adolf Hausrath (1837–1909), professor of theology at the University of Heidelberg, who frequently praised Geiger's publications in the pages of the journal, *Protestantische Kirchenzeitung für das evangelische Deutschland*.<sup>34</sup> Hausrath wrote that he agreed with Geiger that, though Josephus was unreliable and the gospels were distorted, Christian scholars had granted "citizenship" to those sources, shaping an image of the Pharisees as politically reactionary religious hypocrites, "the crusaders of Jerusalem." The Sadducees, Hausrath continued, are then constructed as the polar opposite: if the Pharisees are represented as "a distinguished bunch of sanctimonious parsons," then the Sadducees of necessity become an "unprincipled party of education and freedom." Not only does this image contradict the reports of Josephus, it ignores the accomplishment of Jewish scholars, Hausrath writes, who "made headway to a better understanding of the tendencies and positions of both parties in detail." Geiger's work is presented by Hausrath as the most reliable study of rabbinic Judaism.

In his own synthetic histories of the New Testament period, however, Hausrath relied heavily on Josephus, Philo, and the gospels and reverted to old clichés and misinterpretations of rabbinic sources. Hausrath retained the old caricatures, describing the Pharisees as "religiously degenerate," the Sadducees as "ethically wild."<sup>35</sup> Geiger, in his review of the first volume of Hausrath's book, concluded that

the weaknesses of Hausrath's book resulted from the state of contemporary Christian theology. Christian theologians, Geiger wrote, cannot accept that historical investigation demonstrates that Christianity is "the fruit of a natural historical development," making it "simply a new phase of Judaism, not a new religion."<sup>36</sup> By 1872, with the appearance of Hausrath's second volume, Geiger's tone became enraged. In a letter to Joseph Derenbourg, he wrote, "What is now to be done? One can, from our side, still protest so much, [but] they do not listen, and since they are more numerous and have the power, they shout louder than us. And yet! Truth and genuine research still prevail."<sup>37</sup> That Hausrath ignored the very arguments by Geiger that he had been praising for the previous decade was clearly disappointing, but the larger frustration for Geiger was the absence of an unbiased Christian scholarship; the reigning conviction was that "Judaism must be bad, Christianity full of holiness, even if the historical facts announce the opposite just as loudly and decisively."<sup>38</sup>

Geiger's contemporary, Heinrich Graetz, did not engage contemporary scholarly debates and presented the Pharisees and rabbis primarily in hagiographical terms in his eleven-volume *History of the Jews*.<sup>39</sup> Graetz idealized rabbinic leadership and differentiated between the Pharisees as religious and the Sadducees as political. The former could not have been hypocrites, given the wide support they received from the Jewish populace of their day, he argued. Controversies between them arose primarily due to the Sadducees' literalistic interpretation of Scripture, though he did not explain the reasons for that. Graetz saw the emergence of the Pharisees as a quietistic, halakhically loyal group who, he claimed, began during the era of Ezra the scribe and took formal shape during the reign of John Hyrcanus. Their primary goal was strict adherence to the "oral law," and their major opponents were the "Hellenizers" within the Jewish community, specifically the Sadducees, who were identified by Graetz in Josephan terms. By the second half of the first century BCE, according to Graetz, the Pharisees turned away from political interests and increasingly toward halakhic study and interpretation, an argument subsequently reiterated by Bousset and Neusner.<sup>40</sup> By the time of Hillel, the Pharisees had shaped the Judaism that was to prevail in subsequent generations until the present, Graetz concluded, and that also resolved the conflicts between Pharisaism and Sadduceism.<sup>41</sup>

In a highly critical review, Graetz claimed that Geiger's *Urschrift* was without foundation,<sup>42</sup> and Geiger replied that Graetz's scholarship was corrupted by his conservative religious commitments.<sup>43</sup> Ultimately, Graetz's discussion of the Pharisees exerted little influence on subsequent historical scholarship regarding the Jewish background of Christian origins, particularly the Pharisees, and did not hinder the perpetuation of negative stereotypes. Geiger's work, however, was widely discussed.

Apart from Wellhausen and Schürer, most contemporary Christian scholars focused their discussions of Geiger not on historical questions, but on his challenges to traditional Christian stereotypes of the Pharisees and his identification of Jesus as a Pharisee. For example, Geiger's disavowal that the Pharisees were hypocrites was vehemently rejected by Heinrich Ewald, one of the most prominent and liberal biblical scholars of his day: "this is only too true and proven through the entire true history." In his own discussion of the Pharisees in the revised and expanded edition of his *Geschichte Israels*, published in 1864, Ewald writes in a footnote, "The views of Jewish writers of the present day [*heutigen Juden*], Geiger and Grätz (and also Jost), on the origin and value of the Pharisees and Sadducees are wholly unhistorical and baseless, because they are themselves nothing but Pharisees and do not intend to be anything else."<sup>44</sup> Privately, Ewald accused Geiger of formulating his defense of the Pharisees out of hatred of Christianity.<sup>45</sup> Franz Delitzsch opposed Geiger's depiction of Pharisaism because it called into question, in his view, the veracity of gospel descriptions of the Pharisees.<sup>46</sup>

Geiger's arguments, however, were carried beyond Germany by students and colleagues. Joseph Derenbourg (France), Kaufmann Kohler (United States), and Daniel Chwolsohn (Russia) expanded Geiger's views of the Pharisees in their work, particularly in defining Jesus as a Pharisee and the Pharisees as liberalizers of halakha, even as German Protestant scholars reiterated the negative stereotypes.<sup>47</sup>

The most significant critique of Geiger's work came from Julius Wellhausen, whose reading of the *Urschrift* had inspired his study of 1 and 2 Samuel, published in 1871.<sup>48</sup> Soon after, he devoted a series of lectures at the University of Greifswald to a refutation of the *Urschrift*,<sup>49</sup> subsequently published as a book, *Pharisäer und Sadducäer: Eine Untersuchung zu inneren jüdischen Geschichte*, in 1874 and reprinted in

1924 and 1967.<sup>50</sup> The significance of Wellhausen's critique of Geiger's work stems from the detail with which he examined Geiger's arguments and from Wellhausen's reputation as a scholar, which lent prominence to his claims.<sup>51</sup> That he would devote an entire volume to a detailed refutation of Geiger's work is revealing of Geiger's significance. At the same time, Wellhausen did not acknowledge his debt to Geiger in placing both Pharisees and Sadducees in a sociological/political context. He did, however, make it clear that his underlying purpose was a general evaluation of the nature and worth of Judaism, writing that the Pharisees were "the Jews in superlative, the true Israel"<sup>52</sup> and that they were characterized by a blind, absolute obedience to the law.<sup>53</sup> Their conflicts with the Sadducees exemplified, according to Wellhausen, an inner contradiction within Judaism: the conflict between the political and the religious.<sup>54</sup>

Wellhausen's criticisms extend in two directions: a disagreement over the general portrait of the nature of Sadducean and Pharisaic Judaism and a negative evaluation of Geiger's reading of primary sources, particularly of rabbinic literature. He rejected out of hand Geiger's claim that Pharisaism constituted a liberalization of Jewish religious practice and disallowed Geiger's readings of political and religious tendencies in Mishnaic disputes. Wellhausen also dismissed Geiger's claim of an older and newer halakha.

There is little indication that Wellhausen had any independent knowledge of rabbinic sources; he cites only what was presented by Geiger. Indeed, in a letter to Theodor Nöldeke, written in 1915, Wellhausen acknowledged as much: "You are exaggerating my knowledge absurdly, I know the extra-biblical Jewish literature only insofar as it is written in Greek, and even that only partially."<sup>55</sup> It is not surprising that Wellhausen favored the Greek texts, but it is striking that he did not bring the same skepticism regarding historical reliability to bear on Josephus, the Apocrypha, and the Gospels that he did to the Mishnah. The third-century redaction of the Mishnah indicates to Wellhausen that it cannot be reliably used as a historical source for first-century controversies between Pharisees and Sadducees; he does not indicate any historical unreliability of the gospels as evidence for the nature of first-century Judaism nor challenge the varied and sometimes conflicting reports in the writings of Josephus.

According to Wellhausen, the Sadducees were not a party of priests, but a national political aristocracy that stood in opposition to the Pharisees, a religious party that did not believe in political action. The relationship between the Pharisees and Sadducees is better understood, according to Wellhausen, by analogy to the relationship between prophets and kings. Their differences on religious matters were of minor consequence, which explains the relatively few references to the Sadducees in rabbinic texts, in contrast to their more extensive presence in Greek sources, which are more concerned with political issues.<sup>56</sup>

The emphasis is placed by Wellhausen on defining the nature of Pharisaic religion, and in so doing, he is defining the nature of Judaism: “the Pharisees are the Jews in superlative, the true Israel. The goal of the people and that of the Pharisees are the same.”<sup>57</sup> Thus, when Wellhausen speaks of the Pharisees, he is also commenting on Judaism: “the Pharisees killed nature through the commandments. There were 613 written commandments and 1000 other laws, and they leave no room for conscience. One forgot God and the way to him in the Torah.”<sup>58</sup> What characterizes the Pharisees is their “religious materialism.”<sup>59</sup> Ultimately, in Wellhausen’s 1894 *Israelitische und jüdische Geschichte*, the Pharisees come to be termed idolaters of the law.<sup>60</sup> The difference between the Pharisees and the common people lies only in the former’s zealousness and acerbity.<sup>61</sup>

Wellhausen was repeating older Christian traditions and did not attempt to provide source evidence to justify them. He did, however, defend as a legitimate historical source, Jesus’ notorious accusations that the Pharisees are “hypocrites,” in Matthew 23. Its very exaggeration, he writes, signifies that the passage is a “candid” expression and therefore most probably more authentic than the “smarmy picture” of the Pharisees as first-century “preachers”; moreover, it is confirmed by the prophets’ criticisms and by Paul’s fight against the law.<sup>62</sup> The New Testament epistles are also good sources for defining Pharisaism, he writes, because Paul was the “great pathologist of Judaism.”<sup>63</sup> What Wellhausen concludes is that the Pharisees can claim the merit of having crushed the Hasmonean state and having saved Judaism—a dubious honor, given Wellhausen’s judgment of Judaism.<sup>64</sup>

In his critique of Geiger’s reading of primary sources, Wellhausen states that Geiger’s importance is in developing a method of critical

interpretation of rabbinic texts; that is Geiger's contribution.<sup>65</sup> In reviewing the Mishnaic texts that Geiger presents, however, Wellhausen argues that they do not support a conclusion that the Sadducees "treat their prerogatives as an exploitative monopoly, while the Pharisees, by contrast, represent the principles of the community."<sup>66</sup> The texts are too few to support Geiger's conclusions, and in some cases contradict Geiger's thesis explicitly. Wellhausen points to *m. Yadayim* 4:7, in which the Sadducees argue that owners are responsible for damages caused by their slaves, while the Pharisees hold the owners exempt. He asks, "If the Sadducees represented the slave-owning aristocracy, as Geiger claimed, why would they make owners liable for damages caused by their slaves?" That the Sadducees might have deviated in this particular example from their own self-interest is not considered by Wellhausen, whose purpose is to argue against the use of Mishnaic texts as a historical source. He writes, "This controversy [in *m. Yadayim* 4:7] requires no further elucidation; it teaches us nothing in particular, except perhaps that in some respects the Sadducees were more intelligent than their opponents."<sup>67</sup> In general, rabbinic texts cannot be used, because they are an *ex post facto* effort to legitimate Pharisaic rule, and are therefore not unbiased sources.<sup>68</sup> Moreover, he argues, if rabbinic literature is concerned to legitimate the rule of the Pharisees, it cannot be read as an autonomous, objective source.

That the Pharisees were characterized by their democratization of the exclusivity of Sadducean religion—Geiger's central thesis—is rejected absolutely by Wellhausen. He notes that the table fellowship characterizing the Pharisees was also found among the Essenes, who were undeniably not interested in democratizing or liberalizing priestly religion. Similarly, he questions why, if Geiger's thesis is correct, it had been concealed for two thousand years in obscure legalistic jargon. If rabbinic law should be understood as an internal debate between Pharisaic and Sadducean positions, why did the Talmud and halakhic midrashim preserve the positions of the Pharisees while ignoring or concealing the Sadducees' views? The scanty traces of an older halakha were ferreted out by Geiger through complex interpretive maneuvers, which led Wellhausen to demand why such allegedly significant aspects of Jewish thought would be concealed in the literature and nearly lost over the centuries. Yet for Geiger, it is precisely

the obscurity of Sadducean halakhic positions that proves the success of the Pharisees in wiping out even a memory of the ideology of the Sadducees. In cases in which Wellhausen accepts Geiger's reading of Mishnaic sources, he rejects his interpretations; drawing a principle linking the sources is *blöd* (foolish), he writes.<sup>69</sup> There is simply too little in rabbinic literature on the Pharisees and Sadducees to draw general conclusions.

Wellhausen also rejected Geiger's thesis regarding the derivation of the name "Pharisee." The name cannot be derived from the *nivdalim* mentioned in the biblical book of Ezra, Wellhausen argues, because in Ezra the term refers to the Jewish separation from pagans, not an inner-Jewish separation. The Sadducees were not a party of priests, but aristocratic followers of the Hasmoneans who viewed the priesthood as a means to maintain their political rule. By contrast, the Pharisees wanted foreign rule, not a Hasmonean state. Some of Geiger's interpretations are treated by Wellhausen with a tone of astonishment, without further discussion. For example, Geiger's identification of Second Isaiah, chapters 40–66, as an example of Pharisaic opposition to the Sadducees and the suffering servant in Isaiah 53 as a metaphor for the Pharisees is rejected out of hand by Wellhausen.<sup>70</sup> Even when Wellhausen agrees with Geiger's conclusions, as in the origins of the name Sadducee, he attacks Geiger's methods: "seldom [has] a groundless point of view been established in a worse fashion."<sup>71</sup>

Like Geiger, Wellhausen presents Judaism as a religion emerging within its own world, without major influences from outside, whether Persian, Greek, or Christian. Unlike Geiger, however, Wellhausen finds no positive influence of Judaism on Christianity or on any other elements within Western culture. Numerous critics in recent years have charged Wellhausen with a bias against Judaism in his scholarship.<sup>72</sup> His defenders, notably Rudolf Smend, have claimed that Wellhausen was as anti-Christian as he was anti-Jewish.<sup>73</sup> Wellhausen's identification of Jesus as a Jew has also come under reevaluation recently by New Testament scholars; Hans Dieter Betz, for example, interprets Wellhausen as arguing that Jesus was the last Jew because Judaism as a historical religion had come to an end with Jesus.<sup>74</sup> Ultimately, Wellhausen's critique overshadowed Geiger's work on rabbinic sources, and it is his depiction of the Pharisees, not

Geiger's, that triumphed in the end within German New Testament scholarship.<sup>75</sup>

The same year that Wellhausen's study appeared also saw the publication of Emil Schürer's *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Zeitgeschichte*.<sup>76</sup> In the chapters on the Jewish sects, Schürer acknowledged Geiger's work as inaugurating the scholarship in the field, even while he disagreed with most of Geiger's conclusions concerning the Pharisees and labeled all Jewish-authored scholarship with an asterisk in his bibliography. Pharisaism represented the essence of Judaism, Schürer wrote, "that those who do not follow the law are cursed" and not a principle of progressive development and liberalization.<sup>77</sup> Schürer rejected Geiger's distinction between a Sadducean and Pharisaic halakha, denying any religious interests on the part of the Sadducees, who solely represented, he wrote, the political interests of the aristocracy, even as he accepted, without acknowledgment, Geiger's sociological distinction between the Pharisees as a party of the people and the Sadducees as a party of the priestly aristocracy. The Pharisees, he claimed, constituted the party of the people, marked by a zealous legalism that began with Ezra and Nehemiah, continuing in the Maccabean era with the Hasidim, and emerging during that era as Pharisees, "separatists," those opposing the impurity of non-Jews. The Pharisees, for Schürer, represented Judaism's ideal Jew, whereas the Sadducees were a smaller, marginal groups of aristocrats.

At the time Schürer published the *Lehrbuch* he was just thirty years old and a lecturer in theology at the University of Leipzig. His book was very well received, viewed as a more scholarly survey of the material than that of Adolf Hausrath, though criticized for ignoring political conditions within the Roman Empire.<sup>78</sup> Schürer made extensive use of rabbinic literature, more than any other Christian scholar of the era, but his citations are all intended to demonstrate the "legalism" of Judaism. Schürer's chapter "Life Under the Law," describing the alleged misery of rabbinic Judaism, became notorious as an anti-Jewish polemic,<sup>79</sup> yet its claims were neither new nor unique within German Christian scholarship; virtually all prior descriptions of rabbinic Judaism were comparably negative. The distinction, however, came from Schürer's amassing of rabbinic "proofs," which lent the chapter an aura of scholarly invincibility and seemed to defeat Jewish claims that Christian scholars could not understand early Judaism



because they made no use of rabbinic literature. Surprisingly, Schürer's work was perceived at the time of its publication by some Christian scholars as adhering too closely to the Jewish scholarship of Geiger, with the focus on Palestinian rabbinic Judaism as the setting for the New Testament and omitting discussion of Hellenistic religions and their influence on the New Testament.<sup>80</sup>

The existence of a split between Hellenistic and Palestinian (i.e., rabbinic) Judaism in antiquity became a dogma of scholarship that has been challenged only in recent decades. Emphasis on the Hellenistic context for early Christianity was a technique for excluding or downplaying Jewish influence and reflected the broader preoccupations in German intellectual and academic societies with classical Hellenic culture as the opposite of Hebraic and biblical culture. The opposition between Hellenic and Hebraic came to be challenged in the last decades of the nineteenth century with the rise of Orientalism, as Suzanne Marchand has delineated, which emphasized the ancient Near East, especially Babylonia and Persia, as the original religious context for both the Hebrew Bible and early Christianity.<sup>81</sup> The exploration of the Near East, which gave rise to new archaeological and textual discoveries, provided a broader context for analyzing biblical literature, and became a focus of fascination for German scholars and the general populace at the turn of the century. However, the "Furor Orientalis" encompassed all religions of the Near East and Asia with the exception of Judaism. Indeed, Orientalism became a tool for the exclusion of Judaism from the scholarly investigation of religions of antiquity. It also influenced the rise of the history of religions school, which renounced theological commitments in the interest of an objective historiography of early Christianity, yet which arrived at equally negative conclusions regarding Judaism and the Pharisees.

The prime example of the history of religions approach is the work of Wilhelm Bousset (1865–1920), professor at Göttingen and, later, Giessen. His widely read study *Die Religion des Judenthums im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter* first appeared in 1903, presenting itself as a new approach that used the methods of the history of religions school to identify and describe what he termed "late Judaism," the Judaism of the Second Temple period.<sup>82</sup> The Pharisees, according to Bousset, had initially (under the Hasmoneans) been a progressive movement,

urging a democratic control of religious issues by the Jewish populace, but after achieving power in the Hasmonean era they were quickly transformed into rigid, aristocratic conservatives: “piety in their hands became stiff and lifeless . . . within their ranks arose the new ideas of the later Jewish religion.”<sup>83</sup> Like Wellhausen, Bousset dismissed the Mishnah as a viable historical source; while recognizing that the gospels present a polemic against Pharisaism, they nonetheless provide, he wrote, the best illustration of the character of the Pharisees and Sadducees.<sup>84</sup> Bousset also did not cite the work of any Jewish scholars.

Bousset concluded his depiction by writing that Judaism is a religion of external observance lacking sincerity. The Pharisees were agents of hypocrisy and legalism: observance of Jewish law would bring reward but lacked spiritual or ethical meaning. With regard to Torah piety, Bousset stated that, although the “law” was the “pride and joy of Jewish life,” fulfilling the commandments, for the Pharisees, was purely external and aimed at a reward either in this or the next world.<sup>85</sup> In general, he traced all ethical and religious deficiencies he glimpsed in “late Judaism” back to the fact that “the law had poisoned the religion of Judaism in its core.” His characterization was based entirely on the “basic tendency in which the morality of the Pharisees moved”—pure negativity, insincerity, hypocrisy—that was diagnosed “correctly by Jesus.”<sup>86</sup> Ultimately, for all of Bousset’s claims to be developing new historiographical methods, his depiction of the Pharisees was taken straight out of the gospels.

Bousset’s work brought an outcry among Jewish scholars, who condemned his characterization of Pharisaism and his failure to engage seriously the work of Jewish scholars, and it sparked the publication of several studies of Pharisaism by Jewish authors. Felix Perles was among several Jewish scholars who published heated responses to the work, accusing Bousset of ignoring Jewish scholarship, lacking training in rabbinic sources, and engaging in anti-Jewish polemics under the guise of objective scholarship.<sup>87</sup>

Despite the dismay with which most Jewish scholars reacted to the depictions of rabbinic religion by Wellhausen, Schürer, and Bousset and the continued negative stereotyping of the Pharisees by modern Christian scholars, there were no Jewish academic institutions nor unified scholarly consensus to allow an organized response. Given

that Jewish scholars of early Judaism were not affiliated as professors at German universities, nor invited, as Jews, to contribute to the major university journals of the field, most of which were controlled by Protestant theological faculties, they were kept disaffiliated, structurally and institutionally, from academic forums.

By the 1920s and 1930s, increasing numbers of German Protestants established themselves as scholars of rabbinic literature and began publishing critical editions of Mishnah-tractates, although the context in which those texts were presented was at times highly biased and designed to undermine comparisons of Jesus with the Pharisees. Most egregious was the edition of Mishnah Pesachim, published by Georg Beer, professor at the University of Heidelberg, who dismissed connections between the Last Supper and the Passover Seder, arguing that the latter was an expression of Jewish hope for world domination.<sup>88</sup> With the rise of Protestant scholarship on rabbinics, Jewish scholars were sometimes marginalized. Hugo Gressmann, for example, dismissed the work of Jewish scholars as biased by their commitment to the Talmud. Emerging instead was a wider consensus that Hellenistic Judaism, which was sharply distinguished from the rabbinic Judaism of the Pharisees, was a more important context for understanding the emergence of Christianity. Rabbinic Judaism was characterized even by a scholar as sympathetic to Judaism as Gressmann as “dead or gradually dying.”<sup>89</sup> In his article in the standard reference work, *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, published in 1930, Paul Volz blamed the Pharisees for having created the “spirit” that led to Jesus’ crucifixion, even though they are not mentioned in the gospels’ accounts of the death of Jesus.<sup>90</sup> That the narrow-minded, materialistic Pharisees were so popular among Jews in antiquity, Volz explained, is proof that they represented a widespread legalistic mentality among Jews, reinforced by the popularity of their miracles and healings. Publication of the Damascus Document in 1910, a scroll fragment discovered in 1896 in the Cairo Genizah by Solomon Schechter, led to speculations regarding its evidence for Pharisaism. Joachim Jeremias interpreted it as a Pharisaic text indicating that the Pharisees were not simply the party of the Jewish masses, but rather members of closed religious conventicles, for whom the laws of tithing and purity were of particular concern.<sup>91</sup> While they exerted a strong influence on the general populace, as well

as the Temple and the Sanhedrin, Jeremias distinguished the intensity of their religious practice from that of ordinary Jews of the day.<sup>92</sup>

An even more problematic direction for Pharisee scholarship developed during the 1930s among German Protestants influenced by history of religions methods and the racial politics that infiltrated the universities. Carl Schneider, a student of Johannes Leipoldt, published a textbook of New Testament history in 1934, dedicated to Leipoldt, to prove that the New Testament was an authentically Hellenistic work. Filled with anti-Jewish clichés, Schneider presents the Pharisees as calling for the establishment of a theocracy and describes a “piety of legalism” (*Gesetzesfrömmigkeit*) as characteristic of the Pharisees and in contrast to Hellenism. However much Christianity was rooted in Palestine, it was a product of Hellenism, according to Schneider. A second example came from Herbert Preisker, professor of New Testament at the University of Breslau, whose 1937 study of New Testament history argued that the Pharisees, abandoning their identification with the Jewish people, turned into rigid Talmudists who brought about the defeat of the Jews. Both Schneider and Preisker were active members of an anti-Semitic propaganda institute formed in 1939, the Institute for the Study and Eradication of Jewish Influence on German Religious Life, contributing to its production of a de-Judaized version of the New Testament.<sup>93</sup>

Scholars of the Pharisees face two central issues: determining which sources they will use as historically reliable evidence, and deciding which methods to use in interpreting those sources. On both points, Geiger’s decisions have generally prevailed over subsequent scholarship. It was Geiger who expanded the number of primary sources to be used for evidence of the nature of Pharisaism to include early rabbinic and Targumic texts, apocryphal and pseudepigraphical texts, as well as the conventional sources—Josephus and the gospels. Similarly, it was Geiger who introduced sociological categories that interpreted religious positions in relation to the political commitments and social structures of Jewish society in Palestine.

Nonetheless, despite claims of being guided by strict principles of historicism—and for some, of following the even more historicist methods of the history of religions school—German Protestant scholars remained embroiled in theological presuppositions. The gospels’

negative passages regarding the Pharisees served to override other sources of evidence and to reject the alternative interpretations of the Pharisees developed by Jewish scholars. Ultimately, the conclusions of a Wellhausen or Schürer or Bousset are not much different from the depiction of the Pharisees of a village pastor. The emergence of new centers of scholarship on the New Testament and early Judaism after World War II, both in the United States and Great Britain, brought a fresh approach far less bound to Christian theological commitments and far more congenial to Jewish historiography.

## CHAPTER 11

- 1 See the following titles of mine for the texts referred to in this and the following chapters: *Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees; Formative Judaism: Religious, Historical, and Literary Studies, 3rd s., Torah, Pharisees, and Rabbis* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press for BJS, 1983); *The Pharisees: Rabbinic Perspectives, Reprise of Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees before 70*, 1–3 (New York: Ktav, 1985); as editor with W. S. Green, *The Origins of Judaism: Religion, History, and Literature in Late Antiquity* (New York: Garland Press, 1991). On the relationship between Pharisaism before 70 CE and rabbinic Judaism after 70 CE, see my *Eliezer ben Hyrcanus: The Tradition and the Man*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1973; reprint, Eugene, Ore: Wipf & Stock, 2003).
- 2 Paul was educated under Gamaliel, according to Acts 22:3, but he does not state that Gamaliel was a Pharisee. In Acts 5:34 Luke, the author of Acts, speaks in his narrative of “a Pharisee named Gamaliel.” On that basis I assume Gamaliel was a Pharisee.

## CHAPTER 12

- 1 For debates on the matters covered in this chapter, see chapters 14 and 15. The matters are further spelled out in my contributions to the series *South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism* (Atlanta: Scholars Press): *Judaic Law; Are There Really Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels? A Refutation of Morton Smith* (1993); *Why There Never Was a “Talmud of Caesarea”: Saul Lieberman’s Mistakes* (1994); *The Documentary Foundation of Rabbinic Culture: Mopping Up after Debates with Gerald L. Bruns, S. J. D. Cohen, Arnold Maria Goldberg, Susan Handelman, Christine Hayes, James Kugel, Peter Schaefer, Eliezer Segal, E. P. Sanders, and Lawrence H. Schiffman* (1995). These titles are now issued by University Press of America, Lanham, Md.
- 2 M. Smith, “The Dead Sea Sect in Relation to Ancient Judaism,” *NTS* 7 (1961): 347–60.
- 3 Smith, “Dead Sea Sect,” 353.
- 4 Smith, “Dead Sea Sect.”

## CHAPTER 13

- 1 That judgment must be modified, however, by the analysis of the traditions attributed to Eliezer b. Hyrcanus. See my *Eliezer b. Hyrcanus: The Tradition and the Man*.
- 2 See my *History of the Jews in Babylonia*, vol. 1, *The Parthian Period* (Leiden: Brill, 1965), 122–30.

## CHAPTER 14

- 1 Catholic scholars during this period did not engage in historical study of antiquity. One exception would be J. Langen (*Das Judentum in Palästina zur Zeit Christi* [Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder Verlag, 1866]), who criticized Geiger’s study of the Pharisees and Sadducees as “silliness.” Langen rejected the Talmud as a primary source, claiming it was too late to be use-

- ful, and wrote that Jewish historians such as Geiger make use of the Talmud out of their “partiality” for Talmudic tradition.
- 2 Saldarini, “Pharisees,” *ABD* 5:290.
  - 3 G. Volkmar, *Die Religion Jesu* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1857), 60.
  - 4 M. Wirth, *Die Pharisäer: Ein Beitrag zum leichtern Verstehen der Evangelien und zur Selbstprüfung* (Ulm: Stetten, 1824), iii; Langen, *Das Judentum in Palästina*, 189; Anon., “Pharisäer,” in G. B. Winer, *Biblische Realwörterbuch zum Handgebrauch für Studierende, Candidaten, Gymnasiallehrer und Prediger* 2 (Leipzig: Carl Heinrich Reclam, 1847, 1848), 2:244–48; C. F. von Ammon, *Die Geschichte des Leben Jesu: Mit stetiger Rücksicht auf die vorhandenen Quellen* (Leipzig: Vogel, 1842–1847), 1:225; E. Renan, *The Life of Jesus*, trans. C. E. Willbour (New York: Carleton, 1864), 299.
  - 5 Wirth, *Die Pharisäer*, 25.
  - 6 Wirth, *Die Pharisäer*, iii.
  - 7 “Heuchelei,” “Ehrsucht,” and “Pharisäer,” in Winer, *Biblische Realwörterbuch*; citation from von Ammon, *Die Geschichte des Leben Jesu*, 225.
  - 8 J. S. Ersch and J. G. Gruber, *Allgemeine Encyclopädie* (Leipzig: J. F. Gleditsch, 1846).
  - 9 A. Neander, *Geschichte der Pflanzung und Leitung der christlichen Kirche durch die Apostel*, 2 vols. (Hamburg: F. Perthes, 1832–1833); M. Schneckenburger, *Beiträge zur Einleitung ins Neue Testament und zur Erklärung seiner schwierigen Stellen* (Stuttgart: F. C. Löflund & Sohn, 1832); A. Gfrörer, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: E. Schweizerbart, 1838).
  - 10 Neander, *Geschichte*, 2:529.
  - 11 M. Schneckenburger, *Beiträge zur Einleitung ins Neue Testament und zur Erklärung seiner schwierigen Stellen* (Stuttgart: F. C. Löflund & Sohn, 1832), 69–75, 86–91. See also his *Vorlesungen über neutestamentliche Zeitgeschichte: aus dessen handschriftlichem Nachlass*, ed. T. Loehlein (Frankfurt: H. L. Brönnner, 1862).
  - 12 Gfrörer’s views exerted negligible influence among Christian and Jewish theologians in his day, but he has been credited by more recent historians with presenting a sympathetic portrayal of tannaitic beliefs. See G. F. Moore, “Christian Writers on Judaism,” *HTR* 14, no. 3 (1921): 197–254; and K. Hoheisel, *Das antike Judentum in christlicher Sicht* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1978), 10–11.
  - 13 I. M. Jost, *Geschichte der Israeliten* (Berlin, 1820–1828), pt. 2, 1:55–57.
  - 14 Jost, *Geschichte der Israeliten*, 1:57.
  - 15 Levi Herzfeld, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel von der Zerstörung des ersten Tempels bis zur Einsetzung des Makkabäers Schimon zum hohen Priester und Fürsten* (Braunschweig: G. Westermann, 1847–1857), 2:54, 57.
  - 16 Moore, “Christian Writers on Judaism,” 222–28.
  - 17 H.-G. Waubke, *Die Pharisäer in der protestantischen Bibelwissenschaft des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Beiträge zur historischen Theologie 107, ed. J. Wallmann (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1998), 58.
  - 18 Gfrörer, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, 1:194–214.
  - 19 Gfrörer, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, 2:167.
  - 20 Gfrörer, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, 1:121.
  - 21 Gfrörer, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, 1:132.

- 22 A. Geiger, *Urschrift und Übersetzungen der Bibel in ihrer Abhängigkeit von der innern Entwicklung des Judenthums* (Breslau: Julius Heinauer, 1857; 2nd ed., Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Madda, 1928), 149–50. The second edition was published with an introduction by P. Kahle, a postscript by N. Czortkowski, and a Hebrew essay by Geiger, reprinted from *Ozar Nechmad* 3 (1860): 1–15, 115–21, 125–28; in Hebrew translation, *Ha-Mikra v' Targumav*, trans. Y. L. Brukh (Jerusalem: Bialik Foundation, 1949; repr. 1972).
- 23 Geiger's theory is set forth in the *Urschrift*, especially on pages 150ff., 176ff., 423ff., 434ff.; also *JZWL* 1:19–39; 2:88–112; 8:278–91; and L. Geiger, ed., *Nachgelassene Schriften* (Berlin: L. Gerschel, 1875–1885), 2:121; 5:112–16, 118–20, 142–65.
- 24 Geiger, “Die Levirats-Ehe, ihre Entstehung und Entwicklung,” *JZWL* 1 (1862): 19–39; “Neuere Mitteilungen über die Samaritaner,” *ZDMG* 16 (1862): 714–28; “Sadducäer und Pharisäer,” *JZWL* 2 (1862): 11–54; “Die Testamente der zwölf Patriarchen,” *JZWL* 9 (1871): 123–25.
- 25 Geiger, “Die wissenschaftliche Ausbildung des Judenthums in den zwei ersten Jahrhunderten des zweiten Jahrtausends bis zum Auftreten des Maimonides,” *WZJT* 1 (1835): 13–38, esp. 35; “Karäische Literatur,” *WZJT* 2 (1836): 93–125; see also S. Posnanski, “Geschichte der Sekten und der Halacha,” in *Abraham Geiger: Leben und Lebenswerk*, ed. L. Geiger (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1910), 352–87.
- 26 Geiger, *Urschrift*, 35.
- 27 Geiger, *Urschrift*, 223. This particular statement of Geiger's gained widespread attention. Critics who opposed his interpretation of Pharisaism as a liberalization, in contrast to the Sadducees, argued that 2 Maccabees 2:17 describes not Pharisaism, but Israel's position vis-à-vis the heathen world. See Johann Wilhelm Hanne, “Die Pharisäer und Sadducäer als politische Parteien,” *ZWT* 10 (1867): 239–63.
- 28 Geiger, “Sadducäer und Pharisäer,” 41.
- 29 T. Keim, *The History of Jesus of Nazara*, trans. A. Ransom and E. Geldart (London: Williams & Norgate, 1876–1883), 1:342.
- 30 D. Schenkel, *The Character of Jesus Portrayed*, trans. W. H. Furness (Boston: Little, Brown, 1866), 2:6.
- 31 Schenkel, *Character of Jesus Portrayed*, 1:42.
- 32 Schenkel, *Character of Jesus Portrayed*, 2:9–10.
- 33 Schenkel, *Character of Jesus Portrayed*, 2:10.
- 34 Adolf Hausrath published several review essays in the *Protestantische Kirchenzeitung* presenting the results of Geiger's research and urging Christian scholars to read Geiger's work: A. Hausrath, “Die Resultate der jüdischen Forschung über Pharisäer und Sadducäer,” *PKZ* 44 (1862): 967–78; “Jüdische Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Leben,” *PKZ* 3 (1869): 88; “Jüdische Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Leben,” *PKZ* 33 (1869): 781–82; “Jüdische Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Leben,” *PKZ* 44 (1870): 983–84; [Anon.], “Abraham Geiger: Wissenschaft des Judenthums,” *PKZ* 51 (1875): 1184–88.
- 35 A. Hausrath, *Neutestamentliche Zeitgeschichte* 1: *Die Zeit Jesu* (Munich, 1868), 145.



- 36 A. Geiger, “Innere Geschichte der zweiten Tempelperiode und deren Behandlung,” *JZWL* 6 (1868): 253.
- 37 Letter from Geiger to Derenbourg, April 10, 1872, *JZWL* 10 (1872): 156–57.
- 38 Geiger to Derenbourg.
- 39 H. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die Gegenwart*, vol. 4 first published in 1853, followed by vol. 3 in 1856; 2nd eds.: vol. 3 (Leipzig: Leiner, 1863), vol. 4 (Leipzig: Leiner 1866). See Graetz’s review of Geiger’s *Urschrift* in Anon., “Der jerusalemische Talmud im Lichte Geigerscher Hypothesen,” *Monatsschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* 20 (1871): 120–37. See Geiger’s reviews of Graetz’s *Geschichte der Juden* in *JZWL* 1 (1862): 68–75; *JZWL* 2 (1864): 290–91; *JZWL* 4 (1866): 145–50; *JZWL* 6 (1868): 220–22.
- 40 Deines, *Die Pharisäer*, 179.
- 41 Deines, *Die Pharisäer*, 181.
- 42 Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, 3:690.
- 43 A. Geiger, “Proben neuerer hebräischer Sprachgelehrsamkeit,” *JZWL* 2 (1863): 230–31.
- 44 H. Ewald, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel* (Göttingen: Dieterischen Buchhandlung, 1864), 5:477, n. 1.
- 45 H. Ewald, letter to August Dillmann, 1872; cited by Waubke, *Die Pharisäer*, 219 n. 181.
- 46 For a discussion of F. Delitsch’s responses to Geiger, see S. Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), chap. 7.
- 47 J. Derenbourg, *Essai sur l’Histoire et la Géographie de la Palestine, d’après les Thalmuds et les autres sources rabbiniques* (Paris: A l’imprimerie imperiale, 1867). Derenbourg changed a few details, making the Pharisaic struggle against the Sadducees primarily a religious conflict, without social and political components. For more on Derenbourg’s career in France, and his scholarly dependence on Geiger’s work, see P. Simon-Nahum, *Le cite investie: La Science du Judaïsme français et la République* (Paris: Les éditions du Cerf, 1991), 99–108. K. Kohler, “Christianity in Its Relation to Judaism,” 4:49–59; “Essenes,” 5:224–32; “Jesus in Theology,” 7:166–70; “Karaism,” 7:446–47; “New Testament,” 9:246–54; “Pharisees,” 9:661–66; “Sadducees,” 10:630–33; “Saul of Tarsus,” 11:79–87, all in *Jewish Encyclopedia*, ed. I. Singer (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1902); D. Chwolson, *Das letzte Passahmahl Christi und der Tag seines Todes nach den in Übereinstimmung gebrachten Berichten der Synoptiker und des Evangelium Johannis* (St. Petersburg: M. Eggers, 1892); idem., *Beiträge zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Judentums* (Leipzig: H. Haessel, 1910).
- 48 J. Wellhausen wrote in the foreword, “Ich habe mich hierüber, angeregt durch Geiger’s *Urschrift* und Übersetzungen der Bibel, im Eingange meiner Arbeit ausgesprochen,” *Der Text der Bücher Samuelis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1871), iii. Wellhausen goes on to agree with Geiger that deviations within the Masoretic text from orthographic rules are too numerous and too important to be viewed simply as scribal errors, but argues that seeing as many and as profound tendentious changes in the biblical text as

- Geiger claims is exaggerated; see 29–33. Wellhausen concedes that Geiger is correct, for example, in seeing the animosity of the Pharisees toward the Sadducees in 1 Samuel 2:22; see 30. See Geiger's review, *JZWL* 10 (1872): 84–103.
- 49 There is a discrepancy about the date of the lectures. Wellhausen himself writes in the preface to *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer* that the lectures were held during the winter semester, 1871–1872, but records at the University of Greifswald indicate that the lectures were held on Saturdays from noon to one o'clock during the summer semester, 1873; University of Greifswald Archives, Hgb. 39 Bd. 29. Wellhausen's lectures were entitled "Über die jüdischen Parteien zur Zeit Christi." See also A. Jepsen, "Wellhausen in Greifswald: Ein Beitrag zur Biographie Julius Wellhausens," in *Festschrift zur 500-Jahrfeier der Universität Greifswald*, *Festschrift zur 500-Jahresfeier der Universität Greifswald* (Greifswald, 1956), 2:47–56; esp. 49.
- 50 J. Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer: Eine Untersuchung zu inneren jüdischen Geschichte* (Greifswald: Bamberg, 1874; 2nd ed., Hannover: Orient-Buchhandlung H. Lafaire, 1924; 3rd ed., Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967).
- 51 The harsh tone Wellhausen adopted toward Geiger's work is not in itself significant, since it can be found in all of his criticisms of fellow scholars; Wellhausen seems to have been bombastic even when the difference in question was minor, as in his argument of the 1890s with Eduard Meyer. Wellhausen refers in his critique not only to Geiger, but to Christian scholars who had adopted his arguments, particularly Hausrath; Wellhausen writes concerning Hausrath, "Es ist eine übertriebene Bescheidenheit wenn Hausrath, weil er das Ganze nicht beherrscht, nun auch nicht wagt, sich über das Einzelne eine eigene Meinung zu bilden, sondern in Bausch und Bogen selbst einen Graetz als Quelle verwerthet," *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 123. See C. Hoffmann, *Juden und Judentum im Werk deutscher Althistoriker des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 159–65.
- 52 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 17.
- 53 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 21.
- 54 Waubke argues that Wellhausen is here following the lead of Heinrich Ewald; see *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 181.
- 55 Nachlass Theodor Nöldeke, UB Tübingen, Md782–B 280; cited by C. Wiese, "Ein 'Schrei ins Leere'? Die Auseinandersetzung der Wissenschaft des Judentums mit dem Judentumsbild der protestantischen Theologie im Kontext der Diskussion über die Stellung der jüdischen Gemeinschaft im wilhelminischen Deutschland 1890–1914." Ph.D. diss., Faculty of Protestant Theology, Goethe University, Frankfurt, 1996, 89.
- 56 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 73.
- 57 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 17–18.
- 58 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 19.
- 59 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 19.
- 60 J. Wellhausen, *Israelitische und jüdische Geschichte* (Berlin, 1894), 297.
- 61 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 19.

- 62 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 128.
- 63 J. Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel* (New York: Meridan Books, 1957), 423.
- 64 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 127.
- 65 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 121.
- 66 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 70.
- 67 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 66.
- 68 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 127.
- 69 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 70.
- 70 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 76; see A. Geiger, *Das Judentum und seine Geschichte von der Zerstörung des zweiten Tempels bis zum Ende des zwölften Jahrhunderts*. In *zwölf Vorlesungen. Nebst einem Anhang: Offenes Sendschreiben an Herrn Professor Dr. Holzmann*, 2 vols. (Brelau: Schlettersche Buchhandlung, 1865), 1:75; *Urschrift*, 27–29, 37, 56–59.
- 71 Wellhausen, *Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer*, 50.
- 72 For summaries of the criticisms, see D. A. Knight, ed., *Julius Wellhausen and His Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983).
- 73 R. Smend, “Wellhausen und das Judentum,” *ZTK* 79, no. 3 (1982): 249–82. Smend cites a letter Wellhausen wrote to W. R. Smith, in June 1879: “Amüsant ist mir die Art wie die Juden über mich reden—sehr von oben herunter als wüßten sie alles viel besser. Nur Joseph Derenbourg macht eine Ausnahme, er wiegt freilich die anderen alle auf.” [Amusing how the Jews speak about me—very condescending, as if they knew everything much better. Joseph Derenbourg is the only exception, he offsets all the others.]
- 74 H. D. Betz, “Wellhausen’s Dictum ‘Jesus was not a Christian, but a Jew’ in Light of Present Scholarship,” *ST* 45 (1991): 83–110. See also K. Berger, “Jesus als Pharisäer und frühe Christen als Pharisäer,” *NovT* 30 (1988): 231–62; J. Meier, *Jesus von Nazareth in der talmudischen Überlieferung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1978); J. Meier, *Jüdische Auseinandersetzung mit dem Christentum in der Antike* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1982).
- 75 See Hoheisel, *Das antike Judentum in christlicher Sicht*.
- 76 E. Schürer, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Zeitgeschichte* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung, 1874); 2nd ed. published as *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung, 1886–87; 3rd ed., 1898). See “Pharisäer und Sadducäer,” 2:380–418; “Die Essener,” 2:338, 556–84.
- 77 Schürer, *Lehrbuch*, 464; cited by Waubke, *Die Pharisäer*, 229; and Schürer, 391.
- 78 Hausrath, *Neutestamentliche Zeitgeschichte*.
- 79 See, for example, F. Perles, *Jüdische Skizzen*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: G. Engel, 1920), 242–50; I. Abrahams, “Professor Schürer on Life under Jewish Law,” *JQR*, n.s. 11 (1899): 626f. In his recent revision of Schürer’s book, G. Vermes omitted that chapter; see Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*.
- 80 See the review by K. Wieseler in *TSK* 48, no. 3 (1875): 516–56.
- 81 S. Marchand, “Philhellenism and the Furor Orientalis,” *Modern Intellectual History* 1, no. 3 (2004): 331–58.

- 82 W. Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter* (Berlin: Verlag von Reuther & Reichard, 1903).
- 83 Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums*, 186.
- 84 These contradictions within Bousset's work are noted by I. Elbogen, *Die Religionsanschauungen der Pharisäer mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Begriffe Gott und Mensch* (Berlin: 22nd Bericht über die Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums in Berlin erstattet vom Curatorium, 1904), 6.
- 85 W. Bousset, *Das Wesen der Religion* (Halle: Gebauer-Schwetschke, 1903), 87 and 360.
- 86 Bousset, *Das Wesen*, 116f., unchanged in the 2nd ed., p. 160.
- 87 F. Perles, *Boussets Religion des Judentums im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter kritisch untersucht* (Berlin: Wolf Peiser, 1903). Bousset wrote a response to Perles, *Völkfrömmigkeit und Schriftgelehrtenum: Antwort auf Herrn Perles' Kritik meiner "Religion des Judentums im N.T. Zeitalter"* (Berlin: Verlag von Reuther & Reichard, 1903). See also reviews of Perles by H. Holtzmann, *TLZ* 29 (1904): 43–46; W. Bousset, *TRu* 10 (1907): 380f. Among the Jewish scholarly responses to Bousset were I. Elbogen, "Die Religionsanschauungen der Pharisäer mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Begriffe Gott und Mensch," *BHWJ* 22 (1904): 1–88; M. Güdemann, *Jüdische Apologetik* (Glogau: C. Flemming, 1906); and J. Eschelbacher, *Das Judentum im Urteile der modernen protestantischen Theologie* (Leipzig: G. Fock, 1907).
- 88 G. Beer, Pesachim (Ostern). *Text, Übersetzung und Erklärung* (Giessen, 1912). See the discussion in C. Wiese, *Challenging Colonial Discourse: Jewish Studies and Protestant Theology in Wilhelmine Germany*, *Studies in European Judaism* 10, ed. G. Veltri (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), 381–88.
- 89 Deines, *Die Pharisäer*, 451.
- 90 P. Volz, "Pharisäer," *RGG* 4 (1930): 1178f. Cf. P. Fiebig, "Pharisäer und Sadduzäer," *RGG* 4 (1913): 1487–89.
- 91 This was in opposition to R. Leszynsky, who viewed the Damascus Document as a Sadducean text. See Leszynsky, *Die Sadduzäer* (Berlin: Mayer and Müller, 1912); J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu 1: Die wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse* (Leipzig, 1923); 2: *Die sozialen Verhältnisse: A. Reich und arm* (Leipzig, 1924); *B. Hoch und niedrig: 1. Hauptteil: Die gesellschaftliche Oberschicht* (Göttingen, 1929); 2. *Hauptteil: Die Reinerhaltung des Volkstums* (Göttingen, 1937; 2nd ed., 1958; rev. ed., 1962); on Pharisees, see Hoch und Niedrig, 115–40.
- 92 The work of Jeremias has been criticized for retaining anti-Jewish biases, despite its heavy reliance on rabbinic sources. See B. F. Meyer, "A Caricature of Joachim Jeremias and His Work," *JBL* 110 (1991): 451–62. In response, see E. P. Sanders, "Defending the Indefensible," 463–78.
- 93 For details, see S. Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus: Christians, Nazis, and the Bible* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, forthcoming).

## CHAPTER 15

- 1 M. Smith, personal letter.
- 2 L. Baeck, *The Pharisees and Other Essays* (New York: Schocken Books, 1947).
- 3 R. T. Herford, *The Pharisees* (repr., Boston: Beacon, 1962).

In Quest  
of the Historical Pharisees

Edited by

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The German nation, he wrote, "now recognises how unjustly it has been led around by the nose and defrauded" by the pope. Others, for example the renowned Strasbourg preacher Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg, advocated a communal reformation to be carried out by every Christian. All these ideals proved illusory. No 15th-century reformer found a way of making the German church more attentive to the needs of its members or more pleasing to God. The long-standing criticisms of the Church and the repeated calls for reform set the stage for the reception of Luther's Ninety-Five Theses. They cannot, however, explain the unprecedented success of his movement. German culture has been influenced and shaped throughout Germany's rich history once as an important part of The Holy Roman Empire, and later on as one of the most stable economies in the world. Whereas today, Germany is home to 82.2 million people including Germans and minorities of other nationalities that respect each other, and together make Germany a country of values, unique celebrations, and customs. Firstly, here are some facts about today's Germany. Though English-speaking countries call it Germany, Germans themselves call it Deutschland. It is Germania in Latin, l'Allemagne in French and Almanya in Turkish. Berlin is its capital, but Hamburg, Munich and Cologne are also among the main cities of Germany. In the main, nineteenth-century German theologians paid little attention to natural science and especially eschewed philosophically popular yet naive versions of natural theology. Frederick Gregory shows that the loss of nature from theological discourse is only one reflection of the larger cultural change that marks the transition of European society from a nineteenth century to a twentieth-century mentality. In examining this "loss of nature," Gregory refers to a larger shift in epistemological foundations--a shift felt in many fields ranging from art to philosophy to history to, of course, t... Second, while the German tradition of philosophical aesthetics is self-sufficient, philosophers outside this discourse respond to German concepts without themselves having a significant influence in shaping the tradition. Thus, Dewey, Sartre, Croce, Satayana, Danto, Langer, and Ricoeur, to select a random few, all take up concepts developed within the German context of aesthetics. Baumgarten, Mendelssohn & Leibniz rested his philosophical system on a theological basis, namely, the assumption of the world as creatio Dei, a creation of God. Therefore, the world can be nothing but a well-ordered unity in which the structures of reality are identical with the laws of rationality, as they are predominantly expressed in logic, physics, and mathematics.