German and Russian Jews

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Narrative Overview

Jews have long been a people “on the road” in the sense of being engaged in frequent migrations; among the most active areas of those migrations in the 19th and 20th centuries were the Jews of Germany and Russia. The “pushes” driving them to migrate include some of the most violent, repressive, systematic, and public actions, laws, and programs in human history. German and Russian Jews saw their religious, political and civil rights constantly assailed by mobs and governments alike. Many places restricted where they could live and how they could make a living. Russia established the Pale of Settlement establishing an area in which most Jews in the Russian Empire were to live. Over time, its area was shrunk and its population frequently spiked, due to Jews being driven out of other places.

Russia’s anti-Semitism was state regulated, with its imperial family active participants. For example, when he was appointed to the position of governor general of Moscow Alexander III’s brother, Serge Alexandrovich, expressed his willingness to take the post as long as he was able to remove Moscow’s Jews. In 1891, 20,000 Jews were expelled from Moscow (King, p. 146).

German Jews faced similar persecutions culminating in the holocaust under Hitler’s Nazi rule that saw a systematic dehumanization of Germany’s Jewish population. A series of Nazi-sponsored laws stripped them of their
rights and dignity, culminating in the “final solution” in which they attempted the genocide of Europe’s Jews.

The migration of Jews over time frequently resulted in their being blocked or redirected in their attempts to relocate. The Americas provided new areas of migration for Jews as well as for other Europeans. The United States in particular offered several entry points along the east coast and accepted newcomers with extended, if not open arms. Early waves of German Jews with ties to the land moved inland, where later waves of Germans and Russians populated eastern cities such as Boston, Newport, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston. After 1924, when quotas were placed on immigration their numbers fell significantly. For example, the U.S. let in 153,748 Jews in 1906; in 1932, the U.S. admitted 2,755 (Marcus, 292). So rigidly was the quota system enforced that it saw very little movement, even as the holocaust was taking place in Europe. For example, when the SS St. Louis was turned back from Cuba and faced a return trip to Europe, the United States refused to admit what would have been less than 1000 Jewish passengers.

Like all immigrant groups who came to the US, the experiences of German and Russian Jews crossed a wide spectrum. Early waves in colonial times worked the land, but later waves settling in urban areas, worked hard as peddlers, and entered many retail trades including textiles. They became prominent in the entertainment and financial industries as well. Though they
assimilated into American society over time, frequently that assimilation was community-based as they gathered together in vibrant enclaves.
Key Issues and Questions

There is a significant imbalance between the number of “pulls” and “pushes” concerning the Jews of Germany and Russia; and perhaps unique to the Jews, there were also “blocks” in which depending upon the time, they were not welcome in many places. Questions that can direct a study of the migration of Russian and German Jews to the United States include:

(1) Since the destruction of the temple discrimination and persecution of the Jews has been a global phenomenon. Why was it so severe and systematic in Russia and Germany?

(2) Why go to the United States?

(3) What did the German and Russian Jewish immigrants pursue as occupations when they got here?

(4) Considering their level of literacy, why were these people continuously persecuted and why weren’t they welcomed into the United States with open arms?

(5) What were some of the different views that Americans had towards the new Jewish immigrants?

(6) Given the democratic nature of the United States, why did we, like other nations in the world, block their migration, especially when the extent of the Nazi threat became apparent?

Typically, with migrations to the United States, those who came first braved hardships and paved the way for further groups. This was not the
case with the Jews. The German Jews arrived first and were able to achieve a degree of acceptance. Does that change with the huge wave of Russian Jewish immigrants? Why did the persecution become so severe when the Russian Jews arrived?
Ideas for Learning Activities

* Russia: Mapping the Pale of the Settlement

* NARA Analysis Worksheets for use with photos, documents, cartoons, and maps

* Create a “living museum” where a child can research a specific immigrant or an immigrant group and write a brief narrative, “coming to America.” They can also find images that define the uniqueness of their group. Have a museum day or night when other classes and parents come visit the museum and learn about its subjects!

* Give students an immigrant identity or nationality. Create activities involving how the groups interact in an urban center. Create dialogues and plays with the children’s interpretations of how these groups interact with one another and the American people. Don’t forget to cast some children as Americans!

* Using the primary source letter to Theodore Roosevelt, have children do research to find out what happened next. Have them find out whether the plea for help was answered by the American government at that time.

* Using The Store That Mama Built, have students come up with similarities and differences between this story and those that they have learned about thus far. For a challenge have them compare this story with Out of the Shadows.

* Our primary sources provide great “jumping off points” for lessons on German and Russian immigration.
## Timeline: German and Russian Jewish Immigration to the United States

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>1654</td>
<td>Boat with twenty-three Jews, mostly refugees from Recife, Brazil, arrives in New Amsterdam (New York), marking the beginning of Jewish communal settlement in North America.</td>
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<td>1655</td>
<td>Jews in New Netherland are granted rights to trade, travel, and stand guard.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1656</td>
<td>Jews in New Netherland are granted rights to own property and to establish a Jewish cemetery.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1700</td>
<td>Jewish population of America numbers between 200 and 300.</td>
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<td>1733</td>
<td>Jews settle in Savannah, Georgia, but their community does not become permanent until the 1790s.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1750</td>
<td>Congregation Beth Elohim (The House of God) is founded in Charleston, South Carolina.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1775</td>
<td>Francis Salvador, the first Jew to hold elective office in America, is elected to the South Carolina Provincial Congress.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>Jews are permitted to hold federal office, under federal laws, but not state laws.</td>
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<td>1791</td>
<td>A Pale of Settlement is created in Russian Empire restricting where Jews can live.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>Jewish population estimated at 2,500 (0.04 percent of total population).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1814</td>
<td>First American Hebrew Bible is published in Philadelphia by Thomas Dobson, using a text prepared by Jonathan (Jonas) Horwitz.</td>
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<td>1817</td>
<td>First Jews settle in Cincinnati.</td>
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<td>1820</td>
<td>Jews from the German lands begin to migrate to America in substantial numbers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1826</td>
<td>Maryland Assembly passes the &quot;Jew Bill,&quot; removing restrictions that prevented Jews from holding public office.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1827</td>
<td>Jews are to be conscripted into the Russian army for a minimum of 25 years.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>Jewish population reaches 15,000 (0.09 percent of total population).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>Jews are expelled from Kiev.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>Influx of Jews from German lands, spurred by political unrest in central Europe.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>Rabbi Morris Jacob Raphall becomes the first Jewish clergyman to deliver a prayer at the opening of a session of the House of Representatives.</td>
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Jewish population: between 125,000-200,000 (0.40-0.63 percent of total population).
1861  Russian serfs are emancipated triggering “great hope”
1862  Judah P. Benjamin is appointed Secretary of State of the Confederacy
Jacob Frankel is appointed first Jewish chaplain in the United States Army
General Ulysses S. Grant issues General Order No. 11 expelling Jewish civilians from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Mississippi. Order quickly revoked by President Lincoln
1877  Joseph Seligman, a prominent New York banker, is barred as a Jew from registering at the Grand Union Hotel in Saratoga, New York, marking the growth of social anti-Semitism in America
New Hampshire grants Jews political equality
1880  Jewish population: between 230,000-300,000 (.46-.60 percent of total population)
May Laws- prohibited Jews from owning and renting land outside of towns and cities and discouraging from living in villages in Russia
1881  Assassination of Tsar Alexander II triggers waves of pogroms
Massive migration of East European (especially Russian) Jews to America begins, impelled by persecution and lack of economic opportunity
1882  Onset of "First Aliyah" (immigration of Jews to Holy Land) in which approximately 25,000 Jews emigrate from Eastern Europe to the Holy Land (through 1903)
Temporary Laws in Russia place many restrictions on Russian Jews as result of May Laws
1891  Decree passed expelling Jews from Moscow (20,000 expelled)
1900  Jewish population estimated at between 938,000 -1,058,000 (1.23-1.39 percent of total population)
Moses Alexander, a German Jewish immigrant, is elected governor of Idaho
1903  Pogrom in Kishinev – 45 murdered, over 1300 homes & shops plundered
1905  American Jews celebrate the 250th anniversary of receiving the right to settle in New Amsterdam
Pogroms staged in over 300 cities and towns in Russia and Eastern Europe
1881  2 million plus Jews leave Russia; over 1.7 million make their way to USA
1914  US enters World War I. About 200,000 Jews served in the armed forces
1918  Re-establishment of Poland and Lithuania separates much of Russia’s
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<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Jewish population: between 3.3-3.6 million (3.12-3.41 percent of total population)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Russian Civil War – tens of thousands of Jews are killed, most by White forces. In this period around 2000 pogroms leave over 100,000 Jews dead</td>
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<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Immigration Acts of 1921 and 1924 close America to East European Jews and others. This legislation is motivated, in part, by pseudo-scientific racial concepts</td>
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<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Johnson-Reed Immigration Act of 1924</td>
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<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Jewish population: between 4.228–4.4 million (3.44–3.58 percent of total population)</td>
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<td>1933</td>
<td>Adolf Hitler appointed German chancellor</td>
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<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Nuremberg Laws, National Citizens Law, Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor</td>
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<td>1936</td>
<td>SS creates Deathshead Division to guard concentration camps</td>
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<td>1937</td>
<td>Buchenwald concentration camp opens</td>
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<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>German government recalls all Jewish passports and marks them with a large, colored “J.” This is done at the request of the Swiss government</td>
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<td>1939</td>
<td>Germany issues a command establishing Jewish ghettos in Poland</td>
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<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>Jewish population: between 4.77 and 4.83 million (3.63-3.68 percent of total population)</td>
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<td>1943</td>
<td>Jews become aware of the holocaust. The American authorities, including high-ranking Jewish leaders, do little to induce Roosevelt to admit European Jewish refugees in substantial numbers to the United States. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau Jr. is an exception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Over 500,000 Jews serve in the America armed forces during World War II. There are numerous Jewish generals and several Jewish admirals.</td>
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Timeline Bibliography


TO HIS EXCELLENCY THEODORE ROOSEVELT,
President of the United States of America.

HONORABLE SIR:—

The recent massacres of Jews by organized mobs at Kisheneff, undisturbed by the Russian Government, and the expulsion of the entire Jewish population of Kieff, numbering 37,000, and decreed by the same Russian Government, cannot be treated any longer as an internal affair of Russia, concerning no other country but Russia.

If the Government of the United States realized its right to intercede in behalf of the persecuted Jews in Roumania, it can remain true to itself only by asserting this right in behalf of the outraged Jews in Russia.

Whatever interests of America were threatened by the anti-Semitic policy of the Roumanian Government, they are now more gravely threatened by the anti-Semitic outbreaks in Russia. Official anti-Semitism in Russia is more dangerous to this Country than official anti-Semitism in Roumania, in consequence of the greater number of its victims, and of the more ferocious and inhuman character of its manifestation.

The undersigned, therefore, respectfully petitions your Excellency to employ the good offices of our Government with the Imperial Government of Russia, with the aim in view of securing more safety to Jews in Russia, and making their existence there less wretched.

NAME  Max Kaplan
RESIDENCE  285 48th St.
CITY  New York
STATE  NY
This primary source document is very useful in demonstrating one of the “pushes” influencing Russian Jewish immigration to America. This letter discusses the ways that the Russian Jews were treated and that they did not receive help from the government. It urges President Theodore Roosevelt to interfere on behalf of the Jews being persecuted in Russia. This can serve as evidence of the life of Russian Jews before traveling to America. It could also be useful with older classes for discussion of underlying meanings and implications.
Print shows an aged man labeled "Russian Jew" carrying a large bundle labeled "Oppression" on his back; hanging from the bundle are weights labeled "Autocracy," "Robbery," "Cruelty," "Assassination," "Deception," and "Murder." In the background, on the right, a Jewish community burns, and in the upper left corner, Theodore Roosevelt speaks to the Emperor of Russia, Nicholas II, "Now that
you have peace without, why not remove his burden and have peace within your borders?"¹

This print illustrates the burdens that Russian Jews had to carry. In the cartoon the Jew is carrying the different means of his oppression such as autocracy, cruelty, and murder. It is a very powerful image and is one that can be used with different age groups successfully. This is yet another depiction of a "push" that led Russian Jews to immigrate to America. The use of a cartoon can illustrate the harsh realities of the situation in a brutally honest way, and yet still be interesting to students. Much discussion can come from examining this cartoon with a class.

¹ Flohri, Emil. "Immigration....Polish/Russian: A People At Risk. For Teachers (Library of Congress)." 1904. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/i?pp/ils:@filreq(@field(NUMBER+@band(ppmsca+05438))+@field(COLLID+cph)):displayType=1:m856sd=ppmsca:m856sf (accessed July 6, 2009).
“Internal pass of a Russian Jew issued by the Minsk City Council in 1850. Temporary residence outside the Pale was strictly limited to six to eight weeks, and only for legal and commercial transactions.”

This document calls attention to the severe restrictions put on Russia’s Jews who were required to carry this document. It allowed the Russian government to keep tabs on its Jewish population. Though the document is written in Russian, what it stands for would stimulate discussion.


This website is the online version of an exhibit that has toured in Russia since 1995.
"A passport of a Jewish women stamped with "J" for "Jew." This stamp was added in 1938 on the request of the Swiss government. Switzerland wanted to be able to identify Jewish refugees at the border - in order to turn them back. Despite the reluctance of most countries to accept refugees, about 280,000 German Jews did find refuge abroad."

This document illustrates the isolation of the Jews and is startling in that the designation of Jewish passports with the "J" was done at the request of the Swiss government. It presents an example to our students of the extent of the collaboration against Europe’s Jews even with the neutral Swiss becoming involved.


This website is the online version of an exhibit that has toured in Russia since 1995.
“The pogroms of the 1880s generated a wave of Jewish migration that continued for decades. These refugees, photographed in the port of Liverpool in May 1882, were among the first of the estimated 2 million Jews who left Russia between 1881 and 1914, mostly for the United States.”

The pogroms were a major “push” factor that drove the Jewish population of Russia and eastern Europe westward. This group of displaced Jews was typical of those who fled with the clothes on their backs and what few possessions they could carry. A National Archives Photo Analysis Worksheet would be a useful tool for a discussion of this photo.


This website is the online version of an exhibit that has toured in Russia since 1995.
Act of May 26, 1924: The Immigration Act of 1924 ("Johnson-Reed Act")

Sec. 1. That this Act may be cited as the "Immigration Act of 1924."

Sec. 2. (a) A consular officer upon the application of any immigrant . . . may . . . issue to such an immigrant an immigration visa which shall consist of one copy of the application provided for in section 7, visaed by such consular officer. Such visa shall specify (1) the nationality of the immigrant; (2) whether he is a quota immigrant (as defined in section 5) or a non-quota immigrant (as defined in section 4); (3) the date on which the validity of the immigration visa shall expire; and (4) such additional information necessary to the proper enforcement of the immigration laws and the naturalization laws as may be by regulation prescribed. [The act then goes on to prescribe photographs, notation on the passport of the number of visa, when such visas are not to be issued, the fees for visas.]

Sec. 6. (a) Immigration visas to quota immigrants shall be issued in each fiscal year as follows: (1) Fifty per centum of the quotas of each nationality for such year shall be made available . . . to the following classes of immigrants, without priority of preference as between such classes: (A) Quota immigrants who are the fathers or mothers of citizens of the United States . . . or who are the husbands of citizens of the United States by marriages occurring on or after May 31, 1928 of citizens who are citizens of the United States who are twenty-one years of age or over; and (B) in the case of any nationality the quota of which is three hundred or more, quota immigrants who are skilled in agriculture, and the wives, and the dependent children under the age of eighteen years, of such immigrants skilled in agriculture, if accompanying or following to join them. (2) The remainder of the quota of each nationality for such year . . . shall be made available in such year for the issuance of immigration visas to quota immigrants of such nationality who are the unmarried children under twenty-one years of age, or the wives, of alien residents of the United States who were lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence. . . .

Sec. 11. (a) The annual quota of any nationality shall be 2 per centum of the number of foreign-born individuals of such nationality resident in continental United States as determined by the United States census of 1890, but the minimum quota of any nationality shall be 100. [Subsections (b)-(g) detail how national origin is determined, presidential proclamation of quotas, monthly issuances of visa limits, and the issue of visas to nonquota immigrants.]
Sec. 12. (a) For the purpose of this Act nationality shall be determined by country of birth, treating as separate countries the colonies, dependencies, or self-governing dominions for which separate enumeration was made in the United States census of 1890 and which was not included in the enumeration for the country to which such colony or dependency belonged...

Sec. 13. (a) No immigrant shall be admitted . . . unless he (1) has an unexpired immigration visa . . .; (2) is of the nationality specified in the visa; (3) is a nonquota immigrant if specified in the visa as such; (4) is a preference-quota immigrant if specified . . . as such; and (5) is otherwise admissible under the immigration laws. [Subsection 13(b) covers such details as readmission of aliens without visas.] (c) No alien ineligible to citizenship shall be admitted to the United States unless such alien (1) is admissible as a non-quota immigrant under the provisions of subdivisions (b), (d) or (e) of section 4, or (2) is the wife, or the unmarried child under 18 years of age, of an immigrant admissible . . ., and is accompanying or following to join him, or (3) is not an immigrant as defined in section 3. . . . (e) No quota immigrant shall be admitted under subdivision (d) if the entire number of immigrant visas which may be issued to quota immigrants of the same nationality for the fiscal year has already been issued. . . .

Sec. 19. No alien seaman excluded from admission . . . shall be permitted to land . . . except temporarily for medical treatment, or pursuant to such regulations as the Attorney General may prescribe for the ultimate departure, removal, or deportation of such alien from the United States.


ProCon.org, “What was the outcome of the 1924 Johnson-Reed Immigration Act?,”http://immigration.procon.org/viewanswers.asp?questionID=000767

ProCon.org is a website that has articles and resources relating to controversial topics. The section used is on Illegal Immigration, It includes a section with links to full text legislation concerning immigration in US History. There were sites that contained edited versions of the Immigration Act of 1924, but this site was used because I wanted to edit it myself. The inclusion of this document allows for the discussion of US immigration policies in the mid-twenties and beyond, years that were crucial to Jewish immigration as thousands of Jews sought to flee Europe in the wake of Germany’s aggression there.
The cartoon shows that despite gains by Jewish immigrants not everyone still felt they belonged. This cartoon was depicted from an event in Saratoga Springs, New York, "where the owner of the hotel, Judge Henry Hilton, refused to admit a successful Jewish banker Joseph Seligman. Judge Henry Hilton, the hotel’s owner, explained that he had no objection to the Sephardic elite, who had lived in America since the 17th century and whom he believed to be the refined, “true Hebrews.” By contrast, Hilton claimed, the German immigrant “Seligman” Jews were dirty and greedy, and thus unfit for society. This shows that anti-Semitism was occurring in America as well as in Europe. This anti-Semitism in Europe along with economic changes helped spur the migration of Jews to America. This would provide a nice entry point for a class discussion about anti-Semitism and why some Jewish people were discriminated against and not others.

These two images sort of tell the same story. Immigrants coming to America looking for freedom, opportunity and a sense of optimism. Upon arriving in America immigrants found mixed attitudes regarding their journey. The photo is a candid shot with no fanfare, while the engraver has attempted to show that the new immigrants are full of hope and all will be well. This source provides a good compare and contrast opportunity with students about the immigrants’ travels. Why would people in America not be too eager to welcome the immigrants with open arms? Why would the immigrants travel to America?
This photograph shows a steamship leaving Bremerhaven for New York in 1911. Beginning in the 1840s, steamships were an important factor in increasing the number of immigrants, including German Jews, coming to America. They reduced the immigrant voyages from 4 weeks using sailing ships to 12 days using steamships. (Spickard, page 121) Key questions to consider: Why did German Jews leave their homeland? How attractive were steamships in helping more immigrants decide to come to America? How many passengers did a typical steamship hold versus a sailing ship?
This woman peddler illustrates how many German Jews started in America selling their wares. For instance, they often sold used clothing. After a few years, the peddlers became storeowners. Then they sent for relatives to join them to work in the store. This illustration shows the chain migration model at work. This model was prevalent for the German Jews migrating to America.

Key questions to consider: How long in years did it take most peddlers to become storeowners? Besides used clothing, what other items do you think peddlers sold on the streets? Do you think that more men than women were actual peddlers?

This source is the memoir of Rose Cohen, a Russian Jewish immigrant who came to America at the age of 12. She discusses leaving Russia, traveling to the new world, and her experiences when she arrives, such as her tenement house and job at a sweatshop in New York. It is an amazing first-hand account of the trials and hardships that a typical Russian immigrant had to face while in Russia, on the trip to America and also once in America. This book can be used as a whole or excerpts can be taken from it depending on the needs of the class.
Annotated Bibliography


This website sponsored by Bucknell University’s History Department provides a very thorough collection of resources and links on all aspects of Russian History. From timelines to detailed character studies of leading figures in Russian History, the list of resources is comprehensive. For this project we used a site on Nicholas and Alexandra and a site on the Russian Empire from 1895 to 1910. These sites, as well as other links, provide detailed descriptions, documents, photographs, and maps.


Daniels, a Visiting and Fulbright professor at the University of Hamburg while writing this book, contributes both statistics and descriptions for the German Jewish migration to the United States that began in the 1820s. He compares the impact of German Jews on the American Jewish community as being as important as the impact of Irish and German Catholics on the American Catholic community.

For statistics, Daniels cites figures for a couple of major cities: New York and Cincinnati. Due to German Jewish migration, New York increased its Jewish population from 500 in 1825 to 40,000 in 1860. Cincinnati went from 3,300 Jews in 1850 to 10,000 in 1860. By 1880, there were about 250,000 Jews in the United States with most of them being German Jews. Daniels also uses tables, charts, and maps to illustrate his statistics.

Daniels describes German Jewish immigrants as being family units from small cities and market towns with occupations of artisans, petty traders, and cattle dealers. A few were merchants and bankers. They were not farmers. They came to America to avoid special taxes and discriminatory legislation that stripped them of basic rights, like the right to marry and to live where they wanted to. When they got to America, most German Jews entered the retail trades and did not return home. Less than 5% of them returned home.

Daniel’s book is very useful for providing a sense of the impact of German Jews on the overall American immigration beginning in the 1820s.

Hertzberg, a congregational rabbi for many years, executive member of many Jewish institutions like the American Jewish Congress, and author of other historical works, writes this book about the Jewish experience in America to give his audience a picture of the German Jews leaving the homeland and what encompassed their experiences in America.

Whereas many of the German gentiles were farmers and illiterates in the first great surge of immigration in the 1820s and 1830s, Hertzberg points out that the German Jews of this era were peddlers and middlemen as well as literate people. Their literacy gave them an advantage over the other German immigrants.

To illustrate his point, Hertzberg mentions that German Jews started as peddlers for a few years before opening a store. Once a store was opened, they would send for other relatives. This example illustrates the chain migration model that was prevalent for this group of people. Eventually, some merchants become financiers. Hertzberg draws on the case of Joseph Seligman and his brothers. Arriving in 1837, he and three brothers opened a store in Selma, Alabama in 1841. By the time of the Civil War, the Seligmans were the first Jewish immigrants to establish a financial firm. They did so in New York after establishing a dry goods importing house in New York about 20 years earlier. This information supports Paul Spickard’s notion in *Almost All Aliens* that some immigrants sought power to fit into American society. It is further supported by Jewish leaders being founders of the Republican Party in the 1850s. In fact, Jewish Republican Lewis N. Dembitz of Louisville made one of the three speeches nominating Lincoln at the Republican Convention in 1860.

Hertzberg’s book also describes the arrival of the Russian Jews, which really began a wave of anti-Semitism in the latter part of the 19th century. In fact, German Jews, already established as fruitful members of society, tried to distance themselves from the Russian Jews. It did not work. The bloody pogroms aimed at Jews in Russia from 1903-1905 eventually did bring German and Russia Jews together in America.

Hertzberg’s discussion of German Jews during and after World War II is also noteworthy. The discussion centers on the anti-Semitism that continued unabated during this time period and how a leader such as FDR dealt with it.

Professor Hosking undertakes his study of the Russian Empire operating from the premise that in its attempt to build, create, and hold an empire together, the leaders of the Russian state failed to build a Russian nation. This book focuses heavily on the role that the Russian people play in Russia over the years and less on the non-Russians living within its borders. It was of use to us because in every era the place of the Jews within the empire was explored. Hosking makes no excuses for the treatment of the Jews in the pogroms and details that treatment in detail.


In this work Greg King takes an approach to the wife of the last Tsar of Russia that is unlike previous biographers, though his conclusions are somewhat similar. Alexandra is a withdrawn, nearly antisocial wife who will exercise immense influence over her husband. Where previous investigations into her life focused on her as the Tsarina who became the downfall of Imperial Russia, King devotes much of his work to her early years, prior to coming to Russia. It is his contention that she arrives in Russia with her personality fully developed. She acts as much as reacts to create the problems that she creates, or makes worse, for her husband, and thus for Russia. We used this work to investigate the role of anti-Semitism in Nicholas’ reign, especially with regard to his uncle, the governor-general of Moscow.


This is the story of a Russian Jewish family living in Pennsylvania. When the father dies, the mother is left to care for the store with the help of her children. The story shows the trials and tribulations that such an immigrant family had to face in the new world. The struggles and successes make this a great story to share with students.

Although the book is based on the author’s family history, the story itself is fictional. The author took liberties with characters’ feelings and with events in the story. Therefore, this book could not be used as a primary source, but instead could be used as an example of how life was at that time.
Library of Congress, “From Haven to Home,”
http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/haventohome/

The website is found on the Library of Congress under the exhibitions page. This website provides a good overview of 350 years of Jewish life in America. The information is very thorough and complete. It offers the user a chance to get not only supportive information about immigrants but does a nice job of giving the complete picture about a time in history or specific event. One of the strengths about this site is the ease one has with moving around the site. One of the strengths of this site is the sliding timeline. It allows users to actively search a specific date in history or era in immigration. It breaks down different immigrant groups and has useful links for more resources. The website gathers most of the over 200 pieces of information from the Library of Congress, and other cultural institutions.


This source is an extremely useful source. It has a wealth of information and tables in it regarding the Russian Jewish immigrants. The first part is the one that I felt was the most useful for information about the big picture of the Russian Jews. It discusses the people in Russia, their immigration, the American opinion of them, and what they did once they got here. This book can be very useful for the background information, but also for how the Jews progressed through time for an ongoing study.

Students would be able to utilize this book if they are doing projects that would need this information. This book may be more useful from a teaching standpoint. The tables and statistics in the chart are striking and can be used in any number of ways.

Think Quest. “Immigration, the living mosaic of people, culture, and hope,”
http://library.thinkquest.org/20619/index.html

The website is called Immigration. The information on this site is accurate and thorough. A strength of this site is the way it breaks down individual immigrant groups. When you click on a specific group it gives good information and an informative time line. There is also a timeline link that would allow the user to see a timeline with all immigrant groups together. This website had separate links for German immigrants and Jewish immigrants. This web site would be useful for a lesson plan or project on various immigrant groups. It also has information about the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island that would be helpful to help students understand.
Annotated Websites

http://www.ailf.org/exhibits/jewish2004/jewish_history.shtml

The name of this website is The American Immigration Law Foundation. The site gives good information about the immigrant experience from the colonial period right through to modern day. There is a timeline that give most of the important or relative dates in immigrant history. This site would be useful for gathering foundation information for a lesson or discussion. It would be a good compliment to primary sources being used in a lesson on immigration.

The Arab-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, “Jewish Virtual Library,”

“The Jewish Virtual Library's purpose is to provide information about all facets of Jewish life: Judaism, Jews in the Diaspora, the history of Anti-Semitism, the rise of Zionism and Zionist thought, biographies of prominent Zionists, The Holocaust, Israel and Jerusalem, Israel's Wars, and Jewish holidays, Who is a Jew?” The Jewish Virtual Library is an internationally respected research aid for scholars of Jewish history, religion, and culture. The timeline and search engines were of help to us in our research and both could be easily accessed by students as young as middle school.

Center For Jewish History, “Jews in America: Our Story,”
http://www.jewsinamerica.org/

The name of this website is Jews in America. This site is very easy to view and use to find supporting materials. It gives the user two ways of finding information. You can use the timeline to find specific dates of historical events. The other option is the gallery. It gives you images of people, documents, and photographs of historically significant Jewish people. It was used as supporting material for one of the primary sources, which was the cartoon called “A Hint to the Hebrews.” This site would be a good site to use in finding historic events, people and times of Jewish people in America.


This website is the online version of an exhibit that has toured in Russia since 1995. It appears to have reputable sponsors, scholars, and institutions.
behind it, though it was difficult to validate credentials, because it is a Russian work. We feel confident in the legitimacy of the site because many facts, events, and images that appear here, also were found in other sources. This site is of value to our work because of the extent of the study done on the history of Jews in Russia and the Soviet Union. Along with a valuable timeline were many images, documents, and maps of great value to any study of Russian Jews. Their choice of issues and events included in the section “Nazism and the Holocaust” was interesting in comparison with other timelines of the era.

Jewish Women’s Archive, “Education,” http://jwa.org/teach

The Jewish Women’s Archive, founded in 1995 and based in Brookline, Massachusetts, is a substantial website. In particular, its Education section is outstanding. It contains primary sources as well as lesson plans. In believing that education is empowerment, it gives you a variety of references for the entire history of the Jewish people while still maintaining a focus on Jewish women.


The National Humanities Center, based in North Carolina, offers a fabulous website with essays by leading scholars in their subject areas. “Divining America: Religion in American History” is one of three subject areas with the others being “Nature Transformed” and “Freedom’s Story.” Under “Divining America,” there are religious articles for the 17th and 18th centuries, 19th century, and 20th century for every denomination. There are also links to useful websites from each essay. For instance, “The American Jewish Experience” is a subheading under the 19th century. The essay for the American Jewish Experience is well written and full of informative details. From this essay, there is a link to 10 major Jewish websites. These websites seem to be carefully selected at a high level.


This site gives an overview of the background of Russian Jews to begin with. It also includes quotations and excerpts regarding the experiences and
history of the Russian Jews. This is an excellent source for anyone with an interest in the history of this unique group. The quotations could also be printed and used in an activity with students.