

## Finding the Jewish Shakespeare: The Life and Legacy of Jacob Gordin (Judaic Traditions in Literature, Music, and Art)

Beth Kaplan



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In this revelatory biography, Beth Kaplan sets out to explore the true character and creative achievements of her great-grandfather Jacob Gordin, playwright extraordinaire and icon of the Yiddish stage. Born of an Anglican mother and a Jewish father who disdained religion, Kaplan knew little of her Judaic roots and less about her famed great-grandfather until beginning her research, more than twenty years ago. Shedding new light on Gordin and his world, Kaplan describes the commune he founded and led in Russia, his meteoric rise among Jewish New York's literati, the birth of such masterworks as Mirele Efros and The Jewish King Lear, and his seething feud with Abraham Cahan, powerful editor of the Daily Forward. Writing in a graceful and engaging style, she recaptures the Golden Age and colorful actors of Yiddish Theater from 1891 - 1910. Most significantly she discovers the emotional truth about the man himself, a tireless reformer who left a vital legacy to the theater and Jewish life worldwide.

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