

Arbeiten die Originalität und Unabhängigkeit des jungen Jaffé sowie sein leidenschaftliches Engagement für die jüdische Geschichte.

As a student in Berlin in the early 1840s, Philipp Jaffé (1819–1870) exhibited an acute interest in Jewish history. His earliest, hitherto unnoticed, publications – two articles printed under the initials “P. J....” in the proto-national Jewish weekly newspaper „Der Orient“ – deal with the persecutions of the Jews during the first two crusades. In the first article Jaffé dealt with the persecutions of 1099 solely on the basis of Latin chronicles, squarely denouncing the persecutors and identifying with the persecuted. In the subsequent discussion of the persecutions of 1146–47 Jaffé augmented the testimony of the Latin sources with Yoséf ha-Kohén’s sixteenth-century Hebrew paraphrase of Efrayim of Bonn’s eyewitness account, a paraphrase he read in a faulty English translation of 1835–36. Despite some flaws, these early articles attest to young Jaffé’s originality and independence of spirit, as well as to his passionate commitment to Jewish history.