

# The “Child Prodigy” and the “Wandering Mare”

## Pairing Chōmin's *A Discourse By Three Drunkards On Government* (1887), and Abramovitch's *The Mare* (1873) in the World History Classroom

By David B. Gordon

“ . . . if you look at the situation of Europe today, you'll see that those of us who try to survive on the Asian islands are like a lamp sputtering in a strong wind . . . ”<sup>1</sup>

—Champion in *A Discourse by Three Drunkards on Government*

“What you . . . call my evil doesn't cause as much trouble and pandemonium as your goodness. . . . You convince yourselves that you've created a paradise with your intelligence.”<sup>2</sup>

—Ashmedai (a master demon) to an intellectual youth in *The Mare*

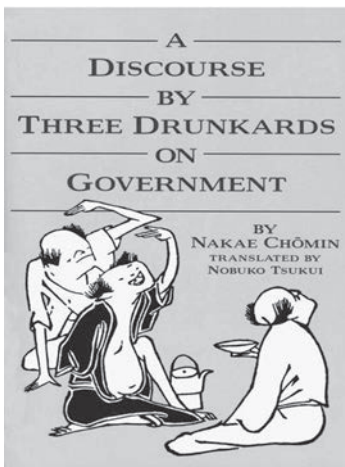
Nakae Chōmin's *A Discourse by Three Drunkards on Government* (1887) from Japan and Sholem Abramovitch's *The Mare* (1873) from Ukraine are two satirical novels that can engage students in high school and beyond. They highlight several major struggles—physical and moral alike—that peoples from outside the West faced in the nineteenth century. Such ethnicities as Japanese and Jews were trying to make sense of the swirl of changes—new social movements, technologies, national identities, and so on—that pressed upon them. Appropriately enough, a character in Chōmin's novel describes Japan as a “child prodigy” as though the country were nearly brand new.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, the central character in *The Mare* declares herself a “Wandering Mare,” a sign of East European Jews' more straitened circumstances.<sup>4</sup>

Happily, each of our novels exists in English translation, is fairly accessible, and provides plenty of food for thought. Using a question-and-answer format, I introduce these works and place them in their contexts below.

### What was the world like in the later nineteenth century?

What American author Mark Twain called the “raging, tearing, booming nineteenth century” was the era in which the world as we know it today first took shape.<sup>5</sup> It was an age in which factories, trains, steamships, telegraphs, professional sports, bacteriological medicine and modern advertising all helped to create a new and faster way of life. Unprecedented technologies such as the steam engine gave countries in Western Europe, along with the United States, huge advantages over potential rivals around the globe. Beyond the West, these changes attracted admiration and fear in equal measure.

Starting with the Meiji Restoration (1868), the Japanese government undertook a path of modernization—often Westernization—that led it to a degree of economic and military power by the later 1880s. This is when *A Discourse by Three Drunkards on Government* (henceforth, *Discourse*) was written. Over in Central Europe, some German Jews had embraced a path of religious modernization called Haskalah. This outlook featured



Nakae Chōmin. Source: *Wikimedia Commons* at <https://tinyurl.com/mrykv4vz>.

an emphasis on ethics and rationality as opposed to traditional rituals supported by biblical narratives now perceived as myths. Haskalah had begun to affect East Europe's Jewish communities—such as those in western Russia's “pale of settlement,” where Jews could settle—by the middle of the nineteenth century. The resulting mix of Jewish tradition, Haskalah, and outside anti-Jewish prejudice form the backdrop for *The Mare*.

### What are the main themes of our two books?

*Discourse* consists of a fictional conversation among three main characters. One is Gentleman, an idealistic Westernized figure advocating pacifism in accordance with an optimistic view of human evolution. The second is Champion, a cynical, apparently ex-samurai, figure advocating Japanese expansion in accordance with a “survival of the fittest” approach to evolution. The third is Master Nankai, the moderator and most moderate figure, at whose house the first two characters are meeting for drinks. Gentleman speaks first and longest, Champion second and at lesser length, and Master Nankai last and shortest. Yonehara Ken, a scholar of Meiji thought, argues that the length they speak stands in inverse proportion to Chōmin's actual support for their position: Gentleman is taking provokingly extreme positions; Champion is hardheaded in his grasp of human nature, though overeager to attack China; and Master Nankai, with his awareness of the winding path of reality and his willingness to accept achingly slow democratic reforms from above, comes closest to Chōmin's views. Yonehara's assessment may be correct, but it may also be, as others have argued, that each of these characters

represents a different side of Chōmin's own personality.<sup>6</sup>

*The Mare*, too, focuses on three characters. The protagonist is Izzy, a young Haskalah supporter who tries and fails to enter a Russian medical school.<sup>7</sup> The second major character is the mare, an elderly, talkative, habitually abused horse that Izzy encounters in visions he has before and after his failure to enter the school. The last character, who dominates the final third of the book, is Ashmedai, a powerful demon-figure. Ashmedai shows Izzy how much cruelty exists in the world—in particular, toward its Jewish

population—and how greatly his idealistic support of Haskalah amounts to willful ignorance of that cruelty.

In his idealism, Izzy resembles Gentleman. In his cynicism, Ashmedai resembles Champion. Does the mare resemble Master Nankai? The mare is intended to represent the Jewish people—she was a prince in ancient times—and its patient resilience in the face of ongoing persecution. Meanwhile, Master Nankai represents a segment of the Japanese people that seeks national strength in combination with democratic reforms. In *Discourse*, Master Nankai has the last word, while in *The Mare*, the mare has what its author treats as the wisest words. Comparisons between characters in the two books can be a good exercise for students reading both works.

### Who was Nakae Chōmin, author of *Discourse*?

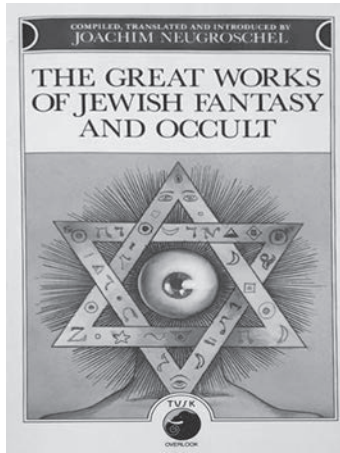
Nakae Chōmin (1847–1901) was a samurai from Tosa domain who became strongly attracted to Western learning. He left his domain as a teen and settled upon French as his primary foreign language while living in Nagasaki. In 1867, at age twenty, he became the official translator for France’s ambassador to the dying Tokugawa regime. While serving in that capacity, the Tosa Incident took place: French soldiers attacked Tosa samurai guarding the city of Sakai, leading the samurai to kill eleven of the soldiers. In ensuing negotiations, the French and new Meiji Japanese governments agreed to have twenty (ultimately, eleven) Tosa samurai commit *seppuku* (ritual suicide) to restore the peace. Chōmin does not record his response to this event, but he would have been the ambassador’s official translator at the time. It probably led to his subsequent deep solemnity—oddly combined with wiseacre tendencies—with respect to Japanese political affairs.<sup>8</sup>

Several years later, Chōmin convinced Home Minister Ōkubo Toshimichi to allow him to take part in the Japanese government’s Iwakura Mission to Europe in 1871–1873. Chōmin prolonged his stay in France to study under republican thinkers such as Émile Acolas. After returning to Japan, he translated Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Social Contract* into Japanese, earning him the nickname “Rousseau of the Orient.”<sup>9</sup> He also wrote *Discourse*. Soon afterward, when Japan’s Meiji Constitution established the Diet assembly, he ran for and briefly participated in parliamentary politics as well. Before dying at age fifty-four, he wrote a work called *One Year and a Half*, which outlined his atheistic, materialistic philosophy.

### Why did Chōmin write *Discourse*?

Chōmin wrote the book to dramatize different perspectives on Japan’s circumstances in the 1880s. The country was at an inflection point: Should it try to cooperate with or even idealistically transform the existing Eurocentric world order? Should it aim for what was best for itself alone? Or should it keep to its course that combined boldness (rapid industrialization) with conservatism (stabilization of power beneath the emperor’s advisors)? Part of what stands out about the book is that it doesn’t loudly assert any one viewpoint but instead allows various perspectives to show their strengths and weaknesses. Even if Master Nankai is the favored character—an effect counterbalanced by Chōmin’s depiction of him as eccentric and forever eager to drink—we spend much of our time, while reading, considering the opinions of his more strident companions.

Chōmin’s specific inspiration in writing the book may well have been a book by then pro-democracy activist Tokutomi Sohō the year before: *The*



Sholem Abramovitch (Mendele Mokher Seforim). Source: The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research website at <https://tinyurl.com/3pmfz8rk>.

*Future Japan* (1886).<sup>10</sup> This work, following the ideas of Herbert Spencer, argued that societies evolve from being military-centered to being economy-centered. It contended that democratic, economy-centered societies rightfully embrace peace, while autocratic, military-centered ones adamantly reject it. Tokutomi made the shift to democracy appear inevitable—something that Chōmin criticizes by having his foil, Gentleman, speak grandly of a “god of evolution” in charge of human progress.<sup>11</sup>

### Who was Sholem Abramovitch, author of *The Mare*?

Sholem Abramovitch was born in 1835 or 1836 (died 1917) in today’s Belarus as the son of a rabbi who combined Orthodoxy with influence from the Haskalah movement. When his father died, Sholem had just entered his teenage years. To earn a living, he joined a beggar companion and headed south to today’s Ukraine, where he became a tutor. An essay he wrote about education was published in a Hebrew journal and the resulting acclaim jumpstarted his literary career. In the 1860s, he composed several pro-Haskalah fictional works about the lives of ordinary Jews, both those who were poor (whose circumstances he knew through his stint as a beggar) and those, usually middle class, who were attracted to Haskalah ideas. Each work was introduced by “Mendele Mokher Seforim”—meaning “Mendele the Traveling Bookseller”—a fictional figure who commented humorously and with heavy irony on the action to come in the text. Writers and fans often refer to Abramovitch by the name of this character even now.

The piece Abramovitch wrote directly before *The Mare* was a play called *The Tax*. This was a bitter work criticizing wealthy Jewish leaders in a Ukrainian community (probably based on his then-hometown of Berdichev). The Russian government, then in charge of Ukraine and much of Eastern Europe, imposed an extra tax on kosher meat without compensating those who collected it. Some collectors in the Jewish community greatly increased the tax for their own profit, a practice that Abramovitch depicted and strongly condemned.

### Why did Abramovitch write *The Mare*?

In 1869, Abramovitch dedicated *The Tax* to the mayor of the Ukrainian city of Odessa, crediting him with enlightened generosity. However, within two years a major pogrom—a massive physical attack on the local Jewish community—occurred in the city with the mayor’s evident encouragement. This led Abramovitch to rethink his opinion about “enlightenment” itself: East European Jews typically rejected it, while gentiles (non-Jews) often retained anti-Jewish prejudices even when Jews strove to assimilate into the surrounding society. Abramovitch decided that Haskalah—the enlightenment project—as it stood was not serving Jews well. Instead, it was an insistence on equality and justice, as embodied in a character like the mare, that represented a path forward. In this way, Abramovitch substantially revised the standpoint he set forth in *The Tax*: His new view was that unfair pressures from gentile government authorities created the deepest problems East European Jews faced.<sup>12</sup>

### What role did satire play in *Discourse*?

In general, satire is the use of an obvious fiction—often involving humorous exaggeration—to expose an actual individual’s (or group’s) foolishness and/or wickedness.<sup>13</sup> In *Discourse*, much of the satire is directed at Gentleman, the Tokutomi-like figure who believes that democracy and trade can

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## Comparing impressions from our two books, Japan is moving forward, albeit in an ominous international context, while East Europe's Jews are nearly checkmated by a combination of external pressures and internal mindsets.

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produce an entirely peaceful world. Champion exposes Gentleman's pacifism as dangerously naïve, asking, for example, what would happen if a powerful foreign country invaded Japan despite its pacifism (Gentleman states that Japanese should ask the invaders to leave and submit to being shot if they refuse).<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, Master Nankai treats Gentleman as simple-minded about social evolution, which he maintains is actually anything but simple and is driven by human decisions rather than a god of evolution acting through those decisions. In addition, Gentleman self-satirizes to a degree with his persistent use of such rigid phrases as "the logic of arithmetic" as he presents his opinions on historical trends.<sup>15</sup>

### What role did satire play in *The Mare*?

In *The Mare*, much of the satire is directed at Izzy—like Gentleman, a promoter of modern-day enlightenment. Izzy, the stalwart supporter of Haskalah, is slowly schooled by sarcasm from the mare and cynicism from Ashmedai (who among other antics flies Izzy into the air to show him a pogrom underway) to realize that no amount of modern education can save the Jewish people. Rather, the mare, and the book, maintain that justice—social equality—is what Jews of the era need most. Here as in *Discourse*, the putatively enlightened figure is regarded as foolish rather than wicked. Indeed, when the demonic Ashmedai presses Izzy near the end to join his legion of deceptively "righteous" community leaders, Izzy refuses. With this act of courage—for which Ashmedai flings him down to the earth—Izzy places himself beyond further satire.

### How did government censorship—Japan's, Russia's—affect these works?

The Meiji Japanese government was known to censor works by figures active in the Popular Rights Movement, which in the 1870s and 1880s sought direct democratic representation for large numbers of male Japanese. Chōmin managed to escape censorship for *Discourse*, evidently because he put ideas in the mouths of various characters without overtly favoring one character over the others. In this respect, it was apt that Chōmin had Champion express the desire that Japan invade "a large country" in Asia or Africa, while claiming to have forgotten its name (China).<sup>16</sup> This feint apparently satisfied the Meiji government's censors, who wished to preserve Japan's friendly relations with its neighbor.

Like Meiji Japan, Tsarist Russia—which then ruled over most of today's Ukraine and other East European territories—often engaged in censorship. For example, after the pogrom took place in Odessa in 1871, the Russian Jewish press was prohibited from mentioning it. Accordingly, when Abramovitch sought to depict a pogrom in *The Mare*, he placed it in Romania, which lay beyond Russian control. He did likewise when he portrayed Christian priests writing antisemitic (i.e., anti-Jewish) screeds: He focused on Catholic priests rather than Russian Orthodox priests engaged in similar behavior. In this way, he could write about what readers knew to be taking place in Russia without accusing Russia directly.<sup>17</sup>

The Yiddish-language edition of *The Mare* escaped censorship. However, Tsarist authorities prohibited its translation into either Polish or Russian. They also disallowed the printing of a second edition for sixteen years despite its popularity. During his long career, *The Mare* was Abramovitch's only work that courted conflict with gentile political authorities.

### How do the circumstances of Japanese and of East European Jews come across differently when the two books are read side by side?

Japan appears as a country that has recently changed massively through political and industrial transformation. It is what Gentleman terms a "child prodigy," even as he states that "[t]here is no way of predicting what this child will be like in future."<sup>18</sup> Indeed, both Gentleman and Champion express unease about Japan's safety in a Western-dominated modern world.<sup>19</sup> Even while they continue to fear foreign invasion, however, Master Nankai believes this to be unlikely so long as Japan's military is strong enough for defensive purposes.<sup>20</sup> It is worth underscoring that Japan would win the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895—in which China and Japan battled over influence over Korea—less than ten years after *Discourse*'s publication. The book would doubtless have taken a less anxious tone had it been written a decade later.

In contrast, East European Jews in *The Mare* come across as poor, overworked, sometimes superstitious, and often vulnerable to the anti-Jewish prejudices of surrounding governments and populations. They are, in short, the "Wandering Mare." This is how the mare character expresses what she—representing the Jewish people allegorically—became once she lost her ancient status as prince. In using this phrase, Abramovitch is adjusting the medieval European myth of a "wandering Jew," condemned to traverse the earth until the second coming of Christ. At a minimum, he suggests, Jews will need to be able to pursue their livelihoods and happiness without poverty and the threat of violence continuously holding them back. Comparing impressions from our two books, Japan is moving forward, albeit in an ominous international context, while East Europe's Jews are nearly checkmated by a combination of external pressures and internal mindsets.

In addition to differences in the situations of the two peoples, the authors diverge in personal circumstance: Chōmin came from the lower portion of the privileged samurai class, while Abramovitch experienced severe poverty after his father's death and had to hide from potential gentile attackers in the above-mentioned Odessa pogrom of 1871.

### How was *Discourse* received in Japan? How was *The Mare* received in Eastern Europe?

*Discourse* was published in a single edition in 1887 and was not republished until long afterward. Meiji statesman Inoue Kowashi met with Chōmin and Tokutomi around the time of *Discourse*'s publication. When Inoue learned of its contents, he stated that only intellectuals would read it: It would not sell as well as *Strange Encounters with Beautiful Women*, a longer work of the same period that combined ideas from the Popular Rights Movement with international settings and love scenes.<sup>21</sup> And indeed, *Discourse* sold fewer copies than that work.<sup>22</sup> In the later 1940s, after Japan's defeat in World War II, the book gained a new lease on life because of the renewed relevance of its themes of democracy (which Japan was now embracing) and militarism (which it was now eschewing). It also helped that multiple postwar renderings of the book made it newly accessible to an audience that could no longer understand the old-fashioned phraseology of the original Meiji text.<sup>23</sup>

As for *The Mare*, it too was primarily read by intellectuals: in particular, educated individuals in small towns (*shtetlekh*) influenced by both Jewish tradition and Haskalah. This social class read and quoted the book enthusiastically and debated its various allegorical meanings.<sup>24</sup> Years later, Abramovitch's funeral in Odessa would be attended by some 50,000 Jews



from the region. It is worth highlighting that *The Mare* was one of the first important modern novels written in the Yiddish language. Yiddish is based largely on the grammar and pronunciation of middle high German, with a certain amount of Hebrew and Slavic (particularly Polish and Russian) vocabulary mixed in. Before modern times, it was the primary language of everyday life in East European Jewish communities. However, it lacked the cachet of Hebrew, which was used for prayer and formal religious study. Although a few writers had tried to use Yiddish to express Haskalah ideas in fiction, Abramovitch's works of the 1870s—centrally including *The Mare*—set forth a powerful new model of what modern Yiddish literature could express about the dilemmas Jews faced.<sup>25</sup>

### **What happened subsequently to Japan and to East European Jewry, respectively? Would our authors have been likely to anticipate the events that took place?**

A few events have already been alluded to. Japan would go on to fight the Sino-Japanese (1894–1895) and Russo-Japanese (1904–1905) wars for control over nearby Korea. Later, in the context of the global Great Depression (1929–1939), the Japanese government would embrace militarism—as Champion had sought—and invaded a number of its neighbors in East and Southeast Asia, including China. Japan's war with the United States (1941–1945) was capped by the horrific atomic bombings of two Japanese cities and followed by seven years of Allied Occupation and subsequent rapid economic growth. Chōmin would not have foreseen these events, though Master Nankai in *Discourse* counseled against Champion's myopic emphasis on military strength.<sup>26</sup> In any case, the rise-hubris-fall-revival sequence would testify to Chōmin's theme that history is shaped by its actors—the flawed but resilient human beings that make decisions at all levels of society.

In the wake of Eastern Europe's first modern pogroms—particularly those of 1881, when the Russian government falsely blamed Jews for the assassination of Tsar Alexander II—Jewish communities began to focus on their future safety. Two million Jews immigrated to the US over the next forty years, while others stayed in Eastern Europe to found the Zionist movement that aimed to create a Jewish state in the Middle East. Still other Jews sought Jewish communal autonomy within their respective countries. In the 1930s, longstanding economic tumult in Germany led to the calamitous election of the Nazi party. Under the Nazis, Germany conquered much of Europe and exterminated approximately 6,000,000 Jews, most of them in Poland and Russia. Jewish life would subsequently revive in the US, the newly formed state of Israel, and elsewhere. Abramovitch showed no sign of anticipating the Nazi Holocaust, though such events as World War I (1914–1918) made him strongly pessimistic.<sup>27</sup> His concern for the poor of Eastern Europe led him, at the time of *The Mare* and later, to focus on improving conditions where they lived rather than calling for immigration to the US or Middle East.

### **Are there any drawbacks to using *Discourse* or *The Mare*?**

*Discourse* includes substantial discussion about relations among European countries. The metaphors that the speakers use—for example, Master Nankai comparing an arms race between France and Germany to a contest between children to make the biggest snowball—are lively and engaging.<sup>28</sup> Still, if students do not have at least some background about European history, such passages may have less flavor overall. It is also worth keeping in mind that the entire book consists of an extended, wide-ranging conversation among three figures. The drama lies in the interchange of ideas—albeit dramatic ones—rather than in physical actions that characters undertake or incur. A certain level of intellectual maturity may be necessary to handle this.

In contrast, *The Mare* contains numerous dramatic scenes, some of which turn out to be visions from the fertile mind of the main character, Izzy. Overall, the courageousness of the book lies in its willingness to call

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out antisemitism as the real reason for the misery of East European Jewish communities. Despite this, there are passages in the text that—like *The Tax*—concentrate on Jews mistreating other Jews, financially as well as in other respects. Read out of context, such passages can overlap uncomfortably with anti-Jewish prejudices that have gained a bit of a foothold in the US. If an instructor decides to use only certain parts of *The Mare*, the chapters that present such themes as mercy versus justice (chapters 13–16) and Ashmedai's demonic promotion of antisemitism (chapters 19–23) may be good to concentrate on.

### **Are there different English editions of these books? If so, which is the best to use?**

There are two English translations of each work. Owing to Chōmin's training in Chinese classics and frequent use of their idioms, his *Discourse* presents extra challenges for prospective translators. The first English translation, by Margaret B. Dardess, is only available in a rare out-of-print volume. A slightly later translation by Nobuko Tsukui remains in print and reads very accessibly for both students and general readers.<sup>29</sup>

*The Mare* has likewise been translated twice into English. The first translation is by Moshe Spiegel and is titled *The Nag*. It has long been out of print and is on occasion difficult to follow owing to its use of 1950s slang. The second translation is by Joachim Neugroschel and appears within a larger volume, also out of print, titled *Yenne Velt*.<sup>30</sup> The latter is definitely a smoother translation for students, though it telescopes the phrasing of certain Yiddish passages. It is worth noting that both translations are based on Abramovitch's later, 1911, expansion of the original text of 1873. The original text contained fewer chapters (sixteen versus twenty-four) and includes less elaboration on Ashmedai's dramatic flight above the earth with Izzy.

### **How might these books—or portions of them—enhance a course that spends serious time on the nineteenth-century world?**

*Discourse* and *The Mare* each underscore the fact that people in the nineteenth century held widely divergent views of the challenges they faced. A Westernized Japanese intellectual, a nationalistic partisan for samurai values, and a political centrist with drinking issues did not see Japan's future the same way. Neither did a Haskalah idealist, a cynical demon, and a long-lived, embattled mare hold the same views about where the Jewish people were headed. As we have seen, even an allegiance to the concept of evolution did not guarantee the same outlook: In *Discourse*, Gentleman concluded from this concept that progress is inevitable, while Champion concluded from it that international conflict will never end. In the nineteenth century, as in our own time, disagreements ran deep.

It is especially noteworthy that our authors were similar ages when they wrote the books under discussion: Chōmin was forty-one while Abramovitch was thirty-seven. By this point in life, they had outgrown certain youthful enthusiasms, such as a belief that education alone could solve all problems (along these lines, the idealistic Izzy was at his most intense when arguing for “enlightenment and education,” while the optimistic Gentleman shouted, “Scholars! We need scholars!”).<sup>31</sup> Despite having moved past their youth, our authors had not become so entrenched in a single viewpoint that they failed to take other perspectives seriously. For example, at

the end of these works, Chōmin's realistic Nankai still sought to have Japan move toward greater equality, while Abramovitch's now-reflective Izzy still contended with the superstitious beliefs of his mother and neighbors.<sup>32</sup> Sweeping solutions might be wrong, but efforts to improve one's community still mattered.

As to how to carry out such improvement, our authors wisely refrain from laying out detailed programs. Indeed, what stays the most with the reader about these books is their raw honesty. Political scientist Timothy V. Kaufman-Osborn has written of *Discourse* that its "anticlimactic conclusions and unresolved tensions, communicating the depth of Japan's ambivalence about the West, are the signs of its truth."<sup>33</sup> Literary scholar Ruth Wisse, in turn, has described *The Mare* as "the most uninhibited" of Abramovitch's works and "politically honest to a degree that has rarely been matched in modern Jewish fiction."<sup>34</sup> These books do not provide final answers. Instead, they remind their readers that people living in the past—in this case, the nineteenth century—thought and felt just as deeply about the issues that they faced in their world of railroads and telegraphs, as we do today, in our world of microchips and artificial intelligence. ♦

## NOTES

1. Nakae Chōmin, *A Discourse by Three Drunkards on Government*, trans. Nobuko Tsukui (Boston: Weatherhill, 1984), 117.
2. Mendele Moykher-Sforim (Sholem Abramovitch), "The Mare," in Joachim Neugroschel, trans., *Yenne Velt: The Great Works of Jewish Fantasy and Occult*, vol. II (New York: Stonehill Publ. Co., 1976), 276–277. Note that Abramovitch's penname, Mendele Moykher-Sforim, appears in the relevant English literature with various spellings.
3. Chōmin, *Discourse*, 88.
4. Neugroschel, *Yenne Welt*, 213.
5. Paul Fatout, ed., *Mark Twain Speaking* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1976), 244.
6. Yonehara Ken, *Nakae Chōmin to sono jidai* (Kyoto: Shōwadō, 1989), 143–158; see especially 143 and 156–157.

7. I am using the rendering of the protagonist's name that is employed in Neugroschel, *Yenne Velt*. His name in the original Yiddish text is "Isrolik," a Russified version of "Israel."
8. Discussion of Chōmin's solemn approach to politics (though not of the Tosa Incident) appears in Maruyama Masao, "Nihon shisōshi ni okeru mondōtai no keifu," in Kinoshita Junji, et al., eds., *Nakae Chōmin no sekai: Sansujin keirin mondō o yomu* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1977), 209–210.
9. See Kawano Kenji, "Tōyō no Rusō—Nakae Chōmin" in Kawano Kenji, ed., *Nihon no meicho*, vol. 36, *Nakae Chōmin* (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1979), 38–44.
10. Tokutomi Sohō, *The Future Japan*, trans. Vinh Sinh, et al. (Edmonton: U. of Alberta Pr., 1989).
11. Yonehara, *Nakae Chōmin*, 146–147.
12. Ruth R. Wisse, *The Jewish Intellectual and the Jews: The Case of Di Kliatshe (The Mare) by Mendele Mocher Sforim* (San Francisco: Congregation Emanu-el, 1992), 6–7, 25n8.
13. For a discussion of the distinction between Horatian satire (directed at fools) and Juvenalian satire (directed at knaves), see Ronald Paulson, "The Fictions of Satire," in Ronald Paulson, ed., *Satire: Modern Essays in Criticism* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 340–359.
14. Chōmin, *Discourse*, 91.
15. The first use appears in Chōmin, *Discourse*, 51.
16. *Ibid.*, 99.
17. Wisse, *Jewish Intellectual*, 16.
18. Chōmin, *Discourse*, 88.
19. *Ibid.*, 132.
20. *Ibid.*, 133.
21. For an excerpt from this book in English translation, see J. Thomas Rimer and Van C. Gessel, eds., *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Japanese Literature, Vol. 1: From Restoration to Occupation, 1868–1945* (New York: Columbia UP, 2005), 30–45.
22. Episode recounted in Yonehara, *Nakae Chōmin*, 142.
23. The first postwar rendering, which also includes the original Meiji-era text, appears in Kuwabara Takeo and Shimada Kenji, *Sansujin keirin mondō* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1965).
24. Shmuel Niger (increasingly referred to in secondary literature as Shmuel Charney), *Mendele Moykher Sforim* (Chicago: L. M. Stein, 1936), 134–136. I am indebted to Dr. Joshua Price, Lector of Yiddish at Yale University, for his kind assistance with challenging passages in the original Yiddish text.
25. In the 1880s, famed Yiddish novelist Sholem Aleichem dubbed Abramovitch "the grandfather" of Yiddish literature, a title that stuck. See <https://tinyurl.com/bdhszpz4>.
26. Chōmin, *Discourse*, 132–136.
27. Charles A. Madison, *Yiddish Literature: Its Scope and Major Writers* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publ. Co., 1968), 48.
28. Chōmin, *Discourse*, 130.
29. Margaret B. Dardess, *A Discourse on Government: Nakae Chōmin and his Sansujin keirin mondō*, Occasional Paper No. 10 (Bellingham, WA: Western Washington State College, 1977). The Nobuko Tsukui translation is listed under endnote 1.
30. Mendele Mocher Sforim, *The Nag*, trans. Moshe Spiegel (New York: Beechhurst Pr., 1955). The Joachim Neugroschel translation is listed under endnote 2.
31. Neugroschel, *Yenne Velt*, 271; Chōmin, *Discourse*, 90.
32. Chōmin, *Discourse*, 127–9; Neugroschel, *Yenne Velt*, 315–317.
33. Timothy V. Kaufman-Osborn, "Rousseau in Kimono: Nakae Chōmin and the Japanese Enlightenment," *Political Theory*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Feb. 1992), 77.
34. Wisse, *Jewish Intellectual*, 9.

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