



## Memoirs of a Grandmother: Scenes from the Cultural History of the Jews of Russia in the Nineteenth Century, Volume One (Stanford Studies in Jewish History and C)

By Pauline Wengeroff



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Pauline Wengeroff, the only nineteenth-century Russian Jewish woman to publish a memoir, sets out to illuminate the "cultural history of the Jews of Russia" in the period of Jewish "enlightenment," when traditional culture began to disintegrate and Jews became modern. Wengeroff, a gifted writer and astute social observer, paints a rich portrait of both traditional and modernizing Jewish societies in an extraordinary way, focusing on women and the family and offering a gendered account (and indictment) of assimilation. In Volume 1 of *Memoirs of a Grandmother*, Wengeroff depicts traditional Jewish society, including the religious culture of women, during the reign of Tsar Nicholas I, who wished "his" Jews to be acculturated to modern Russian life.



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## Editorial Review

### Review

"This is a stunning piece of work. Wengeroff's recreation of a life during the transition from traditional to modern Jewish culture in 19th century Russia is engrossing, powerfully written, and often lyric. As a window into women's lives and women's perspective on their community's life, this is an almost unparalleled source. Magnus's commentary is brilliant: she has a fine eye for what needs to be annotated and is remarkably astute about the central themes of the memoir." (Carol Berkin *CHOICE*)

"[*Memoirs of a Grandmother*] will be a standard reference work and a starting point for a great deal of research. The readability of the translation and the user-friendly nature of the notes make use of this book very enjoyable, which is not something to be taken for granted these days. The publication of the second volume is eagerly anticipated." (Shaul Stampfer)

"[T]hanks to Shulamit S. Magnus, Wengeroff's latest and most devoted editor and translator, English speakers have an opportunity to read a faithful and complete translation . . . of this extraordinary book." (*Jewish Review of Books*)

"With the publication of the first volume of her edition on Pauline Wengeroff's memoirs, Shulamit Mangus has once again significantly advanced the conversation regarding Wengeroff and her work. Graduate students and scholars who do not know German, and even those who do, will benefit from Magus' fluid translation and extensive research. Her incisive introduction draws on research into the period, as well as recent scholarship on Wengeroff." (*Eliyana R. Adler, Shofar*)

"Highly recommended as a scholarly but also a highly readable account by an articulate, intelligent woman." (Susanne M. Batzdorff)

### About the Author

Shulamit S. Magnus is Associate Professor of Jewish Studies and History and Chair of Jewish Studies at Oberlin College. She is the author of *Jewish Emancipation in a German City: Cologne, 1798–1871* (Stanford University Press, 1997).

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