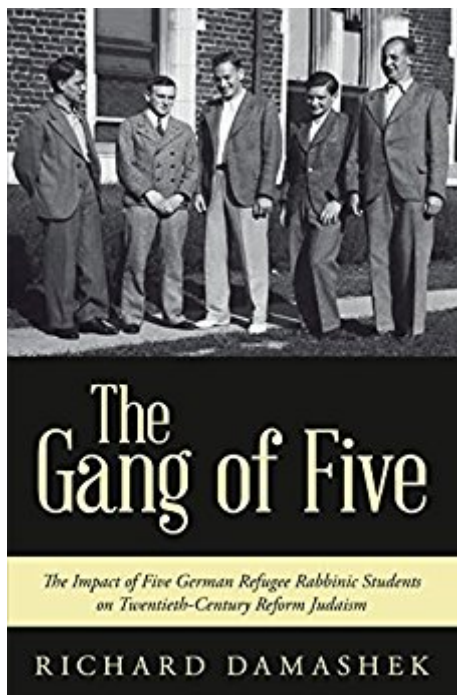




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The Gang Of Five: The Impact Of Five German Refugee Rabbinic Students On Twentieth-Century Reform Judaism



Synopsis

This is not just a Jewish story; this is an American story. Dan Wolf, son of Rabbi Alfred Wolf Richard Damashek, PhD, follows his captivating biography, *A Brand Plucked from the Fire*, with another meticulously researched work about the tremendous impact five German rabbinical students had on Reform Judaism and the Jewish community in America. When W. Gunther Plaut, Herman Schaalman, Wolli Kaelter, Alfred Wolf, and Leo Lichtenberg arrived in the United States after fleeing Nazi Germany, they had no plans to rebel against the Reform Judaism of the day, but the contributions of these five men would dramatically alter its course and shape its destiny. Beginning with their births during World War I, Damashek tells the stories of their early lives, continuing through their escape from Hitler's regime in 1935, their adaptations to their new country, and their eventual role in shaping twentieth century Reform Judaism. These five men were refugees and religious outsiders, who helped transform their new religious community. Through their writings and their leadership, they helped promote new and exciting religious experiences for their synagogues and for Reform Judaism around the world. Their contributions to youth summer camping helped revitalize and infuse a much-needed spirituality into late twentieth century Reform Judaism that helped set the stage for its ongoing development. *The Gang of Five* is a celebration of their lives, their rabbinate, and their contributions to Reform Judaism.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This wonderful little book provides great insight into 20th century Reform Judaism. Retired Professor Damashek writes about five Rabbis who transformed Judaism in the modern world. In 1935 five Jewish German refugees came to study at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, and changed the face of American Judaism. Damashek writes about their impact on us and our impact on them. One of them, Gunther Plaut, was the editor of the Reform Torah published in 1981 and still in use today in Reform Synagogues. He studied with Martin Buber and Abraham Joshua Heschel, and for students of Judaism this connection is important for understanding changing 21st Century Judaism. Professor Tom Rose

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