
Resisters and Accommodators: Varieties of Orthodox Rabbis in America, 1886–1983

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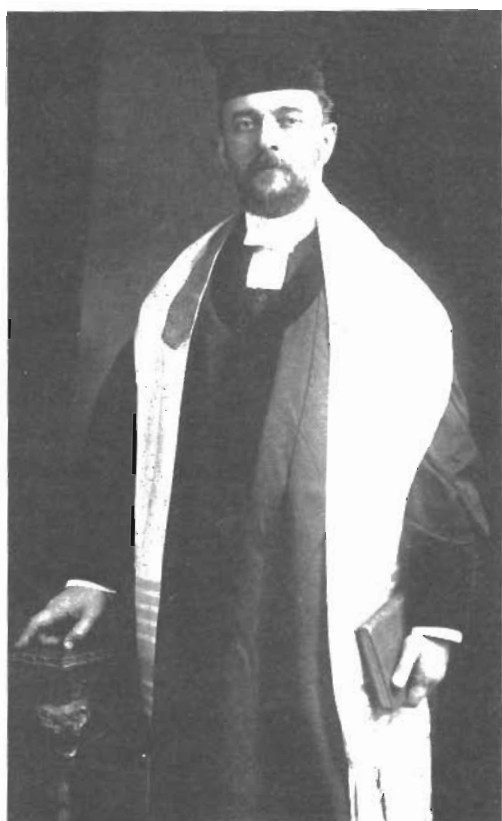
Introduction:
Orthodox Rabbis and Institution Building,
1886–1887

On January 31, 1886, Orthodox Rabbis Sabato Morais of Philadelphia, Abraham Pereira Mendes of Newport, Henry Schneeberger of Baltimore, and Bernard Drachman of New York attended a meeting in the vestry rooms of Manhattan's Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue Shearith Israel hosted by Rabbi Henry Pereira Mendes, minister of that oldest Jewish congregation in America. They were brought together to plan an institutional response to the growth of the American Reform movement. Specifically they were concerned with the emergence of Hebrew Union College as a training center for American rabbis and with the liberal denomination's adoption of its 1885 Pittsburgh Platform, "designed," in the words of one contemporary critic, "to deal a mortal blow to Orthodox Judaism."¹ They were joined at this and subsequent deliberations by, among others, New York Rabbis Alexander Kohut, Aaron Wise, and Henry S. Jacobs, Philadelphia's Marcus Jastrow, and Baltimore's Aaron Bettelheim. The latter clerical figures, though possessed of rabbinical training similar in style to that of their Orthodox colleagues, had by the time of these conclaves publicly articulated, and were perceived as supporting, interpretations of Judaism at variance with contemporary Orthodox teachings. These men also served in congregations which deviated liturgically from Orthodox practice.² They represented what later denominational leaders and historians would describe as Conservative Judaism in nineteenth century America.³ The Jewish Theological Seminary of America was the final product of their cooperative labors; a "Jewish Institute of



Rabbi Samuel Belkin
(1911-1976)
Courtesy Yeshiva University Archives

Rabbi Philip Hillel Klein
(1849-1926)
Courtesy Yeshiva University Archives



Rabbi Bernard Drachman
(1861-1945)



Rabbi Bernard Revel
(1885-1940)
Courtesy Yeshiva University Archives



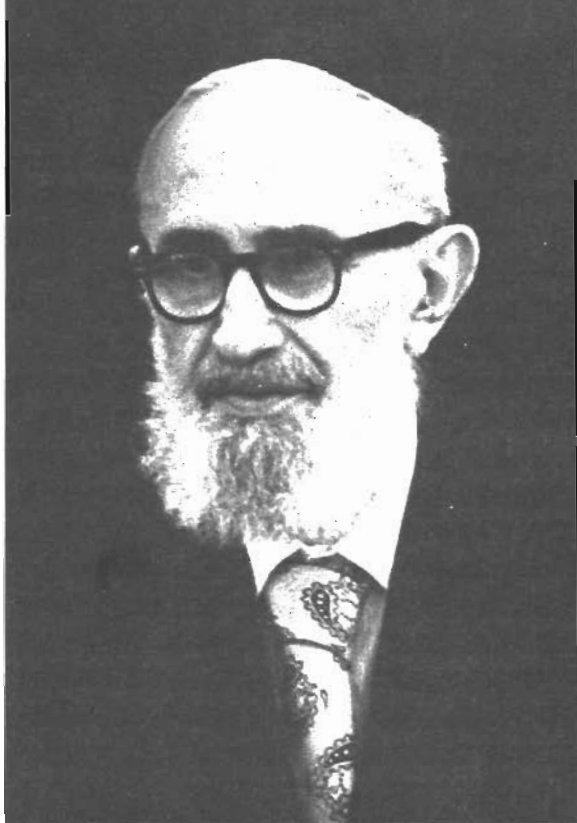
Rabbi Herschel Schacter
(born 1917)
Courtesy Yeshiva University Archives



Rabbi Israel Miller
(born 1918)
Courtesy Yeshiva University Archives



Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik
(born 1903)
Courtesy Yeshiva University Archives

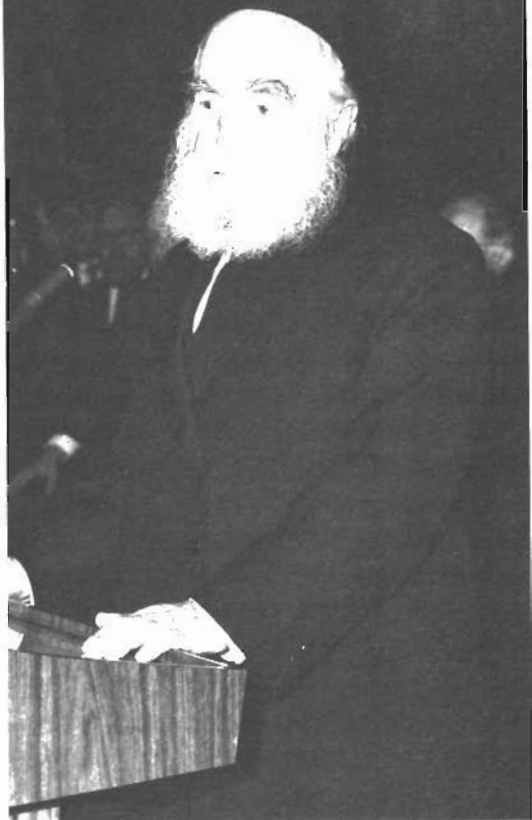


Rabbi Norman Lamm
(born 1927)
president, Yeshiva University
Courtesy Yeshiva University Archives





Rabbi Jacob Joseph
(1848-1902)



Rabbi Moshe Feinstein
(born 1895)

Courtesy Agudath Israel of America Archives



Rabbi Yakov Yitchak Ruderman
(born 1899)

Courtesy Agudath Israel of America Archives



Rabbi Eliezer Silver
(1882-1968)



Rabbi Joseph Breuer (above)
(1882-1980)

Courtesy Agudath Israel of America Archives

Rabbi Eliyahu Meir Bloch (top, l.)
(1894-1955)

Courtesy Agudath Israel of America Archives



Rabbi Aaron Kotler (left)
(1891-1962)

Courtesy Agudath Israel of America Archives

Rabbi Reuven Grozowsky (below)
(1888-1958)

Courtesy Agudath Israel of America Archives



Learning” which its first president, Sabato Morais, prayed would preserve “Historical and Traditional Judaism . . . by educating, training and inspiring teachers—rabbis who would stand for the ‘Torah and Testimony.’ ” Graduates would use “their knowledge of Jewish learning, literature, history, ideals and Jewish Science” to instruct American Jewry how “to live as a power for human uplift and as a factor in the evolution of world civilization in both Americas.”⁴

Institution building was also in the air several blocks south on New York’s Lower East Side when just a year later, the Association of American Orthodox Hebrew Congregations met at Norfolk Street’s Beis Hamedrash Ha-Gadol to search for a chief rabbi for the city. They were desirous of putting an end to the disorganization and lack of discipline which characterized religious life in the ghetto. Perhaps inspired by the publication that same year of immigrant Rabbi Moses Weinberger’s lament on contemporary nonobservance and call for an authoritative religious officialdom as a key solution to the dilemma, this group of Orthodox laymen looked to Western and Eastern European seats of learning both for guidance and ultimately for a candidate. They hoped to find a zealous fighter of uncommon ability who would stop “open and flagrant desecration of the Sabbath, the neglect of dietary laws, and the formation of various shades of Orthodoxy and Reform.” Most specifically, “his mission” would be “to remove the stumbling blocks from before our people . . . through his scrupulous supervision with an open eye the *shohatim* and all other matters of holiness.” After much deliberation and some politicking on both sides of the Atlantic, an agreement was reached in April 1888 between the association and Rabbi Jacob Joseph of Vilna. Three months later, the downtown community rejoiced when the renowned sage and preacher assumed his post in America.⁵

Central figures in each of these institutional initiatives called themselves Orthodox rabbis.⁶ But they shared little in common. The most striking difference between the more traditional element in the Seminary coalition and the chief rabbi chosen by the downtown religious association was their respective educational backgrounds. The East European-born Rabbi Jacob Joseph received the traditional *heder* and yeshiva schooling in his hometown of Krohze, Lithuania, where he showed great promise as a scholar and potential religious leader. His quest for advanced training led him to the Volozin Yeshiva, where he

became a disciple of Rabbi Hirsch Leib Berlin and Rabbi Israel Salanter. Rabbi Joseph's homiletic and literary skills made him an accomplished speaker and writer in Hebrew and Yiddish. He was not exposed to formal education in the secular culture of the land of his birth. Not so his Sephardic counterparts, Morais and the Mendeses. A large part of their educational training was not in the world of the rabbis but in the realm of general knowledge. The Italian-born Morais attended the University of Pisa, while the younger, British-born Mendes studied first at University College, London, and then earned a medical degree at the University of the City of New York. Still, from early youth they were destined to become rabbis. Family traditions or, in Morais's case, close association with a leading rabbi of the home country provided the basis for their interest in and training for the Orthodox ministry of Western Europe and finally of America.⁷

On the other hand, the road to the Orthodox rabbinate of American-born Bernard Drachman and Henry W. Schneeberger was by no means preordained. Drachman was born in New York City in 1861 to Galician and Bavarian parents and was raised in Jersey City, New Jersey, in a community which then housed but twenty or thirty Jewish families. By his own account, his earliest experiences in life were "very much like that of any American child in an ordinary American environment." He attended the local public schools and received his primary Jewish education first from a private tutor and later in a small talmud torah. A gifted student in both secular and religious studies, Drachman gained admission to Columbia University from where he graduated in 1882. He was recruited after grade school to be one of the first students at the Emanu-El Theological Seminary. This Reform-run "prep school" was designed "to give youths preliminary training required for the [Reform] rabbinate." "English-speaking rabbis," Drachman later recalled, "were then very rare in America and members of the organization were desirous of supplying this deficiency." Drachman was destined not to fulfill his patrons' expectations, for upon graduation from Columbia and Emanu-El, he shocked the religious school's officials by declaring that while he intended to travel to Germany to study for ordination, it would not be, as planned, at Geiger's Reform *Lehranstalt*, but rather at the more traditional, Frankel-founded Breslau Seminary. Drachman remained at Frankel's institution, which he defined as "in fundamental harmony on the basic con-

cepts of traditional Judaism and its adjustment to modern conditions,” and received ordination in 1885. He then returned to New York and began his career as a spiritual leader who “insisted on maintaining the laws and usages of traditional Judaism,” possessed both of a rabbinical degree conferred upon him by Dr. Manuel Joel of the Breslau Seminary and of that city’s Neue Synagogue and a Ph.D. from the University of Heidelberg.⁸

Henry W. Schneeberger, Drachman’s colleague in the American-born rabbinate, was born in 1848, also in New York City. The son of a prosperous merchant from Central Europe, he attended New York’s public schools and Columbia Prep before enrolling in the university in 1862. His early religious training also paralleled Drachman’s; he received his primary Jewish education from private tutors, among whom was the famous anti-Christian polemicist Professor Selig Newman. Upon graduation from Columbia in 1866, he too set off for Europe, but in his case to study with Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer, a man who, according to his student, stood for “moderate orthodox views and its conservative principles.” Schneeberger dedicated himself to his mentor’s philosophy of uniting “an unimpaired culture of the Jewish national religious sciences with a firm and solid fundamental general education . . . to make . . . good Jews and at the same time furnish them with social accomplishments that can make them useful to society.” Schneeberger returned to New York in 1871 not only with Hildesheimer’s ordination but also with a Ph.D. from the University of Jena.⁹

These differences in training were strongly reflected in the way each rabbi looked at the broader Jewish and general worlds around him. The Sephardic rabbis were raised and educated not only among non-Jews but with Jews of every denomination and ethnic expression. Morais and Mendes were thus inured to interdenominational cooperation when they joined in the establishment of the Seminary. And although their work there was intended to stop Reform theological progress, they still perceived the Cincinnati-led group as an equal partner in community-wide campaigns against common outside threats like the omnipresent missionary problem.¹⁰ Schneeberger and Drachman had even less difficulty working with the forerunners of the American Conservative movement. After all, Schneeberger and his Conservative counterpart Aaron Wise had both been ordained by Hildesheimer, and

Drachman, like Kohut, had been trained at Breslau. And although Wise and Kohut had broken with what Drachman and Schneeberger still defined as Western European Orthodoxy, they were still considered valuable colleagues in the battle for “the harmonious combination of Orthodox Judaism and Americanism which [for Drachman] was the true concept of the ancient faith of Israel.”¹¹ Not surprisingly Drachman and Schneeberger too viewed Reform leaders as allies against outside threats.

Rabbi Jacob Joseph did not share these perceptions. Even if he could accept the legitimacy of the ordination of his more liberal Orthodox associates, he certainly had no time for or interest in those “colleagues” who had broken from the Orthodox fold.¹² From his European background, he knew of but one expression of Judaism, and it was to help save the faith from America that he had come to this country. Sabbath observance, the supervision of kosher meats, and the provision of immigrant children with a Jewish education were all in sorry disarray. He viewed it as his high task to lead a religious renaissance dedicated to the re-creation on voluntary American soil of the traditions left behind in Europe.¹³

Rabbi Jacob Joseph’s more Americanized Orthodox counterparts shared his concern for the upgrading of traditional Jewish communal functions. Drachman later became head of an Orthodox Jewish Sabbath Alliance, which endeavored to convince Jewish shopkeepers to close their establishments on Saturday and petitioned the state legislatures to repeal blue laws which undermined the economics of traditional behavior.¹⁴ But the motivation which drove and directed Drachman and his fellows’ efforts stemmed from an altogether different understanding of the unique role to be played by Orthodox rabbis in America. They were trained to believe that resistance to modernization, in this case Americanization, was futile, and that any attempt to approximate in this country that which existed in the Old World was destined to fail. It was thus the job of the Orthodox rabbi in America to help his people mediate between their willing acceptance of the demands of acculturation and the increasingly problematic requirements of their ancestral identity. To them alone was given the task of creating a viable, truly American traditionalist alternative to the attractions of reformers. Rabbi Jacob Joseph, to their minds, was not equipped to address these issues.¹⁵

On a practical level this meant that while Rabbi Jacob Joseph harangued his listeners over their noncommitment to the Sabbath, Drachman worked to change American law to facilitate increased Jewish comfortableness with traditions. And while the East European spent most of his time supervising the meat markets, the Americanized expended their energies primarily in bolstering and modernizing Jewish education.¹⁶ When Rabbi Joseph and his generation of downtowners looked at the *heder*, they would lament the low level of learning achieved by students and bemoaned the pitifully poor salaries paid to *melamdin*.¹⁷ His Americanized counterparts too were appalled by the ineffectiveness of Jewish education, but for them, the solution began with the elimination of the European form of pedagogy and the providing of decent salaries to American-trained Jewish educators, who would teach a traditional Judaism relevant to the needs of new generations.

These categories of difference so apparent here among individuals and groups of rabbis each piously declaring themselves to be Orthodox has continued to characterize that denomination's rabbinate over the last one hundred years.¹⁸ With certain notable exceptions or important subtle variations, training, institutional affiliations, and personal attitudes toward both emerging events and outside organizations have polarized the American Orthodox rabbinate into two camps: resisters and accommodators. The former have attempted to reject acculturation and disdained cooperation with other American Jewish elements, fearing that alliances would work to dilute traditional faith and practice. The latter have accepted the seeming inevitability of Americanization and have joined arms with less-traditional elements in the community so to perpetuate the essence of the ancestral faith. While the central issues facing each generation were different and the relative strength of each point has fluctuated, the basic split within the denomination has remained constant and from all contemporary indications will long endure.

II. The Issue of Immigrant Adjustment

If in 1887 Rabbi Moses Weinberger acknowledged and respected uptown traditional society, and Rabbi Jacob Joseph was at least ambivalent toward Drachman, Mendes, and their cohorts, East European

Orthodox rabbinic opinion by 1902 was decidedly opposed to and strident in its nonrecognition of the Americanized Orthodox rabbinate. On July 29 of that year a group of sixty Orthodox rabbis hailing from Russia, Poland, and Austria-Hungary met in the auditorium of the Machzike Talmud Torah on New York's East Broadway to formalize the creation of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim (Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada).¹⁹ These clerical representatives of immigrant Jewish communities from Montreal, Toronto, Bangor, Omaha, and Denver were summoned to New York by Rabbis Asher Lipman Zarchy, Yehudah Leib Levine, Moses Zebulun Margolies (Ramaz), and Bernard Levinthal of Des Moines, Detroit, Boston, and Philadelphia, respectively. The midwesterners had already, in a circular letter to their colleagues in July 1901, expressed their distress over "the constant desecration of the Torah" and spoke of a divine "obligation to unite and form a union of Orthodox rabbis."²⁰ The easterners helped concretize this declaration several months later when, in May 1902, they chaired a meeting of predominantly New England-based rabbis at Ramaz's Boston home.²¹ There they drew up an agenda of concerns and set a tentative date for a national Orthodox rabbinic conclave for July in New York.²²

The sobriety of this call was matched only by the somberness of the delegates as the deliberations began. The meeting was convened on the day of Rabbi Jacob Joseph's funeral. The senior rabbi had been a broken man from years of struggle to bring order to immigrant Jewish religious life and died a relatively young man of fifty-nine the very day representatives arrived for the conclave. And yet it seemed somehow appropriate that the business of the rabbis continued through the days of mourning, for theirs was the task of solving through a national organization the same problems which had confounded and, to a great extent, defeated their late, revered teacher.²³

The assembled rabbis sought means of recalling back to Judaism immigrants and their children who were daily drifting from the faith and practices of the past. Jewish education, they determined, had to be upgraded, individuals and institutions had to be encouraged to observe the Sabbath more punctiliously, kashruth supervision had to be more scrupulously monitored, and the all-too-often-abused marriage and divorce laws had to be upheld. The delegates also declared which individuals were qualified to lead this religious revival by restricting

membership to “those rabbis ordained by the well-known scholars of Europe” who were “spiritual leaders of Orthodox congregations in the United States (and Canada).” In addition, all educationally prepared candidates had to abide by the association’s regulations, which provided, among other stipulations, that no rabbi occupy a pulpit in a city served by a fellow member without the approval of the organization’s executive board. The prevention of encroachment of a different kind was in the delegates’ minds when they further resolved that “if an unqualified person settles in a community and poses as a rabbi, the *Agudah* will attempt to quickly influence him to leave. If . . . unsuccessful then the annual convention will determine his future.”²⁴

Under these provisions, three types of self-declared Orthodox rabbis were to be denied leadership roles in Agudat ha-Rabbanim’s efforts to reach immigrant generations as well as the mutual aid and charity benefits of organizational ties.

1. *The unqualified rabbi.* The Reverend Samuel Distillator, who advertised his varied talents of *shochet*, *mohel*, and *mesader kidushin* in local New York newspapers around the turn of the century, typifies the unwanted entrepreneurial rabbi who seemingly served constituencies without benefit of clerical certification.²⁵

2. *The politically uncooperative rabbi.* It is noteworthy, but not surprising, that at least two of Rabbi Jacob Joseph’s contemporaries, Rabbis Hayim Yaacov Widerwitz of Moscow and Joshua Segal, were not charter members of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. The former was educated “at Hasidic yeshivas” and served in Moscow for fifteen years until 1893, when he settled in New York. His colleague, the so-called Sherpser Rav, arrived in the United States in 1875 and lived out his life in the metropolis. These men were better known by their respective American titles of “Chief Rabbi of the United States” and “Chief Rabbi of the Congregations of Israel,” “counter”-chief rabbis who opposed Rabbi Jacob Joseph’s hegemony, particularly in the area of kosher meat supervision, in the 1890’s. Men like Widerwitz and Segal were less than beloved to those who had mourned Rabbi Jacob Joseph’s passing. And for their part, they had little interest in surrendering their autonomous authority, including their control of numerous abattoirs and butcher shops, to any ecclesiastical committee.²⁶

3. *The American Orthodox rabbi.* By 1902 Rabbis Drachman, Schneeberger, and Mendes had been joined in the Americanized Or-

thodox rabbinate by Western European-trained colleagues Joseph Asher, David Neumark, and Henry S. Morais, and by men like Joseph Hertz, Herman Abramowitz, Julius Greenstone, and Mordecai Kaplan of the first pre-1902 generation of Seminary graduates.²⁷ None of these clerical figures was invited to join the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. But they were not written out of organizational affiliation because of the place and method of their ordination; the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's own house historian declared in 1902 that "the first students that graduated from there [the Seminary] were full-heartedly for the faith of Israel and its Torah."²⁸ Their nonacceptance was predicated more directly upon their divergent views on how to best solve the problems articulated by the Agudat ha-Rabbanim and upon their perceived attempt to undermine immigrant confidence in ghetto rabbinic authority. The Agudat ha-Rabbanim's policy of nonrecognition of and noncooperation with the American Orthodox rabbinate was expressed most emphatically two years after its founding when it announced its opposition to the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, a synagogal association founded by Mendes and his Americanized associates just six years earlier.²⁹

The Orthodox Union was called into existence in 1898 to protect "Orthodox Judaism whenever occasions arise in civic and social matters . . . and to protest against declarations of Reform rabbis not in accord with the teachings of our Torah."³⁰ Practically this meant that Drachman, Mendes, and some younger colleagues fought against blue laws, protected the rights of Sabbath observers, advocated the modernization of Jewish educational techniques, and argued that they, far more than the uptown Reform forces, had the best Jewish interests of the immigrants at heart. The Agudat ha-Rabbanim was unimpressed by their activities. To them, the Orthodox Union was a poorly disguised agent of Americanization which preached a synthesis of Jewish and American methods and values which threatened the continuity of the faith. To Agudat ha-Rabbanim minds, Orthodox Union leaders, bereft of their own constituency uptown, where Reform held sway, were sweeping into the ghetto and—not unlike the universally despised Christian missionaries—were seeking to wean East European Jews away from their traditional religious commitments.³¹

The Agudat ha-Rabbanim was probably most disturbed by the union's understanding of and approach to meeting the crisis of turn-

of-the-century Jewish education. For the downtown rabbis, the American *heder* and yeshiva system had only to be faulted for its failure to produce scholars who would continue the intensive study of rabbinic law and who would ultimately produce talmudic novellae on American soil. The Jewish community had to be severely chastised for its unwillingness to support these traditional institutions of study. It refused to grant all due respect to the scholars from Europe who labored unnoticed in the intellectual wasteland of America. Probably most Agudat ha-Rabbanim members knew little of their Christian contemporary Hutchins Hapgood's writings on ghetto civilization. But had they read him, they undoubtedly would have agreed with his assessment of the life of "the submerged scholars" of the ghetto, men who "no matter what . . . attainments and qualities" were unknown and unhonored "amid the crowding and material interests of the new world."³² The Agudat ha-Rabbanim attempted to solve this dilemma by approximating in America the internal conditions which sustained the great East European yeshivas they had left behind. Yiddish, they thus asserted, should be the preferred language of religious instruction, since it is "the language of the children's parents." English would be used only "when necessary," such as in communities where no Yiddish was spoken. The attainment of a solid, albeit separatistic yeshiva education was deemed the goal for all Jewish pupils. Indeed, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's Yeshiva Committee was called upon to "supervise the . . . subjects taught in the yeshiva . . . lest the students regard the yeshiva simply as a stop over before they pursue advanced secular studies."³³

Advocates of modern Jewish education shared none of these perceptions or prescriptions. Drachman expressed their position best when he defined the goals of Jewish education as the training of Jewish boys and girls through English-language instruction "to perform all the duties, to think all the thoughts and to feel the emotions which are the historical heritage of those of the household of Israel." This love for the Jewish heritage, he further emphasized, was unobtainable either in the *heder*, through private tutors, or through the all-day Jewish parochial school system. He spoke strongly for what would later be called "released time," an "ideal program" which would reach the disaffected and unaffiliated children of immigrants "during the day when children are awake and interested." But his greatest dream was of an

efficient Jewish after-public-school program, “a great system of Jewish public schools housed in their own buildings and equipped with all pedagogic requirements to supplement the general public school system.” There, of course, the traditions of the past would be transmitted through the language of the new land.³⁴

Agudat ha-Rabbanim leaders also witnessed with great concern the efforts of Orthodox Union members to modify the trappings and change the aesthetics of Orthodox synagogue life. It was the American Orthodox rabbis’ perception that a major cause of the disaffection from Judaism of immigrants and even more of the second generation was their uncomfortableness with the noisy and undignified landsmanshaft synagogue service. These congregations, linking Jews from the same hometown or region, offered the opportunity to pray and socialize in an Old World setting. For Agudat ha-Rabbanim members, the landsmanshaft synagogue represented the institutional expression of religious identity steeped in their European traditions.

But Orthodox Union members argued that “landmanshaft Judaism” was in deep trouble. The immigrant synagogue undeniably helped succor the newly arrived in encountering America by providing him with the familiar ritual and social flavor of the other side. However, as the immigrant inevitably progressed in this country, and became infused with new American mores, this Judaism rooted in what union people felt was only nostalgia for the past was declared devoid of any chance of surviving the external societal pressure upon him to live and act as an American.

The Jewish Endeavor Society (JES), founded in 1901 by the early students and first rabbis produced by the pre-Schechter Seminary, sought to address this socioreligious dilemma. As students and later as ordained rabbis, Herman Abramowitz, Julius Greenstone, and Mordecai M. Kaplan were among those inspired by their teacher Drachman to offer acculturating immigrants on the Lower East Side, and later on in Harlem and Philadelphia, Jewish educational and cultural programs and “dignified services” designed to “recall indifferent Jewry back to their ancestral faith.” The “young people’s synagogues” established under the auspices of the JES held services on Sabbaths and holidays, more often than not in the late afternoon, probably to attract those who had been working until evening on these Jewish holy days. The society’s leaders characterized their services as Orthodox, an as-

sersion clearly buttressed by their use of the traditional prayerbook and their insistence upon the separation of the sexes. But in other ways, the services differed dramatically from those in the landsmanshaft synagogue. Recognizing the growing unfamiliarity of Jews with Hebrew, they instituted supplementary English-language prayers and considered the substitution of English translations for standard prayers. A weekly English sermon on topics related to the American Jewish experience was standard. Congregational singing in English and Hebrew was encouraged. And, of course, all overt signs of commercialism were eliminated from congregational life.³⁵

Not surprisingly, these youthful efforts gained the quick and active support of rabbis associated with the Orthodox Union. Henry S. Morais, H. P. Mendes, Joseph M. Asher, David Newmark, and of course Drachman all lectured to the JES membership and taught society-run classes. Indeed the Jewish Endeavor Society could be fairly described during its nearly ten years of existence as the “youth division” of the Orthodox Union.³⁶

This new approach to synagogue life was neither rapidly nor universally accepted by downtown society and its rabbinate. The itinerant preachers (*maggidim*) who spoke to crowds of worshippers on Sabbath and holiday afternoons did not appreciate the society’s competition for synagogue space. More respected and established Agudat ha-Rabbanim constituents had more profound philosophical differences with the movement and its leader. Foremost was the fear that the infusion of American-style trappings and social activities was simply the first step toward the abandonment of traditional Judaism’s theological teachings. Secondly, but almost as important, they were concerned that the leaders of the Orthodox Union, in their zeal to promote their Americanization-Judaism synthesis, consorted with Reform Jews who engaged in similar methods with the purpose of weaning immigrant Jews from their religious past. In April 1904 the Orthodox Union, which supposedly stood for “protest against declarations of Reform rabbis,” sat with leaders of the Reform Emanuel Brotherhood, Temple Israel, and the West Side Synagogue to consider a report drafted by the interdenominational Board of Jewish Ministers to coordinate the endeavors of the several young people’s synagogues which had sprung up since 1900. In the Agudat ha-Rabbanim’s view, the Orthodox Union was at best lending unfortunate recognition to

deviationist Jewish movements and at worst threatening the continuity of the faith through cooperation with the liberals.³⁷

The Agudat ha-Rabbanim's nonrecognition of the Orthodox Union also led to the seemingly unnecessary duplication of efforts on issues of common concern. Rampant nonobservance of the Sabbath, for example, was a problem which exercised traditionalist leaders of all stripes. The Agudat ha-Rabbanim placed Sabbath preservation beside educational improvement as its highest communal priority and maintained a standing Sabbath Committee "to strengthen its observance among our people." The Orthodox Union also spoke out both institutionally and individually for the cause. Drachman specifically served for more than a quarter century as president of the Jewish Sabbath Observers Association, founded in 1894. But there is no evidence of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim and the union working together to promote the Sabbath cause during the organizations' first generation of activity.³⁸

This evident lack of teamwork, however, did not lead to large-scale waste through the duplication of communal energies. The Agudat ha-Rabbanim and the Orthodox Union each attacked the problem somewhat differently, reflecting their own unique understandings of the functions of the Orthodox rabbinate in leading the immigrant community. Downtown leaders perceived as a prime concern the identification for the truly observant of those establishments, particularly butcher shops and bakeries, which violated the Sabbath. They encouraged their followers not to patronize such concerns and exhorted both these public violators and the Jewish community at large to return to traditional behavior. The Agudat ha-Rabbanim initiated forays for the cause outside its own circumscribed constituency when it appealed to Jewish trade unionists to make "Sabbath-day off" a demand in owner-worker negotiations. And it hoped to influence "Jewish charitable organizations to set up divisions to seek employment for Sabbath observers." But it stayed away from external community-directed efforts, the hallmark of the Orthodox Union actions.³⁹

The American rabbis disdained preacherlike exhortations and addressed themselves to American conditions which encouraged religious violations. They communicated with Jewish businessmen and employers, but their primary brief was with the American legislative system, which grudgingly retained discriminatory blue laws. These

regulations prevented Jews from trafficking on Sunday, forcing them to desecrate their Sabbath to work an economically viable week. The Orthodox Union also spoke out clearly against the practice of holding State Regents, school, and civil service examinations only on Saturday. And they protected Jewish children destined to be punished for skipping school on Jewish holidays. The members of the Jewish Sabbath Observers Association worked hardest to promote traditional practice through Albany legislation. The leaders of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim held sway more comfortably on East Broadway.⁴⁰

The Orthodox Union rabbis' self-perception as public protectors of the immigrant's religious rights in America also led them to the forefront of campaigns against school sectarianism and outright missionary activities. To be sure, Henry P. Mendes's interest in these concerns clearly predated the founding of his organization. He was instrumental in the creation in 1880 of the Envelope Society, which helped sponsor the Hebrew Free School Association, established to fight missionary successes downtown. As leader of the Orthodox Union, he presided over organizational deputations to public school officials to eliminate Christian celebrations from the schools. The Orthodox Union would ultimately sponsor a successful boycott of the New York schools in 1906. Mendes, Drachman, and Asher were among the names always associated with the establishment of Jewish mission schools in the ghetto to combat the Christian mission homes. Through its lay leadership the Orthodox Union went so far as to join hands with a Catholic priest in fighting Protestant so-called nonsectarian influences in the poor Jewish and Catholic areas.⁴¹

The Agudat ha-Rabbanim did not criticize these activities, but it neither joined the union's antisectarianism fight nor initiated any parallel campaign of its own. Its more narrow, internally-looking communal agenda spoke to other issues—problems which, significantly, the Americanized rabbis did not emphasize.

Ultimately, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim was less concerned that American law respect the immigrant Jew and more interested that the new American continue to respect Jewish law. The organization's view of the problems of immigrant Jewry was probably best summed up by Rabbi Jacob David Willowski of Chicago. Earlier in his life Willowski had declared from Europe that "America is a *treif* land where even the stones are impure." Nonetheless he eventually found

his way to these shores, and in 1904 he wrote: "All [these problems] are to be blamed on the land [of freedom] where groups with varying viewpoints and opinions came to be settled and no one recognizes any authority."⁴²

So disposed, Agudat ha-Rabbanim members worked to reinvigorate the transplanted rabbis' authority in voluntaristic America as a means of leading immigrant Jews back toward greater observance of traditional Jewish law, often clearly in resistance to the pressures of Americanization. Orthodox Union rabbis formulated their labors based on the assumption that the clerical figure who saw Judaism as a faith in opposition to America would fail to sustain both himself and his community. Rather it was the job of the American rabbi to help present the essence of Jewish identity to the immigrant, regardless of his degree of traditional religious practice, as compatible with the inevitable American identity. And as we will presently see, Orthodox Union rabbis also recognized that they could not do the job alone.

In the winter of 1909, the opportunity for Orthodox rabbis to cooperate with Jews of varying stripes in reinvigorating the immigrant's sense of belonging to his community came to hand in the form of the New York Kehillah. This citywide umbrella organization was initially called into existence as a response by Jews—both immigrants and established Americans—to anti-Semitic allegations of Jewish criminality on the Lower East Side. It soon began to address itself to the broader questions of Jewish religious and cultural survival. High on its list of communal priorities was the creation of the Jewish "public school system" Drachman and others had earlier called for, attractive to new immigrants and capable of calling back to Jewish identification those who were rapidly assimilating. Temple Emanu-El's Rabbi Judah L. Magnes served as the chairman of the movement, which numbered such German-Jewish Reform lay worthies as Jacob H. Schiff, Felix Warburg, Daniel Guggenheim, and Louis Marshall as its major financial backers. As the Kehillah idea moved closer to realization, Orthodox rabbis were faced with the following dilemma: could they work with, indeed trust, Reform Jews in the development of their own Orthodox institutions in America? Clearly, cooperation with the rich philanthropists would bring significant sums to the impoverished field of Jewish education. But would cooperation eventually lead to co-optation, as Reform Jews forced both American and assimilatory

ideologies upon the consciousness of Jewish youth?⁴³

The American Orthodox rabbis associated with the Orthodox Union did not fear association with the Kehillah. Though loyal to their union's mandate to "protest against declarations of Reform rabbis not in accord with the teachings of our Torah," they had no predisposition toward opposing all efforts led by Reform Jews solely because of their denominational label. True to this formula, the Orthodox Union lent support to the Kehillah in 1909, albeit with some reservations, arguing that the institution should be given a chance "if the Kehillah can help not merely Judaism but Orthodox Judaism." They agreed with the Kehillah's plan to make the talmud torah system a bastion of both Americanization and Judaism, so long as instruction would be in keeping with Orthodox traditions when Judaism was taught. And if they harbored fears that their liberal brethren did not really understand the faith's requirements, they kept their apprehensions to themselves. Besides, they trusted their own ability to monitor the educational activities from within. Drachman and Mendes were charter members of the Jewish Community's ruling executive committee, and Mordecai Kaplan served on the Kehillah's first education committee.⁴⁴

The East European-born Orthodox rabbinate—primarily but not exclusively those affiliated with the Agudat ha-Rabbanim—was initially highly suspicious of the Kehillah's designs. They feared that this American institution, led by unreliable Reform leaders and laymen, would ultimately seek "to undermine the Orthodox institutions of the Jewish Quarter." Soon after the Jewish Community became a reality, however, Agudat ha-Rabbanim leaders recognized that Kehillah power and money might be utilized, ironically, to strengthen their hold as religious authorities in the ghetto. As thoughts of a tenuous *modus vivendi* began to be expressed in East European Orthodox circles, some rabbis even started to consider the possibility of co-optation by their fellows of the citywide construct.⁴⁵

This change of attitude stemmed directly from the Kehillah executive committee's call in December 1909 for the establishment within its multifarious city-wide structure of a Vaad ha-Rabbanim, "a committee of recognized and authoritative rabbis for the control of the whole matter of kashruth and schechita and other religious matters." Perceptive Agudat ha-Rabbanim members immediately understood that in its desire to bring all groups of Jews and all Jewish issues under

its banner, the Kehillah was willing to formally recognize men like them as the officialdom in charge of “all matters such as kashrus, milah, mikveh (etc.), concerning which no differences of opinion as to the *Din* exist.” An infrastructure was being created, albeit by the “wrong people,” which could ultimately lead to the resuscitation of the traditional Jewish community, with powerful rabbis at the head, in religiously barren voluntaristic America. If direction of Jewish education could only be wrested away from the Kehillah’s acculturationist cum assimilationist Reform Jewish founders and their American Orthodox rabbinic supporters, they could emerge from this initial limited partnership in effective control of the New York Jewish community. Through these most roundabout of means, the dreams of Rabbi Weinberger and the hopes of Rabbi Jacob Joseph would be fulfilled. So disposed, twenty-three of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim’s forty-six New York-based members joined the thirty-two-member Kehillah Vaad ha-Rabbanim, founded in 1912. Their game-plan was to use the threat of immediate withdrawal from the Kehillah to extend their influence in the field of education, a strategy which Kehillah officials staunchly resisted.⁴⁶

With all its inherent weaknesses and potentialities for conflict, this tenuous marriage of interests could not have even been considered without the efforts of two highly influential pre-World War I Orthodox leaders who simply did not fit the mold of the transplanted East European rabbi, Rabbi Philip Hillel Klein of Harlem’s First Hungarian Congregation Ohab Zedek and Ramaz (Rabbi Moses Zebulun Margolies) of Yorkville’s Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun. The basic sympathies of these exceptional men were with the harmonization of Judaism with American values, and they perceived American Orthodox rabbis, if not Conservative rabbis and Reform leaders, as worthy colleagues. But as astute communal politicians, they still aspired to maintain influence in all religious power bases, even going so far as to stand at the head of avowed anti-Americanization institutions. Accordingly, both of these men were leaders of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. Ramaz was its long-time president, and Klein, for several years, was an honorary president. Yet while both stood at the helm of an organization which opposed the Kehillah’s Americanization assumptions and which seemingly did not recognize other rabbis as equal colleagues, they simultaneously served as members of the Kehil-

lah's governing executive committee. In the latter capacity, Ramaz and Klein served with Drachman and Mendes on the committee of religious organization, which developed the Vaad ha-Rabbanim proposal. And in 1911, Ramaz participated in the executive committee's Educational License Bureau, a committee which included Rabbi Mordecai M. Kaplan, then principal of the Jewish Theological Seminary's Teachers Institute, a Dr. Langer, principal of the German Reform-run Educational Alliance School, and Dr. Samson Benderly, director of the Kehillah's own Bureau of Education.⁴⁷

These seemingly conflicting affiliations surprised no one who had followed either man's American career. The Hungarian-born Klein arrived in the United States in 1890, eleven years after his ordination by Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer. Possessed also of a Ph.D. from the University of Jena, Klein, as rabbi of a growing, prestigious immigrant congregation, found he had much in common with the Western European-trained Rabbis Drachman, Asher, Henry Morais, and Mendes. His shared interests and concerns led him to join in the founding of the Orthodox Union in 1898. And yet six years later, he emerged as an early member of Agudat ha-Rabbanim, which did not recognize his friends and opposed their organization. In fairness, one might suggest that Klein, by virtue of his "modern" Orthodox training with Hildesheimer and his secular university degree, may not have initially agreed with the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's philosophy. This conceivably marginal member of Agudat ha-Rabbanim was indeed not among the American-based European rabbis called to the initial gathering of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. But election to that rabbinic body did not change him. In fact, as he rose in the organization, he continued to work with the American Orthodox rabbinate. And finally, in 1909, when his own congregation moved up from downtown's Norfolk Street to Harlem and attracted both new immigrants and more acculturated and second-generation Jews to his pulpit, he agreed to engage Drachman as his rabbinic associate. Klein preached in Yiddish and Hungarian, primarily to the older generation; his colleague spoke in English. No greater recognition of the reliability of the American Orthodox rabbinate could be given by a leader of Agudat ha-Rabbanim than to share his pulpit with the Orthodox Union's "second in command."⁴⁸

Ramaz's activities and associational patterns also belied his posi-

tion as a head of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. Rabbi Margolies was born and raised in Kroza, Russia. He attended yeshivot in his hometown, Bialystock, and Kovno before serving as rabbi in Slobodka (1877–99). He migrated to America in 1899 and served as unofficial chief rabbi of Boston. It was, strikingly, in his New England home that the agenda for the founding of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim was drawn up. Though seemingly in accord with his organization's definition of rabbi, upon assuming the post of rabbi of an affluent, uptown New York pulpit in 1905, he acceded to working with Rabbi Mordecai M. Kaplan, a graduate of the pre-Schechter Seminary and a major spokesman for the Jewish Endeavor Society. As in the case of Klein and Drachman, Margolies and Kaplan shared ministerial duties. Margolies appealed to the older generation; Kaplan began building his career of youth-centered activities.⁴⁹

Ramaz also broke with the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's policies when he served on the board of education of the Uptown Talmud Torah, beginning in 1908. By 1911 he had become head of that group, which included Rabbi Israel Friedlaender of the Seminary and German Reform lay leaders Schiff and Marshall. This organization advocated, even before 1910, many of the American educational innovations which Drachman wanted and which ultimately became part of the Kehillah's programming. Thus it was quite natural that Ramaz, like Klein, informed by almost a decade of cooperation with Jews of varying stripes in searching for American Jewish solutions to the problems of immigrant identification, would find his way into the leadership of the Kehillah. How and why he and Klein remained powerful in the rejectionist Agudat ha-Rabbanim is a separate question.⁵⁰

The hoped-for working alliance between the Vaad ha-Rabbanim and the Kehillah did not, however, long survive. Magnes's group zealously protected their authority over Jewish education. They stated categorically in 1912 that while the Kehillah would "at all times welcome every recommendation that may be made to it . . . by the Vaad ha-Rabbanim," it would not bind "itself to same." The Vaad, for its part, led by Rabbi Shalom Elkanah Jaffe of Norfolk Street's Beis Medrash Ha-Gadol and East Harlem's Rabbi Samuel Glick, held its ground as ritual authority and worked to extend its influence to education. Its activities prompted Israel Friedlaender to quip "that it was in bad taste to connect the matter of kashrus with that of education."

As time went on, even the powers granted the Vaad did not go unchallenged. In December 1912 Mendes stated that “while the rabbis of the Board were perfectly competent to deal with the matters of shechita and kashrus, there were other subjects, such as ‘get,’ Sabbath legislation, and milah which required the activities of rabbis and laymen who were in better touch with conditions in this country.” By 1914, its dream of communal co-optation now dead, the Vaad’s leaders decided it had no stake in the Kehillah. Contending that “the session or time allowed for daily instruction by the [Kehillah’s Education] Bureau, for the schools affiliated with it, was insufficient for effective religious training,” Vaad members seceded from the Jewish Community and began working independently.⁵¹

Leading the Vaad out of the Kehillah were the very men who had brought it in initially, Rabbis Klein and Margolies. In August 1914 both resigned from the executive committee. Klein cited “poor health” and complained that the committees he served upon did not “call upon [his] specialized sphere of knowledge.” Ramaz resigned with the allegation that in “all matters pertaining to religion [that] should be referred to the Board of Rabbis to be acted upon . . . the Board of Rabbis was ignored entirely.”⁵²

The departure of Klein and Margolies from the Kehillah did not mark a decline in their dedication to the spirit of the Kehillah’s endeavors or to participation in Americanization efforts. It certainly did not end their close collegial association with American Orthodox rabbis. Klein continued to work harmoniously with Drachman in the Ohab Zedek pulpit through the beginning of the 1920’s. Ramaz continued to serve on the Uptown Talmud Torah’s board of education even as that school became one of the Kehillah’s flagship institutions. This institution was the home of the Seminary-run, Kehillah-financed Teachers Institute, which, strikingly, Mordecai Kaplan directed. Most significantly, in 1913, after some three years of serving alone in his synagogue’s pulpit, Ramaz agreed to the appointment of Rabbi Herbert S. Goldstein, an American-born and trained rabbi, possessed of a unique dual ordination. He had been ordained as an Orthodox rabbi by Rabbi Shalom Jaffe, an Agudat ha-Rabbanim worthy, and in 1913 he had received a rabbinical diploma from the Seminary, where he had been a student of Kaplan’s.⁵³

Significantly, Goldstein’s Schechter-era Conservative ordination

did not disqualify the Columbia University-educated cleric, one of the last of the Drachman-Schneeberger generation of Orthodox rabbis, in Ramaz's eyes. The senior rabbi was also seemingly untroubled by Goldstein's outspoken public criticism of the social capabilities of the East European Orthodox rabbinate. In a front-page editorial in the *Hebrew Standard*, published in June 1915, Goldstein declared that the preservation of "the Judaism of the future" lay solely in the hands of "the young, university-trained Orthodox rabbi." Only they, he argued, could assist the "scientifically-trained, skeptical young Jew, reconcile what he learned in the public school and college with the ancient doctrines of his faith." Only those "reared on American soil, who have breathed the ideal of American democracy, who have been born and bred like other Americans," could minister to the acculturated intent on breaking down the ghetto walls to "live as their neighbors, their fellow citizens, the Americans."⁵⁴

Ramaz overlooked Goldstein's difference in training and tacitly accepted his social orientation, because to a great extent he agreed with his colleague's understanding of Judaism's requirements in America. Ramaz and Goldstein apparently worked harmoniously in the Kehillah Jeshurun pulpit for five years. Ramaz ministered to the first generation, Goldstein attended their children. Finally, in 1917, ambition and the drive for even greater youth-directed programming led Goldstein to leave Yorkville to found the Institutional Synagogue in neighboring Harlem.⁵⁵

Though Rabbis Klein and Margolies were the most renowned East European-born and trained clerics who willingly and consistently cooperated with Jews of differing theological confessions both within the Kehillah and without, they were not the only New York-based immigrant Orthodox rabbis to lead lives dedicated to the harmonization of Jewish tradition with Americanization. The thoughts and activities of Rabbis Shmarya Leib Hurwitz and Zvi Hirsch "Harris" Masliansky also departed forcefully from the patterns of rabbinic attitude and behavior promoted by the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. Masliansky was generally recognized as the most outstanding Yiddish-language preacher on the Lower East Side at the turn of the century. But he did not share the common proclivity of the downtown *maggidim* to oppose religious innovation. Born in 1856 in Slutzk, Minsk, Russia, into a rabbinic family, he was educated in yeshivot in Mir and

Volozin. Ordained in 1880 by Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Spector of Kovno and Rabbi Samuel Mohilever of Bialystock, he spent the early years of his rabbinate as a teacher and preacher in Eastern Europe. There he worked enthusiastically to increase popular support for the then nascent Zionist cause. Banished from Russia in 1894 for his controversial public utterances on Jewish nationalism, he migrated to the United States and immediately began to speak out for Zionism and for the Jew's need to acculturate to America short of abandoning tradition.⁵⁶

Masliansky's attitude toward Americanization soon became known to German-American Jewish leaders, who in 1898 appointed him the first official lecturer in Yiddish at the Educational Alliance. Masliansky's appointment represented a signal departure from the Americanizing institution's earlier policies of disdaining the cultural-linguistic baggage of its immigrant clients. Now, through him, the alliance sought to begin bridging the widening chasm between Yiddish-speaking parents and their quickly acculturating children. Similar awakened sensitivities led Louis Marshall, four years later, to call upon Masliansky's assistance in launching his *Yiddishe Welt* as an organ dedicated to encouraging rapid acculturation through the medium of the Yiddish tongue.⁵⁷ It is thus not surprising to find Masliansky at the founding of the Orthodox Union in 1898, in the forefront of supporters of the Jewish Endeavor Society in the early 1900's, and as a consistent support of the Kehillah from its inception to its ultimate decline. Masliansky publicly expressed his approach toward cooperation with the Drachmans and Mendeses of the Jewish community, not to mention the Marshalls and Schiffs, when he declared in homiletic fashion that before Orthodox Jews vocally opposed the miscasting of Jewish tradition represented by the Reform movement, let them first learn from their liberal colleagues how to organize communal life, "how to honor leaders, and how to give charity." "There will come a time," he prophesied, "when Judah [Orthodoxy] and Ephraim [Reform] will be united, but first let Judah be united in its own territory."⁵⁸

Shmarya Leib Hurwitz also had credentials as a preacher from Eastern Europe, but he built his reputation in this country primarily as a Jewish educator who, possessed of an impeccable Orthodox pedigree, accepted the modern pedagogic methods promoted by the Kehillah. Hurwitz was born in the town of Kritchev in the province of Mogilev, Russia, in 1878. A scion of a Chabad Hasidic family, he attended

yeshivot in Mstislav and Shamyachi before serving as a rabbi in Yekaterinoslav from 1899 to 1906. Arriving in New York, he quickly earned a reputation in downtown society as an able preacher. Saturday- and holiday-afternoon services in major ghetto-based synagogues were spiced by his addresses to the appreciative crowds. In 1908 he moved to Harlem's Congregation Bnei Israel Anshe Sameth, lured uptown by real estate operator Joseph Smolensky, who reportedly enticed Hurwitz with a lucrative contract which spared him "from the poverty which most rabbis find themselves in." In 1909 Hurwitz moved to create the Rabbi Israel Salanter Talmud Torah to meet the educational needs of the thousands of children residing on the outer ridge of Jewish Harlem who were then untouched by modern Jewish education. By 1910 the talmud torah was home to 350 children in twelve different after-school classes.⁵⁹

When the Kehillah became a reality, Hurwitz gave it his full-hearted support. He backed the founding of the Bureau of Education, supported its "model school" program, and permitted the creation of a boys' preparatory junior high school on its premises.⁶⁰

Significantly, Hurwitz's advocacy of modern pedagogic methods and his association with non-Orthodox Jews did not endear him to all the members of his congregation. But then again, they probably had problems with his views of Orthodox synagogue life in general. In April 1912 Hurwitz declared, in an article entitled "The Necessity to Found Synagogues Here in America," that so long as synagogues were dirty, the services too long, disorderly and basically unintelligible, and the sermons dealt with esoteric midrashic and talmudic subjects, youngsters would not find Judaism attractive. Indeed Hurwitz severed his connections with his immigrant congregation and preferred to work with his patron Smolensky to help strengthen American Judaism primarily through the talmud torah system.⁶¹

Finally, the career of Philadelphia's Rabbi Bernard Levinthal suggests that the pre-World War I clerical ability to serve the Agudat ha-Rabbanim while personally promoting the harmonious synthesis of Judaism with Americanization through cooperation with Jews of varying theological opinions was not entirely a metropolitan New York area phenomenon. His multifarious communal activities, ranging from the founding of a modern, communal talmud torah to charter membership in both the German-dominated anti-Zionist Ameri-

can Jewish Committee and the later Zionist American Jewish Congress, to early leadership of the Federation of American Zionists and the Orthodox Union, led one sympathetic biographer to describe him as “the most Americanized of the strictly Orthodox rabbis in the country.” All these distinctions were achieved while he served as a long-time honorary president of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim.⁶²

The so-called chief rabbi of Philadelphia (he oversaw the activities of some six congregations) predicated his activities upon his understanding that “a rabbi is a rabbi of all Israel, not merely of Orthodox, Conservative or Reform.” He reportedly declared that in communal work, one has to “stand above all positions and denominations.”⁶³

As with his fellows, particularly Margolies and Klein, Levinthal was not simply a seeker after communal influence and honor regardless of ideological inconsistency, though none of these men was immune to the pursuit of power and self-aggrandizement. They were, rather, strident Americanizers who used their connections to promote their perception of Judaism’s requirements. As such, they were destined to serve as role models for a new generation of American-born Orthodox rabbis—trained at the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS) and elsewhere—who emerged after World War I.⁶⁴

III. The Challenges of Interwar American Judaism (1920–1940)

The Agudat ha-Rabbanim, for all its ideological difficulties with Orthodox Union rabbis in the pre–World War I period, had to admit that its Americanized opponents almost always displayed deference to their East European colleagues as the recognized officialdom in ritual matters.⁶⁵ This authority was more than merely a source of honor or responsibility or even power in the American Jewish community. It was, specifically in the areas of kosher supervision, a most important source of steady income for many an immigrant rabbi seeking financial stability, if not economic advancement, in this country. Rabbis Asher Lipman Zarchy, Hirsch Grodzinski, and Moses Matlin did not migrate to Des Moines, Iowa, Omaha, Nebraska, and Sioux City, Iowa, respectively, with the primary goal of building great Jewish communities in these areas. Rather, they were drawn by the large stockyards of these cities and the pecuniary rewards to be earned as overseers for companies which distributed kosher meats throughout

the United States. Others did not have to trek that far to find gainful rabbinic employment. There were religious constituencies desirous of a “chief rabbi” to bring order to religious practice within cities that were but a few hours from the major immigrant centers.⁶⁶ That control of Jewish industries rested solely within the East European rabbinate did not mean, however, that colleagues did not frequently compete with each other for a given city’s meat stipend. The most celebrated instance of pre-World War I rabbinic rivalry was the challenge to Rabbi Jacob Joseph by Rabbi Widerwitz and Rabbi Segal. Their attack upon his control of New York’s meat and poultry abattoirs and butcheries and their emergent counter-chief rabbinate effectively undermined whatever authority Rabbi Joseph had in communal affairs. Indeed, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim was set up to some degree to remedy this problem. But it had only limited success. The 1903 Chicago battle between Rabbis Judah David Willowski and Zvi Album was probably that era’s most striking case of rabbinic noncooperation. Album was a charter member of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim, and Willowski, one of late-nineteenth-century world Jewry’s most renowned rabbinic writers, was honored as *zekan ha-rabbanim* (“elder rabbi”) by the Agudat ha-Rabbanim in 1903, the year of his immigration. Both were committed to upholding their organization’s policy of nonencroachment by one rabbi upon a colleague’s territory. Yet Willowski’s attempt, as the newly elected chief rabbi of Chicago, to impose his suzerainty upon the butcheries under Album’s domain led to a citywide battle punctuated not only by vicious polemics between angry supporters of each faction but by fistfights in local synagogues.⁶⁷

Kashruth competition was even more acute among Orthodox rabbis not bound by Agudat ha-Rabbanim strictures. In 1906 Rabbi Luntz fought Rabbi Selzer in Paterson, New Jersey, creating two chief rabbinates there. Rabbi Gabriel Z. Margolis, chief rabbi of Boston beginning in 1907, battled Rabbi Federman, the city’s incumbent kosher meat overseer. And while Agudat ha-Rabbanim leaders sought to use kashruth supervision as a weapon in Kehillah negotiations over Jewish education, other East European rabbis publicly challenged their authority to represent Orthodox Jewry in the area of meat regulation.⁶⁸

Internecine rivalries over kashruth control were already quite commonplace when, in the 1920’s, a new generation of American-born

and/or trained rabbis entered the fray. These modern clerics neither shared the East Europeans' negativism toward Americanization nor consistently deferred to their elders, as had the previous generation, in matters of Jewish ritual regulation. For Agudat ha-Rabbanim members the emergence of a new group of English-speaking Orthodox rabbis was undoubtedly a source not only of consternation but also of embarrassment. Ironically, these rising leaders were products of an institution which the Agudat ha-Rabbanim had been instrumental in founding and maintaining—the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary.

This school, later and better known as the division of Yeshiva University dedicated to the training of American Orthodox rabbis, was organized in 1897. It grew out of the desire on the part of several graduates of Yeshiva Etz Chaim, the first elementary-level all-day yeshiva in the United States, for further and more intensive talmudic study combined with a modicum of general studies. Lithuanian-born kosher wine supervisor Rabbi Yehudah David Bernstein, a founder of Etz Chaim, and Rabbi Moses Matlin, the father of an Etz Chaim student, joined with layman David Abramowitz in inaugurating the institution. In its early years, RIETS was decidedly not, as its sympathetic historian put it, “a rabbinical training seminary in the modern and professional sense of the term.”⁶⁹ A goodly number of its early students were already ordained rabbis or ritual slaughterers from Russia who saw in RIETS a European-style yeshiva overwhelmingly dedicated to the advancement of rabbinic scholarship.⁷⁰ It was thus understandable that the delegates would rally to the cause when Rabbi Bernstein rose at the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's second convention, in 1903, to propose formal recognition and support for RIETS. It was also not surprising that Agudat ha-Rabbanim members would champion the acute fundraising needs of RIETS. After all, several early Agudat ha-Rabbanim members—Rabbis Matlin, Bernstein, Alperstein, and Kaplan—were among the first *roshei yeshiva* (talmud instructors) at the school.⁷¹

Three years later the ongoing relationship between school and rabbinical association was cemented when a Semicha Board was created at RIETS under the control of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim, specifically through members Margolies, Klein, Levinthal, and Samuel Z. Wein. This authority would ordain men who had the same training and qualifications for the rabbinate as candidates back in Europe. To this point

little official thought had been given to the very different prerequisites for service in an American pulpit.⁷²

Soon, however, the question of what types of competencies a man needed to possess in order to serve effectively as a rabbi in America became a major point of dispute at RIETS. The student body's composition had been changing as the first decade of the twentieth century passed. By 1908, according to one contemporary estimate, the majority of students were native-born sons of immigrants.⁷³ For these students, attendance at RIETS was their or their families' answer to the public school—*heder*/talmud torah educational marriage. They wanted the intensive talmudic education on the European model offered by a traditional yeshiva. But they simultaneously desired improved secular studies to permit them to ultimately compete with fellow Jews and other Americans in the marketplace, universities, and professions of this land. Only a few of these new-style students sought careers as rabbis in America, but they too sought to be competitive.⁷⁴ They entered RIETS hoping to become knowledgeable in the ways of American science and civilization and equipped as English public speakers comfortable with homiletic messages attractive to fellow new Americans.

The pressure to Americanize RIETS peaked in 1908, when the students struck the institution. They demanded a broader, more systematic secular curriculum, instruction in the English language and "in the art of public speaking" as well as in the "softer" Jewish disciplines of Hebrew literature and Jewish history. The yeshiva's predominantly lay directors apparently recognized the potency of the ideology which backed this demonstration and responded almost immediately by electing the student-sympathetic Ramaz as their new president.⁷⁵ That change began a protracted process which, through Ramaz, Levinthal, Klein, and significant Orthodox lay support, redefined the RIETS mandate. From that point on, RIETS evolved to ultimately stand as an institution of Torah and *hakhma*, "secular knowledge," capable of training Orthodox spokesmen "according to the spirit of the times." The battles of 1908 ultimately led to the reincorporation of a merged RIETS and Etz Chaim in 1915 as the Rabbinical College of America under Rabbi Dr. Bernard Revel.⁷⁶

Dr. Revel stood unequivocally in favor of "Torah and *hakhma*." His own life story was proof of the possibilities in the harmonization of

Torah scholarship with the secular. Born in Kovno in 1885, young Revel earned the reputation of an *illui* (budding talmudic “genius”) at the Telshe Yeshiva, where he was ordained. But Revel’s purview went beyond talmudic erudition. While still in Russia he evinced much interest in the Western-oriented disciplines of the *Wissenschaft des Judenthums*. He also, interestingly, demonstrated more than a passing interest in the ideology of Bundism (Jewish socialism), a highly un-Orthodox modern expression of Judaism.⁷⁷

This uncommon young Orthodox rabbi migrated to the United States in 1906 and quickly found RIETS hospitable to his need to continue rabbinic learning. New York University simultaneously met his desire for intensified secular studies, and he graduated with an M.A. degree in 1909. From there, Revel’s quest for higher study in the world of Jewish *Wissenschaft* brought him to Dropsie College, America’s first nontheological Jewish academic institution. This institution, which was destined to develop close spiritual and personal ties with the Jewish Theological Seminary, graduated Revel as its first Ph.D. in 1912.⁷⁸ Thus, when called to the Rabbinical College (RIETS) in 1915 to assume the presidency, at the age of thirty, Revel had achieved, through his own initiative and perseverance, what the school hoped to provide succeeding generations of American Orthodox rabbis. He was an “immigrant” rabbi comfortable both in his parents’ universe and in the ways of America, capable of training students and colleagues to aid Jews in their harmonization of conflicting cultural and traditional values.

To help Revel in his labors were the two “grand old men” of American Orthodoxy, Rabbis Mendes and Drachman. The former was appointed professor of homiletics; the latter, as professor of pedagogy, “acted in various instructional capacities,” teaching both Hebrew studies and the German language. Several years later, Mendes’s spot on the faculty was assumed by Herbert S. Goldstein, one of the most renowned Orthodox preachers of his era. For Mendes and Drachman the reorganization of RIETS undeniably represented a new start for the “seminary idea” of 1887, which to their minds had been waylaid by the liberalizing innovations of Schechter. True advocates of traditional Judaism in America would now again be produced, theologically prepared and socially competitive in the marketplace of American ideas and denominational expressions.⁷⁹

For members of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim, the reorientation of RIETS forced a most troubling major policy decision. Could they continue to support and service an institution which now did not mirror the desire to recreate an East European yeshiva environment in America and instead strove to reflect the immigrant's attempted accommodation of Judaism with America? For men like Ramaz, Klein, and Levinthal, who had manned the RIETS Semicha Board from 1906 and/or the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's Rabbinical College Committee set up in 1917 to monitor the school's activities, support for the changes was a natural extension of their philosophy of positive acculturation. But what of the aforementioned Rabbi Jaffee, also a member of the 1917 committee, who had previously avoided frequent institutional association with Drachman and Mendes and Americanization efforts in general? And what of the less-famous committee members like Eliezer Preil of Trenton, Eliezer Silver of Harrisburg, and Israel Rosenberg of Jersey City, not to mention the rabbis who held classes at RIETS? None of these men had previously championed Margolies/Klein/Levinthal policies. How could they reconcile the apparently sharp deviation from the long-standing organizational policy of non-recognition of Americanization programs?⁸⁰

Several factors may have contributed to the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's acceptance of the change in RIETS. First was the recognition that in member Revel the American Orthodox seminary was being led by a man of impeccable rabbinic training who, whatever his acculturating proclivities, understood the feelings of his colleagues. Second, they perceived that the idealized old-style yeshiva, for all its scholarly grandeur, could not compete effectively for American-born students, or ultimately for Jewish souls, against the seminary's traditionalism. They were forced to move somewhat from their position of almost complete nonaccommodation. They decided to stay with the Rabbinical College of America as its "rabbis," working in typical Agudat ha-Rabbanim style from within to achieve their organization's ultimate goals. They would be the traditional teachers of the next generation of rabbis, bulwarks against all except the most necessary changes. They would ordain students whose loyalty they hoped to retain.⁸¹

It was not long before Agudat ha-Rabbanim members recognized that many of the ordainees did not intend to remain obedient disciples. The RIETS-Rabbinical College produced during its first generation

some fifty trained-in-America rabbis.⁸² While the vast majority found positions in the metropolitan area either as pulpit rabbis or as heads of large communal talmud torahs, some ventured to other venues and to smaller Jewish communities previously served only by one or two East European rabbis, creating an immediate potentiality for rabbinic competition.⁸³

Such was the case in 1931 when a young RIETS graduate, hired by a Portland, Maine, congregation for the Passover holidays, began to “buy his community’s *chometz*” and received a stipend for his services. The resident Agudat ha-Rabbanim rabbi, who depended upon holiday honoraria for his economic survival, was outraged. He complained to the Agudat ha-Rabbanim that “this young chick whose eyes have not yet opened has pushed me aside after my ten years in the community. Please declare his rulings void and his ordination nullified.”⁸⁴

An even more vexing incident took place that same year in Massachusetts when another RIETS-trained rabbi “overruled” the chairman of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim-backed Council of Orthodox Rabbis in a matter of kosher meat slaughtering. The younger rabbi characterized the Agudat ha-Rabbanim decision as “foolish.” And when asked if he knew the chairman of the rabbinic council he “acted as if the Chairman wasn’t worth knowing and he boasted that he had no desire to be a member of an organization such as the Agudat ha-Rabbanim.”⁸⁵

The Agudat ha-Rabbanim responded to these charges and to the more generalized complaint that the American rabbis were undermining old-line authority in Jewish localities.⁸⁶ Under the leadership of its new president, Rabbi Eliezer Silver (elected in 1923), deputations and protests were addressed to Revel urging him not to send yeshiva graduates to communities led by Agudat ha-Rabbanim members without the specific permission of the resident senior rabbi. Secondly, Silver launched a program to bring the already ordained American rabbis into the Agudat ha-Rabbanim’s fold and under its control.⁸⁷ He offered them organizational collegiality and mutual aid, provided that they could pass the more stringent *yadin yadin* ordination required of members.⁸⁸

Silver drew heavily upon his own wide experience as a rabbi in the field in tendering this plan. Born in the Lithuanian town of Abel in 1881, he had gained his earliest training from his father, Rabbi Bunim

Tzemah Silver, before receiving advanced rabbinical training in Dvinsk, Vilna, and Brisk. He was awarded ordination from Rabbis Hayim Ozer Grodzinski and Shalom Ha-Kohen of Vilna. Unlike so many of his Orthodox rabbinical colleagues, Silver, upon his arrival in the United States in 1906, did not settle in New York. Rather, with the assistance of Rabbi Levinthal, he established himself in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where he remained until 1925. He then moved on to Springfield, Massachusetts, for six years before assuming a pulpit in Cincinnati, Ohio, a position he would hold until his death more than fifty years later.⁸⁹

From his vantage points “outside of New York,” Silver witnessed and participated in numerous controversies over kashruth and overall communal control in the smaller Jewish communities. He understood the fears of the rabbanim threatened by insurgent rabbis and dedicated himself to clerical unity under the Agudat ha-Rabbanim’s banner.

Rabbi Revel, for his part, was desirous of maintaining good relations with the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. Their continued approbation of his graduates lent all-important legitimacy to the institution. The promise of membership in the Agudat ha-Rabbanim for his students was also welcome. Accordingly, Revel took steps in the early 1930’s to develop a rabbinical curriculum that would prepare his yeshiva men for the more advanced degree. But at the same time, he recognized that Silver’s demands threatened the very existence of his school. To Revel RIETS had been reorganized to offer American-born youth the opportunity to become American Orthodox rabbis. They were to compete effectively with Seminary-trained Conservative ordainees for leadership of an Americanized Jewish community. But how attractive could his school be to potential students if they knew that their ultimate job placement was to be effectively controlled by a coterie of East European-oriented rabbis? Faced with such a conflict, Revel seemingly adopted a fence-straddling policy—officially sensitive toward the Agudat ha-Rabbanim’s position when specific conflicts arose, and simultaneously encouraging East European rabbis to accept his younger generation. He also tried to sensitize his disciples to respect the provinces of their elders.⁹⁰

Revel’s American-trained rabbis were not captivated by the Agudat ha-Rabbanim’s offers, nor did they share their mentor’s seeming great concern over RIETS’S institutional legitimacy. First, few were then

qualified for full membership in the Agudat ha-Rabbanim, and fewer saw the necessity for more advanced study to enter the lists. More importantly, the younger clerics viewed the senior rabbinic alliance as out of touch both structurally and ideationally with contemporary issues, unable to serve the rapidly emerging second-generation Jewish community of the interwar period. The Agudat ha-Rabbanim was, to their minds, an organization which preached rabbinical unification to standardize Jewish ritual practice and yet was rife with discord both from within and from without. Its combative members were seen as unaware of the negative impact their often notorious behavior made upon masses of acculturated Jews. And the popular perception of the Orthodox rabbinate was, for RIETS graduates, no mean issue. While the older immigrant laity which backed the Agudat ha-Rabbanim rabbis knew and “understood” the roots of these internecine rivalries, their children did not. And it was precisely these younger Jews, whom Agudat ha-Rabbanim members were ideologically and sociologically unable to reach, that they were seeking to influence. Membership in the Agudat ha-Rabbanim would be of little help to the American-trained Orthodox rabbi, then in the early throes of competition with the rising Conservative rabbinate, in projecting himself as a legitimately modern traditional pastor.

These critical evaluations of the East European rabbinate took permanent organizational form in 1935 with the founding of the Rabbinical Council of America (RCA).⁹¹ This new clerical organization was in truth an amalgamation of two separate but similar-thinking organizations, the Rabbinical Council of the Orthodox Union and the Rabbinical Association of RIETS. The former organization was formed in 1926 by, among others, the rabbis of three of Manhattan’s most established modern Orthodox synagogues—Herbert S. Goldstein of the Institutional Synagogue, David De Sola Pool, Mendes’s successor at Shearith Israel, and Leo Jung, who replaced now Conservative/Reconstructionist Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan at the Jewish Center. These men, who were reminiscent of, if not identical to, the earlier Drachmans and Mendeses in their rabbinical training and orientation, sought to help bring American concepts of standardization to the kashruth industry through the OU symbol.⁹² The Orthodox Union brought together RIETS men who either could not qualify for the Agudat ha-Rabbanim or did not want to join it. Chaim Nachman, H. Ebin, Ben Zion Ro-

senbloom, and Joseph H. Lookstein sought both to help their alma mater and to assist themselves in pulpit placement and congregational problems.⁹³ The amalgamation of these groups into the RCA constituted a signal enduring link between two generations of American Orthodox rabbis.

The RCA set as its dual mandate the bureaucratization and standardization of kashruth and the promotion of its own brand of American traditional Judaism above and beyond the power of the Conservative movement. Toward the first goal, the RCA fought for more than a generation, and with only a modicum of success, to end the practice of individual rabbis negotiating the right to oversee a particular product's kashruth. As the RCA saw it, this chaotic system of sometimes secret agreements lowered public esteem for the rabbinate when it did not encourage imposters or unscrupulous supervisors in the field. The RCA campaigned for the concentration of all kashruth under the OU banner, a public statement that control of this industry was a communal responsibility and not an individual rabbi's sinecure. The RCA commissioned and controlled competent supervisors and publicized the OU symbol as authoritative. It also sought to encourage the greater observance of kashruth both by the Jewish public and by national Jewish organizations, then notorious in Orthodox minds for their unkosher-catered meetings and banquets.⁹⁴

The actuation of these plans required that RCA members surrender their autonomy to the national body, a personal and financial concession to communal priorities that many were loath to make. Indeed, it was not until 1954 that the RCA could officially prohibit its members from granting personal *hechsherim* (certifications). And even then compliance was not uniform either within or without the organization. Certainly Agudat ha-Rabbanim rabbis and innumerable other unaffiliated clerics unbound by this bureaucracy resented the undermining of their authority. But then again, the RCA's methods in the second major area of its interest, the battle against Conservative Judaism, elicited even less Agudat ha-Rabbanim support.⁹⁵

The Conservative movement had emerged during the interwar period as American Jewry's numerically predominant religious denomination. Offering its communicants a sociologically sophisticated mixture of liturgical traditionalism and ideological liberalism, it attracted vast numbers of second-generation Jews uncomfortable with their

parents' European-looking Orthodoxy and put off by the "church-like" religious radicalism of Reform. American Jews were good family men who wanted to pray seated next to their wives and family. And they found in Conservatism a theology and practice attuned to the slowly developing suburban life-style, prepared to make religious accommodations to America's work clock and transportation revolution and yet still remain philosophically and practically within older Jewish traditions. Masses of Jews saw in the Conservative rabbi an adroit mediator between the ancestral faith of the past and the exigencies of the American future. These leaders could communicate their approach in impeccable English understandable to Jews and Gentiles alike. Orthodox rabbis, in their view, did not truly understand the demands of the acculturated, and Reform rabbis had yet to be sensitized to their fears of assimilation and of intermarriage.⁹⁶

Agudat ha-Rabbanim rabbis, whose policies of resistance to Americanization possessed little currency with most second-generation Jews, had little to offer the acculturated in response to Conservatism's appeal, except well-articulated contempt for its perceived corruption of rabbinic tradition. The innumerable proclamations against and excommunications of the Conservative rabbinate, for all their intensity, had little practical effect.⁹⁷ The Yiddish-speaking followers of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim, those who knew and were influenced by the organization's ordinances, were Jews with relatively little interest in Conservatism's American social appeal. And those attracted to the liberal-traditionalists were drawn from among those disinterested in and unaware of old-line proclamations and attitudes.

RCA rabbis, on the other hand, staunchly believed that they could compete effectively against the Conservative rabbinate for spiritual leadership of the next generation. Through a tripartite policy of simulation, inclusion, and cooperation, they sought to prove that the American Orthodox rabbinate and its laity could be as attuned to American mores as their more liberal brethren without doing violence to the tenets of the ancestral faith.

RCA board member Joseph H. Lookstein of Manhattan's Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun was probably the organization's staunchest advocate of simulation. The Orthodox synagogue could be as architecturally modern, its services as decorous and appealing, its liturgy as linguistically intelligible, and its English-language sermon as compel-

ling as any Conservative temple. Born in 1902 in the province of Morigilev, Russia, Lookstein was brought at age seven to the United States and settled with his family first on the Lower East Side and then in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn. He received his basic Jewish and secular education at the all-day Rabbi Jacob Joseph School on Henry Street and then moved a few blocks over on the Lower East Side to the Talmudical Academy, the RIETS "prep school." Significantly, while studying for ordination, Lookstein pursued an advanced secular degree at City College of New York. It was during his university years that this talented and culturally versatile young man was called to assist Ramaz as student rabbi in the Yorkville pulpit previously occupied by Mordecai Kaplan and Herbert S. Goldstein.⁹⁸

Ordained by RIETS in 1926, Lookstein served as assistant to Ramaz during the last ten years of the senior rabbi's life. While in this post, he earned graduate degrees from Columbia University, was appointed by Revel professor of homiletics and practical rabbinics at Yeshiva University, and emerged as a leading spokesman for the RCA. Blessed with a gift for English sermonizing and possessed of an impressive academic and professional resume, Lookstein bore witness that a RIETS graduate could be as worldly and Americanized as any of his seminary counterparts.⁹⁹

One sympathetic family biographer has suggested that Lookstein's simulation idea grew out of his rejection while an adolescent of "the noise, the tumult and the general disarray of the Orthodox *shuls*." Impressed by the aesthetics and dignity that were characteristic of Reform and Conservative synagogues, he "strove to combine warmth with dignity, the enthusiasm of Orthodoxy with the aesthetics of Reform, the tradition of four thousand years of Jewish practice with the modern active tempo." That meant weekly English-language sermons, prayers in English as well in Hebrew, special-theme Sabbaths, and guest speakers. In 1937 Lookstein even invited Judah Magnes, then chancellor of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, to speak from the Kehilath Jeshurun pulpit on Kol Nidre night. All these policies and programs dated back to Drachman and the beginnings of American Orthodoxy at the turn of the century and to Goldstein in the 1910's. But by Lookstein's time these activities were more characteristic of the Conservative synagogues.¹⁰⁰

Lookstein was also a prime exponent of simulation in Jewish educa-

tion. Clearly disdaining the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's concept of a yeshiva and taking Drachman's early idea that Orthodox Jewish education should emulate the public schools, Lookstein, in 1937, founded the Ramaz School, the prototype of many of today's modern day schools. Lookstein believed he could simulate the best aspects of the integrationist, acculturationist philosophy of the public schools in a homogeneous Jewish school environment. The student at Ramaz would receive the intensive Hebraic and Judaic training unobtainable in released-time or supplementary programming, while learning with equal intensity the values and mores of American society. Lookstein argued that the Jewish school calendar should correspond directly to the public school schedule; there would be no classes on Sundays, and Christmas vacation, renamed winter vacation, was instituted to permit maximal social integration with non-Jews and less Jewishly committed co-religionists.¹⁰¹

Unfortunately for the RCA, not all Orthodox rabbis possessed Lookstein's leadership capabilities or served congregations as content as the Yorkville synagogue with his aesthetic innovations and nondoctrinal changes.¹⁰² Far more frequently, the interwar-period American Orthodox rabbi found himself in conflict with congregants who wanted to attend an "Orthodox" synagogue, defined here as a synagogue served by an American-trained Orthodox rabbi, but at the same time wanted to adopt the egalitarian mixed seating characteristic of Conservative temples. And when they were not debating pew patterns, conflicts raged over the equally crucial question of standardizing the time of Friday evening services. RIETS men serving such congregations had to deal with frequent lay requests that the synagogue precincts be used on weekday evenings for mixed-dancing congregation-sponsored socials. They also had to decide whether men known to be public nonobservers of the Sabbath could be allowed the honor of leading services, as well as whether a man married to a non-Jew could be accepted into full synagogue membership. They even had to take positions on such seemingly less compelling problems as whether and when pulpit flowers might be used in the synagogue.¹⁰³

For many rabbis the answer to all these queries was yes, sometimes unabashedly, sometimes reluctantly. To compete against the more liberal traditionalists, many rabbis felt they would have to accommodate congregational pleasures and take simulation beyond the limits of the-

ological acceptability, although without formal or programmatic assent. At the same time, these rabbis wished to see themselves as Orthodox rabbis and as members of the RCA, and to be so considered by their colleagues.¹⁰⁴

This approach to synagogue life and congregational ritual was particularly prevalent among those rabbis serving in midwestern pulpits, graduates of either RIETS or the relatively new Chicago-based Hebrew Theological College (HTC). The latter seminary was founded in 1922 by a group of Midwest-based rabbis to train local youths for rabbinic pulpits. Committed from its inception to producing “modern leaders of Orthodox Jewry,” its curriculum emphasized not only “intensive study of the Talmud and the Codes . . . and mastery of the *Tanach* [Bible] but also a thorough knowledge of Jewish history and literature and a comprehensive grasp of the problem of contemporary Jewish life.” As such, this rabbinic training school had much in common with the early pre-Schechter Seminary while sharing many of the ideological perspectives of the Revel-organized RIETS. It stood for little that would satisfy the Agudat ha-Rabbanim’s understanding of the goals and methods of a yeshiva. In any event, its modern ordained rabbis, far removed from the metropolitan hub, fought the “battle for Orthodoxy” against powerful Reform and Conservative forces. They almost universally acquiesced at least on the issue of mixed seating. Still as graduates of an American Orthodox training center, they sought RCA membership, posing a critical policy dilemma for the national organization.¹⁰⁵

The RCA adopted a policy of inclusion both for HTC graduates and for those RIETS alumni who led what would come to be known as “traditional” congregations. Undoubtedly faced with a choice between accepting the situation of their colleagues as it was and driving them into the arms of the Conservative Rabbinical Assembly (RA) and the United Synagogue of America, the RCA by 1942 opted for inclusion. Its articulated policy was to admit all rabbis ordained at RIETS, HTC, or any other recognized Orthodox institute or authority. National office-holding in the organization, however, was to be reserved for rabbis serving in separate-seating congregations.¹⁰⁶

The RCA strove to garner additional respect for Orthodoxy and its rabbinate through cooperation with more liberal Jews on interdenominational issues. In 1936, in a move highly reminiscent of Drachman

and Mendes's willing participation in the New York Kehillah, the RCA became a constituent member of the Synagogue Council of America, an amalgam of Conservative, Reform, and Orthodox groups which dealt, inter alia, with church-state concerns and problems of anti-Semitism, issues upon which seemingly all denominations could agree. Ten years earlier the Orthodox Union and its Rabbis Goldstein and Pool had been among the founders of the council. And in 1939, RCA leaders sat down with Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) and RA spokesmen to explore their mutual concerns over "the secularization in the Jewish centers and federations." To be sure, the usual fears were expressed that cooperation on nonreligious or interreligious matters would lead to theological co-optation. But to many RCA people, the possibility of projecting themselves as leaders not only of their community but of the entire Jewish community was all too compelling.¹⁰⁷

These RCA policies, to be sure, did not sit well with the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. Harkening back as always to the European model which dominated its perspective and fueled its energies, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim contended that the rabbi's job was primarily to lead and not to be the servant of his community. Jewish law, it countered, set certain standards which may be neither suspended nor abridged on the basis of the popular will. And those clerics who would undermine the immutable halacha had no place in the Orthodox rabbinate. The Agudat ha-Rabbanim could see no social, political, or religious legitimacy to American colleagues serving in mixed-seating synagogues. And the RCA apologia that once ensclosed in his pulpit a rabbi would hopefully change things for the "better," held for no currency for its members. Indeed, they even had difficulty with the seemingly innocuous simulation idea that Orthodox synagogues could hold Friday-evening lectures on "secular" topics to attract the uncommitted, because it emulated Conservative practice.¹⁰⁸

Acting on these beliefs, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim in 1939 called upon the seventeen men who maintained memberships in both the Agudat and the RCA to leave the American association in protest over its articulated policies. The resignation of these distinguished rabbis from the RCA, it was hoped, would effectively undermine that clerical body, leading to the reestablishment of a separate RIETS alumni society clearly under the hegemony of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim.¹⁰⁹

One year later, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim sought to assert its rabbinical suzerainty in a far more dramatic way, through a takeover of RIETS. The death in 1940 of Bernard Revel, at the age of fifty-five, left Yeshiva University in disarray. Gone was the synthesizer who had fused, for students and American Orthodox rabbis alike, the positive goals of acculturation with the maintenance of the Old World faith. American Orthodoxy was bereft of the spokesman who could crystallize and articulate its distance from Conservative Judaism and its differences with the Agudat ha-Rabbanim brand of Orthodoxy. With Yeshiva at bay, some rabbinical students gravitated toward the Seminary. Meanwhile, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim tried to step into the vacuum. Rabbi Silver suggested to the RIETS board that an Agudat ha-Rabbanim committee be appointed to administer the school. With his men in charge, Silver could monitor the types of men leaving RIETS and the pulpits they were to assume.¹¹⁰

The university's board politely but firmly sidestepped Silver's initiative. Instead they appointed a primarily in-house executive board to manage the school while a search for a new president could be conducted. In 1943, Rabbi Samuel Belkin emerged as a worthy successor both to Revel's post and as expositor of his philosophy. A thirty-one-year-old professor of classics at Yeshiva College and Talmud instructor at RIETS, Belkin was in personal background, educational training, and philosophical orientation remarkably similar to his predecessor. Like Revel, Yeshiva's new president had been recognized while a child as a potentially, prodigious talmudic scholar. He was ordained at age seventeen at the yeshiva of Rabbi Israel Meir Ha-Kohen Kagan in Radun, Russia. But like Revel, Belkin also manifested a voracious appetite for secular humanistic learning. His quest for the latter form of scholarly training led him to the United States and to American universities, where in the years between his arrival in this country and his appointment to Yeshiva's faculty, Belkin not only mastered the English language but earned a Ph.D. in classics at Brown University and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. In him, Yeshiva had once again found a leader whose life spoke to its commitment to living harmoniously in both the world of Jewish faith and the universe of secular knowledge and society. It would be Belkin's agenda through his more than thirty years at Yeshiva's helm to expand the purview of the university and to deepen the parameters of Revel's message. He would sit

atop of a theological seminary that aspired to produce a type of rabbi who was truly conversant with, if not comfortable in, the American environment. RIETS graduates would continue to be occasionally objectionable to the Agudat ha-Rabbanim.¹¹¹

It was RCA leaders who played a large role both in blocking the Agudat ha-Rabbanim takeover and in the selection of Belkin, thus ensuring that Yeshiva stayed Revel's course. Having asserted their independence from the respected East European rabbis, they lobbied hard to maintain their alma mater as an institutional bastion of support for their ideas and activities.¹¹² While that struggle raged, the RCA proceeded to place even greater distance between itself and the senior rabbis by creating its own Halacha Commission. Through this agency, which responded to questions on religious law and practice submitted to it by individual members, the American rabbis formally asserted that as a group they were competent not only to teach Judaism in this country but also to adjudicate problems of ritual observance. No longer would American-born rabbis have to defer to the learning of the members of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. Through the Halacha Commission, a statement was implicitly and explicitly made that a man trained in the ways of the modern Jewish world as well as the world of Torah was better equipped to apply precedent and procedures to the needs of the Americanized lay majority. It was to this committee that questions regarding mixed dancing, the permissibility of autopsies to advance medical science, and the use of microphones during Sabbath and holiday services were submitted, and authoritative answers were rendered.¹¹³

The RCA, however, probably could not have made, or sustained, this broad assertion of its authority in American Jewish life without the philosophical backing and practical support of another uncommon East European-born rabbi, Joseph B. Soloveitchik.¹¹⁴ The "Rov," as he came to be known to his disciples within and without Yeshiva University, emerged in the 1940's as the towering ideologue of American Orthodoxy.

Soloveitchik was born in 1903 into a world-renowned rabbinic family. His grandfather, Rabbi Haym Soloveitchik, the so-called Brisker Rov, is credited with revolutionizing the methodology of talmudic study in the East European yeshivot. The "Brisker method," in the words of one of its present-day exponents, relied upon an "insis-

tence on incisive analysis, exact definition, precise classification and critical independence.” Soloveitchik learned this system under the close tutelage of his father, Rabbi Moses Soloveitchik, with whom he studied almost exclusively through his teen years. While still a young man, Joseph Soloveitchik came to believe that a systematic knowledge of general philosophy would enhance his understanding of the Torah and its applicability to the modern condition. He enrolled in the University of Berlin in 1925 and studied there for six years under the Neo-Kantian philosopher Heinrich Maier, earning a Ph.D. in 1931 with a dissertation on the philosophy of Hermann Cohen.¹¹⁵

While the younger Soloveitchik sought his own road to more advanced religious understanding, Rabbi Moses Soloveitchik was recruited by Revel to head the RIETS faculty in 1929. His appointment did much to solidify the traditional talmudic and codes core of the rabbinic training at RIETS, while Revel introduced mechanisms for the ancillary skill development so much required of an American cleric. With Rabbi Moses Soloveitchik on the faculty, few could effectively question the scholarly reliability of men who studied at RIETS.¹¹⁶

In 1932 Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik migrated to these shores, was accepted as unofficial chief rabbi of Boston, and affiliated with the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. During his early American years, Soloveitchik, bred in a tradition that emphasized the intellectual rather than the pastoral functions of the rabbinate, devoted himself primarily to the dissemination of Torah scholarship through public and private lectures and through the creation of the first Hebrew day school in New England, Boston’s Maimonides School. This school’s approach and curriculum more closely resembled those of the recently founded Ramaz than the older Etz Hayim.

It was not until 1941 and the death of his father that Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik brought his talmudic excellence and affinity for the study of philosophy to Yeshiva University.¹¹⁷ The Agudat ha-Rabbanim asked Rabbi Soloveitchik to head up the RIETS Talmud faculty. His acceptance assured the rabbinic body that a high level of rabbinic scholarship would continue to characterize Yeshiva while it went through the throes of replacing President Revel, but, as time went on, Soloveitchik’s political nonalignment with the Agudat ha-Rabbanim in its dealings with the younger Orthodox rabbis led the organization to be less than satisfied with him.¹¹⁸

For RIETS students and their more senior alumni colleagues in the RCA, Rabbi Soloveitchik's emergence came to mean something entirely different.¹¹⁹ Here was a man possessed of the highest East European rabbinical credentials and yet philosophically and psychologically capable of relating "the ideal *halakhic* system to the basic realities of human life" and able to formulate "a creative philosophy, conservative and progressive, keeping intact our Jewish tradition even as he was developing it further," who would become their spiritual guide and legal mentor.¹²⁰

In practical terms this ultimately meant that Rabbi Soloveitchik not only understood and accepted the forces and pressures which had created the RCA tripartite approach to religious life—simulation, inclusion, and cooperation—but was prepared to assist in setting authoritative parameters for each of these policies. In the sociological realm of simulation, Soloveitchik granted those who sought his advice the widest latitude. He applauded those who could show "the American Jew that it is possible to have a synagogue conform to the *Shulkan Aruk* . . . and at the same time . . . excel as far as good behavior, cultivated manners and beautiful sermons are concerned." And in certain specific situations, he acceded to a RIETS graduate accepting a pulpit in a mixed-seating congregation, if that congregation demonstrated a willingness to be convinced to conform to Orthodox strictures. In one case, after being informed that a mixed-seating congregation was willing to install a temporary *mechitza* during the trial Sabbath of an RCA member, Soloveitchik, in his own words, "inclined to take the more liberal view of the situation . . . [but] only to a situation in which there is at least a vague probability that the visit of the rabbi might pave the way for bringing that synagogue into the fold." At the same time, as adviser to the RCA's Halacha Commission in the 1940's and as its chairman in the early 1950's, Soloveitchik vigorously opposed so-called Orthodox congregations which adopted the Conservative practice of having the cantor face the congregation rather than the ark in prayer and/or showed no interest in moving in the direction of separate seating. He also rendered a final, negative opinion on the issue of the permissibility of a microphone at Sabbath and holiday services. That decision further distinguished the Orthodox from the more liberal congregations.¹²¹

Finally, he staunchly supported the RCA policy of cooperation with

the less traditional in broad communal agencies. In a poignant statement on the need for Jewish unity against hostile outside forces, Soloveitchik declared:

When representation of Jews and Jewish interest *klapei chutz* [towards the outside world] are involved, all groups and movements must be united. There can be no divisiveness in this area for any division in the Jewish camp can endanger its entirety. . . . In the crematoria, the ashes of Hasidim and Anshe Maseh [pious Jews] were mixed with the ashes of radicals and freethinkers and we must fight against the enemy who does not recognize the difference between one who worships and one who does not.¹²²

At the same time he advised RCA members to tread warily when dealing with Conservative and Reform rabbis on issues affecting the internal life of the Jewish community.

Although Rabbi Soloveitchik's leadership did much to legitimize the RCA's approach toward meeting the problems of mid-twentieth-century American Jewish denominational life, his influential voice did little to effectively reconcile Agudat ha-Rabbanim and RCA disagreements. If anything, the Soloveitchik years (ca. 1940 to the present) witnessed the widening of the gap between groups of Orthodox rabbis operating in America. RCA stalwarts, possessed of the Rov's imprimatur and thus confident of their authenticity, have organizationally resisted, although with some notable individual exceptions, the gravitational pull of the East European-trained rabbis. At the same time, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim has become more and more attuned to a very different Torah voice which has solidified and further formalized its resistance to the harmonization techniques characteristic of the American Orthodox rabbinate. This new era of immigrant Orthodoxy, which we will presently discuss, began on a large scale during and after World War II, and to a great extent its adherents have eclipsed the indigenous prewar Agudat ha-Rabbanim leaders as the staunchest resisters of Americanization. In so doing, they have challenged the assumptions of both the Agudat ha-Rabbanim and the American Orthodox rabbinate.

IV. A New Era of Immigrant Orthodoxy (ca. 1940–1980)

Through all its early years of disagreement and conflict with American Orthodox rabbis, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim proudly projected itself as

the institutional bastion of resistance against Americanization's inroads into traditional faith. But not all East European rabbis who shared the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's basic point of view aligned themselves with that organization. In its earliest days, some Galician- and Hungarian-born or trained rabbis disdained affiliation with the predominantly Lithuanian rabbinic alliance on ethnic grounds.¹²³ For others nonalignment with the clerical association meant continued freedom to pursue their own pecuniary interests in the kashruth field.¹²⁴ Finally and most significantly, there were rabbis who believed that the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's antiacculturation and antimodernization policies did not go far enough. They looked askance at the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's continued support for RIETS, especially as creeping Americanization slowly transformed that East European-style yeshiva into Yeshiva University. And they had theological difficulties with the organization's consistent backing of modern Jewish nationalism, albeit through the somewhat separatistic Mizrachi (Religious Zionist) movement.

Rabbi Gabriel Wolf Margolis was one individual who opposed the Agudat ha-Rabbanim both practically and philosophically. And in the early 1920's, he unified varying strains of East European rabbinic disaffection with Agudat ha-Rabbanim into a competing organization, Knesset ha-Rabbanim ha-Orthodoxim (Assembly of Hebrew Orthodox Rabbis). The Vilna-born Margolis, scion of a Lithuanian rabbinical family, had served communities in the Russian Pale cities of Dubrovno, Horodno, and Yashinovka for close to forty years before migrating to the United States and settling in Boston in 1908 at the age of sixty. This senior scholar, the reputed author of several European-published rabbinic tracts, quickly elected chief rabbi of several New England-area congregations, saw little personal value in affiliating with the still relatively new rabbinic organization.¹²⁵ If anything, he recognized the Agudat ha-Rabbanim as an organizational establishment which stood in the way of his economic and rabbinic-political advancement through the kashruth industry. Indeed, upon his removal to New York in 1912 to head up the Adath Israel Congregation and burial society, and upon his recognition that the kashruth industry in the metropolis was then under Agudat ha-Rabbanim control through its rabbinic officialdom of Klein, Ramaz, and Jaffe, he undertook a decade-long campaign to undermine the reliability of Agudat ha-Rab-

banim within New York Orthodox circles. Not only did he speak out against the Agudah's move toward cooperation with the Kehillah, he charged his opponent Ramaz with incompetence in his monitoring of slaughtering procedures. And he also pointedly accused Jaffe of falsely certifying unkosher products. Finally, Margolis violently opposed the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's support for a 1919 strike by the Butcher Workmen Union and the Union of Live Poultry Workers. This dispute gave him the opportunity to declare that the Agudat ha-Rabbanim was itself a "union" designed to prevent competent competitive rabbis from establishing themselves in the United States. But despite all his efforts, Margolis was unable to effectively wrest kashruth control from the incumbent supervisors.¹²⁶

In the early 1920's it became clear that Margolis's difficulties with the Agudat ha-Rabbanim went well beyond questions of money and rabbinic power and propriety. Margolis was, firstly, troubled by his opponents' support for Zionism. As he saw it, Jews had no right to actively participate in their own political redemption. God alone would decide when the exile should end, and therefore no true-believing Orthodox Jew could associate with that modern national movement. Using the traditional liturgical rendering of Maimonides' Creed as his source, he announced that "God will send at the end of days his redeemer to save those who wait for him. For God and for no one else. And as he took us out of Egypt, so he will show us miracles soon and in our own day."¹²⁷

Margolis also had difficulty with the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's continued association with the Americanized RIETS. Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Spector, he declared, "would turn over in his grave if he knew that a seminary had been built bearing his name where [general] philosophy, the humanities and all other meaningless matters were taught." RIETS, he believed, had lost its way as it sought, under Dr. Revel, to emulate Columbia University and the hated Jewish Theological Seminary of America.¹²⁸

These philosophical concerns, coupled with his long-standing practical opposition, led Margolis in 1920 to organize some 135 like-minded critics of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim into the Knesset ha-Rabbanim ha-Orthodoxim. This assembly placed high on its agenda of priorities the reformation of what it called "the politics of kashruth." And not unlike the organization it opposed, the Knesset called for the

strengthening of traditional Jewish education in the United States, the greater observance here of the Sabbath, and help for afflicted Jews across the seas. Not surprisingly, it also adroitly refrained from recognizing Zionism as an international Jewish reality in this post-Balfour period. But for all the noise and furor of their criticism and protests, Margolis and his followers failed to unseat the Agudat ha-Rabbanim as the most representative voice of the East European rabbinate in America.¹²⁹

Rabbi Yehudah Heschel Levenberg's contemporaneous, quiet institutional challenge of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim, on the other hand, was ultimately of tremendous, enduring significance. In the 1910's and the early 1920's, the Slabodka-trained chief rabbi of New Haven organized the Beis Ha-Medrash Le-Rabbanim (Orthodox Rabbinical Seminary), the first European-style yeshiva in the United States offering no secular studies.¹³⁰ This inaugural institutional statement that Torah Judaism need not, on any level, accommodate Americanization attracted to its faculty such future luminaries as Rabbis Moses Feinstein, Yaacov Ruderman, and interestingly enough, the young, newly arrived Samuel Belkin.¹³¹ Although the school would survive but a few years—it declined precipitously when Levenberg moved himself and his school to Cleveland—it set an ideological standard which at least Rabbis Feinstein and Ruderman would uphold in their respective yeshivot, Mesivta Tifereth Jerusalem of New York and Baltimore's Ner Israel, both founded in the 1930's.

These schools were two of the five enduring institutions formed or transformed during the interwar days which challenged the RIETS/Agudat ha-Rabbanim monopoly on rabbinic training and leadership, and their shared, if somewhat strained, assumptions about the limits of Americanization. Williamsburg's Mesivta Torah Vodaas, led by Rabbi Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz, Rabbi David Liebowitz's Brooklyn-based Yeshiva Chofetz Chaim, and Brownsville's Yeshiva Rabbi Chaim Berlin, headed by Rabbi Yitzchok Hutner, joined their Manhattan- and Baltimore-based colleagues in standing four-square against the combination of advanced secular and religious studies within one institutional setting. But significantly, none actively opposed their students attending schools like the City College of New York at night. These yeshivot were not producing American Orthodox rabbis, as was RIETS. Rather, they were educating Orthodox rabbis in

America who would acquire their advanced degree of integration with the host society in other, secular institutions. Such were the limits of the approaches to religious educational life even in the circles that were the most resistant to Americanization during the pre-World War II days. There was no rabbinical group or individual who would or could attempt to shut out America totally from the lives of religious students.¹³²

The coming of World War II broadened tremendously the limits of Orthodox rabbinic resistance to Americanization. Hitler's invasion of Poland in 1939 and of Russia two years later forced to these shores a new breed of Orthodox Jews to a great extent previously unseen in America. These were men and women who during the period of mass migration had heeded the words of Rabbi Israel Meir Ha-Kohen Kagan (the Chofetz Chaim): "Whoever wishes to live properly before God must not settle in these countries."¹³³ They were now entering this country—when immigration laws permitted—only because the Europe they knew was in the process of being destroyed. Individually this meant that people who had not broken to any great extent with the traditional past to seek their fortune and new world in America were reinvigorating the Orthodox community. The desire to become like all other Americans was far less pronounced among them than it had been among those who preceded them. Obversely, their zeal to recreate European institutions on American soil was far more emphatic than that of the immigrant Orthodox of the turn of the century. Institutionally, this new migration came to mean the settlement and sustaining in America of two new religious organizational forms, the refugee yeshiva and the leader-oriented sect.

Cleveland's Telshe Yeshiva and the Beis Medrash Govoha in Lakewood, New Jersey, best represent the Torah institutions founded or reestablished in this country by rabbis, students, and their followers who successfully, and in some cases miraculously, escaped the European Holocaust. In the former case, Rabbis Elya Meir Bloch and Chaim Mordecai Katz led their community halfway around the world from western Russia through Siberia to Japan and then to Seattle, Washington, before reassembling their lives and yeshiva in 1941 in an Ohio suburb. There, on American soil, they proceeded to recreate almost intact both the methodology of talmudic study and the insulated spirit of their old-country home. Two years later, Rabbi Aharon Kotler, for-

merly head of the Polish Kletsk Yeshiva, after a similarly arduous journey, resettled in America. Possessed of an even greater drive to recreate the Jewish religious world then being destroyed by the Nazis, he founded his yeshiva in a rural New Jersey community. There, theoretically removed from the assimilatory influences of the metropolis, an institution was built which would not only block out America but would even deemphasize the "utilitarian" goal of training young men for the active rabbinate. His school stood for the East European ideal of "Torah for its own sake." Men would study there not so much for ordination but for the love of learning. American talmudic scholars would there be produced worthy of what would have been Lithuanian Jewry's highest scholarly accolades.¹³⁴

The arrival in America of leader-oriented Orthodox immigrant groups was also a product of the dislocations which accompanied and followed the Second World War. In 1939 Rabbi Joseph Breuer moved from Frankfurt am Main, by way of Belgium, to New York's Washington Heights, bringing with him the Orthodox traditions of Samson Raphael Hirsch and quickly attracting to his new residence a considerable following of German immigrant Jews. In 1940, Rabbi Joseph Isaac Schneersohn, the leader of the Lubavitcher Hasidim, made Brooklyn's Crown Heights his home, beginning a process which led thousands of wartime and postwar Russian Hasidic refugees to that locality. The year 1946 witnessed the settlement of Hungarian Satmar Rebbe Joel Teitelbaum and his followers in Brooklyn's Williamsburg. And these years and the next decade witnessed Hasidic groups from Romania, Hungary, and Galicia following their leaders to these shores. The Hasidic groups differed from each other somewhat in matters ritual, social, and ideological, and overall the approach of the East European Hasidim to religious life certainly varied significantly from the teachings of the Hirschian Western European contingent. But what they all held in common was the Orthodox community structure, resistant of rapid Americanization, rooted in their allegiance to their respective chief rabbis.¹³⁵

Unlike poor Rabbi Jacob Joseph, who after his arrival in the United States searched for a constituency which would resist the inroads of the new land, Rabbis Breuer, Schneersohn, Teitelbaum, and the others led their followers to America with their individual authority and power remaining intact. Committed to recreating the lost communi-

ties of Europe on American soil and resisting, each to its own degree, the pressures of immigrant acculturation, these leader-oriented groups quickly established their own networks of schools, self-help charitable institutions, and social organizations. Chief rabbinates were now truly being established in this country, but with one major difference. None of these men, with the possible exception of the Jewish-proselytizing Lubavitcher Rebbe, attempted to extend their formal suzerainty beyond the community of their true believers.

These new, growing, and confident Orthodox elements impacted dramatically on the status, thinking, and practice of such indigenous Orthodox groups as the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. No longer were these long-time Orthodox rabbis in America the most strident force against Americanization. Though the circumstances that brought the newcomers to America were entirely different from those which directed the earlier generation, they were nonetheless showing that traditional faith could progress in this country without any accommodation to the host environment. This meant, for example, that an Americanized RIETS/Yeshiva University, even in its most traditional of incarnations, was not, to their minds, a necessary evil to attract a lost generation back to the ancestral faith. Why, Lakewood or Telshe devotees asked rhetorically, trim one's ideological and social sails to represent the entire, seemingly uncaring American Jewish community, when there now existed a strong, ever developing, committed religious population which accepted the law of the Torah and wanted only those rabbis trained as in the past to lead and guide them?¹³⁶

This newly arrived Orthodox leadership also questioned the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's long-standing commitment to Zionism, as expressed through its support of the Mizrachi movement. Many, if not all, of the newcomers were backers of the Agudath Israel. That religious-political party, founded in Central and Eastern Europe in 1912, linked in its opposition to Zionism a diverse group of Hirschians, Hasidim, and Lithuanian yeshiva spokesmen. At its inception the Agudath Israel criticized modern Jewish nationalism on strong theoretical and practical theological grounds. In its view, Jewish tradition had ordained that the Jews were in exile for their sins and were destined to remain in Diaspora until Providence willed their miraculous return. Accordingly, the contemporaneous Zionist manifestation was a false messianic movement, led mostly by men and women who had broken

with the Jewish religious past, which threatened the continuity of the people's existence. Significantly, the Agudath Israel was particularly strident in its upbraiding of Mizrahi religious Zionists, seeing them as the worst transgressors of all. They spoke and behaved daily like Orthodox Jews and yet they supported the apostate movement.¹³⁷

The cataclysmic and climactic events of the 1930's and 1940's, which witnessed Zionism's emergence not only as a major political reality but more significantly as a practical refuge of necessity, caused the Agudath Israel to modify its position. It had become increasingly difficult to oppose this projected sovereign refuge haven for one's people in a Hitlerian world, even when one opposed the Zionist movement. Accordingly, the Agudath Israel deemphasized its theological difficulties with Jewish nationalism and refocused its attention on the fact that Israel was being built by secular Jews unconcerned with and unbridled by the law of the Torah. Now occupying an ideological position still significantly different from the Mizrahi's—the latter had always considered itself the “watchdog” for Judaism *within* the Zionist movement—the Agudath Israel in the 1930's and 1940's charted its own separatist role in “building Eretz Yisrael in accordance with Torah and the guidance of the sages.” Practically this meant that it would remain outside of the Zionist political system, while creating its own religious institutions and fighting for greater traditional religiosity in the Yishuv. By World War II's end only a small minority from the original Agudath Israel coalition, the Naturei Karta of Jerusalem and their Satmarer cousins, remained opposed to the rise of Israel.¹³⁸

The Agudath Israel in its original form—Rabbi Gabriel Margolis notwithstanding—made no appreciable impact upon the Orthodox rabbinate in America through the mid-1930's. Agudat ha-Rabbanim and RCA members seemingly shared leadership in the relatively small but vibrant American Mizrahi movement. Indeed an American branch of the Agudath Israel did not appear until 1938. And even then, under the guiding hand of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's president, Eliezer Silver, a major goal of the American branch was to find mechanisms for all Orthodox Jews concerned with the Yishuv to cooperate in promoting their religious institutional life.¹³⁹

The Torah-world leaders who arrived during and after World War II rejected this cooperating, seemingly half-hearted approach. Transplanting the European Agudath Israel's position to America, they en-

deavored to chart a course for their movement in line with their group's worldwide position. Rabbis Kotler, Bloch, Katz, and Grozovsky all became, as early as 1941, part of the Council of Torah Sages, an Agudath Israel presidium in America which effectively replaced the indigenous American-born leadership. Implicit here was the newcomers' critique of the old-time American rabbis' non-adherence to uncompromising principles.¹⁴⁰

The Council of Torah Sages also championed, and with characteristic intensity, long-standing Agudat ha-Rabbanim causes. The older organization had from its inception argued that Yiddish was the most appropriate language for Jewish religious instruction. But it allowed, however, that English might be used as a secondary tongue, particularly in geographical areas where Yiddish had been forgotten. In 1947 Rabbi Kotler declared that Yiddish must be the sole language for teaching the tradition. "Mass assimilation among the gentiles," he pronounced, "will result if we utilize the language of the land. Our Jewish children will then emulate non-Jewish practice."¹⁴¹

The council's 1956 categorical condemnation of Orthodox rabbis cooperating with their Conservative and Reform counterparts in the Synagogue Council of America and on local boards of rabbis gave another of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's old-line principles its fullest articulation. In a ban signed by eleven *roshei yeshiva*—including Rabbis Kotler, Feinstein, and Ruderman, two Mesifita Torah Vodaas instructors, Yaacov Kamenetsky and Gedalia Schorr, and two refugee RIETS scholars, Lifshitz and Zaks—colleagues were "forbidden by the law of our sacred Torah to be members" of such organizations. Significantly, Rabbi Eliezer Silver, still president of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim, did not sign the proclamation. For him, such a written testament—despite his basic philosophical agreement with its thrust—would effectively cut off Yeshiva University men whom he still hoped to influence both from his organization and from the wider, growing yeshiva world.¹⁴²

Men like Eliezer Silver were undoubtedly filled with bittersweet sentiments by the rise of this new era of immigrant Orthodoxy. While they could only applaud the rapid and comprehensive growth of a truer-than-ever Orthodox community in this country which was seemingly well-resisting America's pressures and recreating reasonable facsimiles of Old World life-styles, they had to be saddened that

the realization of that which they had originally set out to do was being achieved by others. Indeed, by the mid-1950's, long-time Agudat ha-Rabbanim members could not help notice that even their organization was no longer in their hands. In 1958, the majority of the organization's members were wartime immigrant rabbis, and the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's presidium was now controlled by Council of Torah Sages men like Kotler, Feinstein, Kamenetsky, and Lifshitz among others. The strictest of the Orthodox of one generation had been eclipsed by the new yeshiva world with its army of new immigrants. In 1960, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim officially opposed members belonging to mixed rabbinical groups. It solemnly declared that any rabbi who belonged to such organizations as the Synagogue Council and/or the New York Board of Rabbis (NYBR) would forfeit his membership. And with an eye toward the Orthodox Union/RCA it declared that "all Orthodox rabbis must also resign from the Board of Rabbis."¹⁴³

This new generation of immigrant Orthodox rabbis also made its impact on the thoughts and behavior of RCA members. Although the Council of Torah Sages denigrated their education and deplored their outlook, some RCA men have been either unwilling or unable to ignore the new immigrant rabbis' teachings and influence. This sensitivity to what renowned, transplanted European figures were thinking and saying was seen most graphically in the RCA's reaction to the aforementioned 1956 ban. With Rabbis Kotler, Feinstein, and others officially on record as opposed to their membership in the Synagogue Council, and/or the NYBR, a group of RCA spokesmen led by then President Rabbi David Hollander argued that the RCA had no choice but to submit to higher Torah law. Although Hollander's view never acquired the majority necessary to change RCA policy, the influence of the council had made inroads. Its uncompromising position had detached from the American Orthodox rabbinical ranks a clerical segment willing, after a generation of struggle for independence, to surrender its autonomy to a body of immigrant rabbis.¹⁴⁴

The yeshiva world has influenced the American Orthodox rabbinate in other ways, less easily documented, but equally significant. As one contemporary sociologist discovered, the RIETS student of today is far different from his counterpart of prewar days. He too has felt the impact of the yeshiva world's uncompromising ideology. Indeed,

many have come to redefine our term “simulation” to mean the attempt to approximate the talmudic learning environment of a Chaim Berlin or a Lakewood while participating to an ever decreasing degree in a university setting. And while all RIETS men revere Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, and a goodly proportion still evince an interest in the secular, for some the rabbinic role-model is a Rabbi David Lifshitz (a signatory of the 1956 ban) or any number of younger *roshei yeshiva* who have themselves sought to emulate the East European rabbinical style. Significantly, RIETS has responded to these demands and proclivities through the establishment, beginning in the 1950’s, of its own Kollel (postgraduate, “Torah for its own sake”) programs, as well as, in 1970, the *yadin yadin* program, first conceived of by Revel two generations ago. Finally, although Rabbi Haskel Lookstein, following in his own father’s footsteps, may have been assigned by RIETS to teach students homiletics, many present-day rabbinic candidates believe that their ability to rise in congregational life is predicated less on their capacity to deliver articulate English-language sermons and more on their reputation as a talmudic scholar attractive to an increasingly learned Orthodox laity.¹⁴⁵

V. Reflections on the Current Generation of Accommodators
(ca. 1940–1980)

For all the inroads immigrant Orthodox rabbis have made during the post–World War II years upon the thinking and practices of their American-trained colleagues, the traditions begun by Drachman and Goldstein,¹⁴⁶ institutionalized by Revel and Belkin, formalized by Lookstein, and delimited and crystallized philosophically by Rabbi Soloveitchik have by no means disappeared. The current generation of RCA rabbis still constitutes for the most part a hard core of support for the established principles of simulation, inclusion, and cooperation. For some, continued backing for the idea that Orthodox rabbis must represent the entire community, and should cooperate with and include less-traditional colleagues to the extent that they can, is an exigency of life as a minority denomination in the suburbanized contemporary Jewish community. This point of view was clearly apparent in the reaction of rabbis serving communities far removed from the New York metropolis to Hollander’s anti-SCA position. “A local rab-

bi who would follow Hollander's intolerant footsteps," one Colorado-based source declared, "would be hooted out of town or consigned to obscurity."¹⁴⁷ But for most of the clerics who tacitly ignored the 1956 ban, the decision to avoid self-segregation was less a product of necessity and more an act of faith. Indeed RIETS produced, from the late 1930's to the 1950's, a coterie of graduates who not only supported umbrella defense and interdenominational organizations but personally rose to leadership positions in these cooperative institutions.

Significantly, men like Rabbis Emanuel Rackman (RIETS, '32), Israel Miller (RIETS, '41), and Herschel Schacter (RIETS, '42) were all initiated into the practical world of Jewish intragroup cooperation as chaplains in the United States Armed Forces during the Second World War. As volunteers willing to serve both their country and all its Jewish elements, they entered the military already predisposed toward representing a broad ethnic polity. Their close observation, if not eyewitnessing, of Hitler's atrocities sensitized them further to Rabbi Soloveitchik's message that Jew-hatred drew no ideological lines.¹⁴⁸

Returning to America in the late 1940's, all three of these men built multifaceted careers as leaders of second-generation American congregations, spokesmen for the RCA and for Religious Zionism in America, and as Orthodox representatives in a myriad of intragroup organizations. Each has served in the Executive and other high-ranking capacities in the Jewish Agency, the American Zionist Federation, and the World Zionist Organization. Miller and particularly Schacter were among the first to join the contemporary community-wide battle for Soviet Jews.¹⁴⁹ Rackman was president of the New York Board of Rabbis from 1955 to 1957. And not surprisingly each has served as chairman of the Jewish Welfare Board's Commission on Jewish Chaplaincy. Most significantly, in 1968 Schacter was elected chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, the first Orthodox rabbinical leader to speak for that umbrella organization. The principle of cooperation was thus fully articulated as a RIETS/RCA man represented to the American and world governments the interests of some thirty Jewish organizations running almost the gamut of Jewish commitments and positions. In 1974-76 Miller served in this powerful and prestigious post. And in 1982, Rabbi Julius Berman, a 1959 graduate of RIETS and president of the Orthodox Union, became the third Orthodox-based chairman.¹⁵⁰

Architectural, sermonic, and ancillary congregational simulation is also still advocated by most RCA members. And in the most recent decade, Orthodox simulation has added an additional dimension, for at least some RCA members, through their advocacy of increased women's participation in all aspects of synagogue life. The rise of the feminist movement has impacted substantially upon American Jewish denominational life. Dramatic change has both taken place and has been resisted in the more liberal movements. Women are now trained and ordained as rabbis at the Reform Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion and at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. And their sisters have now battled successfully for admission to the Jewish Theological Seminary's rabbinical program. On the local level, Conservative women have struggled for greater liturgical access and participation, and both Conservative and Reform women have petitioned for increased control over the political dimensions of synagogue life.¹⁵¹

Americanized Orthodoxy, too, has not been immune to these currents of change. Although a goodly proportion of the RCA membership has resisted to date either debate over or concession to women's goals, another smaller contingent has been searching, textually and sociologically, for the limits to which they can accommodate within the Orthodox reading of Jewish law that which is becoming part of the more liberal Jewish theological/sociological world. Accordingly, many Orthodox congregations now permit their women to serve on lay boards of trustees, and some even permit female membership on synagogue ritual committees. Most strikingly, a few rabbis have placed their imprimatur upon separate women's tefilot (prayer services) within their communities. Interestingly, by 1982 this latter initiative had become pervasive enough for the Agudat ha-Rabbanim to declare in a tone somewhat reminiscent of eighty years ago:

God forbid this should come to pass. A daughter of Israel may not participate in such worthless ceremonies that are totally contrary to Halacha. We are shocked to hear that "rabbis" have promoted such an undertaking which results in the desecration of God and his Torah. We forewarn all those who assist such "Minyonim," that we will take the strictest measures to prevent such "prayers," which are a product of pure ignorance and illiteracy. We admonish these "Orthodox rabbis": Do not make a comedy out of Torah.¹⁵²

In 1976, Rabbi Norman Lamm was elected Yeshiva University's

third president. A self-described disciple of Rabbis Belkin and Solo-veitchik, this American-born and Yeshiva College-trained, RIETS-ordained leader was in his early career a junior colleague of Joseph Lookstein at Yorkville's Kehilath Jeshurun and later served as successor to Leo Jung at the West Side, New York, Jewish Center.¹⁵³ During his relatively brief administration to date, Lamm has committed himself forcefully to many of the now century-old principles which have directed the Americanized Orthodox rabbinate. But, as we have seen, the Orthodox world in America today is quite different from the one his predecessors first knew. The refugee-yeshiva/leader-oriented communities, now in their own second generation, are strong, resolute, and growing. The simulators and cooperators seem to be represented more in his own generation than in the one being trained and emerging from his own theological seminary.

Lamm, for his part, has urged lay and rabbinical leaders "to broaden our horizons beyond our immediate needs and the concerns of our narrow constituency to embrace all of the Jewish community throughout the world." And he has spoken out in a historical vein against "right wing . . . authoritarianism which . . . has largely abandoned the fierce intellectual independence which had always been the hallmark of the European yeshiva scholar in all segments of religious life." On a more philosophical level he has declared similarly:

We are committed to secular studies, including all the risks that this implies, not only because of vocational or social reasons, but because we consider that it is the will of God that there would be a world in which Torah be effective; that all wisdom issues ultimately from the Creator and therefore it is the Almighty who legitimizes all knowledge.

Finally, he has charged his fellow Americanized Orthodox rabbis to take their unique message, different from what is offered both by the more liberal denominations and by the world of transplanted Europe, to the larger American Jewish community as teachers, rabbis, and communal leaders. Time will tell how strongly his voice will be heard both within and without the American Orthodox seminary that he champions.¹⁵⁴

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Notes

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The following abbreviations are used:

- AH *American Hebrew*
 AJH *American Jewish History*
 AJHQ *American Jewish Historical Quarterly*
 AJYB *American Jewish Yearbook*
 EJ *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem and New York, 1971-72)
 HS *Hebrew Standard*
 JCR *Jewish Communal Register* (New York, 1917-18)
 MA Judah L. Magnes Archives. Jewish Historical General Archives, Jerusalem, Israel; copy of file at American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.
 Min CED Minutes of the meeting of the Committee on Education of the Jewish Community of New York
 Min ECK Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Kehillah
 MJ *Morgen Zhurnal*
 PAAJR *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*
 PAJHS *Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society*
 UJE *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, edited by Isaac Landman (New York, 1939-43)
 YT *Yiddishes Tageblatt*

1. Moshe Davis. *The Emergence of Conservative Judaism* (Philadelphia, 1963), p. 237; Bernard Drachman, *The Unfailing Light* (New York, 1948), pp. 177-182; Cyrus Adler, "Semi-Centennial Address," in *The Jewish Theological Seminary of America: Semi-Centennial Volume*, ed. Cyrus Adler (New York, 1939), pp. 5-7; Henry Pereira Mendes, "The Beginnings of the Seminary," *ibid.*, pp. 35-42.

2. The dividing lines between "Orthodox" and "Conservative" rabbis involved in this initiative were much less the differences in their rabbinical training than in their philosophy and practices in American pulpits after ordination. The similarity in their rabbinical training, whether they are indicated in the text as "Orthodox" or "Conservative," is evidenced by the following comparisons. Among those of Ashkenazic origins, both Drachman and Kohut were graduates of the Breslau Seminary, the former in 1885, the latter eighteen years earlier. Schneeberger was ordained by Azriel Hildesheimer in Berlin in 1871, Aaron Wise was ordained by the same man a few years earlier when Hildesheimer was still in Eisenstadt, Hungary. Wise and his older colleague Kohut significantly were students at the Pressburg Yeshiva in Hungary, the school of Rabbi Moses Sofer (the *Hatam Sofer*), before gaining ordination among more modern, liberal exponents of traditional Judaism. Bettelheim was ordained in the 1860's by Rabbi Shlomo Yehudah Leib Rappaport, the famous traditional rabbinical pioneer of the Haskalah and supporter of *Wissenschaft des Judenthums*. Marcus Jastrow, ordained by Rabbis Moses Feilchenfeld of Rogasen and Wolf Landau of Dresden, clearly received at least as traditional a training as the other American-serving rabbis, both Orthodox and Conservative. Probably the most traditionally trained rabbi in the group was Rabbi Moses Maisner. He was ordained by Rabbi A. S. B. Sofer of the Pressburg Yeshiva. Drachman described his colleague as a "strong adherent of Orthodox teachings who served Adath Israel Synagogue of New York. See *AJYB* 1903-4, p. 77, and Drachman, p. 179. Importantly, all the rabbis here mentioned, including Maisner, were recipients of Ph.D.s from recognized Central European universities. See below for a discussion of the levels of Orthodox training received by those who defined themselves as Orthodox in the

America of the 1880's. For now, the heterodoxy of practice among those defining themselves as Conservative is evidenced by the fact that Kohut of New York's Ahavath Chesed, Wise at the city's Rodef Shalom, and Jastrow at Philadelphia's Rodef Shalom all came to pulpits which had already broken with totally distinct Orthodox practices. Bettelheim was rabbi in the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, which used the Jastrow-Szold prayerbook and permitted mixed seating during the services. Significantly, his Orthodox colleague Schneeberger served that city's Congregation Chizuk Emunah, whose members had broken away from the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation over the issue of mixed seating.

Among the Sephardic rabbis, the Mendeses, father and son, were members of a British-based rabbinical house. Both received secular training at English-style schools and universities and were trained for the rabbinate primarily at home through family tutors. Their father and grandfather was London Rabbi David Aaron De Sola. Meldola De Sola of Montreal, another of the fourteen Seminary founders, was also a grandson of David De Sola. Sabato Morais, commonly acknowledged as the greatest guiding spirit behind the Seminary, was privately trained for the rabbinate in Italy and ordained by Rabbi Abraham Baruch Piperno of Leghorn. Henry S. Jacobs, born in Kingston, Jamaica, rabbi of Ashkenazic Congregation B'nai Jeshurun of New York in 1886, also claimed Sephardic heritage and received similar training. He was ordained by Rabbi N. Nathan of Kingston and served at Shearith Israel (New York) for two years before moving on to B'nai Jeshurun. There he was more comfortable with the abridged Torah reading and other variations which made that congregation, in the words of its historian, "classified as Conservative-Reform, together with Jastrow of Philadelphia and Szold of Baltimore."

Rabbis Weil and Davidson are the remaining rabbis mentioned in the sources as involved with the founding of the Seminary. I have been unable to find any background information on these two figures except for the random remark in an *AJYB* listing of rabbis and cantors in 1903-4 that a Rabbi D. Davidson served Congregation Agudath Jesharim in New York City. For more details on these rabbis, see Davis, pp. 329-366; Israel Goldstein, *A Century of Judaism in New York* (New York, 1930), pp. 160-163; Isaac Markens, *The Hebrews in America* (New York, 1888), pp. 275-308; Isaac Fein, *The Making of an American Jewish Community: The History of Baltimore Jewry* (Philadelphia, 1971), pp. 118-119. David De Sola Pool and Tamar De Sola Pool, *Old Faith in a New World* (New York, 1955), pp. 192-194, 425; Guido Kisch, ed., *Das Breslauer Seminar: Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar (Fraenkelscher Stiftung) in Breslau 1854-1938* (Tubingen, 1963), pp. 381-403.

3. This denominational historiographic point of view is clearly most reflected in Davis's *The Emergence of Conservative Judaism*. See also on this trend, Herbert Parzen, *Architects of Conservative Judaism* (New York, 1964), pp. 18-25.

4. Mendes, pp. 35-41. See also on the purposes of the early Seminary, Davis, p. 237; Adler, pp. 5-7; and Drachman, pp. 177-182. There is a significant difference of opinion among both historians and contemporary observers as to the relative strength of the so-called Orthodox as opposed to the Conservative factions in the organizing of the Seminary. Clearly reflecting later denominational tensions and prejudices, Drachman's autobiography suggests that Kohut "was the only rabbinical representative of Conservative Judaism." See Drachman, p. 179. Cyrus Adler, in his contribution to the Jewish Theological Seminary festschrift, talks of a highly heterogeneous grouping "reflecting varying views." See Adler, p. 5. Davis's work suggests a view of these events similar to Adler's. In like manner, Drachman is clear in his understanding of the early Seminary as having an "uncompromising adherence to the tenets of Orthodox Judaism [although] the term 'Orthodox' is not used." See Drachman, pp. 181-182. Davis emphasizes the heterogeneity of opinion which pervaded the Seminary. For our purposes it is clear, however, that the self-defined Orthodox leaders in the institution saw their work as strictly Orthodox, albeit

looking, as Drachman put it, "for the harmonious combination of Orthodox Judaism in America which to me was the true concept of Judaism." See Drachman, p. 206.

5. Abraham J. Karp, "New York Chooses a Chief Rabbi," *PAJHS*, March 1954, pp. 129–194. Jonathan D. Sarna, trans. and ed., *People Walk on Their Heads: Moses Weinberger's Jews and Judaism in New York* (New York, 1982), pp. 22, 111–114.

6. The suggestion that the rabbis here engaged in organization building viewed themselves as Orthodox rabbis creating Orthodox institutions in America is evidenced either by their contemporary statements or by their later activities. Morais, for example, argued during the deliberations over the founding of the Seminary that it should be called "The Orthodox Seminary." See Davis, p. 235. Drachman, as noted previously, argued that "although a certain proportion of the organizing delegation and participating rabbis belonged to the Conservative wing of Judaism, the principles of the Seminary . . . were those of uncompromising adherence to the tenets of Orthodox Judaism." See Drachman, p. 181. The Mendeses and Schneeberger were founders of both the Seminary and the later Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, which was formed in 1898 to promote "Orthodox Judaism whenever occasions arise in civic and social matters." See Israel M. Goldman, "Henry W. Schneeberger: His Role in American Judaism," *AJHQ*, December 1967, p. 179, and *AH*, January 4, 1901, pp. 231–233. Additionally, not only did the men see themselves as Orthodox, but they were perceived as such by some significant contemporary observers. Rabbi Joseph H. Hertz, a student of Morais, eulogized his teacher as "the trusted leader of Orthodox Judaism in America." See J. H. Hertz, "Sabato Morais: A Pupil's Tribute," in Adler, p. 47. Drachman himself referred to Morais, H. P. Mendes, and Schneeberger as "splendid representatives of the Orthodox ministry." See Drachman, pp. 177–182. But probably the most significant "testimony" to Morais's Orthodoxy is the appreciation of him expressed by the Agudat ha-Rabbanim, which, as we will immediately see, represented transplanted East European forms of Orthodoxy in America. Its *Sefer ha-Yovel shel Agudat ha-Rabbanim ha-Ortodoksim de-Artsot ha-Brit ve Canada* (New York, 1928) recounted the history of the Jewish Theological Seminary and stated that "the founder of the Seminary, Dr. Sabato Morais, was indeed an upholder of the old traditions . . . and the early students who emerged from there were full-hearted for the faith of Israel and its Torah." The *Sefer ha-Yovel* then contrasts Morais's upholding of old traditions with the later "conservatives, so-called 'upholders of old traditions' who did not deserve to be called such." See *Sefer ha-Yovel*, p. 18. To be abundantly fair, it should be noted that the publication of Davis's book sparked an important historiographic debate as to how the designations "Conservative" and "Orthodox" may be used in dealing with nineteenth-century figures. One of the most spirited exchanges was between Abraham J. Karp and Charles Liebman on the question of Morais's designation as Orthodox. Liebman claimed that "Morais . . . must be reclaimed to Orthodoxy," based upon his textual-based understanding that when Morais used the term "enlightened conservatism" he was referring to modern forms of Orthodoxy. If "conservatism" did not mean Orthodoxy, it is unlikely he would have used the term "Orthodox" in his defense of the Seminary to Reform Rabbi Richard Gottheil as an "Orthodox institution which will win many converts to intelligent conservatism." Liebman also notes historiographically that in other writings Davis characterized Morais as "the unflinching champion of traditional Judaism." For Liebman "the first head of the Seminary was apparently fond of the term 'conservative' as a synonym for Orthodoxy." Karp, on the other hand, while admitting that Morais called himself Orthodox and "espoused the cause of Orthodoxy," said he displayed many un-Orthodox philosophical and practical features uncharacteristic of "the Orthodoxy of a rabbi living in the 19th century." Morais, for example, worked with non-Orthodox elements in both nontheological, communal endeavors and in the founding of Maimonides College. Morais also chose as his colleagues on the advisory board of the Seminary men like Jastrow, Szold, Kohut,

etc.—for Karp “hardly an Orthodox rabbinic body.” Most significantly, Karp quotes Morais as advocating liturgical change and philosophical departures deviating from Orthodox belief. Our suggestion is that Morais may be characterized as an Orthodox rabbi based on his self-definition and activities, his acceptance as such by his American Orthodox colleagues, and most notably his acceptance by the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. Clearly Karp is right in arguing that Rabbi Hayim Soloveitchik of Brest-Litovsk, Isaac Elchanan Spector of Kovno, or even Samson Raphael Hirsch of Frankfurt am Main might not have called Morais an Orthodox rabbi. But that conceivable nonrecognition does not make him a Historical School rabbi by default. Rather he and his generation of Orthodox rabbis—Drachman, Schneeberger, et al.—as we will see below, are spiritual, when not actual, antecedents of the “Orthodoxy espoused and practiced by the Rabbinical Council of America in the present decade of the 20th century,” a basis of judgment of Orthodoxy which Karp feels cannot be used in evaluating Morais. See on this debate, Charles Liebman, “Orthodoxy in Nineteenth Century America,” *Tradition*, Spring–Summer 1964, pp. 132–140, and Abraham J. Karp, “The Origins of Conservative Judaism,” *Conservative Judaism*, Summer 1965, pp. 33–48. There is, of course, no historical debate or question concerning the Orthodox affiliation of Rabbi Jacob Joseph.

7. Karp, pp. 143–144; Max S. Nussenbaum, “Champion of Orthodox Judaism: A Biography of Sabato Morais” (D.H.L. diss., Bernard Revel Graduate School, Yeshiva University, 1964), pp. 1–10; *JE*, vol. 8, pp. 486–487. The elder Mendes, though not a university graduate, was well versed enough in secular culture to run Northwick College, a school for Anglicized Jewish youths.

8. Drachman, pp. 3, 100, 151, 165, 167, and *passim*.

9. Goldman, pp. 153–159 and *passim*.

10. The elder Mendes was born and raised in Kingston, Jamaica, where he established the Beth Limud School of Kingston. He resigned that post when he moved on to England for his “family-based” rabbinical training. After service in a pulpit in Birmingham he was elected to a pulpit in London, where he built Northwick College, a Jewish boarding school. H. P. Mendes attended his father’s school, which drew to its student body the children of Anglicized upper-middle-class families of varying religious commitments. It offered them a combined secular and religious curriculum. On the Mendeses’ early training and associational patterns, see *JE*, vol. 8., p. 468, and Eugene Markovitz, “Henry P. Mendes: Builder of Traditional Judaism in America,” (D.H.L. diss., Bernard Revel Graduate School, Yeshiva University, 1961), pp. 4–5. Morais, similarly, had a broad associational pattern with Jews of all stripes as well as non-Jews. He counted among his closest Jewish friends Emanuel Felici Veneziani, who was destined to be named Chevalier of the Crown of Italy, Israel Costa, later Chief Rabbi of Leghorn, and Raffaello Ascoli, lawyer and writer. His membership in the Order of Free Masons of Italy testified to his associational history with non-Jews, particularly Italian patriots, in his youth and young manhood. See Nussenbaum, pp. 7–10. For an example of Morais’s communication, if not participation, on nontheological issues with Reform rabbis, see Nussenbaum, p. 150, for a discussion of Jastrow, Mendes, and Joseph Krauskopf mediating an 1890 Philadelphia cloakmakers’ strike. The Mendeses showed their interdenominational orientation in their activities in the founding and early leadership of the New York Board of Jewish Ministers, later the Board of Rabbis. See Markovitz, pp. 133–153, for discussions of their combined antimissionary and promodern Jewish education work.

11. Drachman, pp. 100, 206. Drachman insisted in an appended note to his autobiography, that he did not agree with the view which saw Hildesheimer’s Berlin Seminary as Orthodox and by analogy his education as less than Orthodox. For him, Breslau, which advocated “the bindingness of Jewish law,” and Berlin, which advocated “the harmonious union of Orthodox faith

and modern culture," were both Orthodox institutions. He did, of course, note that some other Orthodox rejected even the Orthodoxy of Hildesheimer. For him, Breslau and Berlin were both "in fundamental harmony with the basic concept of Traditional Judaism and its adjustment to modern conditions."

12. Although the committee that chose the chief rabbi was concerned about the "various shades of Orthodoxy . . . in America," Rabbi Jacob Joseph himself never spoke out publicly in criticism of the legitimacy of the Orthodox ordination claimed by his English-Sephardic and American-born Ashkenazic colleagues. Indeed, there is some evidence that at least one of his contemporaries both recognized the existence of an American Orthodoxy uptown that was different from theirs and was pleased with its activities. Weinberger, in a letter to a friend in Hungary, spoke of "uptown congregation named Orach Chayim, whose members are enormously wealthy and completely German . . . who go there daily for the afternoon prayers and to engage in Torah study." See Sarna, p. 116. Polish-born Abraham Neumark, trained at rabbinical seminaries in Berlin and Breslau, was spiritual leader of that congregation. His educational profile is clearly not unlike Schneeberger's or Drachman's. See Ben Zion Eisenstadt, *Anshe Hasheim b'Arzeis Ha-Bris* (St. Louis, 1933), p. 21, for Neumark's biography.

Despite this "character witness," additional questions could have been raised, and would still be cogent today, as to the acceptability of the ordination of the Seminary Orthodox group to those of East European heritage. Critics of the Sephardim would have relatively little difficulty with the ritual and philosophical Orthodoxy of those who ordained Morais and Mendes. But they might question the levels of knowledge of traditional Talmud and rabbinic sources achieved by their colleagues. The Sephardim might be seen as Orthodox but not as highly revered or respected as Orthodox rabbis. Observers seeking to denigrate Schneeberger's legitimacy might also criticize his early training and facility with traditional texts. And questions could be raised about his teacher Hildesheimer. Though widely seen as an Orthodox rabbi by German Jewry, it is clear that he moved his seminary from Eisenstadt to Berlin because of opposition to him emanating from Hungarian rabbis, disciples of the Hatam Sofer, who deplored his modernism. See on Hildesheimer, *Ej*, vol. 8, col. 478, and Leo Jung, ed., *Jewish Leaders (1750-1940)* (New York, 1953), pp. 220-221. However, it also should be noted that Hildesheimer was "orthodox enough" for the committee which selected Rabbi Jacob Joseph to solicit his opinion about possible candidates for the chief rabbinate of New York. See Karp, p. 137.

Bernard Drachman's case presents far more problems. He might be "disqualified" from the Orthodox rabbinate on the basis of his early training as well as the background of his teachers. At the Breslau seminary, Drachman counted as his teachers a most heterogeneous faculty which included Heinrich Graetz, Manuel Joel, Israel Lewy, David Rosin, Jacob Freudenthal, and Baruch Zuckerman. All of these scholars were advocates of Reform and of the philosophy of *Wissenschaft des Judenthums*, and friends, colleagues, or disciples of Zachariah Frankel. Although Drachman claimed for himself a belief "in the bindingness of the authority of tradition upon the individual conscience," he was ordained by Joel, a recognized contemporary supporter of Frankel, who clearly questioned the untrammled validity of the oral law. See on the history of the Breslau seminary, Isaac Heinemann, "The Idea of the Jewish Theological Seminary 75 Years Ago and Today," in Kisch, pp. 85-101. At all events, I believe that Drachman proved his Orthodoxy not so much at the Breslau seminary but immediately thereafter, when he left one of his earliest pulpits, at New York's Congregation Bikur Cholim, over the issue of the synagogue trustees' demand that he support their initiative toward mixed seating in the services. That act, more than philosophical pronouncements and educational background, might ultimately prove to be the most effective historical guideline between American Orthodoxy and American Conservatism in the nineteenth century.

Even if Rabbi Jacob Joseph could have accepted this appreciation of Drachman as Orthodox, he might still have had difficulties with the ongoing affiliation of Drachman and his associates with the Jewish Theological Seminary. They all called their work Orthodox, but an examination of the institution's earliest curriculum would raise additional questions. Not only were they part of a most heterogeneous faculty but they were training rabbis in a way more reminiscent of Breslau—if not Geiger's Berlin—than of Volozin. The Bible was "the principal text book of the Seminary . . . selected portions of the Talmud form[ed] a part of each year's instruction," Jewish history would be taught primarily for "its bearing upon the history of the world," and all graduates were to be required to have a secular education. Additionally, words like "critical accuracy" and "Historical Judaism" were used to describe the approach toward study, phrases that could be construed as supporting either American Orthodoxy or Conservatism but certainly not the Orthodoxy of East European Rabbi Jacob Joseph. See Davis, pp. 240–241, for the Jewish Theological Seminary statement on curriculum.

13. Karp, p. 188.

14. Benjamin Kline Hunnicutt, "The Jewish Sabbath Movement in the Early Twentieth Century," *AJH*, December 1979, pp. 196–215.

15. Clearly Mendes, Morais, et al. had no cause to denigrate the legitimacy of Rabbi Jacob Joseph's Orthodox ordination. But they did outspokenly question his effectiveness as an American Orthodox rabbi. H. P. Mendes wondered out loud, "will he be able to take up the fight against the encroaching steps of Reform in America? Do not give way to false hopes. Those who come after you will be Americans, full-blooded Americans like your brethren in faith uptown." And Morais chimed in, "[Rabbi Joseph] is not a cultured man. He does not possess the knowledge nor the literary attainments which a rabbi should possess." See *American Israelite*, March 30, 1888, and *New York Herald*, July 31, 1888, quoted in Karp, p. 153.

16. It is interesting to note that in attempting to recreate rabbinic authority in America, specifically on the kosher meat issue, Rabbi Joseph ultimately had to turn to his uptown American Orthodox colleagues H. P. Mendes and Drachman for help in bringing the wholesale butchers into line. Drachman and Mendes aided their downtown associate, although for them meat monitoring was not the highest communal concern. See Karp, p. 169.

17. Sarna, pp. 51–56.

18. The Orthodox rabbinate in America, of course, predates the 1880's. Rabbi Abraham Rice of Baltimore is generally acknowledged as the first ordained rabbi to serve in this country. A student of Rabbis Abraham Bing and Wolf Hamburger of the yeshiva in Wuerzburg, he arrived in the United States in 1840 and served in Baltimore, Maryland. He was joined in the American Orthodox pulpit in 1853 when Rabbi Bernard Illowy arrived from Hungary. A student of Rabbi Moses Schreiber of Pressburg and later the recipient of a Ph.D. from the University of Budapest, Illowy served in pulpits in New York, Philadelphia, and New Orleans before becoming Rice's Baltimore-based colleague in the 1860's. Representatives of the East European Orthodox rabbinate in the United States pre-1887 include Rabbis Abraham Joseph Ash of New York, Abraham Jacob Lesser of Chicago, New York's Joseph Moses Aaronsohn and, of course, Moses Weinberger. Ash served Beis Hamedrash Ha-Gadol intermittently from 1860 until his death in 1887. His passing helped precipitate the search which led to Rabbi Jacob Joseph's selection. Rabbi Lesser, trained at yeshivas in Mir and Minsk, came to the United States in 1880 and served in Chicago until 1900, when he moved to Cincinnati. Rabbi Aaronsohn was, in the words of one contemporary Hebrew journalist, Zvi Hirsch Bernstein, "the first Orthodox rabbi in America with the exception of Rabbi Abraham Joseph Ash." See on these early rabbinical figures, Fein, pp. 54–55, 95, and passim; Israel Tabak, "Rabbi Abraham Rice of Baltimore," *Tradition*, Summer 1965, pp. 100–120; David Ellenson, "A Jewish Legal Decision by Rabbi Bernard Illowy of

New Orleans and Its Discussion in Nineteenth Century Europe," *AJH*, December 1979, pp. 174–195; Sarna, pp. 4–5; Judah D. Eisenstein, "The History of the First Russian-American Jewish Congregation," *PAJHS*, 1901, pp. 63–74; *Sefer ha-Yovel*, p. 137; Zvi Hirsch Bernstein, "On Jews and Judaism 35 Years Ago," *Yalkut Maarabi*, 1904, p. 129.

Of course, such notables as Rev. Gershom Mendes Seixas and Rev. Isaac Leeser served as ministers/hazzanim and spokesmen for traditional Judaism in this country from the late eighteenth through the mid-nineteenth century without the benefit of ordination.

19. For a graphic representation of the information extant on these founding members, see Benzion Eisenstadt, *Chachme Yisrael Beamerika* (New York 1903).

20. *Sefer ha-Yovel*, pp. 13–21.

21. The *Sefer ha-Yovel* reports that the organizational meeting at Ramaz's home in Boston took place "at the time of the Zionist meeting" in that city (undoubtedly the Federation of American Zionists meeting), raising the question of what impact Zionism's secular nature made on the founding of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. The winter of 1901–1902 is, of course, a significant time-frame in general Zionist history. In December 1901, at the Fifth Zionist Congress, a resolution was passed favoring a program fostering global Zionist national education; the launching of secular Hebrew culture as part of the Zionist movement. Religious Zionists angered by the resolution's total omission of any religious orientation to the Zionists' Jewish cultural activities met four months later under the leadership of Rabbi Isaac Jacob Reines to organize as an independent body to protect the interests of religious Jews in the Zionist movement. The world Mizrahi movement would soon emerge out of these latter deliberations. Looking at America, the limited historiography on the early years of Zionism in this country indicates that East European Rabbis Margolies and Philip Hillel Klein, along with—and significantly so—Drachman and Mendes, were among the early backers of Hovevei Zion in New York. The Hebrew and Yiddish press of the day noted that these rabbis addressed Zionist cell meetings. Additionally, the *Encyclopedia of Religious Zionism* indicates that Rabbis Dov Baer Abramovitz, Abraham Eliezer Alperstein, Joseph Grossman, Bernard Levinthal, and Margolies—all charter members of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim—were consistent supporters of Mizrahi both here and abroad. Thus it is not surprising to find Levinthal, Ramaz, and others attending the New England conclave in May 1902. And although that convention did not deal with the Mizrahi question of East Europe, the problem of religious Judaism being overlooked might well have been on their minds when a resolution to condemn Dr. Emil G. Hirsch for asserting that "the Sabbath is dead" was considered out of order by some Zionist delegates who asserted that "the Zionist movement does not recognize religious questions." That may well have made some impact upon the Orthodox rabbis there at the convention. Of course, Sabbath observance would become a basic plank of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's program.

In any event, it is important to note that both the organization and its member rabbis as individuals, though resisting of Americanization, were not anti-Zionist. In 1903, at the Agudah's second annual convention, "Zionism was unanimously accepted as part of the Conference program." A year later, a eulogy for Theodor Herzl was pronounced by Rabbi Margolies at the third convention. As late as 1936, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim could congratulate the American Mizrahi on its twenty-fifth anniversary. The era of anti-Zionism among Orthodox rabbis in America dates from a later period, clearly much later than the rise of organizational anti-Zionism of the Agudath Israel in Eastern Europe. See below for a discussion of postwar anti-Zionism among Orthodox rabbis. See on the foregoing discussion, *AH*, May 30, 1902, pp. 39–41; *AJYB*, 1903, p. 161, and 1904–5, p. 282; Hyman B. Grinstein, "Memoirs and Scrapbooks of Joseph Isaac Bluestone," *PAJHS*, 1939, pp. 53–64; Samuel Rosenblatt, *The History of the Mizrahi Movement* (New York, 1951), pp. 1–20; Pinchas Churgin and Leon Gellman, *Mizrahi: Jubilee*

Publication of the Mizrahi Organization of America (1911–1936) (New York, 1936).

22. There is some disagreement in the sources about the date of the meeting in Ramaz's home. The *Sefer ha-Yovel* states that the meeting was held in the month of Adar (February-March) at the time of the Zionist convention in Boston. That year, the Zionist convention in Boston met at the end of May. Our working assumption is that the Adar date is mistaken.

23. *Sefer ha-Yovel*, p. 24.

24. *Ibid.* For an English translation of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's constitution, see Aaron Rakeffer-Rothkoff, *The Silver Years in American Orthodoxy: Rabbi Eliezer Silver and His Generation* (Jerusalem and New York, 1981), p. 316.

25. Jeffrey S. Gurock, *When Harlem Was Jewish* (New York, 1979), p. 23

26. Judah David Eisenstein, *Ozar Zikhronothai: Anthology and Memoir* (New York, 1929), pp. 77, 118. "Biographical Sketches," *AJYB*, 1903, p. 180. Eisenstein, the early historian of the East European Jewish religious community in the ghetto, recorded for posterity Rabbi Widerwitz's public appreciation of who made him chief rabbi of the United States: "The sign painter," he reportedly asserted. And to the question of "why of the entire United States?" he replied, "because it is impossible to bring together all American communities to dismiss me." Despite this humorous epigram, it should be noted that Widerwitz was nonetheless a scholar who had published, while still in Russia, the works of Rabbi Mendel of Lubavitch and who, according to Eisenstein, published numerous articles. Rabbi Segal was even more of a serious scholar than Widerwitz. Indeed Segal authored a most significant work of American halachah, *Eruv v'Hotzaah* (1901), a tract which argued the permissibility of carrying in New York's East Side on the Sabbath. His position was based on the reality that the Jewish Quarter was enclosed on three sides by water and the fourth side was considered legal "as a closed door" by virtue of the elevated railroads linked by raised columns north to south in Manhattan Island. Eisenstein tells us, significantly, that the "Hasidim who followed him carried their taleisim on the Sabbath." Eisenstein, p. 118. Of course, Widerwitz's and Segal's difficulties with Rabbi Jacob Joseph stemmed not from varying interpretations of "Sabbath texts" but rather the competition over the right of supervision in the crucially important "workaday" world of kosher meat supervision. See below for more on the split within the East European Orthodox rabbinate in America over the power of kosher regulation. It is also possible that Segal and Widerwitz, of Galician and Hasidic orientation, did not fit in the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's predominantly Lithuanian, non-Hasidic group of rabbis.

27. English-born Joseph Asher was educated secularly at Jews' College grammar school, Owens College, Manchester, and Trinity College, Cambridge University. As such his training was quite similar to that of the Mendes family. But he received his rabbinical training in Kovno, Russia, and was ordained by Rabbi David Tevel Katzenellenbogen of Kovno/Suwalk, qualifying him at least theoretically for Agudat ha-Rabbanim membership. Clearly his position as professor of homiletics at the Seminary, not to mention his role as rabbi and preacher at Conservative Congregation B'nai Jeshurun in New York before moving on to the Orthodox Orach Chaim in the same city, did not help his chances of being invited to joined. Asher identified closely with the Mendes-Drachman strain of Orthodoxy. So did his predecessor at Orach Chaim, David Neumark. As noted above in n. 12, the Polish-born Neumark was trained in the Breslau and Berlin rabbinical seminaries before coming to the United States and linking up with the American Orthodox group. Philadelphia-born Henry S. Morais was the recipient of an American secular education and was trained for the ministry by his father, Sabato Morais. He served congregations in Syracuse, New York, and Newport, Rhode Island, before beginning a very significant tenure at Congregation Mikve Israel in New York.

Henry Speaker (1895), David Wittenberg (1895), Bernard M. Kaplan (1897), Leon H. Elma-

leh (1898), Morris Mandel (1898), Menahem M. Eichler (1899), Michael Fried (1899), Emil Friedman (1899), David Levine (1900), and Israel Goldfarb, Phineas Israeli, Hillel Kauvar, and Nathan Wolf, all of the 1902 pre-Schechter rabbinical graduating class round out the list of so-described “full-hearted (American Orthodox) rabbis.” All also played an important role in the Jewish Endeavor Society, to be discussed below.

See for biographical descriptions: “Biographical Sketches,” *AJYB*, 1903, p. 42; Adler, pp. 76–78; Eisenstein, *Anshei Shem*, p. 21.

28. *Sefer ha-Yovel*, p. 18.

29. Mendes, Abramovitz, Drachman, Greenstone, Kauvar, Morais, and Schneeberger were all officers and trustees of the Orthodox Union in 1903. See *AJYB*, 1903–4, p. 159. The decision to oppose the activities of the Orthodox Union was part of a blanket rejection by the Agudat ha-Rabbanim, at its third convention, of Rabbi Mendes’s appeal to them to cooperate in (a) bringing “to the notice of the rabbis the fact that certain marriages legal in Jewish law are illegal according to the law of the State,” (b) regulating the practice of milah, i.e., “mohelim not paying sufficient regard to surgical cleanliness,” and (c) opposition to the “Cincinnati College” of the Reform movement. The Agudat ha-Rabbanim responded that they would abide by the state’s laws and did not need to be reminded. They also averred that mohelim under their influence always used great caution in the operations. Most significantly, they rejected cooperation with Mendes in opposing Reform. They demurred that Seminary rabbis (now post-1902) “are not fit for the position of rabbi on account of lack of proper and sufficient preparation.” Finally, the Orthodox Union was not recognized as a valued ally in the fight to perpetuate Judaism. The Agudat ha-Rabbanim noted that “our principal aim has always been directed to form and build up a union of real Orthodox congregations.” See *AH*, July 8, 1904, p. 204, July 30, 1904, p. 282, and Markovitz, “Henry Pereira Mendes: Architect of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America,” *AJHQ*, March 1966, pp. 380–381.

Agudat ha-Rabbanim’s nonacceptance of Seminary graduates post-1902 is understandable considering the change of administration and emphasis at the start of the Schechter years. Non-recognition of the Orthodox Union, an organization led by the Orthodox leaders of the old Seminary, cannot easily be based on the sudden invalidity of the Seminary. Rather, one might argue it was due to (a) unwillingness of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim to share leadership, (b) holding the American Orthodox to be guilty by association for working with Conservative leaders, and (c) the presently to be discussed Americanizing thrust of the union, which the Agudah rejected.

30. *AH*, January 4, 1901, p. 231.

31. Indirect impressionistic evidence supporting this view of the Orthodox Union rabbis as searching for a constituency to lead may be found in Drachman’s autobiography. Commenting upon the lot of the American Orthodox rabbi around the turn of the century, he lamented: “It seemed for a time. . . that there was no room, no demand in America for an American-born, English-speaking rabbi who insisted upon maintaining the laws and usages of Traditional Judaism. . . Reform Judaism had conquered almost the entire field of Jewish life. . . There were a few Orthodox congregations whose members were American-born. . . But there were no vacancies. Groups of East Europeans. . . adhered to Orthodox traditions of their native lands and wanted rabbis of that type.” See Drachman, p. 167. In truth the leaders of the Orthodox Union were interested not so much in leading first-generation immigrants but in struggling for the second generation.

32. *Sefer ha-Yovel*, pp. 25–26; Rakeffet-Rothkoff, pp. 317–319. See Rabbi Zalman Jaccob Friederman, “Takanot Hachomim,” *Ha-Peles*, 1902, pp. 469–471. For another look at how the Agudat ha-Rabbanim understood the picture of Jewish education at its inception, Hapgood focuses upon the career of Vilna-born Rabbi Moses Reicherson (1827–1903), a great Hebrew

grammarian. Arriving in New York in 1890, he authored articles for *Ner Maarabi*, *Ha-Pisgab*, and *Ha-Ivri* and edited *Ha-Techiya*. But his talents went almost unnoticed in New York, and he died a "melamed in the Uptown Talmud Torah." See Eisenstein, p. 106, Hutchins Hapgood, *The Spirit of the Ghetto* (New York, 1902), pp. 55–57.

33. *Sefer ha-Yovel*, p. 26, and Rakeffet-Rothkoff, p. 319. To be sure, not long after its founding, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim moved slightly off its staunchly separatistic stance. At its second convention, held in August 1903, leaders agreed both to work toward a systematic curriculum for "all talmud torahs and hedarim" in this country and to give financial aid to talmud torahs in smaller communities. Mention was also made of the need to establish Hebrew schools for girls. Equally important, it was decided to hire "graduates from the normal schools in the employ of the City Boards of Education" to teach secular subjects in the all-day yeshivot, a concession to United States law if not custom. A year later at the third convention, held in July 1904, authorities leading talmud torahs and yeshivas "were requested to institute lectures for the young on Saturday and Sunday afternoons." No mention was made of the language of discourse or the topics for discussion. In any event, for the Augdat ha-Rabbanim the ideal form of Jewish education remained the transplanted *heder/yeshiva* system from East Europe. See *AJYB*, 1903–4, p. 160; 1904–5, p. 282.

34. *AH*, May 30, 1902, pp. 37–38.

35. *HS*, October 18, 1901, p. 4; *AH*, January 18, 1901, p. 284; February 8, 1901, p. 379; April 5, 1901, p. 596; Drachman, pp. 225 ff.

36. *AH*, December 6, 1901, p. 118; February 7, 1902, p. 375; May 2, 1902, p. 725; December 25, 1903, p. 205. For more on the history of the Jewish Endeavor Society, see my "Jewish Endeavor Society," in Michael Dobkowski, ed., *American Jewish Voluntary Organizations* (Westport, Conn., forthcoming). Clearly the Jewish Endeavor Society was a critical first step toward what would emerge as the Young Israel Synagogue in the 1910's. See on that my "The Orthodox Synagogue in America," in Jack Wirthheimer, ed., *The History of the Synagogue in the United States* (New York, forthcoming).

37. Ironically the JES stood for one of the causes which most interested the Agudat ha-Rabbanim—putting the imposter rabbi and his "mushroom synagogue" out of business. See *AH*, October 17, 1902, p. 608, for the society's position on the privately owned and operated "congregations" which sprung up overnight yearly around High Holiday time ostensibly offering services to non-seat holding-downtowners in "rented rooms, saloons and dance halls." With reference to *maggidim*, we have the comments of one Endeavorer that his "services were successful but unfortunately a 'maggid' usually appeared on the scene followed by his hosts and naturally the services had to make room for the Yiddish preacher." See *AH*, January 16, 1903, p. 298.

The foregoing description of Agudat ha-Rabbanim opposition to the JES is based exclusively upon observations made by society proponents about the tenor of criticism which greeted their efforts on the Lower East Side. We are thus hearing only from Agudat ha-Rabbanim critics possessed of their own particular biases. A major bibliographical issue which must be addressed beyond this work is the specific opinions of individual Orthodox rabbis over (a) the permissibility of substituting vernacular prayers for the original Hebrew, (b) what are the obligatory prayers which had to be recited in the original, and (c) whether Yiddish-language sermons were inviolable and whether there exist certain "secular" topics that ought not to be discussed from the pulpit.

38. *Sefer ha-Yovel*, p. 26; Rakeffet-Rothkoff, pp. 319–320; *AJYB*, 1903, p. 160; Drachman, p. 229. When Drachman's association was first founded, Rabbi Jacob Joseph was one of the individuals who initially cooperated with him. Eisenstein, p. 77. And by the mid-1920's there are indications that the Agudat ha-Rabbanim had come to work not only with Orthodox Union

people but with more liberal Jews and non-Jews in promoting the five-day work week. See Benjamin Kline Hunnicutt, "The Jewish Sabbath Movement in the Early Twentieth Century," *AJH*, December 1979, pp. 196–225. But that era of semicooperation began a full generation after Drachman's organization came into being.

39. Again it should be noted here that Drachman's organization worked with Reform Jews from its very inception, which might have discredited that organization *a priori* in Agudat ha-Rabbanim eyes. See Hunnicutt, pp. 199–200.

40. See *HS*, October 24, 1902, p. 4; *AH*, February 7, 1902, p. 400; *HS*, June 12, 1903, p. 10, for examples of turn-of-the-century Orthodox Union lobbying efforts.

41. For Mendes's early anticonversionist efforts, see Markovitz, "Henry P. Mendes," pp. 53–54. On the Orthodox Union's early 1900's antisectarianism campaigns, see Leonard Bloom, "A Successful Jewish Boycott of the New York City Public Schools," *AJH*, December 1980, pp. 180–188; Jeffrey S. Gurock, "Jacob A. Riis: Christian Friend or Missionary Foe; Two Jewish Views," *AJH*, September 1981, pp. 29–47; idem, "Why Albert Lucas of the Orthodox Union Did Not Join the New York Kehillah," *PAAJR*, 1982–83. Parenthetically, my two aforementioned articles note the strong differences in opinion between Orthodox Union leaders and Reform Jewish spokesmen on how to deal with Christianity's impact on the immigrant Jew.

42. Jacob David Willowski, *Sefer Nimukei Ridbaz Perush al ha-Torah* (Chicago, 1904). For more on Willowski's United States career, see Aaron Rothkoff, "The American Sojourns of Ridbaz: Religious Problems within the Immigrant Community," *AJH*, June 1968, pp. 557–572. For his conflicts with other Orthodox rabbis, see below.

43. See Arthur Goren's authoritative history of the Kehillah, *New York Jews and the Quest for Community* (New York, 1970), particularly chapters 2 and 3, for the evolution of the "Jewish Community" idea and varying group reactions to its formulation.

44. *AH*, January 4, 1901, p. 235; *HS*, March 5, 1909, p. 12; Min ECK, April 7, 1909; *MA*, P3/1398; Min CED, April 10, 1910; *MA*, P3/1662.

45. Goren, p. 50.

46. Min ECK, December 12, 1909; *MA*, P3/1398; Min ECK, October 8, 1912; *MA*, P3/1400; Min ECK, October 10, 1910; *MA*, P3/1399; Min ECK, May 14, 1912; *MA*, P3/1400; *JCR*, pp. 292–293, 1187–1188.

47. *JCR*, pp. 1187–1188; Min ECK, April 17, 1909; *MA*, P3/1398; Min ECK, December 11, 1911; *MA*, P3/1400.

48. Rabbi Philip Hillel Klein was born in Hungary in 1848. He received his earliest training from his father, Rabbi Zeev Zvi Klein, a disciple of the Chatam Sofer. At the age of fifteen he began studying with Rabbi Hildesheimer while the latter still resided in Eisenstadt. Like his mentor Klein ultimately migrated to a more cosmopolitan setting, in his case, Vienna, where he studied secular subjects while teaching at a yeshiva led by Rabbi Zalman Shtitzer. In 1869, at the age of twenty-one, he was ordained by Rabbi Zvi Benjamin Auerbach of Halberstadt at Hildesheimer's Berlin Rabbinical Seminary. Klein ministered in Liebau, Russia, before migrating to the United States in 1890. See *Sefer ha-Yovel*, p. 140. Klein served with Drachman on the committee on resolutions at the second Orthodox Union convention in 1901. He was also honored at that occasion with the privilege of delivering the opening prayer to the delegates. See *AH*, January 4, 1901, p. 235. For Klein/Drachman's Harlem career, see Drachman, pp. 277–279; Gurock, *When Harlem Was Jewish*, p. 119; and First Hungarian Congregation Ohab Zedek, *Golden Jubilee Journal* (New York, 1923), passim. Drachman for his part, in his autobiography, lauded Klein as "a rabbi of the old ghetto-type, on a par with the great Talmudists of Poland and Russia, but he was a university graduate as well." See Drachman, p. 280.

49. See *Ej*, vol. 11, col. 959, and *AJYB*, 1903–4, p. 79, for basic biographical information on

Ramaz. For Ramaz's pulpit career and an in-house look at his relationship with Kaplan, pre-1910, see Joseph H. Lookstein, "Seventy-Five Yesteryears: A Historical Sketch of Kehilath Jeshurun," *Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun, Diamond Jubilee Year Book, 1946* (New York, 1946), pp. 17–236. Of course, more needs to be known about the early career of Kaplan in that Orthodox pulpit. The basic facts are that in 1902, upon his graduation from the Seminary, he was appointed, in the words of this congregational organ, "minister" of the synagogue. The journal continues that "the title of 'minister' was changed to that of rabbi when in 1908 ordination was conferred upon Rabbi Kaplan by Rabbi Isaac Reines of Lida, Russia," p. 24. In any event, for at least three years, Ramaz worked with a "non-Orthodox" rabbi who did not have dual ordination like that possessed by Rabbi Herbert S. Goldstein to be discussed below.

50. *AH*, January 31, 1908, p. 344; February 28, 1908, p. 444; *HS*, February 14, 1908, p. 1; *Min ECK*, 12/11/11; *MA*, P3/1400.

51. *Min ECK*, October 8, 1912; *MA*, P3/1400; *Min ECK*, December 10, 1912; *MA*, P3/1400. Moses Z. Margolies and Philip H. Klein to Executive Committee of the Jewish Community (Kehillah of New York), October 31, 1912, in *Min ECK*, October 21, 1912; *MA*, P3/1407; *JCR*, pp. 292–293.

52. Klein to Bernard G. Richards, *MA*, P3/1414; *Min ECK*, August, 11, 1914; *MA*, P3/1410.

53. For a history of the Uptown Talmud Torah's Americanization efforts and problems before and during the Kehillah era, see Gurock, *When Harlem Was Jewish*, pp. 99–108.

54. See *HS*, June 18, 1915, p. 1, for Goldstein's major statement on the role of the Orthodox rabbinate in America.

55. For more on Goldstein's career in Yorkville and beyond, see Isaac Berkson, *Theories of Americanization* (New York, 1920); A. Joseph Epstein, "The Early History of the Central Jewish Institute, 1915–1920" (M.A. thesis, Bernard Revel Graduate School, Yeshiva University, 1977); Aaron Reichel, "An American Experiment: The Institutional Synagogue in Its First Score of Years" (M.A. thesis, Bernard Revel Graduate School, Yeshiva University, 1974).

56. "Biographical Sketches of Jews Prominent in the Professions, etc., in the United States," *AJYB*, 1904–5, p. 152; Marnin Feinstein, *American Zionism, 1884–1904* (New York, 1925), pp. 132, 170–171, 209.

57. Moses Rischin, *The Promised City: New York's Jews, 1870–1914* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), pp. 103, 239–240. Masliansky's memoirs indicate that prior to assuming his job at the Educational Alliance, he reportedly told Louis Marshall, "It is the goal of the Educational Alliance to warm the immigrant Jewish soul with his traditions which he has preserved over the thousands of years of his travails in Diaspora, because he will never become a good American if he loses his Judaism . . . we must Americanize the older generation and Judaize the younger souls." See Zvi Hirsch Masliansky, *Masliansky's Memoirs: Forty Years of Life and Struggle* (New York, 1924). See also for more on Masliansky, his *Sermons*, trans. by Edward Herbert, rev. and ed. by Abraham J. Feldman (New York, 1926), and *Droshe* (New York, 1908–9).

58. *AH*, January 4, 1901, p. 235. *JCR*, p. 72, indicates that as late as 1917–1918, three years after Klein and Margolies left the Kehillah's executive committee, Masliansky remained on that powerful cooperating board.

59. Eisenstadt, *Doros ha-Aharonim*, 2nd ed., vol. 2 (Brooklyn, 1937), p. 59; *MJ*, August 7, 1908, p. 5; August 19, 1908, pp. 7–8.

60. *MJ*, June 5, 1911, p. 5; June 3, 1910, p. 5; Hurwitz was more than just a school principal. He was a prolific writer in the field of Jewish education, authoring both textbooks for students and a philosophical tract on the goals of Jewish education in America. Among his books for youths and schoolchildren were *Dinai Yisroel Minhagav*, *Otzar ha-Yahadut*, *Hagim Zemanim*, and twenty-two other similar primers. His approach to Jewish education was best expressed in a

tract entitled *Ha-Dat ve ha-Hinuck* (1927) in which he argued that Jewish educational goals in America had to be different from those prevailing in Europe. He advocated a balanced curriculum of Jewish history, Bible, prophets, and Hebrew language and literature in addition to the traditional study of Talmud, ideas very much in keeping with those of the Kehillah innovators.

61. *MJ*, September 22, 1910, p. 7; June 5, 1911, p. 5; *YT*, April 15, 1912, p. 7. Given Hurwitz and Masliansky's attitudes, which clearly differed in many ways from those of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim, an organization which neither joined, it is not surprising that both helped found the Jewish Ministers Association of America (Agudas ha-Rabbanim ha-Matiffim) in 1916. Hurwitz was the organization's first secretary, and Masliansky was a charter member of the organization, which included in its membership such American-born or Americanized rabbis as Drachman and Moses Hyamson. See *JCR*, pp. 1189–1192. Noteworthy also is the fact that this organization was not the first attempt to bring Orthodox rabbis of varying backgrounds together. In 1896, Mendes attempted to establish an Orthodox Rabbinical Council of New York City. There were ten names in its charter of organization—Mendes, Drachman, and Meisner of early Seminary officialdom, plus seven other worthies: Rabbi Morris Wechsler, in 1895 spiritual leader of Congregation Brit Shalom of New York, and Rabbi Wolf Friedman, possibly the rabbi of Congregation B'nai Israel Anshe Sameth, and five otherwise unidentifiable rabbis named Bloch, Gur, Marcus, Yanowsky, and Tzinzler. See on this early group, Markovitz, pp. 374–375, and for brief biographical sketches, see *AJYB*, 1903–4, pp. 55, 104. Hurwitz and Masliansky did, however, stop short of joining the interdenominational Board of Jewish Ministers, an organization joined by Mendes, Drachman, and younger colleagues Hyamson and Goldstein. See *JCR*, pp. 298–300.

62. *AJYB*, 1903–4, p. 74; Naomi W. Cohen, *Not Free to Desist: The American Jewish Committee, 1906–1966* (Philadelphia, 1972), p. 563; Alex Goldman, "Bernard L. Levinthal: Nestor of the American Orthodox Rabbinate," in *Giants of Faith: Great American Rabbis* (New York, 1964), pp. 160–176; *Sefer Kavod Chachomim* (Philadelphia, 1935), passim. It is interesting to note that among the dignitaries offering greetings in honor of Levinthal's anniversary were such ideologically diverse communal leaders as the Jewish Theological Seminary's Cyrus Adler, identified there as head of the American Jewish Committee, Morris Rothstein of the Zionist Organization of America, Conservative Rabbi Julius Greenstone, American Orthodox Rabbi David De Sola Pool, and East European trained Yeshiva University worthies Joseph B. Soloveitchik, Moses Soloveitchik, and Bernard Revel. The Agudat ha-Rabbanim also sent greetings.

63. *Sefer Kavod Chachomim*, p. 75; Goldman, p. 167.

64. A clear thrust of the above presentation is the historiographical necessity of full-length studies of these exceptional East European rabbis who, as we will see, so influenced the next generation of Orthodox rabbis. For example, although Rabbi Levinthal supported Americanization efforts and as such should have been a role model for the next generation of Orthodox rabbis, an "oral tradition" about him, which needs amplification, maintains that he jealously protected his prerogatives in centralizing Philadelphia pulpits and keeping younger RIETS men out for more than a generation. Ramaz on the other hand, as we will see later, supported the goals of the newer colleagues.

65. There are, of course, instances where American Orthodox rabbis cooperated with East European colleagues in the hope of ensuring the latter's hegemony of kashruth supervision. As noted previously, Drachman and Mendes in 1888 helped Rabbi Jacob Joseph control the wholesale butchers of New York. And in that same year, both English-speaking rabbis conducted appeals in their synagogues to help save Rabbi Joseph's failing association. In the 1890's accusations were leveled against Drachman claiming that he was both awarding "tens of thousands of *heksherim* to *shohatim* and butchers who did not observe the Sabbath" and planning to usurp Rabbi Jacob Joseph's position as chief rabbi. Critics pointed to Drachman's Vaad ha-Rabbanim

Mahzike Hadath (Rabbinical Council—Strengtheners of the Faith) as the source of the problem. Drachman replied that his organization had a broad agenda for protecting observant Jews, not just kashruth, and that he had been brought into this area of controversy by problems of Jewish consumers.

If one accepts Drachman's apologia, it may be understood that kashruth supervision was not at the top of his communal concerns. At most he saw himself as a protector of Jewish consumers in the broader economic sense. Harold Gastwirth notes, for example, that in April 1899 Drachman was involved in the founding of the Orthodox Hebrew Society, dedicated to dealing with problems of Sabbath observance, Sunday blue laws, and Christian missionaries, but not kashruth. The Orthodox Union's list of concerns in its early generation did not prioritize kashruth supervision. To be sure in 1905 the Orthodox Union discussed the idea of certification of retail stores, and five years later talked about a set of universal requirements governing kashruth. But neither idea was acted upon. See on these Orthodox Union positions, *YT*, January 19, 1905, p. 8, and *AH*, March 25, 1910, p. 535. And, of course, as we have noted previously, Orthodox Union rabbis deferred to the Agudat ha-Rabbanim in Kehillah days and activities. For these and more details on the American rabbis' early relationship with Agudat ha-Rabbanim rabbis over kashruth, see Harold P. Gastwirth, *Fraud, Corruption and Holiness: The Controversy over the Supervision of the Jewish Dietary Practice in New York, 1881-1940* (Port Washington, N.Y., 1974), pp. 55-82.

66. Clearly much more needs to be known about what motivated East European-born rabbis to depart far away from the immigrant centers. In the case of Rabbi Marlin, *Sefer ha-Yovel*, p. 146, suggests that "illness and weakness forced him to move to western mountain states," but the choice of Sioux City, a town of at most several hundred Jews, was undoubtedly not a random selection. The growth of kashruth supervision as a profession was facilitated greatly in the post-1880 period by advances in the agricultural and railroad industries. The introduction of the refrigerator car "made it possible to slaughter the cattle and dress the meat in the west, thus substantially reducing the cost of shipping as compared with that of transporting a live animal." See Gastwirth, p. 27. At all events, it is important to note that the vast majority of East European rabbis did not move out of touch with the immigrant centers. Then as now, the lack of contact with colleagues and superiors, the unavailability of religious training facilities and spouses for their children, and the myriad of religious activities which require a Jewish community, seemingly kept these rabbis close to "home." A statistical analysis of the sixty charter members of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim residing in thirty-one American cities in 1902 reveals the following: A full quarter lived in New York City alone, and another third had settled in cities with Jewish populations in excess of fifty thousand. Only five rabbis ministered in cities with less than five thousand Jews: Providence, Rhode Island, Portland and Bangor, Maine, Des Moines, and Omaha. Thus Rabbis Grodzinsky and Zarchy were the only ones working in small towns remote from the Baltimore-Boston seaboard, east-of-the-Alleghenies segment of America which thirty-five of the sixty called home. (Rabbi Matlin moved out of New York after 1902.) The geographical homogeneity of this group is further highlighted by the fact that only five of the sixty lived west of St. Louis. Rabbi Zarchy, who during his career served in Lexington, Kentucky, was the only one of the sixty to preside south of the Mason-Dixon line.

Twenty-seven years later, the pattern of East European rabbinic settlement had not changed appreciably. There were 313 members of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim working out of eighty-six cities. But 152 of them—approximately one-half—lived in New York. An additional fifteen resided in Chicago, America's second-largest Jewish city. Nine more were based in Baltimore. Surprisingly only five were centered in Levinthal's Philadelphia, a city often seen as a bastion of Conservative Jewry. All in all, 207 of the 313 rabbis made the Baltimore-Boston seaboard their

homes. Noteworthy also is the fact that the Agudat ha-Rabbanim had members in thirteen New Jersey cities within approximately three hours of New York and Philadelphia, and members in thirteen Massachusetts cities within approximately three hours of Boston or New York. An additional seventeen rabbis were based in western Pennsylvania and western New York State. An equal number ministered west of St. Louis, including four in Los Angeles, four in Minneapolis—St. Paul, and three in San Francisco—Oakland. Des Moines was by that time led by a Rabbi N. H. Zeichik, and Rabbi M. H. Braver worked out of Sioux City. Omaha continued to be served by Hirsch Grodzinsky, an individual whose perseverance alone is deserving of further study. The South could only boast of four rabbis, two in growing Atlanta and one each in Lexington and Norfolk, Virginia. Certainly the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's members did not comprise the totality of the East European rabbinate in America. But the sixty subjects in 1902 and 313 in 1929 constitute enough of a sample to make these reasonable judgments. All these statistics verify our suggestion that the East Europeans stayed close to the immigrant hubs until well into the twentieth century.

67. See Gastwirth, pp. 55–90, for the most complete discussion of Rabbi Jacob Joseph's difficulties with his competitors. The Willowski-Album dispute has been studied through the published writings of each. Album authored *Sefer Divrei Emet*, 2 vols. (Chicago, 1904–1912), where he defended his position. Willowski's introduction to his *Nimukei Ridbas al ha-Torah* (Chicago, 1903) offers his side of the story, along with a wide-ranging indictment of religious practice in America. That work, along with Weinberger's 1887 tract, ranks high within the rabbinic "protest" literature of the immigrant period. For the best secondary account of the dispute, see Aaron Rothkoff, "The American Sojourn of Ridbaz: Religious Practice within the Immigrant Community," *AJHQ*, June 1968, pp. 557–572. See also on the Ridbaz-Album battle, Gastwirth, pp. 90–92.

68. Gastwirth, pp. 92–118.

69. Gilbert Klaperman, *The Story of Yeshiva University: The First Jewish University in America* (London, 1969), p. 53. Klaperman notes significantly that although the school's New York State certificate of incorporation clearly states that among the objects of the school's concern was "preparing students of the Hebrew faith for the Hebrew Orthodox Ministry," the true agenda of the school was more in line with its public newspaper announcement in January 1897, which made no reference to training for the pulpit as a reason for establishing the school. See Klaperman, pp. 52–54.

70. It should be noted, however, that from its inception RIETS was never totally sealed off as an institution. Secular studies, albeit at this point a peripheral, necessary evil, were offered at the school seemingly to attract native-born students away from public school education. These students, we will immediately see, changed significantly the foci of the school. See Klaperman, pp. 52–54, 75.

71. It is important to note that not all of the RIETS faculty members were Agudat ha-Rabbanim members. Rabbi Joseph's nemesis, Hayim Yaacov Widerwitz, frequently lectured at the yeshiva. See Klaperman, pp. 69–70, 80.

72. *Ibid.*, pp. 88–89.

73. The comparison of native-born to foreign-born students at RIETS here noted is taken from Klaperman's study, which is in turn based on an article by I. Cohen, "Yeshiva Rabbi Isaac Elchanan," in the journal *Aspaklaria* (Adar 1907). More scientific analyses of the nativity, not to mention the actual real numbers, of students at the institution are rendered impossible by the unavailability of RIETS records from its inception until its merger with Etz Chaim in 1915. Thus estimates of student enrollment in the early years are derived entirely from contemporaneous newspaper sources, memoirs, and interviews with early students and their families, dutifully

recorded by Klaperman.

74. This projection of the nature of student interest in studying at RIETS is based upon our knowledge of what was taught at the school and a sketchy awareness of what became of some of the members of the early class of 1901. Klaperman reports that of the twelve or so students known to have been in the school as of 1901, five later attended medical school, one became an English-language journalist, only two became Hebrew teachers, and one was destined to serve as a rabbi. See Klaperman, p. 78.

What is more interesting and unfortunately unknown is the question of where these students came from. Our understanding of immigrant history in this country tells us that most children of new Americans were sent to the public schools, and some were also afforded a supplementary Jewish education. What made the families of RIETS students different, allowing them to a great extent to ignore the usual tool of Americanization? More needs to be known about this significant self-selecting group.

75. The nature of the student demands and the formal decision of the directors to elect Ramaz are known from contemporary newspaper sources. See for a complete discussion of these accounts, Klaperman, pp. 93–106. The unavailability of internal documentation makes it, however, impossible to know why the directors (seven rabbinic, thirteen lay) moved so fast to stem the protest. One possible explanation is that fear of encroachments by the Jewish Theological Seminary upon the fledgling Orthodox institution may have moved their hands. Klaperman reports that just a year before the strike three RIETS students had presented themselves to Dr. Solomon Schechter to discuss the possibility of their enrolling in the newly reoriented Conservative Seminary. It should be remembered, of course, that one of Schechter's mandates was to train East European Jews to minister to their Americanizing brethren. Fear of possibly losing good men to the more liberal denomination may have moved the hand of the RIETS directors. That same fear, as we will presently see, may have influenced the Agudat ha-Rabbanim to support the 1915 merger and reconstitution of RIETS.

76. See Klaperman, pp. 99–133, for a discussion of the tumultuous seven years between the student strike and the establishment of the Rabbinical College of America. Several times during that era, RIETS was threatened with closing. Student unrest continued, for substantive changes in curriculum were slow in catching on. Some students expressed their displeasure by actually moving on to the Seminary. As late as 1913, the ever-present and supportive-of-change Ramaz criticized RIETS's "unrealistic curriculum as a cause of student defection." See Klaperman, pp. 171–172. It was also a time which saw a rising group of concerned Orthodox laymen like David A. Cohen and Harry Fischel, who preached a practical synthesis of "Orthodox Judaism and Americanization." Fischel for one was quite forthright in asserting, upon the Rabbinical College's founding, that its goal was "to educate and produce Orthodox rabbis who will be able to deliver sermons in English, to appeal to the hearts of the younger generation."

It should also be noted that during these years, Rabbis Jaffee and Masliansky were among the prime movers of a Yeshiva Le Rabbanim, "a yeshiva to train rabbis." See Klaperman, pp. 117–118. Masliansky's participation is not surprising, given his already noted attitude toward Judaism and Americanization. What Jaffee, who showed no previous interest in types of synthesis, was doing there is hard to explain. Klaperman suggests that "Rabbi Jaffee was the stormy petrel on the rabbinic scene known as an impetuous non-conformist who rushed in without fear when his mind was made up." See Klaperman, p. 117. Jaffee, defined in this essay as one of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's opponents of accommodation and cooperation, is another of the oft-mentioned rabbinic figures worthy of further study.

77. For a complete biography of the early years of the first president of Yeshiva University, see Aaron Rothkoff, *Bernard Revel: Builder of American Jewish Orthodoxy* (Philadelphia, 1972),

pp. 27–39 and *passim*.

78. *Ibid.*, pp. 38–39. The close spiritual and personal ties between the Seminary and Dropsie were cemented through the activities of Cyrus Adler, president of both Dropsie, from 1908, and of the Seminary, from 1915. See also Ira Robinson, “Cyrus Adler, Bernard Revel and the Prehistory of Organized Jewish Scholarship in the United States,” *AJH*, June 1980, pp. 497–505, for a discussion of the relationship between the Orthodox leader, Conservative leadership, and the rise of Jewish letters in this country.

79. See *Rabbinical College of America Register 5678 (1917–1918)* (New York, 1917), reprinted in Klaperman, p. 254, for a listing of the faculty positions held by Drachman and Mendes. See also Drachman, p. 368, for his description of his teaching duties at the yeshiva. Significantly, Drachman notes that he never taught Talmud at the Rabbinical College because it was the special domain of the East European rabbis, who were “inclined to consider Occidental and most especially American rabbis as inferiors.” See also *Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary Register 5685 (1924–25)* (New York, 1925), which lists Goldstein as assistant professor of homiletics. An interesting subject for examination is the progression of the line of homiletics instruction at American Jewish theological seminaries from Drachman at the seminary through Mendes and Goldstein and ultimately to Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein at Yeshiva University and its relationship to the greater history of denominational life. For more on this issue see below.

80. For a listing of the members of the Rabbinical College Committee, see *Rabbinical College Register* in Klaperman, p. 254. An intriguing question emerging here concerns Jaffee’s relationship with Goldstein, his former student, who went from him to the seminary and then into the American Orthodox pulpit and ultimately to Revel’s institution.

81. As was true of all previously noted important rabbinical political decisions in America, not all East European rabbis followed the organization’s apparent line of thinking. See below for a discussion of early opposition to the Rabbinical College initiated by, among others, Rabbi Gabriel Wolf Margolis. This tentative reconstruction of Agudat ha-Rabbanim attitudes is based upon several of the organization’s activities in response to episodic changes toward Americanization undertaken at RIETS. In 1905, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim called for its right to supervise both religious and secular studies and to monitor student behavior.

Indeed in 1902 it attempted to make the RIETS building, to be built ultimately on Montgomery Street, the center for its organization as well. See on this Klaperman, pp. 171, 207. See also his remark that “the Agudat ha-Rabbanim had long challenged the desirability of a secular education for rabbis.” Of course the theme of fear of the Seminary is, as previously noted, a subject open for much more extensive study.

82. In 1917–18 *Rabbinical College of America Register* lists seventeen “alumni” of that institution. The 1924–25 *RIETS Register* counts thirty-three graduates since “the reorganized Seminary” came into existence. Clearly the latter group, who were ordained under the new curriculum, must be characterized as American-trained rabbis. As for the earlier group, Rothkoff suggests that the men ordained before the reorganization “had received the greatest part of their rabbinic training in European yeshivot.” See Rothkoff, p. 51. These earlier rabbis might be seen simply as having finished their education in the United States, constituting in effect the next generation of Agudat ha-Rabbanim membership. Unfortunately, more detailed background information on these first graduates is unavailable, since the yeshiva’s student records for those years are no longer extant.

83. Of the seventeen pre-1918 alumni listed, seven were noted as having positions in New York or Brooklyn synagogues or schools. Four others found pulpits in the Baltimore-Boston areas, and an additional three resided in western Pennsylvania or upper New York State. Omaha,

Seattle, and Canton were home to the remaining three rabbis. The latter listing also indicates that yeshiva graduates continued to settle in the New York area or in the outlying areas already served by Agudat ha-Rabbanim members. Of the thirty-three pre-1925 graduates, twenty-four found jobs in the New York–Brooklyn synagogues and schools. The Baltimore–Boston axis attracted two others, and western Pennsylvania and upstate New York became home to four others. The remaining three rabbis lived in Omaha, Ottawa, Canada, and Savannah, Georgia.

84. Rakeffet-Rothkoff, p. 107.

85. Rothkoff, p. 171.

86. Conflicts arose primarily when a young yeshiva graduate either simply assumed a full-time position or more problematically, as we will see below, accepted such deviations from Orthodox ritual in his synagogue as a low or nonexistent *mehitza* (partition separating the sexes in prayer). There were also instances, on the other hand, where East European rabbis would contact the yeshiva for an American rabbi to help conduct High Holiday services. The younger colleague would preach in English. See for an example, Rabbi Silver's 1939 letter of thanks to Rabbi Revel for sending him a rabbinical student assistant, quoted in Rakeffet-Rothkoff, p. 176.

87. See Rothkoff, pp. 169–180, for examples of pressure placed on Revel by Agudat ha-Rabbanim members. In 1930 Silver sent a questionnaire to many of the American-trained Orthodox rabbis to ascertain through some twenty-two specific questions their behavior patterns in the rabbinate, their relationships, if any, with rabbis of the more liberal denominations, their interests in the kashruth industry, etc. Rakeffet records sample reactions to these inquiries, which ranged from “the respectful to the polemical.” Some were pleased that the established Agudat ha-Rabbanim was interested in their activities. Others perceived Silver's questions as an invasion of their privacy. See Rothkoff, pp. 99–105. These questions and answers, saved in the Silver Archives, remain still an invaluable trove for a social and attitudinal history of the early American Orthodox rabbinate.

88. Full membership in the Agudat ha-Rabbanim would be accorded to those trained to “adjudicate all areas of Jewish law” (*yadin yadin*). Associate memberships would be offered to those possessing only *yoreh yoreh*, the power “to decide matters of ritual.” For these working definitions see Rakeffet-Rothkoff, p. 104.

89. *Ibid.*, pp. 43–95, for a detailed biography of Silver's early years and the stages of his American rabbinic career.

90. This understanding of Revel's behavior is predicated upon documentation extracted from Rothkoff's biography. That volume notes that Revel frequently received letters from young rabbis in the field complaining about the inroads Conservative Judaism was making into their constituencies. Indeed, supporters of Yeshiva were very concerned that an Agudat ha-Rabbanim rabbi would drive congregants to the more liberal denomination. Rothkoff reports that Revel received a telegram in 1937 from laymen who wanted an American Orthodox rabbi to remain in a pulpit over the objections of an East European *rav*. The young rabbi, they said, was passing “the legacy of the Torah to our children . . . and our elder learned rabbi by his conduct setting a bad example to our young ones causing them to shift to Conservatives.” See below for more on Conservatism's impact. At the same time, Revel had to continue to have the approbation of the East European rabbis to keep the religious reliability of his school at status quo. This led to the perceived fence-straddling position. For documentary evidence supporting this thesis, see Rothkoff, pp. 166–178.

91. For a discussion of the individuals and groups who came together to form the RCA in 1935, see Louis Bernstein, *Challenge and Mission: The Emergence of the English-Speaking Orthodox Rabbinate* (New York, 1982), pp. 9–12.

92. De Sola Pool and Jung were throwbacks to the Drachman/Mendes era or style of Ameri-

can Orthodox rabbis, based on their training at Western European seminaries and at secular schools and not East European yeshivot or at early RIETS in America. De Sola Pool, born in London in 1885, was trained at that city's Jews' College before studying in Berlin at Hildesheimer's seminary. He arrived in the United States in 1907 and assumed Shearith Israel's pulpit, a position he would hold until his retirement in 1956. For more on his life and career, see his own history of his congregation, *Old Faith in a New World: Portrait of Shearith Israel, 1654–1954* (New York, 1955). Leo Jung was born in Moravia in 1892. He moved to London in 1912, when his father, Meir Jung, was elected rabbi of the London Federation of Synagogues, only to return to Central European yeshivot before receiving ordination in the Berlin Rabbinical Seminary in 1920. He migrated to the United States that same year and after two years' service in Cleveland, assumed the Jewish Center pulpit in 1922. For more on Jung's career, philosophy, and approach to the American rabbinate, see his autobiography, *The Path of a Pioneer: The Autobiography of Leo Jung* (London and New York, 1980). See also Nima H. Adlerblum, "Leo Jung," in *The Leo Jung Jubilee Volume*, ed. by Menahem M. Kusher, Norman Lamm, and Leonard Rosenfeld (New York, 1962), pp. 1–40, and his collected sermons and essays, most specifically *Foundations of Judaism* (New York, 1923), *Crumbs and Character* (New York, 1942), *The Rhythm of Life* (New York, 1950), *Harvest* (New York, 1955), and *Heirloom* (New York, 1961). Goldstein, as noted before, had Jaffee's *semicha* and seminary ordination. It is not surprising that these men, each serving affluent, acculturated pulpits, gravitated toward each other and toward the Orthodox Union. The Jewish Center, of course, had been founded in 1918 by Kaplan, who had not yet formally broken institutionally with Orthodoxy. The prototype of the predominantly Conservative Jewish Center Synagogue was created under Orthodox auspices, and it is clear that Jung's congregation was keenly aware of the tensions between Orthodox and Conservative rabbis over leadership of the acculturated Jewish community.

93. The names of these rabbis and their agendas are derived from the *Program of the Third Annual Convention of the Rabbinical Association of the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary, August 8–9, 1931*. Significantly, the convention dealt with four major issues: "The Problem of Placement," "The Relation of the Rabbinical Association to Existing Rabbinical Organizations," "Our Part in the Maintenance of the Yeshiva," and "The Cultural Program of the Yeshiva." A study of the some twenty-five or so men listed as committee members of the association, their backgrounds and their pulpit experiences, would cast much light on the growth of the early Orthodox rabbinate. We would like to know of the levels of conflict and cooperation which they encountered both with the Agudat ha-Rabbanim to their right and the Conservative colleagues to their immediate left.

94. For the many details on the evolution of RCA policies toward kashruth regulation, see Bernstein's chap. 4 on kashruth, pp. 91–121.

95. *Ibid.*, p. 92 and *passim*.

96. Marshall Sklare, *Conservative Judaism: An American Religious Movement* (New York, 1966), is the standard and best starting point for understanding that movement's growth and development. See also, on the sociological-theological mix which made Conservative Judaism so attractive, Will Herberg, *Protestant-Catholic-Jew* (Garden City, 1955). And for an insightful look at the growth of Conservative Judaism within the New York metropolis, see Deborah Dash Moore's *At Home in America: Second Generation New York Jews* (New York, 1981).

97. *Ha-Pardes*, published out of Chicago by Rabbi Samuel Aaron Pardes beginning in 1927, made public many of the ordinances and exhortations promulgated by the Agudat ha-Rabbanim against synagogue modernization efforts. This organ reported that at the 1930 convention of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim, both Conservative and Reform rabbis were described as "enticers" seeking to lead Jews astray, and a prayer was proffered that Jews be saved from these forms of

"idolatry." More significantly, that same year the Agudat ha-Rabbanim opposed Orthodox synagogues conducting late Friday night lectures on "secular" subjects, since they emulated the more liberal denominations and might confuse the careless into believing all denominations were basically the same. In 1931, Silver denounced the Conservatives for teaching "a new Torah" and argued the necessity of his organization's continuing to pillory the activities of the deviationists. Of course, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim was publicly most exercised by the Conservative rabbinate's incursions into the realms of kashruth and marriage regulation. The liberal-traditionalists' attempt to solve the agunah problem in the 1930's was described as an "abominable act which threatens the future of the Jewish people." The Agudat ha-Rabbanim also declared all associations with Conservative rabbis in communal efforts off-limits to its members. See on these proclamations, *Ha-Pardes*, June 1930, p. 26; December, 1930, p. 6; June 1931, p. 28; May 1934, p. 2; June 1935, pp. 2-5. See also Agudas ha-Rabbanim de-Artzot ha-Brit ve-Canada, *Le-Dor Aharon* (New York, 1936), for a full-length polemic against Conservative activities in the areas of marriage and divorce.

98. Bernard L. Shientag, "Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein: A Character Study by a Congregant," in *Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun Diamond Jubilee*, pp. 53-57 and passim. Lookstein's election as a student rabbinical assistant in 1923 followed the resignation of Rabbi Elias L. Solomon, a Seminary graduate and destined to be a leader of the Conservative Rabbinical Assembly. It marks, on a one-synagogue microcosmic level, the beginning of the competition between RIETS and seminary men. Until then, when looking for a university-trained, English-speaking rabbi, the upwardly mobile, acculturated congregation had to look for Seminary men Kaplan, Goldstein, and Solomon. Solomon, significantly, did not have the "benefit" of either prior Orthodox ordination before Seminary graduation, as in Goldstein's case, or subsequent ordination, as in Kaplan's case, before assuming an Orthodox pulpit. With Lookstein, one might argue, the congregation could have the correctly trained rabbi they wanted, prepared both sociologically and halachially. This change is certainly worthy of further investigation and explication.

99. Lookstein's gift for the homily can be discerned through an examination of his compiled sermons. See his *The Sources of Courage* (New York, 1943), *Faith and Destiny of Man: Traditional Judaism in a New World* (New York, 1967), and *Yesterday's Faith for Tomorrow* (New York, 1979).

100. Haskel Lookstein, "Joseph: The Master of His Dreams" in *Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein Memorial Volume*, ed. Leo Landman (New York, 1980), pp. 16-17.

101. Joseph H. Lookstein, "The Modern American Yeshiva," *Jewish Education*, April 1945, pp. 12-16. The Ramaz School was not the first modern day school in twentieth-century America. The Yeshiva of Flatbush preceded it by more than a decade. And, of course, more separatistic yeshivot like Etz Hayim and the Rabbi Jacob Joseph School, the latter attended by Lookstein himself, date back to 1886 and 1902 respectively. For more details on the history of American yeshivot, see Alvin Schiff, *The Jewish Day School in America* (New York, 1966).

102. It may be suggested that the contentment of Lookstein's congregation was also based on the geographical proximity of the members' residences to the work and business district of New York and their socioeconomic profile. Based in Yorkville, they were still living in the inner city, making commutation from work to home to synagogue without violating the Jewish Sabbath clock a logistical possibility. And as an upper-middle-class group, congregants may have been able to more easily adjust their work and life schedules to remain consistent with ancestral time traditions. Of course, more investigation needs to be done to explain their attitudes toward nonegalitarian synagogue seating patterns.

103. That each of the dilemmas noted here posed a real problem for the American Orthodox RCA members during the interwar period is evidenced by the fact that questions requesting

guidance on each issue were submitted by members to either the RCA Standards and Rituals Committee or to its Halacha Commission during the first fifteen years of that organization's existence. In submitting questions to their peers, members of the RCA made a significant statement of independence from senior East European-trained authorities. See Bernstein, pp. 39–51, for the RCA proclamations on these social-theological questions.

104. Bernstein, p. 15. It may be suggested that men trained as American Orthodox rabbis in the interwar period at RIETS and at the HTC can be classified into four categories when looking at that rabbinate's relationship with the Conservative rabbinate. There were those like Lookstein who competed with the Conservatives as Orthodox simulators without making theological accommodations. There are those noted here who liberalized ritual without formally going over to Conservatism and who remained in the RCA. Category three includes those who, either for financial considerations or out of sincere theological belief, left the Orthodox rabbinate and joined the RA. And there are those RIETS men in limbo who served mixed-seating congregations and felt comfortable neither in the RA nor in the RCA. Each of these varieties of RIETS alumni needs further amplifications.

105. During the first quarter-century of its existence, the HTC ordained some 132 rabbis and graduated some 200 Hebrew teachers. It also trained meat slaughterers who undoubtedly served midwestern communities. By the milestone year of 1947, the HTC complex included a Rabbinical Department, a Teachers Institute, a school for *shochetim*, and four prep-school classes, and served as co-sponsor of the Chicago Jewish Academy, a "Ramaz-style" day school. The alumni of this institution, men like Maurice Solomon of Kansas City, Manuel Laderman of Denver, Colorado, New York's Simon G. Kramer, and Baltimore's Uri Miller, who became head of the RCA, clearly made their mark upon American Jewry and have yet to be studied. We also need to know more about the background, training, and philosophy of Rabbis Saul Silber, Isaac Ha-Levi Rubinstein, Ephraim Epstein, and Abraham Cardon, who helped found the school. Noteworthy also is the fact that Rabbi Oscar Z. Fasman, an early ordainee, became in 1946 "the first American-born person to lead an institution granting Orthodox rabbinic ordination." See Saul Adelson, "Chicago's Hebrew Theological College," *Jewish Life*, December 1947, pp. 43–48, for a brief discussion of the history of that school. See also Eliezer Berkowitz, "A Contemporary Rabbinical School for Orthodox Jewry," *Tradition*, Fall 1979, pp. 56–64, for a discussion by an HTC faculty member about the goals of modern theological seminaries. See also, for a brief autobiography of Fasman, his "After Fifty Years, an Optimist," *AJH*, December 1979, pp. 159–178.

106. Bernstein, pp. 14–15.

107. *Ibid.*, pp. 142, 135.

108. Rakeffet-Rothkoff, pp. 105–106.

109. Bernstein, pp. 128–129. The Agudat ha-Rabbanim suggested that the some "twenty percent" of the RCA members who were "more or less acceptable," i.e., at least separate-seat congregations, be admitted as full members. The others might become associates but without full privileges. Negotiations took place between RCA and Agudat ha-Rabbanim leaders in 1939 but to no avail.

110. See Rakeffet-Rothkoff, pp. 264–271; Klaperman, pp. 171–177; and Bernstein, pp. 10–11, for discussions of the history of Yeshiva from the demise of Revel to the election of Belkin.

111. A thorough biography of Belkin is clearly warranted but remains to be written. Basic biographical materials and short discussions of his philosophy are to be found in Leon Stitskin, "Dr. Samuel Belkin as Scholar and Educator," in *Studies in Judaica in Honor of Dr. Samuel Belkin as Scholar and Educator*, ed. by Leon Stitskin (New York, 1974), pp. 3–18, and Hayim Leaf, "Dr. Samuel Belkin—Scholar, Educator and Community Leader" (Hebrew), in *Samuel Belkin Memo-*

rial Volume (New York, 1981), pp. ix–xx. The former article also contains a partial list of Belkin's writings. For Belkin's years at Yeshiva, see Klaperman, pp. 177–184.

112. Rabbis Jung and Lookstein were key figures in the battle to prevent the imposition of Agudat ha-Rabbanim hegemony. Both were members of the Yeshiva board and were appointed to the executive board during the interregnum period. More importantly, they were the rabbis of Manhattan's two most affluent Orthodox congregations from where were derived many of the major financial contributors to the institution. Lookstein was also instrumental in galvanizing the RCA's official response to the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's challenge.

113. The Halacha Commission was a seven-man board led in the early 1940's by Rabbi Simcha Levy, a RIETS alumnus and rabbi in Perth Amboy, New Jersey. The other six men included both RIETS and HTC graduates. For more details on the issues faced and decisions rendered by the commission, see Bernstein, pp. 34–71.

114. It should be noted that by 1940, Rabbis Klein and Margolies, two of the most famous pre-World War I rabbis, who undoubtedly would have backed RCA activities, had passed away. Margolies's last connection with RCA rabbis was at their organizing meeting in 1935, where he gave his blessing. Margolies's policies were continued and developed further by Lookstein, his student, pulpit successor, and grandson-in-law. Significantly, Levinthal, who survived his fellows, did not show great enthusiasm for the younger rabbis, though he seemingly shared their point of view about America. Of course, Rabbi Soloveitchik clearly surpassed his earlier colleagues in support of the American rabbinate. Besides his practical backing, he gave the idea of harmonizing Judaism and Americanism a broader philosophical grounding.

115. Aaron Lichtenstein, "R. Joseph Soloveitchik," in *Great Jewish Thinkers of the Twentieth Century*, ed. and introduction by Simon Noveck (Clinton, Mass., 1963), pp. 282–285. There is no full-length biography or autobiography of Soloveitchik in his career or thought. Indeed, as Lichtenstein pointed out a generation ago, most of Soloveitchik's teachings have been orally presented and not published. Lichtenstein continues that "although Soloveitchik has published very little, he has written a great deal. . . . R. Soloveitchik himself once described it as a 'family malady.' Soloveitchik attributes this familial reluctance to the demands of perfectionism." See Lichtenstein, p. 287. More recently some of Soloveitchik's lectures and essays have been compiled. See, for example, Abraham R. Besdin, ed., *Reflections on the Rav: Lessons in Jewish Thought, Adapted from Lectures of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik* (Jerusalem, 1979), and Joseph Epstein, ed., *Shiurei ha-Rav: A Conspectus of the Public Lectures of Joseph B. Soloveitchik* (New York, 1974).

116. Rothkoff, pp. 118–122. Rabbi Moses Soloveitchik headed up a RIETS faculty of rabbis from Eastern Europe seemingly possessed of close ideological affinities to, if not membership in, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. It would be interesting to know of the relationship both within the seminary and subsequently without between the East European teachers and the American students. To what extent did the teachers back or influence Agudat ha-Rabbanim policy, and to what degree did they support the American-born students? In other words, did Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik's soon-to-be-discussed attitude toward his American disciples constitute a break in the RIETS faculty atmosphere?

117. Lichtenstein, p. 285.

118. *Ibid.*, p. 286; Rothkoff, p. 214; Rakeffet-Rothkoff, pp. 267–271. Joseph Soloveitchik's contact with Yeshiva University did not abruptly begin in 1941. In 1936 he delivered a series of lectures on philosophy at Yeshiva College. See Rothkoff, p. 129. He taught general philosophy in the college during the early years of his tenure at the university. In 1940, he organized with Revel a Boston branch of RIETS; an institution which did not survive his moving to New York. It should, however, be noted that Soloveitchik did not give up his position of leadership and author-

ity in Boston when he began his formal connection at Yeshiva. He commuted for the next forty years between New York and Boston.

119. It should be noted that when Joseph Soloveitchik was appointed, there was some student opposition to the choice. See Rakeffet-Rothkof, pp. 269–270. In the chaotic interregnum days, fears were raised that Soloveitchik would be the pawn of the Agudat ha-Rabbanim and help them dismantle the institution which Revel had built.

120. Lichtenstein, p. 282.

121. Joseph B. Soloveitchik, "Tribute to Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein," in *Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein Memorial Volume*, pp. vii–viii; letter, Joseph B. Soloveitchik to Israel Klavan, May 23, 1952, quoted in Bernstein, p. 49. It may be suggested that the use of the term "vague probability" can be applied to almost all situations where a RIETS man found himself in a "traditional" pulpit not affiliated with the Rabbinical Alliance or the United Synagogue. This approach closely follows the inclusionist policy of defining as within the fold all who have not formally joined the competing denomination. In truth, many famous present-day RCA rabbis began their careers in such mixed-seating pulpits, effected change over time, and ultimately rose to prominence in their movement. Clearly the history of Orthodox rabbis in less-than-Orthodox pulpits remains for future research.

122. Translated text of a Soloveitchik interview with the *Jewish Day*, November 19, 1954, quoted in Bernstein, p. 59.

123. We have noted that during Rabbi Jacob Joseph's unsuccessful career, his nemesis, Rabbi Segal, attracted followers from among Galician and Hungarian Jews who felt uncomfortable with the leadership of the Lithuanian Rabbi Joseph. They formed the association of the Congregation of Israel of Poland and Austria. Clearly the issue of ethnic subdivision within immigrant Orthodox Jewry remains to be examined beyond the limits of the present work.

124. See above for our discussion of East European rabbinic noncooperation in the area of kashruth.

125. Margolis was the author while still in Europe of *Agudat Erov* (Vilna, 1895), a commentary on the Passover Haggadah, *Shem Olam* (Vilna, 1901), a series of funeral orations, *Toras Gabriel* (Jerusalem, 1902), a commentary on Genesis and Exodus, and *Ginze Margaliot* (n.p., 190[?]), a commentary on the Book of Esther. In this country he published *Hiruzei Margoliot*, 2 vols. (1919). For Margolis's biography and bibliography, see Eisenstadt, pp. 240–241.

126. Margolis's account of his difficulties over kashruth with the Agudat ha-Rabbanim is recorded in his *Hiruzei Margoliot*. See pt. II, pp. 378, 381–385, 394–395, 400. See Gastwirth, pp. 118–122, for both sides of the story.

127. *Sefer Knesseth ha-Rabbanim*, vol. 2. (New York, 1924), pp. 22–23.

128. *Ibid.*, pp. 44–45. Margolis was, of course, not the only outspoken critic of the schools Revel built and refashioned. Rothkoff points out that the founding of Yeshiva College as a bonafide liberal arts college particularly troubled a group called the Rabbinical Board of New York, which in January 1932 complained that Yeshiva was devoting too much time to secular studies and taking away from the hours of talmudic study. From within Yeshiva, complaints were often heard from *roshei yeshiva* that funds which should have gone to RIETS were being diverted to the less-talmudic Teachers Institute and to the "secular" college. To be sure, many Agudat ha-Rabbanim members, as we have noted, had their own difficulties with the directions RIETS took. But they stayed within RIETS as its ordaining body.

129. Volume 1 of *Sefer Knesseth* consists primarily of letters of support for the organization drafted by individual rabbis, reprinted articles on organizational conventions from the Orthodox New York newspapers, the *Yiddishes Tageblatt* and the *Morgen Zhurnal*, and the resolutions and speeches made and given at Knesseth conventions during the early 1920's. (It seems as if the

Knesseth was defunct by the end of that decade.) The sources note in passing that 135 members affiliated as of 1921. Of these, forty-three names and thirty-six addresses of rabbis can be derived from the text. Not surprisingly, all the rabbis about whom we have information served in communities where Agudat ha-Rabbanim members resided and in proportion to the opponents' settlement patterns. A natural basis for rabbinical competition thus seemingly existed. Of the thirty-six for whom we have addresses, thirteen were New York- or Brooklyn-based, fourteen lived along the Baltimore-Boston seaboard, and seven in Boston or environs alone. (It should be remembered that Margolis was a chief rabbi in Boston prior to moving to New York.) Three others resided in Cincinnati, and St. Louis, Kansas City, Omaha, and Montreal were home for the others. It also should be noted that six Knesseth members appeared as Agudat ha-Rabbanim affiliates in the latter's 1929 *Sefer ha-Yovel*. These sources give one the impression that the Knesseth was at best a loose confederation. Members may have held varying degrees of commitment to it and opposition to the Agudat ha-Rabbanim. We have noted the similarities in the groups' platforms. When the Knesseth died, it was probably not a large step "back" into the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's fold.

The looseness of the organization even on the ideological level can be seen with reference to its approach to Zionism. Although Margolis, as late as 1922, still opposed Zionism theoretically, the organization he led took a somewhat different stance. Although refusing to mention Zionism by name, instead referring to the "government in Eretz Yisrael," it did, in 1920, indicate support for the settlers in Palestine. Of course, it also strongly urged that the Torah leaders of Eretz Yisrael introduce into the *new yishuv* "their understanding of Judaism and culture." Unqualified support was understandably pledged to the pre-1881 Orthodox community of the *old yishuv*. This position is very much akin to the stance taken by the Agudath Israel in the 1930's and 1940's, which we will discuss below. Knesseth members explicitly stated that with fellow Jews in trouble in the Ukraine, in Soviet lands, and with American laws soon to restrict Jewish immigration to these shores, "we have no other hope for our people than to help build up our Holy Land in which our unfortunate brothers shall find their resting place." Of course, they opposed Zionist political aims. See *Sefer Knesseth*, vol. 1, pp. 9, 21.

Finally, membership in the Knesseth ha-Rabbanim may be related, interestingly enough, to the rise of Prohibition legislation in the United States. Under Internal Revenue Commission regulations, to be allowed to utilize wines for sacramental purposes, a rabbi had to show that he was a member of a recognized rabbinical body. Illegal kosher wine "peddling," of course, often became an abuse of this system. In any event, the Knesseth gave rabbis a home base for legal or possibly illegal wine handling. See *Sefer Knesseth*, pp. 74-76. Clearly Rabbi Gabriel Wolf Margolis in his multifarious activities is worthy of much more intensive study beyond the present effort.

130. Helmreich, *The World of the Yeshiva* (New York, 1982), p. 24. It should be noted that even in its European-style infancy RIETS always offered some basics in secular studies.

131. Belkin's participation in this school warrants fuller explication. It was certainly an institution quite unlike the university he would later lead. Helmreich notes two basic sources on the life and career of Levenberg, "Rabbi Yehuda Heschel Levenberg," *Olameinu*, January 1975, pp. 14-15, and Isaac Ever, *Harav Yehuda Heschel Levenberg: Zayn Leben und Kamf* (Cleveland, 1939).

132. Helmreich, pp. 26-37. Significantly, when Mesivta Torah Vodaas was founded in 1917 in the acculturated, middle-class Williamsburg, Brooklyn, neighborhood, the school's curriculum was quite modern and American. Classes were conducted in English and Hebrew, and Talmud was not the cornerstone of study. Rabbi Mendlowitz transformed the yeshiva almost overnight, modeling it after the Hungarian yeshivot of his youth. See Alexander Gross, "Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz," in *Men of the Spirit*, ed. Leo Jung (New York, 1964), pp. 533-561, for a

discussion of this rabbi's career, including his activities in the founding of Torah Umesorah (National Society of Hebrew Day Schools) in 1944. Yeshiva Rabbi Chaim Berlin began as an elementary yeshiva in 1906. It did not rise to advanced status until the leadership era of Rabbi Hutmner, ca. 1940.

133. Israel Meir Ha-Kohen Kagan, *Niddehei Yisrael* (Warsaw, 1894), pp. 129-130, quoted in Rakeffet-Rothkoff, p. 18.

134. Helmreich, pp. 39-44. For a hagiographic biographical sketch of Rabbi Bloch, see Chaim Dov Keller, "He Brought Telshe to Cleveland," in *The Torah World: A Treasury of Biographical Sketches*, ed. Nisson Wolpin (New York, 1982), pp. 262-276. For a similar treatment of Rabbi Kotler, see Shaul Kagan, "From Kletzk to Lakewood," in *ibid.*, pp. 184-205. *The Torah World* is a collection of interesting short biographies of yeshiva-world luminaries culled from the pages of the *Jewish Observer*, the voice of the Agudath Israel in America. They give the reader of sense both of that group's understanding of history and of its reverence for its leaders.

The Mirror Yeshiva (U.S., 1946) and the Kamenetz Yeshiva (U.S., 1960), both in Brooklyn, are other examples of refugee yeshivas. Rabbi Eliezer Yehudah Finkel and his son-in-law, Rabbi Chaim Leib Shmuelevitz, were the leading figures in the migration of the yeshiva community from Mir, Poland, to Shanghai, China, where it remained through 1945, when part of the school settled in Jerusalem. Rabbi Abraham Kalmanowitz, who preceded them to America, brought the rest of the yeshiva to Brooklyn. See on that episode, Eliyahu Meir Klugman, "Rosh Yeshivah in Mir-Poland, Mir-Shanghai and Mir-Jerusalem," and Chaim Shapiro, "The Last of Its Kind," in *The Torah World*, pp. 239-261. Rabbi Reuvain Grozovsky was a prime mover in the settlement of a Kamenetz community in America before taking a post at Mesivta Torah Vodaas. See his biography by Nisson Wolpin, "From Kamenetz to America" *ibid.*, pp. 206-222. Helmreich notes three other ideologically similar "advanced yeshivas in America," Brooklyn's Beth ha-Talmud Rabbinical College, the Talmudical Academy of Philadelphia, and the transformed Rabbi Jacob Joseph Yeshiva. The latter institution, a long-time elementary yeshiva, acquired refugee rabbis in the late 1940's-1950's, earning it that elevated status. See Helmreich, pp. 48-49.

135. *EJ*, vol. 7, cols. 1399-1400; Ernst J. Bodenheimer with Nosson Scherman, "The Rav of Frankfurt, U.S.A.," in *The Torah World*, pp. 223-238; Charles Liebman, "Orthodoxy in American Jewish Life," *AJYB*, 1965, pp. 67-85; Israel Rubin, *Satmar: An Island in the City* (New York, 1972), pp. 39-42; Solomon Poll, *The Hasidic Community of Williamsburg* (New York, 1962), pp. 27-31. Clearly neither these books nor the present study begin to elucidate the multiplicity of differences among the various Hasidic sects in America. Our emphasis here has been solely on the commonalities of institutional structure and of allegiance to the figure of a *rebbe*/leader.

The placement of the Breuer community, for the purposes of this study, in the category of leader-oriented sects is based primarily on their its members' sense of allegiance to the late Dr. Breuer and now to his successor, Rabbi Shimon Schwab, although the followers of these two men would never apply the Hasidic term "rebbe," with all its quasi-mystical connotations, to them. And, of course, Breuer people take a theoretical attitude toward the permissibility of secular studies quite different from that of Hasidim. Indeed one of the major thrusts of Hirschian philosophy was a belief in the possibility of synthesizing Western knowledge with Jewish tradition. That should at first glance have made the Breuer people quite comfortable with their Yeshiva University neighbors in Washington Heights. See on Hirschian philosophy and practice in twentieth-century Germany, Herman Schwab, *History of Orthodox Jewry in Germany* (London, 1950).

And yet, as Liebman pointed out almost a generation ago, Hirschians in America have tended to align themselves with the Lithuanian yeshiva world. Liebman argued in 1965, and to be sure

these observations need updating, that the "Breuer community finds itself increasingly overwhelmed by the fervor of the yeshiva world" (including its negative attitude toward secular education). See Liebman, p. 72. It is also noteworthy from a bibliographic perspective that Rabbi Breuer's biography is included in *The Torah World* collection.

136. The denigration of RIETS's approach and curriculum by refugee-yeshiva rabbis dates back to before the war, when in 1938 Rabbi Elchanan Wasserman, then head of the Polish Baranowicz Yeshiva, visited the United States and publicly praised Mesivta Torah Vodaas while refusing to set foot in RIETS. Three years earlier, Rabbi Kotler, also on tour of America, refused a similar invitation from Revel. See Rothkoff, pp. 155-156. In 1950, at its second American convention, the Agudath Israel designated Mesivta Torah Vodaas, with Silver's acquiescence, its number-one funds beneficiary ahead of Yeshiva University. See Rakeffet-Rothkoff, p. 272. And in 1944, the Igud ha-Rabbanim was formed. This organization, made up primarily of graduates of the more traditional yeshivot in America, challenged the RCA/Yeshiva University and Agudat ha-Rabbanim association. See Liebman, pp. 75-76. Of course, one of the greatest targets of yeshiva-world acrimony has always been Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik. Though no one has ever questioned his scholarship or Orthodoxy, refugee-yeshiva people have clearly not been comfortable with his approach toward RIETS and modernity in general. Liebman notes a graphic illustration of how Soloveitchik is viewed by others. In 1962, at Rabbi Kotler's funeral, Soloveitchik was not called upon to eulogize his fellow Torah giant, while men like the Satmar Rebbe and Rabbi Moses Feinstein were both accorded that high honor and obligation. See Liebman, p. 85.

137. For an important recent study of the conflict between the Mizrahi and Agudath Israel during wartime and post-World War I Poland, see Ezra Mendelsohn, *Zionism in Poland: The Formative Years 1915-1926* (New Haven and London, 1981), pp. 24-25, 56-57. He notes there the Agudath Israel's "basically pre-modern Jewish identity" and its perception that religious Zionists were making it possible for the masses to "abandon their Judaism and still, in their own minds at least, remain Jews." For the Agudah's evaluation of its own history, see Joseph Friederman, "A Concise History of Agudath Israel," in *Yaacov Rosenheim Memorial Volume* (New York, 1968), pp. 1-66.

138. Rakeffet-Rothkoff, pp. 157-162. For more on the Agudath Israel's position on Zionism in theory and practice and the rise of the Yishuv, see Isaac Breuer, *Das Jüdische Nationalheim* (Frankfurt am Main, 1925), Yaacov Rosenheim, *Agudist World-Position* (New York, 1941), and Agudas Israel World Organization, *The Jewish People and Palestine* (London, 1947).

139. Rakeffet-Rothkoff, pp. 155-165.

140. *Ibid.*, pp. 175-183.

141. *Ibid.*, p. 290. In reality, however, Rabbi Kotler's Yiddish-only exhortation remained only a theoretical statement. Torah Umesorah, the National Society for Hebrew Day Schools, founded in 1944 by Rabbi Mendlowitz and headed by Rabbi Kotler until his death in 1962, which has done much to promote day schools and elementary-level yeshivot throughout the United States, has always adopted a multilingual (Hebrew, English, and Yiddish) approach to Jewish educational instruction. In essence, Kotler too had to recognize certain limitations in establishing Torah education beyond the particular immigrant youth constituency. See Liebman, pp. 72-73. And for a history of that educational movement, see Doniel Zvi Kramer, "The History and Impact of Torah Umesorah and Hebrew Day Schools in America" (Ph.D. diss., Bernard Revel Graduate School, Yeshiva University, 1976).

142. Rakeffet-Rothkoff, pp. 140-142. Silver once referred to these new leaders as "zealots" and deplored their "zealotry."

143. *Ibid.*, pp. 292-295.

144. Bernstein, pp. 141-156, discusses the disputes within and without the RCA over the ban

and the options which presented themselves for response.

145. Helmreich, pp. 233–235. The Hebrew Theological College too had been influenced by Aaron Soloveitchik, younger brother of the Rov, who in 1966 left RIETS and headed up the HTC. For more than a decade he strengthened that institution's rabbinical department, and most significantly, as Liebman found out, "Reb Aharon has resisted pressures . . . to urge students to accept positions in synagogues with mixed pews in the hope of instituting *mehizot* later on." See Liebman. "The Training of American Rabbis," *AJYB*, 1968, pp. 25–26. However, in the late 1970's, he left HTC to found the Brisker Yeshiva of Chicago.

For an example of present-day RIETS reverence for men like Rabbi David Lifshitz, see Noah Goldstein, "HaRav Dovid Lifshitz, Shlita," in the publication of the RIETS Rabbinic Alumni *Chavrusa*, April 1982, p. 4.

146. The traditions of Mendes or a De Sola Pool of both serving a Sephardic Orthodox congregation and becoming involved in broader communal affairs is continued today on a less publicized basis by Rabbis Louis Gerstein and Marc Angel from the home-base of Shearith Israel in New York. There are, however, other Sephardic rabbis who serve congregations outside the metropolis. The men who minister in New Rochelle, New Jersey, Houston, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and the recent Syrian immigrant community in Brooklyn stay clear of larger organizational ties. They serve immigrants who came here either before World War I or after World War II. These men, trained at Yeshiva University, stay clear of all existing Ashkenazic rabbinic combines. Their feeling is that in joining such organizations they would lose their distinctive Sephardic heritage and with it their popularity in their own ethnic community. They also have their own immigrant rabbis to contend with. For more on this understudied Jewish group, including its denominational orientation, see Marc Angel's "The Sephardim of the United States: An Exploratory Story," *AJYB*, 1973, pp. 77–138.

147. *Intermountain Jewish News*, February 24, 1956, as quoted from Bernstein, p. 145.

148. *EJ*, vol. 11, col. 1581; vol. 13, col. 1494; vol. 14, col. 935. See also I. J. Karpman, *Who's Who in World Jewry* (Tel Aviv, 1978), p. 619 and *passim*. Clearly the military chaplaincy forces the Orthodox rabbi to interact daily and ceremonially with Jews of all denominations. A subject which demands further investigation is to what degree RIETS more than other yeshiva men volunteered for this somewhat religiously problematic service during wartime as well as beyond. The role of the chaplain in world conflict, including the area of difficulties with civilian and military authorities in protecting Jews, also should be examined. Toward that end, see Emanuel Rackman, "Mah Lamadu Anu Rabbanei ha-Tzava," *Talpioth*, April 1947, pp. 273–278.

It should also be emphasized strongly that when it came to saving Jews from Nazism or dealing with problems of refugees in general, the RCA rabbis had no monopoly upon concern and activity. During World War I, the Agudat ha-Rabbanim was in the forefront of the Central Relief Committee, which helped the displaced Jews of Eastern Europe. And though they placed a particular emphasis on helping Orthodox Jews, they helped all of their brethren and *cooperated* with American nontraditional groups. The same also can be said about the activities of the Agudath Israel and the refugee scholars in the establishment of the Vaad Ha-Hatzala, which tried to rescue Jews from Nazism and which also cooperated in relief and rescue efforts. See on this subject Rakeffet-Rothkoff, pp. 186–215, and Efraim Zuroff, "Rescue Priority and Fund Raising as Issues During the Holocaust: A Case Study of the Relations between the Vaad Ha-Hatzala and the Joint, 1939–1941," *AJH*, March 1979, pp. 305–327. The significant difference between their approach and that of the Americanized rabbis is that during the acute crisis the latter worked very often *within* existing interdenominational organizations and continued their support in calmer days. The differences here are very much akin to the differences between the attitudes of the Mizrahi and the Agudath Israel toward Palestine and Israel in the post-1930 era.

149. It is important to here note a very different type of split within Orthodox rabbinic ranks over attitudes toward activities outside the purely religious realm. In the 1960's, Rabbi Meir Kahane, a Brooklyn-based rabbi, founded the Jewish Defense League. That organization challenged the RCA establishment rabbis and their less-traditional partners in interdenominational, umbrella organizations over their perceived "soft" policies toward meeting the challenge of Russian Jewry. For more on Kahane as rabbi, leader, and *rebbe*, see Janet Dolgin, *Jewish Identity and the JDL* (Princeton, N.J., 1977).

150. Although the three men noted here and now Berman are the most famous American Orthodox cooperators, they are by no means unique. A perusal of the *AJYB* and other sources over the last two generations indicates that RIETS/RCA men like Gilbert Klaperman, Sol Roth, and Frederick Hollander have all been presidents of the New York Board of Rabbis. Interestingly, the present executive director of that group is Paul Hiatt, a RIETS/RCA man. Orthodox presidents of the SCA beyond the first generation of Goldstein, De Sola Pool, and Lookstein include Joseph Karasick, Theodore Adams, and Walter Wurzberger. Of course, innumerable RCA men have served as presidents of local boards of rabbis.

151. Anne Lapidus Lerner, "Who Has Not Made Me a Man: The Movement for Equal Rights for Women in American Jewry," *AJH*, 1977, pp. 3-38; Charlotte Baum, Paula Hyman, and Michel Sonya, *The Jewish Woman in America* (New York, 1976).

152. The debate within the American Orthodox rabbinate over women's role can be followed to some extent through the pages of *Tradition*, an RCA publication, and other contemporary journals. See, for example, Saul Berman, "The Status of Women in Halachic Judaism," *Tradition*, Fall 1973, pp. 5-28; Michael Chernick, "The Halachic Process—Growth and Change," *Sh'ma*, April 1976, pp. 92-94; A. M. Silver, "May Women Be Taught Bible, Mishnah and Talmud," *Tradition*, Summer 1978, pp. 74-83; R. P. Bulka, "Women's Role: Some Ultimate Concerns," *Tradition*, Spring 1979, pp. 27-37; Emanuel Rackman, "The Principle of Polarity," *Judaism*, Winter 1980, pp. 9-11; Avraham Weiss, "Women and Sifrei Torah," *Tradition*, Summer 1982, pp. 106-118; Saul Berman and Shulamith Magnus, "Orthodoxy Responds to Feminist Ferment," *Response*, Spring 1981, pp. 5-18. See also the *Jewish Press*, December 10, 1982, p. 3, for the Agudat ha-Rabbanim's condemnation of women's services.

153. "Norman Lamm," *Current Biography*, 1978, pp. 27-30.

154. *Jewish Week—American Examiner*, July 3-16, 1981; *Young Israel Viewpoint*, September 1982; *Jewish Week—American Examiner*, October 4, 1981, p. 3; "Yeshiva University President Urges Orthodox Community to Broaden Its Horizons," undated press release, Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America; Norman Lamm, "Modern Orthodoxy Identity Crisis," *Jewish Life*, May-June 1969, p. 7, quoted in Helmreich, p. 320. See also *New York Times*, September 25, 1982, p. 6, for an account of a meeting between Lamm and leaders of the other denominations to discuss a unified American Jewish voice on the issues surrounding the 1982 Israel-PLO Lebanese war.