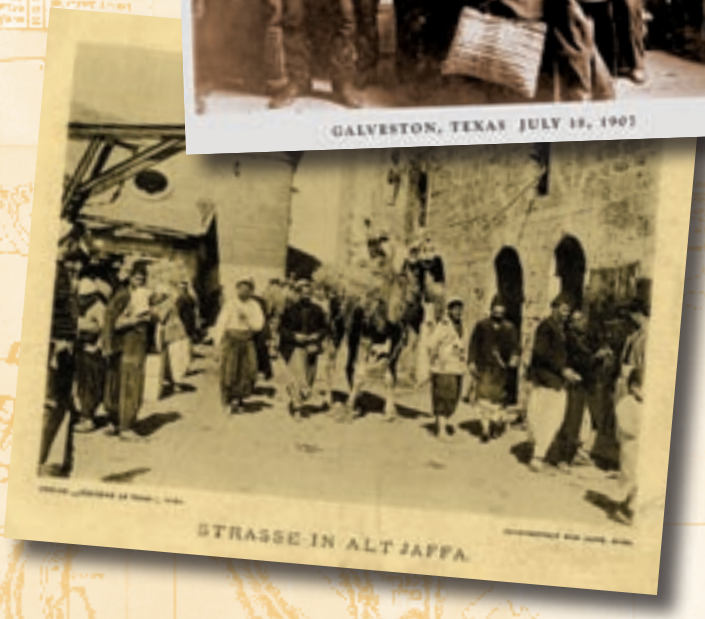
The American Jewish Archives Journal





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Cover photo:
Some of the earliest Jewish immigrants to Galveston, Texas, July 18, 1907; an image of a street scene in early 20th century Jaffa, Palestine. The background is of a early 20th century Yiddish map of Ottoman Palestine.
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

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In 1948 Abba Hillel Silver spoke to the United Nations General Assembly, advocating the creation of the State of Israel. Silver rose to prominence as a leader of the American Zionist movement during the decade that witnessed the mass destruction of the Holocaust and the creation of a Jewish homeland. This article demonstrates how he integrated his American identity with his Zionism.

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TO OUR READERS...

According to the Senegalese environmentalist, Baba Dioum (b. 1937), human beings conserve only what they love, and they love only what they understand, and they understand only that which they are taught.

Even though Mr. Dioum did not have American Jewish history on his mind when he first framed his penetrating adage in 1968, there can be no doubt that he has captured in words a fundamental truth that sheds light on the archival enterprise. Human beings strive to preserve and sustain that which they love. The desire to preserve the building blocks of history is fueled by the sentiments of love and respect we feel for our heritage. If our historical perspective is dim, then our interest in preserving the past ebbs and wanes. It is this educative process that enhances and enriches our appreciation of the past. In short, by teaching history we deepen our understanding of past, which leads to a greater love of our heritage. And those who love the past will be instinctively devoted to its preservation.

Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch (1851-1923) argued that Jewish history was "the store-house from which we can draw power and inspiration." The fundamental purpose of this journal is to deepen our understanding of American Jewish history. Its contents are intended to bring new information to our readers. The more we understand our past, the more dear it becomes. The more we read, the more we are inspired to preserve our history.

The American Jewish Archives is a cosmos of historical data without which this journal (not to mention reams of books and scholarly articles) could not be published. Together, the AJA and the AJAJ constitute a living cycle of historical activity: the journal's articles bring us historical knowledge, which deepens our appreciation for the past and compels us to preserve it.

This journal takes pride in publishing the research of veteran scholars like Professors Naomi Cohen and Edward Shapiro along with the work of younger scholars like Professors Jonathan Krasner, Zohar Segev, and Gur Alroey. Dr. Cohen's article provides us with a fine analysis of the *Ark*, one of the earliest magazines for American Jewish children. This article contains much valuable information about youth

culture during the early years of the twentieth century, as well as how adults advised a new generation of American Jews to behave.

Dr. Shapiro's interesting analysis of Newark, New Jersey's Jewish Vocational Service sheds light on the demographic and sociological transformations that took place in the years following World War II. In the wake of the suburbanization, acculturation, and latitudinarianism that affected Jewish life in the 1950s and 1960s, the primary mission of the Jewish Vocational Service shifted. Instead of focusing on vocational placement and guidance, the JVS began to address the needs of second and third generation American Jews and, significantly, non-Jews who increasingly relied on the JVS for educational counseling, programs for the elderly, the disabled and, during the 1970s, vocational activities that were intended to meet the needs of new Russian immigrants who came to the United States during the late 1960s and 70s.

Dr. Krasner's stimulating essay on the Jewish Chautaqua Society offers readers an explanation as to why the hopes of JCS's founders failed to flourish. Even though the JCS would not succeed in becoming American Jewry's premier instrument for the advancement of Jewish education, many of its pioneering efforts would blaze trails that benefitted successive generations of Jewish educators. Meanwhile, Dr. Segev offers readers a fresh look at how Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver's political and ideological *weltanschauung* influenced his work as a Zionist leader. Silver's political objectives, Segev opines, are best understood when viewed as an expression of his commitment to an American Jewish brand of Zionism. Gur Alroey's comparative examination of immigration to Galveston and Palestine during the great era of migration (circa 1881–1914) reminds us that not every East European Jew went to New York city via Ellis Island.

The late Rabbi Sidney Greenberg pointed out that Carl Sandburg's first novel was titled *Remembrance Rock*. The novel is about a man who faithfully places a handful or two of dust he has collected from a diverse array of historically significant sites under a massive boulder that sits in his garden. The story's protagonist goes out to sit near this boulder — his "Remembrance Rock" — in order to draw inner strength from this unusual historical shrine.

At one point in the novel, Sandburg's protagonist reflects thoughtfully on the meaning of his Remembrance Rock:

> Their visions [come] through… They live in the sense that their dream is on the faces of living men. They go on, their faces here now, their lessons worth our seeing. They ought not to be forgotten — the dead who held in their clenched hands that which became the heritage of us, the living.

This journal remains dedicated to the notion that the lessons of the past are worth our seeing; they ought not be forgotten. This instruction will lead to understanding and appreciation. In this way we preserve the past and make it "a heritage of us, the living."

GPZ
Cincinnati, Ohio



THE ARK

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THE ARK

224 EAST SEVENTH AVENUE CINCINNATI, OHIO

The first issue of The Ark*, published November 24, 1911.*

(Courtesy American Jewish Periodical Center, Klau Library, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio)

The *Ark:* An Early Twentieth-Century Periodical

Naomi W. Cohen

The *Ark,* a monthly illustrated magazine for American Jewish children that appeared from 1911 to 1923, has heretofore been an unexplored source for social historians. Yet, an analysis of its contents adds to our knowledge of the American Jewish experience. Like a slice of everyday life, it illustrates the realities confronting the Jews of that time within both the Jewish community and the larger American society.

The *Ark,* however, was more than the passive observer of Jewish life. While it kept tabs on multiple forces that were constantly changing Jewish development, it actively preached a fixed message. The message, a veritable creed imparted to its young readers, was three-pronged. First, the *Ark* taught that a code of universal ethics underlay the progress of civilization. Mandating the proper behavior of the individual and of human society at large, the *Ark* held that immutable ethical truths constituted the legacy bequeathed to mankind by the ancient Hebrews that were later incorporated into secular democratic law. Social justice and goodness conformed to fixed ethical precepts, and social evils stemmed from a rejection of morality. Second, the *Ark* insisted on the preservation of the Jewish heritage. How that heritage was preserved was less important, and ethical precepts aside, the journal's editors accepted pluralism within Judaism. Writers and readers told of different customs and beliefs that made it impossible to speak of uniformity on matters of religious observance or sense of peoplehood within the daily life of American Jews. No matter, the *Ark* said. Although initially sponsored by the Reform movement, and although it made a discernible pitch for Reform, it contents accepted the multiple forms of Jewish religious behavior of those years so long as they bespoke a commitment to Judaism and Jewish identity. Third, the *Ark* expressed an unchanging love and reverence for the United States. Extolling the wonders of America for Jews, the periodical repeatedly

stressed the compatibility of Americanism and Judaism while it endorsed the overarching constant Jewish aim for full integration within the American community. Upon Jews lay the obligation, the journal taught, to accommodate to the ideas and behavior of Christian America, certainly as long as that behavior did not conflict with Jewish religious observances or identity.

To be sure, the three focal points occasionally exposed conflicts or issues not covered by the magazine. But within those broad parameters the *Ark* set out its philosophy for Jewish youth.

The Ark Until World War I

In November 1911 the *Ark,* a monthly journal of some eighty pages, made its debut. Meant for Jewish children and young teenagers, its contents included fiction, poems and plays, short articles, and letters from readers. A central motif of this particular issue was the approaching Hanukkah holiday, and included were an account of the traditional story of the Maccabees, another story about how Hanukkah was celebrated in Russia, and two Hanukkah plays for the use of religious schools. Although some contributions were reprinted from other periodicals, and although some contributors were not Jewish, it was abundantly clear at the outset that the magazine's overriding purpose was to cultivate among its young readers a strong Jewish identity, a commitment to biblical ethics, and an appreciation of Jewish education. For example, the *Ark* admonished the children at Hanukkah time to behave as loyally to Judaism as the Maccabees had — "live your lives so that all Israel will be honored in your living!… For the mantle of the Maccabees has fallen upon you, and yours is the duty to keep the lights aflame with the devotion that is due your faith."[1]

The *Ark* was not the first magazine for American Jewish children. That distinction belongs to the *Sabbath Visitor,* a journal founded by Rabbi Max Lilienthal in 1874. The *Ark*'s immediate predecessor was *Young Israel*, a periodical that lasted for only three years. A project undertaken by the Reform movement, *Young Israel* was sponsored by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and over half of its board of editors were Reform rabbis. For our purposes, both the

Sabbath Visitor and *Young Israel* are important insofar as they provided models for later periodicals.

By 1874, Reform leaders had recognized the paucity of literature in English for American Jewish children, and they aimed to spread Reform's message among the youth as part of an effort to stem the alarming drift away from Reform temples. A relatively long-lived magazine, the *Ark* adopted the exact format of *Young Israel* and continued a pattern of diversified materials. In an attempt, however, to broaden its appeal to non-Reformers, it made no mention of its Reform affiliation nor of a Reform editorial board. Reform rabbis contributed stories and poems to the *Ark,* and, as discussed below, the magazine had a distinctive Reform tone. The journal's target audience, however, was broader. A statement of purpose explained:

> There are journals in plenty for the American Jew – there is no lack of magazines for the American child – but the American Jewish child has either to read what was written for adult eyes and understanding, or else find in his browsings *[sic]* in the juvenile magazines all life interpreted from a Christian standpoint. Because our readers are young Jews, we shall endeavor to have all the pages of "The Ark" reflect a Jewish atmosphere. We shall try to interest the Jewish child from the vantage point of every phase of life that touches him. We shall try to inculcate in him a love and understanding of all things Jewish *without a thought as to the religious affiliation of his parents; we shall have no care as to any shade of belief, or special interest,* of the elders of the House of Israel–but the Jewish child, if he is to dwell within the House, must feel himself one with Judaism, the eternal principles of which are changeless and dear to every Jew. (Emphasis added.)

The *Ark* preached that the Jewish child was no less an American for being a Jew. Since the child absorbed Americanism from the very air he breathed, the magazine insisted that he or she also appreciate the riches of a Jewish heritage.[2]

The *Ark,* like *Young Israel,* was published in Cincinnati by Simon Bacharach. When Bacharach died in 1923, one writer testified that he had been the *Ark*'s guide and inspiration.[3] For its entire existence, the *Ark* was under the managing editorship of Isabella R. Hess (Hess as a young child had been a reader of the *Sabbath Visitor*).[4] She was a frequent contributor to the magazine — almost every issue carried at

least one story or poem she had written — and besides other original contributions, she drew material from printed books, journals, and newspapers. Some of the pieces carried the name of the writer and their original source; others appeared anonymously, and for the most part no evidence existed that Hess obtained permission from the original publishers to include a specific story or article. The contributors were past or contemporary men and women writers, some famous and others not. Many had made their name in the Jewish world: Sholom Asch, Sholom Aleichem, I. L. Peretz, Emma Lazarus, Israel Zangwill, and Reform rabbis Gustav Gottheil, Emil Hirsch, and Jonah Wise. Some non-Jewish contributions — a story by Thomas Mann, another by L. M. Montgomery, and poems by Lord Byron ("Jephtha's Daughter"), Elizabeth Barrett Browning ("A Child's Thought of God"), and Rudyard Kipling ("Hymn Before Action") — dealt with Jewish or non-denominational material.[5] A source providing numerous pieces by non-Jews in the first volumes of the *Ark* was George Alexander Kohut's *A Hebrew Anthology,* a collection of poems on biblical themes in English literature by famous Christians from the Elizabethan age to the present.

The *Ark* usually followed the calendar. The motif of a typical issue concerned the holiday celebrated that month; for example, the focus in the February issue was usually on Washington and Lincoln, in March on Purim, in April on Pesach, in July on Independence Day, and in September on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Explanations of the holidays along with poems and stories of appreciation were the usual fare. To many children of that time the *Ark* likely was their first exposure to minor Jewish holidays like Purim,[6] Lag b'Omer, or Tisha b'Av, or to customs like *tashlich* on Rosh Hashanah. In some instances Orthodox holiday practices were described, but more often the way to mark a Jewish holiday bore the stamp of Reform, notably the movement's toleration of deviations from tradition. Certain constants did obtain: virtuous behavior outranked ritual, and all holidays demanded that Jews remember the less fortunate. After all, as one writer reminded his readers, the Hebrew word for charity really meant justice.[7] Where parallels could be found between American and Jewish history (e.g., Sukkoth marked the ancient Jewish equivalent

of Thanksgiving; the struggle for liberty in the Passover story was identical with the search for freedom in the American Revolution; Judah the Maccabee ranked with the Pilgrims who sought religious liberty), so much the better. "Surely," the *Ark* said, "Jewish Americans may well and fittingly observe both [Sukkoth and the American Thanksgiving]. Both are their own."[8]

The material in the journal noted variations in observance even among Reform-affiliated Jews. Still greater proof of a variety of American Jews and "Judaisms" appeared in the *Ark*'s letter box. Run by a "Cousin Judah," this letters-to-the-editor department was a favorite of the readers. The younger "cousins" reported to Cousin Judah from farms, towns, cities, orphanages, and private houses throughout the country. From Clarkesburg (W. Va.), Albia (Iowa), Natchitoches (La.), Kiefer (Okla.), Trinidad (Colo.), Chehalis (Wash.), and countless other places came accounts of the number of Jews and synagogues in a town or school, how religious services were conducted, and the activities of the children's schools and clubs. Sometimes the writer was the only Jew in a school or class and was therefore, as one child put it, especially appreciative of the *Ark*.[9] The letters also offered descriptions of Jewish experiences in little-known communities. The writer from Natchitoches, for example, explained that in order to get the very small number of Jewish children confirmed, a few women organized a Sabbath school and arranged with the rabbi of a nearby town to come once each month to prepare them.[10] The letters not only revealed different Jewish customs, but in some cases they provided examples of Jewish horizontal mobility, as well as the surprisingly high level of the children's reading and writing abilities. Cousin Judah answered each letter; picking up the holiday theme, he also wrote a monthly essay to the cousins, usually on virtuous living, the importance of education, and loyalty to Judaism. In a style that some children called "sermony," he effectively preached on the behavior of a proper American Jewish child.

In a typical issue of the *Ark,* fiction, poetry, and plays took precedence over nonfiction. While the journal printed short articles on diverse subjects such as nail-biting, jujitsu, and the special boats needed

to sail on the Chesapeake Bay,[11] current events were largely ignored until World War I. Where the Anglo-Jewish and Yiddish press focused on subjects like progressivism and socialism, the fight over immigration restriction, the Galveston movement, the Mendel Beilis case, Zionism, and new Conservative and Orthodox institutions, the *Ark* kept quiet. (In some measure, the Cincinnati-based *Ark* may have been mirroring the isolationist bent of the Midwest.) To be sure, one department in the journal called "Items of Interest," which ran a piece on the German army's new uniform,[12] filled some gaps, but letters from the children indicated that their knowledge of current events far surpassed what the magazine supplied. For example, Russian discrimination against American Jewish passport holders, which developed into a cause *célèbre,* was first mentioned in a letter to Cousin Judah,[13] and so were different views on women's suffrage. The items themselves were one or two paragraphs on a wide range of subjects, from nature and geography to technology and foreign dignitaries. In the same issue, the pitfalls of not using leisure time properly could be one subject, and the spelling policy at Wellesley College another.[14] Again, in this section the journal showed a recognition of the multiplicity of customs within the Jewish and secular worlds. Anecdotal material, like the health regime of Harvard's seventy-year-old president Charles Eliot,[15] and jokes, puzzles, and occasional book reviews rounded out most issues.

The Jewish component in the *Ark*'s stories was usually tied to an emphasis on virtuous living. A common theme was that of a Jewish girl or boy, the only Jew or identifying Jew, in a class/boarding school/camp, who was snubbed socially by his more affluent or acculturated Jewish or non-Jewish peers. The hero possessed admirable traits; he was modest and hardworking, responsible and scrupulously honest, charitable, and sensitive to others. But not until he performed bravely or risked his own life or good name on behalf of his tormentors did he gain acceptance. Similarly, the hero who never hid his Jewish identity or ritual practices won respect for his religion by his unselfish deeds.

Numerous stories, especially before 1917, followed that general pattern. For example, one tells of Ruth, the only Jewish girl in a boarding school, who suffers the antisemitic taunts of her schoolmates and is barred from a sorority because of her religion. Falsely accused

of stealing examination papers, she nevertheless remains silent in order to show that she can be "one of the girls." After the true culprit finally confesses, the sorority recognizes Ruth's merits and invites her to join. In a following installment, Ruth refuses to participate in the sorority's sewing circle that meets on a Saturday. The sorority's guest that day is a prominent Protestant bishop who, on learning of her absence, publically praises Ruth for her refusal to desecrate her Sabbath.[16] Another example concerned a Jewish boy looking for a job in order to care for his sick mother. His search is unsuccessful because he openly admits that he won't work on the Sabbath. At long last, his luck changes. When he tells the interviewer how proud he was to be a Jew, he is hired on the spot for his principled behavior and "spunk."[17] The Horatio Alger twist of good fortune accompanying virtuous living is even more pronounced in other stories. One is of an immigrant boy suffering from trachoma who is barred from landing on Ellis Island but secures the patronage of a kind doctor and becomes a great physician; another is of a poor girl burdened by the care of her family who returns a wallet thrown from a train and is subsequently rewarded for her honesty by the wealthy owner.[18]

The virtuous Jew is also the subject of numerous stories set in foreign countries in Europe and Asia during biblical and medieval times. In those, a common motif is the Jew who does a favor for the ruler. Offered the choice of a reward, he often requests that his people be spared persecution or expulsion. Never does he agree to convert in order to save himself. In most cases the characters are all good or all evil. Overwhelmingly, the stories, often saccharine-sweet, end happily on an optimistic note.

The same righteous heroes and the same emphasis on virtuous living appeared in stories reprinted from non-Jewish sources, usually children's magazines like *East and West* and *The Classmate,* featuring non-Jewish heroes. Here too the tone is upbeat. One poem from *The Classmate* reads:

> Don't hunt after trouble, but look for success/
>
> You'll find what you look for; don't look for distress/
>
> If you see but your shadow, remember I pray, that
>
> the sun is still shining, but *you're* in the way![19]

Virtue too was readily preached. In a serialized story of a struggling and upstanding young artist who finally succeeds, the author wrote about the hero:

> But however high he may climb, however far he may go, I do not think he will change materially from the true-hearted lad we have known in these chapters. I think he will rejoice in the joy of his friends, and grieve with their sorrows. He will always be ready to share all he has with those who need. His anger will always be quick for evil, but his forgiveness will also be gentle.[20]

The lesson from the Jewish and non-Jewish sources was simple — a code of absolute values grounded in Jewish ethics applied to all humanity. In the case of the Jews, however, there was another dimension. Irrespective of where and when the Jew lived, his righteous behavior negated the age-old derogatory stereotypes leveled against Jews as a group.

In sum, the righteous Jew bore a heavy burden. As Max Raisin, rabbi and prolific writer, charged the young readers:

> Remember that to be a true Jew means to be a true and complete man. Therefore let your Judaism dominate all your thoughts and actions. He who allows himself to become estranged from his people, he who severs his connections with the congregation and synagogue, he who goes so far as to marry out of the fold of his people can only be classed as a renegade from the camp of Israel. We are not large in numbers, therefore not even the least of us can be spared from assisting in the heavenly work before us…This means you as it means everyone else in Israel. Will you not enlist in the holy army to battle in behalf of the Lord of Hosts?[21]

Raisin's piece succinctly illustrated the philosophy and tone of the *Ark*. Whether the eight-to-sixteen year-olds understood the message or took it to heart was quite another matter.

Stories as well as short accounts of events in the lives of famous Jews, like statesman Benjamin Disraeli, philanthropist Judith Montefiore, and artist Boris Schatz, taught Jewish history along with virtue to readers of the *Ark*.[22] Material from biblical and rabbinic texts underlay pieces about figures of ancient times and about the physical landscape of Judea and Babylonia. In a long serialized story about a young warrior of the tribe of Menasseh, Rabbi Jonah Wise discussed the customs of the original tribes of Israel;[23] another long story dealt with Hiram of Tyre and the building of Solomon's Temple.[24] For the medieval period the *Ark* relied on other types of sources, including folktales, legends, and even fairy tales that were translated from Hebrew, Yiddish, German, or Russian. One reader, a young teenager from Reading, Pennsylvania, contributed many translations of his own from the Hebrew. Such pieces described Jewish social, cultural, and religious practices in pre-modern Europe and Asia. How rulers treated Jews in the Middle Ages as well as specific episodes of persecution, like the story of a young Marrano girl martyred during the Spanish Inquisition,[25] were also included. Throughout the issues sayings from the Talmud — e.g., "It is no trouble to find excuses for the sins we cherish" and "Without a rich heart wealth is an ugly beggar" — peppered the journal's pages. The prominent educator and author, George Alexander Kohut, added fictional accounts of the rabbinic period in a series he called *Told By The Rabbis,* and so did Rabbi Jacob Raisin in his *Tales From The Talmud*.[26] Modern Jewish history, except for that of American Jews, was less fully covered, but some lacunae were filled by obituaries of famous Jews or by one or two paragraphs on people and places in the "Items of Interest."

Contemporary fiction in the very first years of the *Ark* dealt primarily with second-or third-generation, middle-class American Jewish children of Central European extraction who lived in small Midwest cities rather than major east coast urban centers. They were highly acculturated, well dressed, and sufficiently prosperous to enjoy boarding schools, summer camps, and household servants; their

pronunciation of common Hebrew words was Germanic. Occasional mention was made of their forebears who, like many nineteenth-century immigrants, had peddled in the South and West. Their religious practices revealed a minimal Jewishness; they were at best affiliated with Reform temples, their Jewish education was limited to Sunday schools or a few hours weekly at religious schools, they ignored traditional observance of the Sabbath and Jewish holidays, and the highlight of their Jewish training was the ceremony of confirmation. Like many of their non-Jewish fellow Americans, they looked down on the more recent East European immigrants and excluded them from their company. "Only a Russian" was the line in one piece referring to the immigrants' unsavory traits.[27]

Increasingly, readers of the *Ark* met Russian-born children as well. Russians, the stories told, were eager above all to leave their trouble-ridden land for the New World. Just as the *Ark* hailed the United States as the paragon of free government, so did it make Russia the symbol of despotism. Would-be immigrants, therefore, substituted "Next year in America" for the traditional prayer "Next year in Jerusalem."[28] The stories went on to describe the life of immigrant children. Uniformly poor, they dwelt in squalid tenements, malnourished, sickly, and often orphaned; they spoke ungrammatically and with a heavy Yiddish accent, they were taunted by classmates in the public school, and almost never were they friends of the German Jews. A few were homesick when they first reached America, but that feeling quickly evaporated.

The image of the typical Russian child changed somewhat when he encountered the Germans. Indeed, the Russian immigrants proved the more virtuous in terms of family loyalty, responsibility, ambition, and appreciation of books and education. They displayed a greater love and loyalty for the United States (for example, a special reverence for the flag and for the Fourth of July) as well as a greater commitment to Jewish precepts and observances. They celebrated neither Christmas nor Easter (although surprisingly they did send cards for Valentine's Day), nor did they distance themselves from the language and customs of their grandparents. The portrayal of the Russians showed how the *Ark* was adjusting to the upwardly mobile masses of pre-World War I immigrants as they made their way from the slums to universities and

professional careers. Like its Reform sponsors, the journal aimed at reducing the mutual antipathy between the Russians and Germans, in part by saying that they are just as good as "we" are.[29] Aware of how second generation Russian immigrants were attracted to the newborn movement of Conservative Judaism, the journal strove for greater unity among American Jews under a Reform banner.

Although the editors of the *Ark* accepted variations of religious observance on the part of American Jews, it was first and foremost a religious journal committed to the belief in the ongoing Jewish mission. That idea, that Israel spread the light of truth throughout the world, was the point of an article by Rabbi Max Raisin: "of all the famous races and nations of antiquity, Israel alone has survived as a universal and invincible religious force, and he alone stands, where he always was, at the topmost height of moral endeavor and spiritual attainment."[30] From that underlying premise, the *Ark* deplored the widespread ignorance of things Jewish on the part of the youth and their neglect of the Sabbath and holidays, and its stories and articles pressed vigorously for a Jewish education. Jews in Eastern Europe charged that their American brethren lived like "goyyim" — "Who knows what becomes of our husbands in that trefe land?" asked one woman whose husband had left for the New World.[31] Many American Jewish leaders voiced similar concerns. In his memoirs, prominent communal worker David Blaustein contrasted the American observance of Purim with that of his *cheder* in Europe: "Here in America, Purim is a lost day. I dare say many a Jewish boy does not even know in which season of the year Purim falls."[32]

Nor were Reform loyalties of the magazine much of a question; only once did it run a piece suggesting that some Reform leaders may have carried anti-traditionalism too far.[33] Contributors to the journal, the socio-religious lifestyle of the heroes in prewar contemporary fiction, and even the advertisements (mostly for books by Reform rabbis) testified to its Reform position. An Orthodox journal would hardly have approved, as did the *Ark,* of celebrations of Halloween or Valentine's Day, or modifications of the dietary laws, or the importance bestowed on "confirmation" in place of the traditional *bar mitzvah.* True, the *Ark* printed an essay by Solomon Schechter, head

of the Conservative Jewish Theological Seminary, but the piece was an appreciation of Abraham Lincoln, and hardly an endorsement of Orthodoxy or Conservatism.[34] On occasion the magazine included calls for amity among all Jews including traditionalists, and Cousin Judah objected to ranking Reform above Orthodoxy. Explaining his acceptance of plural forms of Judaism, he wrote: "Since to me Judaism means serving the one eternal God with one's whole heart, I fail to see how one form can be preferable. Both Orthodox and Reform have saints and sinners in the fold."[35]

The most striking proof of the *Ark*'s commitment to Reform was its studied indifference to Jewish peoplehood and its opposition to Zionism. Even though not all Reform Jews were anti-Zionists, the magazine, like major Reform institutions before World War I, defined Jews and Judaism in religious terms alone. Palestine had historical associations for Jews, but many, one article explained, eschewed mourning the destruction of the ancient Jewish commonwealths, preferring instead to see exile as a good, proving that God had dispersed the Jews in order to spread His word.[36] The following early poem, which on the surface appeared pro-Zionist, was sooner meant as a hymn to the onset of the Chosen People's divine mission:

Onward, young brave Hebrew, go

To thy native land of old

To the land of prophets great,

To the land of brave and bold.

Upward let thy spirits rise

To thy native heaven bright;

Where Jehovah's sunny eye

Sheds on Israel blessed light.[37]

American Jews had no need of a restored Jewish homeland or temple. We all love Palestine for its history, Cousin Judah once told his young readers in connection with Tisha b'Av, "but I am glad that so many of us are here where we may share equally in the dignity and responsibility of national life! Let us not forget our gratitude for this

haven, our American home."[38] It should be noted, however, that two of the "cousins" participated in Zionist activities in their towns, showing again the differences of opinion, this time on whether Judaism had a "peoplehood" or national dimension.[39] True, a handful of stories mentioned single Russian Jews desirous of immigration to Palestine, but according to one writer, even in the trouble-ridden czarist domain where pro-Zionist sentiment might seem justified, Jews were primarily loyal to Russia.[40]

The focus on American Jewish living led easily to the matter of interreligious relations. The youngsters read of antisemitism in Europe, particularly in pre-modern days; the charge of deicide is mentioned in one story and that of the blood libel in two others. Still another recounts the old Italian tale on which *The Merchant of Venice* was based; here, although the story hinges on Shylock and his bargain for a pound of Christian flesh, at the end the pope sides with the Jew.[41] But the *Ark* never discussed the problem of American antisemitism *per se;* dislike of the American Jew comes through in stories merely as social discrimination, by Jews as well as Christians, against the individual Jew — sometimes the "yid" or "sheeny" or "kike" — and in derogatory images of the group's social behavior. When, for example, one later story was critical of "noisy, over-dressed, vulgarly prosperous Jews" at summer resorts, it was tacitly taking the side of those who discriminated.[42] The very problem did not appear to be one of great importance, never involving political discrimination let alone physical danger, and its manifestations were usually erased by the virtuous hero. Sensitive readers might have wondered why *all* Jews were branded by negative stereotypes, but the magazine never addressed that question. Its stock message, that Christians much preferred the self-respecting Jew, implied that self-respect — for example, don't seek to join a club where Jews are not welcome[43] — and exemplary behavior would win acceptance.

On day-to-day encounters between American Jews and Christians, coverage in the *Ark* ranged from descriptions of street brawls to accounts of warm cooperation. The positive theme received greater emphasis. There were stories about Jews and Christians who linked

the lights of Christmas trees with Hanukkah candles or who defended each other publicly. One serialized account told in separate episodes of how a little Jewish boy taught the kindly Irish Catholic policeman on the beat the meaning and wonders of Jewish holidays.[44] Nor did the journal forget to emphasize the unity of Jews and Christians or the "bond of brotherhood"[45] forged in American wars. Nevertheless, despite the inroads made by intermarriage among Jews, the magazine didn't think that interfaith unity extended that far. Several times stories of mixed couples included the Christian partner's conversion. In only one story that appeared during the war did the Jew marry a non-Jew, but in the end his Jewish identity triumphed and he repented before an untimely death.[46]

To be sure, the need to accommodate could conflict with Jewish living. If America was inherently Christian, did accommodation dictate the adoption of Christian religious practices? Cousin Judah advised the readers not to attend Christian services until they were secure in their own faith. He added that Jesus may have uttered beautiful words, but they were beautiful because they were in fact Jewish.[47] A recurring question concerned the propriety of marking Christmas. Aside from fictional comparisons of Hanukkah and Christmas — one child tells his non-Jewish classmates that none, not even George Washington, could match the heroism of Judah the Maccabee[48] — the proper Jewish hero in most stories refuses to participate in Christian plays or pageants in school. The subject received more attention in the columns of Cousin Judah, where the usual advice was to abstain from Christmas festivities and not to exchange Christmas gifts with other Jews. Rather surprisingly, however, since Cousin Judah often assumed the role of the guardian of Jewish tradition, he told the cousins that they could join private Christmas celebrations — what he called giving Christians their holiday cheer — so long as they kept them out of their homes.[49] The question persisted and became more difficult for the Jews in 1915, when the prewar Americanization movement was gathering steam. Doubtless succumbing to that pressure, editor Hess in one story told of a teacher who overcame the reluctance of a Jewish boy to participate in the Christmas program. "This is America, the United States," the teacher's clinching argument was, "and in our schools we are working

together for the good of all. We try to forget here that we are divided by being Germans or English, Gentile or Jew, Catholic or Protestant. We each wish to try and make this a good land to live in."[50] Cousin Judah followed suit. Advising his readers against the organization of Jewish clubs in schools, he wrote that all pupils in the schools were American — we have neither Christians nor Jews.[51]

The phrase "it's everybody's United States" applied to national as well as religious groups, but the *Ark* was less concerned with ethnic distinctions or stereotypes. One story was exceptional. It tells of an Italian child who is subjected to the taunt of "dago" until she teaches her classmates the sweetness of Italian melodies and thereby replaces the pejorative term with that of "angel."[52] For the most part, however, the journal not only included the negative stereotypes but by sheer repetition actually *reinforced* them. At a time when cultural pluralism was as yet unknown, ethnic snubs were readily accepted.

The Irish figured most prominently in the fiction, and they usually fit one pattern — poor, manual laborers, hard-drinking, loud, and quarrelsome. To be sure, there were some "good" Irish, like the friendly policeman or the faithful servant, but the wild Irish boys on the block whose misdeeds ranged from truancy to theft vastly outnumbered them.

Black Americans, although less well known to Jewish children, also conformed to fixed images. Conveying a sense of their inferiority, the journal reprinted many jokes from American periodicals, replete with dialect and the name "Rastus," that highlighted the mental and intellectual shortcomings of blacks. In one story that appeared after the war the heroine was a black girl who saved someone's job.[53] Another story, written by Zionist Nathan Straus, also broke with the usual pattern. It tells of a Jewish girl and a black girl, both aliens in America, who dream of a homeland of their own where they could enjoy popular respect. According to Straus, Zionist leader Theodor Herzl and black leader Booker T. Washington were visionaries of the same kind.[54]

The social ladder erected by the *Ark* replicated general American opinion almost exactly. Old-stock Americans were on the top, Germans were the best-liked foreign group, Italians and Slavs were way down (here the *Ark* deviated from public opinion by excluding the Jews), and blacks were at the very bottom.

An analysis of Christian juvenile periodicals of this period lies beyond the scope of this article, but one can easily assume from the pieces reprinted in the Jewish journal that their message on morality and faith in God was virtually identical with the *Ark*'s. Indeed, the values preached by the *Ark* were eminently compatible with Americanism. Diligence, honesty, thrift, and sobriety sounded very much like the Puritan creed which was at the core of American beliefs since the colonial era. With respect to the *Ark*'s message on religion and loyalty to one's faith, Americans were also comfortable. They had long tolerated differences in religion, and as long as Jews did not claim a separate nationalism, Judaism and its adherents were quite acceptable. The Reform movement, still officially anti-Zionist and always an ardent exponent of accommodation, looked especially respectable. Thus, just as the *Ark* easily found, and reproduced, stories and poems from secular and even Christian journals[55] similar in outlook to its own, so could the non-Jewish child feel at home with the *Ark*.

Insisting that "you don't have to be Christian to be a good American," the *Ark*'s message of integration and accommodation permeated every issue. Nevertheless, precisely because it spoke for a minority group and a minority faith, the *Ark,* more than any other American journal, felt obliged to hammer home the importance of patriotism. Using the words of Congressman Julius Kahn of California, it reminded its readers that they were *"Jewish Americans"* and not *"American Jews"* (i.e., Americans first and Jews second).[56] In fiction and non-fiction it repeatedly extolled the character of America, hailing the nation which was the defender of liberty, the asylum for the oppressed, and the provider of equal opportunity. For such bounties Jews were indebted, and the journal expressed its gratitude on numerous occasions. February, with the birthdays of Lincoln and Washington, usually evoked paeans of praise for the country — editor Hess waxed eloquent in one poem, "The Heritage," on the two presidents and their contributions to the legacy of freedom[57] — and so did May and Memorial Day, celebrating those who had fought in American wars to safeguard freedom.

At times the material in the journal went further and equated Judaism with Americanism. As mentioned above, the themes of

Passover, Sukkoth, and Hanukkah were seen as identical to the American fight for freedom (American Revolution), the American harvest festival (Thanksgiving), and the Pilgrims' search for religious freedom (like that of Judah the Maccabee). The Jew, one piece stated, shared the destiny of the early American Puritan: "Blest by their prayers/ Made sacred by their tears/ Found this their Canaan/ The long-promised land."[58] Most important, the fundamental law of America, like that of Judaism, rested on the Bible, and the verse from Leviticus inscribed on the Liberty Bell made it "God's Bell."[59]

To hasten the process of Jewish accommodation and integration into American society, the *Ark* also instructed its readers in the nation's history. The Civil War, and the battle of Gettysburg in particular, was a favorite topic, but the journal dealt with trivial subjects too, like the home of Betsy Ross and the hotel in which President Garfield played billiards.[60] Short pieces appeared on a variety of historical facts about the states, the presidents, the army and navy, and occasionally a few paragraphs dealt with distinguished living Americans. The journal's fiction abounded with American symbols — the flag, the picture of Lincoln, Fourth of July pageants. Other nuggets of Americana found their way into the pages of the *Ark*; for example, in a description of the home of Quaker John Greenleaf Whittier, the following explanation was included: "The Quakers were very peaceful people and loved the Indians and were not afraid of them–and the Indians never harmed the Quakers."[61] In such ways, the *Ark* taught that it was the duty of young American Jews to learn, and revel in, the history of their country.

Pointing out the need to integrate, lessons in American Jewish history illustrated how Jews had been part of the American experience from the outset. The *Ark* printed material on the Jewish connection with the voyages of Columbus, on Jewish pioneers in the colonies, and on Jews in the settlement of the continent. Just as American Jews had done since the Revolution, the journal never ceased to recount the military service of American Jews: "Wherever, throughout this broad land, there sleep those who died that our banner might indeed be the Flag of Freedom, there sleeps the Jew."[62] One article, titled "Israel in the American Revolution," tells of individuals like Haym Solomon and David Salisbury Franks, whose patriotism proved that the Jew was not

"an alien parasite."[63] In a larger sense, patriotism became the means for undoing anti-Jewish imagery and attaining America's acceptance.

Other pieces, like stories and the columns of Cousin Judah, fleshed out the saga of America's Jews. They spoke of the peddling origins of many Jews and their rise up the economic ladder, of the hardships of immigrant economic life, of the role of women and children in the Jewish family, and of stellar performances by Jewish students in American schools. Local Jewish institutions, like synagogues and other communal organizations, were described in the same sources. Even advertisements could be instructive. In one ad for the *Jewish Encyclopedia,* mention was made of the famous "to bigotry no sanction" letter from George Washington to the Jews of Newport, which the ad called the "first time in the history of the world that the right hand of fellowship was extended by the head of any nation to the Jew."[64] The historical material taught two lessons — the vibrancy of Jewish creativity in the United States and the contributions that Jews made to the development of the country. America was good to the Jews, and the Jews were good for America.

The War and Postwar Years

A close reading of the *Ark* reveals major changes that crept into the journal after 1914. To be sure, the same emphasis on virtue, religious observance, and American freedom, and the same kind of stories and legends about ancient and medieval times, still figured prominently. But the very flavor of the periodical was different. Not only did it shrink in size — by 1923 a typical issue was only twenty-five pages — but a much larger percentage of its space was allocated to current events, such as rights for Russian Jews and the appointment of Louis Brandeis to the Supreme Court.[65] With more stories, and shorter pieces devoted to wartime and postwar developments, and with the omission of puzzles and fewer pages to the "Letter Box," the static, even predictable, message of the journal no longer prevailed. Fewer stories ended happily, nor, because of the war, was the pervasive optimistic mood predominant. The *Ark,* which had often seemed to depict a world of sweetness and light bounded by ethical behavior and loyalty to Judaism, now spoke more realistically to American Jewish children living in a pulsating and rapidly changing community. In those ways

it was illustrative of the period that historians have called the "End of American Innocence."

During the period of American neutrality, August 1914 to April 1917, the *Ark* printed all sorts of pieces on various aspects of the war in Europe — military training and leaders, battles, instances of interreligious cooperation in actual combat, and even spies. At the same time the journal called for Jews, like other Americans, to rally behind the popular campaign of Americanization. It is likely that Cousin Judah's admonition not to organize Jewish clubs in public schools stemmed in part from a desire for Jewish conformity, i.e., to show the hyper-Americanists that Jews betrayed no ethnic distinctiveness that set them apart from non-Jewish Americans.[66] Pieces on interreligious and interethnic amity served the same purpose.

The dominant theme, however, and one that echoed the loud voice of American isolationism, was pacifism. A poem taken from *Life* magazine captured the prevalent notion of the time that only bankers benefitted during war:

> The kings are in the background, issuing commands,
>
> The queens are in the parlor per etiquette's demands,
>
> The bankers in the counting-house are busy multiplying,
>
> The common people at the front are doing all the dying.[67]

Writers for the *Ark* prayed for world peace and gloried in the fact that the United States was not involved. One short article that appeared in the first month of the war stated: "Today, when most of the flags of Europe are tipped with a crimson hue, the hue of human blood, our own banner flies freely to the wind, unoffended and unoffending…. Peace will throw her mantle of grace upon us and we shall go unafraid about our daily lives."[68] War meant suffering and heartache; it proved that man had not lived up to the teachings of the Law, Cousin Judah chimed in. A poem from the *Hebrew Standard* even suggested that Israel was now working to make the whole world a Holy Land.[69]

The journal also watched the impact of the war on its European brethren. Since both sides attacked Jews living in the path of the opposing armies, the *Ark* included pleas for the relief of the victims.

At least as important, contributors to the magazine described how Jews worldwide, despite prejudices against them, were ready to do military service for their countries and how they were decorated for heroism. There was hope, therefore, that doubts about Jewish loyalty, long embedded in the beliefs of antisemites, would be laid to rest.

Another theme developed in several stories concerned Jews on the battlefield who fought other Jews within enemy ranks. Meeting in hospitals or prisoner-of-war situations, they discovered that their Jewish background, specifically prayer and the Hebrew language, bound them together. Only one of those stories raised the issue of a conflict of loyalties, such as which took precedence — loyalty to one's country or loyalty to a fellow Jew. In that story, the Jew who captures a spy who is also Jewish does not release his captive to the military authorities.[70]

Like a vast number of American Jews, the *Ark* at first, albeit in not so many words, supported Germany. Czarist Russia, of course, was *the* major consideration. How strange, one writer mused, that the democracies of France and England were allied with a tyrannical regime in the Triple Entente. A month later an article by a German sympathizer, published by Herman Ridder and called "Russia and the Jews," suggested that a German victory might ameliorate the plight of Russian Jewry.[71] Despite Germany's serious propaganda efforts to win American Jewish sympathy, the country's unlimited use of U-boat warfare and the overthrow of the czarist government in March 1917 slowly undermined Germany's appeal. By the time America joined the war, the *Ark* was solidly behind the Allies.

Not unexpectedly, America's entry into the war changed the dominant theme of the *Ark.* Patriotism writ large became the byword. The earlier pacifist message gave way to prayers for peace and a "League of Kindness" to follow an American and Allied victory.[72] Jews, like other Americans, were urged to cheer on the Allies. After all, hadn't France helped the rebel cause during the Revolution?

> We seize the chance to pay back France a little of the debt
>
> Our Eagle owes the Fleur de Lys and gallant Lafayette.
>
> So everywhere; sea, land air, to the first line advance
>
> Old Glory and the Stars and Stripes on every breeze in France.[73]

The journal's coverage of the conflict on the various fronts continued, but now the stories and nonfiction emphasized the exploits of American servicemen. Civilians fought too as they bravely bade farewell to sons and brothers or aided soldiers on the homefront. Although most pieces applied equally to Jewish and non-Jewish children — often Jewish names were the only distinguishing mark — some stories linked the war to Jewish themes. A few contributors interpreted the world conflict as a "holy" war, a struggle by the good and the righteous for liberty. One story told about a soldier on guard duty who fantasized that freedom fighters of the past — Washington, Lincoln, Judah the Maccabe, and Mordecai — accompanied him on his rounds. [74] Cousin Judah in particular stressed the Jewish element. Among other things he said that the laws of Moses that underlay civilization were carried by the American army. Since the war itself was caused by a Haman-like spirit, he preached that Jews had to fight in the spirit of Mordecai and Esther.[75] The war also presented an opportunity to preach interreligious unity, and in that spirit the *Ark* proudly hailed the book of Jewish thoughts by England's Chief Rabbi Joseph Hertz, which it claimed could bring spiritual comfort to both Christians and Jews.[76]

The *Ark*'s young readers were urged to do their bit for the war effort. While their older brothers were in the service, they could help by planting victory gardens, by contributing to relief drives for American and Allied servicemen, and by praying for an American victory. The children also read of special Jewish relief operations, like the work of the Jewish Welfare Board on behalf of American Jewish soldiers and that of the American Jewish Relief Committee for the Relief of European Jews in the war zones. In more lofty terms the youngsters were told that righteous behavior on their part was a patriotic duty: "The supreme patriotic duty of American girls and boys is to work and play so squarely, to study so earnestly, that they may develop the manhood and womanhood which is the chief glory…of any righteous nation."[77]

Changes in the *Ark* that began during the war lasted into the postwar era. For one thing, the expanded coverage of current events continued, and readers were kept informed of all sorts of happenings

in the Jewish world, from the ongoing suffering in Russia to the quota system in American universities. News of American Jewish organizations also increased. In addition to Reform institutions mentioned above, reports of the National Farm School, American Jewish Historical Society, United Synagogue (Conservative), Jewish Welfare Board, and Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society were now included. The *Ark* culled such items from the American secular and Anglo-Jewish press; when it began the use of Jewish news agencies, particularly the Jewish Telegraph Agency, it successfully focused the attention of its readers on the condition of world Jewry. Current events were also treated in fiction. One story tells of the efforts of a Russian Jewish boy to enter a *gymnasium* where the number of Jews admitted could not exceed ten percent of the total. In the end, the boy failed the entrance examination because he was unable to multiply fifty-nine by fifty-nine in his head.[78]

Perhaps the most dramatic change was the *Ark*'s expanded coverage of the *Yishuv.* The trend had begun during the war, with occasional brief reports on the Jewish settlement in Palestine — harvest time, a Hebrew theater, a medical unit from the United States, plans for a Hebrew University, and General Allenby's military campaign in the Near East.[79] A Zionist poem was also printed in 1917: "He says that he is going to fight/ In the foremost line/ For freedom and for what is right/ And for — Palestine!"[80] Other than items like these, neither attention to, nor endorsement of, Zionism as a political movement ever appeared. Indeed, the journal made only passing mention of the Balfour Declaration, a notable victory for political Zionism.[81]

Like American Reform institutions, and like non-Zionists in general, the *Ark* supported building up the land of Palestine along with the physical and social conditions of the *Yishuv,* but it ignored the desire, at least of American Jews, to create a Jewish state. Thus, Zionist accounts of agronomist Aaron Aaronsohn by Henrietta Szold or the one by Jessie Sampter called "A Week in the Galilee" were perfectly legitimate. So too was the piece by Zionist author Maurice Samuel, in which he called Zionism the thread of hope among Jews in Eastern Europe.[82] Although the magazine freely printed pieces from Zionist magazines, and although one poem hailed the visit of

Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann to the United States,[83] the journal remained squarely in the non-Zionist camp. The sole political loyalty of an American Jewish child was to America, and effusive praise of the country continued in the journal as before. When one youngster, a twelve-year-old from Norfolk, Virginia, wrote that she and her parents were leaving shortly to settle in Palestine, Cousin Judah's answer avoided the subject of *aliya* for the creation of a modern Jewish homeland and merely wished her happiness "in the land of our fathers."[84]

The greatness of America did not blind the *Ark* to the widespread antisemitism of the postwar decade. No longer silent on discrimination as it had been in prewar America, it readily pointed out bigots and bigotry. Not only did it take note of the quotas at universities, but it included short pieces on the revived, and now antisemitic, Ku Klux Klan and the poisonous diatribes of Henry Ford and his newspaper, the *Dearborn Independent*.[85] It attacked the exclusion of Jews from jobs and social institutions, and it even reported on an antisemitic episode at the Naval Academy in Annapolis that had required the intercession of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, then assistant secretary of the navy.[86] Enlightening its readers on the pervasiveness of Jew-hatred, it also indicted those Jews who discriminated against fellow Jews. While the *Ark* revealed various manifestations of anti-Jewish practices, it omitted serious analyses of the problem or any pat solutions. For example, in only one story does a Jew suggest that intermarriage would end antisemitism.[87]

As they had before the war, contributors to the *Ark* still preached that self-respect was the best response to discrimination. The popular rabbi, Stephen Wise of New York City, explained that the Jew himself might be at fault. Lacking self-respect, Wise said, the Jew preferred to renounce what he thought the world regarded as offensive.[88]

Again, as in prewar years, the *Ark* also taught that the individual's behavior reflected upon the entire group. A young immigrant on his journey to America is cautioned: "And because you are a Jew, your life must be even cleaner, you must try harder always to do right, because here in America the Jew must prove that when any one in the world says the Jew is not righteous, and God-fearing, and self-respecting, that

one lies!"[89] Some writers did find a new weapon against antisemitism, i.e., the record chalked up by Jewish servicemen during the war. One article argued that the war record indisputably laid to rest Henry Ford's charge that Jews were disloyal. Amplifying that point, a poem on exclusionary policies called "No Hebrews Wanted" bitterly recalled that the policy had not applied to Jewish soldiers: "You see this Croix de Guerre?/ No Hebrew wanted here, they say/ They never said so - there!"[90]

The *Ark*'s news of general American affairs was still sparse, and readers needed other sources to learn about the Senate's rejection of the League of Nations or Secretary Charles Hughes' plans for naval disarmament, and even events that very much involved American Jews like the major labor strikes of 1919 and the postwar Red Scare. But through its fiction primarily, the magazine captured much of the popular social mood. To be sure, the familiar themes of the poor but virtuous and God-fearing youngster who rescues his family or friends in modern and premodern times still abounded, but other material showed how much the journal had moved on. For example, the heroes/heroines were not uniformly of high school age; more and more they were found in college, often with the trappings of fur coats and automobiles. Different too were the fictional (and non-fictional) "think" pieces in lieu of simple plots with happy endings. The favorite subjects of that genre dealt with the reconciliation of emotions with reason and the ranking of personal priorities. One can conclude in light of such changes that the typical reader of the *Ark* had grown older and more mature.

Fictional accounts set in the age of the flapper showed how the regnant social mood influenced the American Jewish lifestyle. Young Jewish women left home to attend college or to work in large cities, and some adopted the code of the liberated woman, replete with anti-conventional opinions, wild parties, and sexual license. One story was especially relevant. It tells of Helen, in an apartment of her own, who mingles with the socialist and progressive set of New York's Greenwich Village. A pure and innocent girl, she dislikes the thought of casual sex and wants men only as friends. On the advice of a friend, however, she decides to throw off her inhibitions. In the end, she is saved from the

"precipice" by a young man who loves and respects her. (Helen remains pure, but clearly her friends do not.)[91] A variation on the flapper theme comes in a story about three college girls after the war. They applaud the candor of the new youth, but they reject the "garish" habits of "rouge, lip-sticks, extremely short skirts and cigarette smoking."[92] Not all Jews of college age were caught up in the cult of "rebellious youth," but enough were to warrant an outburst from Rabbi Stephen Wise. Lower standards of conduct, he charged, could be found among the daughters of "nice people": "overmuch smoking," "indecent drinking," "lewd dancing," "semi-nude dressing," make-up, and all night-parties. Don't blame the spirit of the time, he added, but raise the standards.[93]

The theme of licentious youth blended easily with that of the new woman. Before the war, the virtuous Jewish woman in the *Ark*'s fiction was one who fulfilled the duties of caring for a husband and children with modesty, diligence, and self-sacrifice. Adept at the household tasks of cooking, cleaning, and sewing, she found her happiness in the well-being of her family, devotion to God, and charitable work. The role model for her daughters, she accepted the limits on her ambitions and expectations without complaint. The war shattered that all-pervasive image, and the old-fashioned housewife and mother now shared center stage with the new woman. Daughters left home, with or without their parents' consent, for wartime jobs or college and then post-college careers. In the economic marketplace they were no longer relegated to the ranks of lower school teachers or office workers, and in some stories they were doctors, actors, or artists. Independent and self-sufficient, they could even defend themselves against physical attacks. One story, for example, on the new Jewish woman tells of Betty, alone in an apartment, who courageously brandishes a toy revolver and successfully foils a thief's attempt to make off with the silverware.[94] At the same time, their religious observance grew weaker, and the number of intermarriages increased. Readers of the *Ark,* however, were not left in doubt as to which image was superior, that of the old-fashioned housewife or that of the newly liberated woman. Mixed marriages usually turned sour, or the new woman, disillusioned or unhappy, mended her ways and returned to her home and/or religion. Although true virtue and morality usually triumphed, one story is an exception.

In *The Old Rose in the New Garden,* a mother who holds fast to the earlier model as did her mother and grandmother favors her son and ignores her daughter's aspirations. The son runs away and amounts to nothing, but when her virtuous daughter returns home after establishing herself as a renowned singer, the mother's mind snaps.[95]

According to the *Ark,* the best response to the erosion of morality and virtuous behavior was a positive affirmation of religious faith. As it had before the war, the journal insisted on loyalty to Judaism. It recognized that in upwardly mobile Jewish circles in some synagogues, as one writer put it, religious observance was not "fashionable"[96] and that Jews, like others, were freethinkers, radicals, and members of the Ethical Culture and Christian Science movements. But the magazine brooked no compromise with Jews who shrugged off their faith. In one story where a Jewish family is divided between Ethical Culture and Christian Science, the hero is the young son who, despite the family's pressure, holds fast to Judaism: "I'm a Jew," he says, "I've enlisted for life." Isabella Hess's contribution was a poem that emphasized the Jewish mission or responsibility for carrying the "torch of Truth" to the world: "O bear it aloft that the world may know/ You, too, are brave and true! … / That for the Truth you dare live–and die–/ As fitting the name of Jew!"[97] The journal reinforced its preaching with repeated admonitions from rabbis and laymen on the need to read religious, especially Jewish, books in a secular age.

During the postwar era the *Ark* took greater cognizance of the Jewish skeptic and the nonbeliever and often preached to the individual just as it had to the group. Cousin Judah, for example, told the individual that he could find comfort in religion; living up to the Jewish ideal, he said, and not the label of Reform or Orthodoxy, was the Jew's real concern.[98] Another writer advised the individual not to fear the obligations of Judaism, that Judaism was a joy and delight and not a burden. Lines from a poem taken from the *Sunday School Times* summed up the benefits of religion for the individual: "He that believeth shall walk serene/ With ordered steppings and leisured mien/ He dwells in the midst of eternities,/ And the timeless ages of God are his."[99] But whether speaking to the group or to the individual, the *Ark* found the postwar setting even less congenial than the prewar years to an emphasis on traditional religion.

The most striking change in the fiction dealing with the contemporary scene was the portrayal of the first-and second-generation prewar immigrants from Eastern Europe. Replacing the earlier stratum of German Jews as the center of attention, the East Europeans were no longer the pitiful tenement dwellers (although tenements still housed many, particularly those in stories about postwar immigrants) to be admired for their noble virtues, religious devotion, and patriotic zeal. An exception was a learned and studious emigrant from Lithuania who falls in with the wrong crowd and becomes a drunkard and a gambler and subjects his family to extreme poverty.[100] Rather, those who had rapidly advanced on the economic and social ladders predominated. Most, who had built up their businesses from pushcart peddling or a hole-in-the-wall ghetto store, had profited from wartime production and holdings in real estate. They lived well, they employed servants, and they sent their children to college. Vertical mobility was matched by horizontal mobility, as increasing numbers of Jews left the first areas of settlement for more expensive neighborhoods. In sum, they were well equipped to enjoy America's decade of prosperity.

But, as a large proportion of the stories concerning the successful Jewish entrepreneur recounted, the attendant results of socioeconomic advances were far from admirable. In many of the "think" pieces, the *arrivistes* were a vulgar and distasteful lot — their speech was ungrammatical and heavily accented, they flaunted their wealth in flashy clothes and jewels, they gambled excessively at cards, and they raced to keep up with the Joneses. They distanced themselves from old-fashioned religious observances, they laughed at Orthodox fellow Jews, and they even preferred appearance over substance in the choice of a rabbi.[101] Ironically, the picture that many Jewish writers drew in the *Ark* was one that non-Jewish antisemites had held since the nineteenth century.

More than before, the *Ark*'s fiction saw rapid acculturation as the driving force in the life of the Jewish postwar as well as prewar immigrant. One girl succinctly spelled it out to her friend: "Don't never talk Yiddish. We're Yankee now."[102] Nevertheless, acculturation had its tragic side too. Renouncing Yiddish was often followed by a

renunciation of things Jewish and, if nothing equivalent filled the void, the immigrant stripped of his heritage remained, as in Oscar Handlin's classic analysis, "uprooted." At the same time, the push for acculturation, especially if accompanied by material success, widened the generation gap. Stories told of children who were ashamed of their parents and homes that appeared too Jewish. An unusual twist comes in one story where the heroine blames her father, a radical, for not having instructed her in Judaism.[103] Grasping for more freedom, the children cut their ties to their elders and to their siblings in order to create a different and totally independent way of life. For example, one story is of a Jewish millionaire and philanthropist who breaks with his son when the latter marries a non-Jew. Only his wife's deathbed request leads him to invite his son and daughter-in-law to the mother's funeral.[104] Another story, called *Apples of Sodom,* is of two brothers raised in the tenements, one a poor and unsuccessful poet and the second a wealthy man who indulges in high society and high living. Inevitably, the two drift away from their parents and from each other.[105] The reader of such tales can readily understand how the image of strong family loyalties among Jews, an image long touted by non-Jews as well as by Jews, was undermined.

Conclusion

The *Ark* ceased publication with the issue of December 1923. It neither announced that it was going out of business, nor did it give any other indication of its intentions. Doubtless the death of its publisher, Simon Bacharach, in November was the immediate determinant. A hands-on publisher, Bacharach not only guided the journal, but in light of the unusually low prices for the books and magazines advertised in its pages (often in conjunction with a subscription to the *Ark*), it is not unlikely that he contributed financially as well.

Another reason may have been an inability to elicit a sufficient number of original contributions. Indeed, in the journal's later years more and more material was reprinted from outside sources. To be sure, it could frequently, as it had, use pieces from rabbis and students at the Reform and Conservative rabbinical seminaries, and it had unlimited access to ancient and medieval Jewish texts. But some of

its popular writers, including Isabella Hess, were also publishing their stories in other journals.

Still a third explanation is suggested by the changed focus of the journal. During the war and postwar years, more and more pieces — items from the news agencies, the "think" pieces, the tragedies that followed in the wake of rapid acculturation — were unsuitable for children below high school age. Like the heroes and heroines in the fiction, the readers had grown up. A few seventeen-and eighteen-year-olds wrote that they continued to read the *Ark* after graduating high school, but encouraging as that was, the magazine had drifted from its original purpose of reaching a younger group. Another publication of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the *Union Home Study Magazine,* for young adults only partially filled the void. The name changed in 1921 to *Young Israel,* but that periodical had no connection with the *Young Israel* that had immediately preceded the *Ark.*

For twelve full years the *Ark,* one of the oldest and longest-lived journals for American Jewish children, preached its three-fold message — absolute morality, a primary loyalty to the United States, and a commitment to Judaism. Its attempts to guide young readers along those lines were, in the main, impressive. Most issues were well balanced, mixing fiction and nonfiction, historical and contemporary material, and information on places and personalities. How well the *Ark* succeeded in influencing its young readers to accept its prescriptions for proper Jewish living cannot be proved, but thanks to the testimony of countless letters to Cousin Judah, we do know that it gained the commendation of a wide readership.

The *Ark*'s three cardinal tenets boiled down to one central thesis: America was *the* Promised Land for the Jews. As we have seen, the journal tended to ignore manifestations of American antisemitism, and even in the 1920s it refused to treat discrimination as a major problem. Upon the Jews, however, rested the obligation to conform to American beliefs and tastes. It wasn't a difficult task according to the journal; it compromised neither ethical beliefs nor Jewish identity. After all, as the journal assumed, the proper American was expected to be as virtuous, patriotic, and God-fearing as was the ideal Jew. The *Ark*'s tone often

sounded apologetic, especially when it discussed Jewish contributions to America. Apologia, like attempts to transmit a reverence for things American and efforts to emphasize similarities between American and Jewish traditions, were calculated to prove the compatibility of Judaism and Americanism. If, for example, the higher law of America rested on the Bible, or if Sukkoth was the same as Thanksgiving and the exodus from Egypt the same as the journey of the Pilgrims to the New World, the American heritage was very much akin to the Jewish. The *Ark*'s use of fiction and nonfiction from secular sources can also be seen as a way of proving that Jews read and appreciated the same classical and contemporary literature that all Americans did. As discussed above, even the Judaism it preached was that of a religion, unencumbered by ethnic loyalties and supportive of acculturation. In all dimensions, therefore, the virtuous and loyal Jew was eminently acceptable to Christian America.

Although loyalty to America required no concrete duties of Jews other than those imposed on all citizens, commitment to Judaism did. Pride in a Jewish identity and self-respect as a Jew, the *Ark* taught, rested on a foundation of knowledge and observance. Well aware of the religious conditions in the second and third decades of the twentieth century, when observance of Jewish law and ritual continued to wane, and when a growing percentage of Jewish children received little or no formal Jewish education, the *Ark* strove to revitalize both knowledge of Jewish history and observance of religious ceremonies. While it insisted on the importance of Jewish studies, it also took on for itself the role of teacher. It gave the young reader a glimpse of Jewish life and thought in ancient and medieval times; it taught the rituals of the Sabbath and of Jewish holidays; and its stories, set in the past and the present, illustrated the rewards of living according to Jewish values. Supplementing its instruction, the *Ark* encouraged youngsters to read books, not only on Jewish heritage but on the need of religion in general. Nevertheless, evidence from the journal's fiction suggests that its efforts were largely futile. Before the war, confirmation was the high point, and end point, of a Jewish education; after the war, neither the ceremony of confirmation nor *bar mitzvah* appeared.

Some pieces in the journal suggest that the quest for a vibrant Jewish religion may have been illusionary. In the first place, the pluralists, or those accepting of different varieties of Judaism, had opened the door to all sorts of syncretistic combinations. Secondly, doubtless realizing that they were swimming against the tide of popular practice, others suggested compromises with standard ritual — less-stringent observance of the dietary laws, the usual period of mourning, and the observance of holidays. Thus, like American religion generally, Jewish practice rested not only on the individual congregation but on the individual Jew.

For the social historian and the historian of immigration, the *Ark* is a valuable source of information on the daily lives of American Jews in the early twentieth century. The fiction and the readers' letters in particular provide details on what Jews ate, how they dressed, where they lived and worked, the schools to which they sent their children, their family structure, their voluntary associations, what they believed, and how they related to other Americans. It is from relatively unknown sources like the *Ark* that standard interpretations of the course of American Jewish history can be amplified, criticized, or emended.

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Notes

Notes are used only for direct quotations from the *Ark* and for the mention of singular instances. My thanks to Esther Green, Adina Feldstern and Yael Rosen for their assistance and encouragement.

[1] *Ark* I (November 1911): 567.

[2] Front material in *Ark* II (January 1912). For a while the journal promoted the Menorah League, a national network of the *Ark*'s readers "who, in their devotion to Judaism and to the ideals of their country will stand proudly amongst their fellows." Front material in *Ark* II (April 1912); see also *Ark* I (November 1911): 570–71.

[3] *Ark* XIII (December 1923): 334.

[4] A letter from Isabella Hess of Troy, New York, to the editor, in *Sabbath Visitor,* July 10, 1885, 371.

[5] Non-Jewish contributors can be found in the following issues: *Ark* I (December 1911): 713; II (January, March 1912): 53–56, 237 and seq., 252; IV (August 1914): 436.

[6] *Ark* also sold Purim plays adapted for Jewish religious schools.

[7] *Ark* IV (May 1914): 307.

[8] *Ark* IV (November 1914): 627.

[9] *Ark* V (June 1915): 308.

[10] *Ark* V (January 1915): 37–38.

[11] Although this section concentrates on the period prior to 1917, a few references are to the years 1917-1923. *Ark* III (January, July 1913): 6–8, 428; V (June 1915): 280–82.

[12] *Ark* V (January 1915): 32.

[13] *Ark* III (December 1913): 745.

[14] *Ark* II (January 1912): 64–67.

[15] Ibid., 420.

[16] *Ark* I (December 1914): 706–10; II (January 1912): 9–13. A description of a Jewish girl who doesn't fit in appears in one episode: "She's loud-mouthed, bragging, conceited, over-dressed, and of course, in the swaggerest *[sic]* style." II (July 1912): 571.

[17] *Ark* I (December 1911): 715.

[18] Ibid., 686; IX (September 1919): 231–40.

[19] *Ark* IV (August 1914): 466.

[20] *Ark* II (January 1912): 22.

[21] *Ark* III (October 1913): 656.

[22] *Ark* III (August 1913): 512; IV (April, November 1914): 195, 621–23.

[23] Begins in the *Ark* I (November 1911): 572.

[24] Begins in the *Ark* IV (July 1914): 405.

[25] *Ark* II (June 1912): 550.

[26] Kohut began in *Ark* II (January 1912): 14–16; Raisin began in IV (June 1914): 367.

[27] *Ark* II (August 1912): 690.

[28] Ibid., 667.

[29] Ibid., 690.

[30] *Ark* III (November 1913): 686.

[31] *Ark* II (October 1912): 642; II (August 1912): 667.

[32] *Ark* II (February 1914): 79-80.

[33] *Ark* III (July 1913): 447.

[34] *Ark* V (March 1915): 140.

[35] *Ark* III (February 1913): 92 and seq.

[36] *Ark* II (July 1912): 569.

[37] *Ark* II (September 1912): 813.

[38] *Ark* IV (July 1914): 420.

[39] *Ark* IV (February, May 1914): 115, 309.

[40] *Ark* IV (July 1914): 422.

[41] *Ark* III (September, December 1913): 549, 751; IV (May 1914): 289–94; XIII (January 1923): 3. The *Ark* printed excerpts from Rabbi Emil Hirsch's sermon on "The Ancient Anti-Semite and his Modern Successors," but the sermon was beyond the comprehension of the youngsters. I (November 1911): 579. Two other pieces discussed Charles Dickens's Fagin and tried to depict the author as someone friendly to Jews. II (January 1912): 16, VIII (May 1918): 142 and seq.

[42] *Ark* IX (January 1919). In a story set in Europe, the writer explained that Jewish faults were caused by Christian prejudice. III (December 1913): 751 and seq.

[43] *Ark* VII (April 1917): 122.

[44] For example, see the *Ark* V (December 1915): 580 and seq. One unusual story is of an Irish Catholic boy who accepted the anti-Jewish stereotypes but nonetheless wanted to be Jewish. See IX (February 1919): 37–42.

[45] *Ark* IV (June 1914): 322.

[46] *Ark* VIII (June 1918): 177 and seq.

[47] *Ark* IX (September 1919): 247.

[48] *Ark* II (November 1912): 961.

[49] *Ark* II (December 1912): 1049.

[50] *Ark* V (December 1915): 588.

[51] *Ark* VI (February 1916): 82–83.

[52] *Ark* II (April 1912): 391–92.

[53] *Ark* IX (December 1919): 326.

[54] *Ark* VII (January 1917): 3–6.

[55] One poem was taken from the *Christian Advocate.* See the *Ark* VI (September 1916): 418.

[56] *Ark* V (December 1915): 605.

[57] *Ark* II (February 1912): 104.

[58] *Ark* V (November 1915): 522. A similar theme was developed in a long poem reprinted from *Lippincott's*. See III (December 1913): 766–67.

[59] *Ark* VI (July 1916): 291.

[60] *Ark* VII (June 1917): 177; II (April 1912): 319.

[61] *Ark* II (February 1912): 176.

[62] *Ark* III (May 1913): 310.

[63] *Ark* II (July 1912): 580ff.

[64] Those who purchased a copy of the encyclopedia received a copy of the letter. See the ads in the front material in volume II of the *Ark*'s first issues.

[65] *Ark* IV (December 1914): 677; VI (March 1916): 128–29; VII (November 1917): 326.

[66] *Ark* VI (February 1916): 83.

[67] *Ark* VI (June 1916): 279.

[68] *Ark* IV (August 1914): 444.

[69] *Ark* VI (April, June 1916): 169, 272.

[70] *Ark* IV (December 1914): 699.

[71] *Ark* IV (August, September 1914): 464, 507–9.

[72] *Ark* VIII (August 1918): 240.

[73] *Ark* VIII (January 1918): 12.

[74] *Ark* VIII (February 1918): 43.

[75] Ibid., 58; VIII (March 1918): 92.

[76] *Ark* VIII (May 1918): 141.

[77] *Ark* VII (June 1917): 184.

[78] *Ark* XIII (September 1923): 244–48.

[79] *Ark* VII (December 1917): 368; VIII (September, November 1918): 280; VIII, 339; IX (March 1919): 78.

[80] *Ark* VII (November 1917): 334.

[81] *Ark* VIII (August 1918): 239.

[82] *Ark* IX (July 1919): 171; X (November 1920): 287; XII (March 1922): 67.

[83] *Ark* XII (March 1922): 81.

[84] *Ark* IX (October 1919): 276.

[85] *Ark* XII (January, December 1922): 23, 329.

[86] *Ark* XII (July 1922): 185.

[87] *Ark* XIII (February 1923): 31 and seq.

[88] *Ark* XIII (April 1923): 105.

[89] *Ark* XI (May, September 1921): 134; XI, 250.

[90] *Ibid*

[91] *Ark* IX (April 1918): 92-96.

[92] *Ark* XII (August 1922): 215–18.

[93] *Ark* XI (May 1921): 127.

[94] *Ark* XIII (January 1923): 22–26. In one earlier instance a woman is an archeologist. See volume II (June 1912): 491 and seq.

[95] *Ark* XII (June 1922): 157 and seq.

[96] *Ark* IX (January 1919): 23–25.

[97] *Ark* XII (March, May 1922): 58, 118 and seq.

[98] *Ark* IX (August 1919): 217; (October 1919): 275.

[99] *Ark* X (August, September 1920): 208, 228–29.

[100] *Ark* XII (July 1922): 171–83.

[101] *Ark* XII (December 1922): 323 and seq.; see also two stories on the modern rabbi in X (November 1920).

[102] *Ark* X (July 1920): 184.

[103] *Ark* XII (August 1922): 215–18.

[104] *Ark* XII (June 1922): 153ff.

[105] *Ark* XII (September 1922): 232 and seq.

The Jewish Vocational Service of Newark, New Jersey, 1950-1980

Edward Shapiro

The Jewish Vocational Service (JVS) of Newark, New Jersey, was established in 1939 to provide vocational training for native-born Jews having difficulty finding jobs during the Great Depression, a period of rampant employment discrimination, and for newly arrived Jewish refugees from Europe who had little knowledge of English and vocational skills unsuited to their new home. At that time Newark was the sixth largest Jewish community in the United States.[1] The JVS remained a small agency employing a couple of professionals until after World War II, when its responsibilities broadened and its staff expanded. The agency's history between 1950 and 1980 is a test case of the response of an ethnic social welfare organization to the often-competing pressures emanating from the parochial community that it was established to serve and from the general society.

In 1950, the Newark Jewish community faced a major financial crisis brought on by the settlement in the city of survivors of the Holocaust, many of whom had acute psychological, social, and vocational challenges. The Newark Jewish Federation was spending approximately twenty-five thousand dollars per month to aid these people, and it anticipated that it was going to cost an additional forty-two thousand dollars per month to assist the two hundred and twenty-five refugee families expected to settle in the city the following year. The financial pressures on the community would be lessened if the refugees could become economically self-supporting as soon as possible.

By the end of 1951, the Jewish community was spending only ten thousand dollars a month to support refugees. In part this was due to the success of the JVS in discovering jobs for immigrants. In 1950 alone, the agency had found employment for one hundred and thirty-nine refugees. Also by the end of 1951, the flow of refugees into Newark had been reduced to a trickle. The JVS, however, was left with approximately thirty refugees for whom its normal counseling

and placement services were ineffective. Their advanced age, physical disabilities, and psychological problems precluded employment in the private sector, and being new to the United States, they were as yet ineligible for social security.[2]

The JVS concluded that a sheltered workshop was the most desirable solution. This would vocationally rehabilitate those with the greatest potential for employment in private industry, furnish long-term employment for those unable to work outside a sheltered environment, and enable its clients to work the six quarters then required for social security benefits. Morris Grumer, the JVS's executive director, claimed the methods of the sheltered workshop were "all geared toward helping the individual achieve vocational adjustment by means of the satisfaction of emotional and personal needs through the job situation."[3]

A sheltered workshop restricted to refugees would eventually self-destruct, since its clientele would ultimately find private employment, secure social security benefits, or die. In view of the political temper in Washington, D.C., it was unlikely that immigration laws would be modified to increase immigration. Since the nature of the sheltered workshop's long-term clientele was unclear, the Jewish Community Council (JCC), the policy-making body of the Federation, approved establishing the workshop on a trial basis for one year, with the understanding that the JVS could present the project at a future date for consideration as a permanent service to non-refugee and non-relief clients. According to the JVS's Committee on Unemployables, "as the project continues and develops, other handicapped individuals could be employed at the shop."[4]

The Opportunity Workshop, the first sheltered workshop under Jewish auspices in the United States, opened in September 1952 at the Newark YM-YWHA on High Street. Initially there was space for only ten refugees. They ranged in age from forty-three to seventy, and had a variety of cardiac, neurological, orthopedic, and emotional problems that prevented them from working outside a sheltered environment. In September 1953, the workshop expanded its intake policy to include non-refugee Jews, resulting in an immediate doubling of workshop participants.[5]

Hearing of the workshop's new intake policy and its work with the emotionally disturbed, the Rehabilitation Commission of New Jersey, a state agency, approached the JVS in 1953 regarding the possibility of referring some of its emotionally handicapped clients on a fee basis to the workshop for rehabilitation. The JVS was interested in the proposal, since it would guarantee a future clientele, permit an expansion of its activities, and benefit community relations. Heretofore the JVS had only served Jews. The boards of both the JVS and the Jewish Community Council (JCC) debated whether the opportunity to enrich the workshop's services and to enlarge its staff through public money justified opening the agency's services to non-Jews. In April 1956, the workshop Committee, a subcommittee of the JVS's Board of Trustees, unanimously adopted a resolution favoring a non-sectarian admissions policy for the workshop, provided that the state fully compensated the JVS for all services provided to non-Jews. Both the JVS and the JCC approved this suggestion, and when the agreement went into effect in 1957, it became a model for other Jewish vocational agencies throughout the country.[6]

Both the JVS and the JCC feared that accepting government funds would inevitably dilute, if not eventually destroy, the Jewish character of the agency. To forestall this possibility, a compromise was worked out. Non-Jews would be admitted to the workshop, while the educational counseling, job placement, and career counseling performed by staff not involved in the workshop would continue to be restricted to Jews. In the 1960s, additional outside pressures were exerted on the JVS to modify its sectarian character. It then developed an imaginative "spin-off" technique by which functions were handed over to a non-sectarian body. This enabled the JVS to provide services to the general community while remaining a Jewish agency.

Once the workshop had implemented the new intake policy, the JVS was presented with additional governmental grant possibilities. In 1959, it signed an agreement with the United States Veterans Administration's Lyons Hospital in western New Jersey to provide services at the workshop for emotionally handicapped veterans, few of whom were Jews. Ten years later the JVS signed another contract with the Veterans Administration to provide vocational and psychological

testing to Vietnam war veterans, as well as to their widows and children. In 1966, the agency received a grant of eight hundred and eighty-six thousand dollars from the United States Office of Economic Opportunity to provide vocational testing and counseling for inner-city residents in Newark. In 1970, an additional anti-poverty grant to the JVS funded a vocational rehabilitation program for Newark drug addicts.

Before these new ventures were approved, the JVS staff had to convince a skeptical Board of Trustees that, directly or indirectly, they would benefit the Jewish population. On the one hand, the JVS was a Jewish agency, its board and professionals were Jews, and it received funds from the Federation. Members of the board questioned why dollars raised from Jews during the annual Federation fund-raising campaign should be spent serving the needs of non-Jews, who did not contribute to the campaign; they should be aided by Christian, non-sectarian agencies, and government. Board members also feared that the unique vocational services of the JVS, such as serving Holocaust survivors and other refugees, would be de-emphasized if the agency broadened its client population.

Beginning in the 1950s, the bulk of the JVS's workshop funds came from governmental sources, both federal and local, and it was virtually inevitable that it would have to change its insular approach of the 1940s and early 1950s when it served only Jews. One reason for this redefinition of the JVS's role was the realization that the economic barriers Jews had faced during the 1930s were largely eliminated after World War II. Another was the decline in the number of Holocaust survivors settling in the Newark area who needed extensive vocational counseling and rehabilitation. The new mission of the JVS enabled it to continue contributing to the welfare of the general society, and the favorable publicity the agency received would be excellent public relations and help combat antisemitism. The JVS staff also convinced the JVS's lay leadership that state funds would enable the agency to improve its services to the Jewish community.

The concern within the JVS as to how best to reconcile conflicting demands of ethnic particularism and philanthropic universalism was not unique to Newark. It was part of a broader national debate

within Jewish vocational agencies and other Jewish social welfare organizations over their *raison d'etre.* As Martha K. Selig of the New York Federation of Jewish Philanthropies noted in 1959, governmental funds "hold a promise and a challenge" — the promise of more extensive and improved programming and the challenge of remaining Jewish. "We need not fear government participation for this is consonant with our democratic society." She concluded optimistically that "we can continue to remain Jewish agencies and retain our tradition even as we reach out to help others." Government funding had not prevented Jewish agencies from serving Jews. On the contrary, it "has freed the philanthropic dollar for responsibilities unique to the voluntary sectarian agency. It has permitted us to retain the Jewish character of our agencies and has not intruded on their operation or autonomy." The JVS's 1957 contract with the Rehabilitation Commission, signed two years before Selig's article appeared, was a model for the fruitful collaboration between government and sectarian agencies that she had praised.[7]

The contract also changed the client population of the workshop. This, along with the good relationship with the Rehabilitation Commission and the interest of Joseph L. Weinberg, who had succeeded Grumer as the JVS's executive director in 1957, in aiding the emotionally disturbed, resulted in the agency's most important research and development project. Between 1959 and 1963 the JVS, in cooperation with the Rehabilitation Commission and Overbrook Hospital, Essex County's mental hospital in Cedar Grove, conducted a study on the vocational rehabilitation of schizophrenics.

The possibility of releasing schizophrenics into the general population had increased during the 1950s with the introduction of tranquilizers. But the success of this would depend, in part, upon whether they could support themselves economically, an area that lacked substantial research. The U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation offered a one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollar grant, to be administered by the Rehabilitation Commission to determine whether a vocational agency could help rehabilitate schizophrenics. The Rehabilitation Commission, because of its past history with the JVS, asked the

agency to conduct the study. The director of the Rehabilitation Commission noted that the JVS had become "a vital partner in the state government's work on behalf of the emotionally disturbed."[8]

The JVS staff was eager to do the research. It would be a feather in the agency's cap, since it would be the first research project in New Jersey involving the vocational rehabilitation of the emotionally handicapped and, in addition, would further cement the close relationship between the agency and the Rehabilitation Commission. It would also not cost the JVS anything, as the state would provide all funding. Finally, the JVS would be furnishing a major public service. With approximately three hundred and fifty thousand schizophrenics hospitalized in the United States, treatment was very expensive. The nation was being deprived of the labor of a large number of people as well. Anything fostering the economic productivity of schizophrenics would be of great benefit.

The JVS Board of Trustees was skeptical. It feared involvement with the psychotic, wondered whether the research project would be of any value to the Jewish community, and questioned whether a sectarian agency should become involved in what seemed to be a public responsibility. The board was also suspicious of the JVS becoming involved in research itself. It had always been a service agency, and some board members feared research would divert it from its major responsibility. The board established a special Research Project Committee to examine the proposal and to report back. This committee concluded that the project could result in significant findings without the JVS bearing any of its cost. This, along with the staff's eagerness, convinced the board and the board of the Jewish Community Council to approve the research project.

Begun in 1959, the research concluded that a workshop experience was far more effective in rehabilitating schizophrenics than ordinary rehabilitation services. Dr. Henry A. Davidson, the superintendent of Overbrook Hospital, said, "Patients long hospitalized, estranged from friends and relatives, have in some instances been able to start a new life … where they are accepted and made to feel part of the family." Beatrice Holderman, the director of the Rehabilitation Commission, was also encouraged by the study's findings. "Hospitalized mental

patients and their families," she said, "now have more hope for readjustment of the ill members of the community." As a result of the study, the Rehabilitation Commission, which previously had little interest in psychotic clients, increased its services to the more seriously emotionally disturbed.[9]

During the research phase of the schizophrenic study of the late 1950s and early 1960s, the JVS received requests to become involved in vocational counseling and training of young blacks and Puerto Ricans in Newark. The requests came from the Americans for Democratic Action, the Urban League, Rutgers University, the Welfare Federation of Essex and West Hudson, and the Rehabilitation Commission. These organizations looked to the JVS because of its quarter-of-a-century experience in operating vocational service programs and its recent history with non-sectarian publicly funded projects. These requests came during the golden age of the civil rights movement, prior to the urban riots of the mid-1960s and the emergence of black power. At this time many American Jews were very supportive of the civil rights movement and wished to lend a helping hand. The board of the JVS established an Anti-Poverty Committee to study these requests. This committee and the JVS board unanimously approved JVS involvement, although with several barriers. Of these, funding was the most important.[10]

It was unlikely that either the Federation or the JVS board would allow money raised by the local campaign of the United Jewish Appeal to fund a program which did not directly benefit Jews. Newark's city government had neither the funds nor the interest to fund such a project, and there were no local philanthropic foundations willing to underwrite it. The money would have to come from Washington, probably from the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), the federal agency established in 1964 as part of the Johnson administration's war on poverty. Washington, the JCC, and the JVS, however, were initially reluctant to become involved in this project because of the morass of corruption characteristic of Newark politics in general and the city's anti-poverty program in particular. Board members of the JVS also feared the project could divert the agency from its primary mission of serving persons with physical and

emotional disabilities. They were also sensitive to the possibility of being charged with paternalism by black leaders such as Le Roi Jones (Imanu Amiri Baraka) demanding that institutions serving the black community be controlled by blacks.[11]

The JCC and the JVS ultimately decided that any involvement by the agency in the inner city must be of limited duration (approximately one year), and that the program be "spun-off" as soon as possible into the hands of minority representatives. They also insisted that the agency's other activities not be adversely affected. Finally, the JVS's involvement depended upon complete freedom from any and all political interference. After being reassured on these points by Newark's anti-poverty officials, the JCC overcame its initial reluctance and approved the project in July 1965.[12]

In its grant proposal to the Office of Economic Opportunity, the JVS said it planned to mobilize "the large network of social agencies in the community in a cooperative effort to open up new pathways to occupational and professional opportunities" for children from "disorganized families" in Newark. The OEO responded with a grant of eight hundred and eighty-two thousand dollars, and Career Oriented Preparation for Employment (COPE) began in March 1966. It was the largest and most intensive youth-training program in the Newark area. Besides the JVS, the Newark Board of Education, the United Community Corporation (Newark's anti-poverty agency), and the Newark Welfare Federation also took part. For its first fourteen months, COPE was administered out of the office of the JVS's director of professional services. During this period a staff of ten counselors specifically recruited by the JVS for the project tested and advised approximately fifteen hundred persons between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one. The counselors encouraged their clients to develop positive work habits, acquire job skills, and remain in school or return to school if they had dropped out.[13]

The federal government judged COPE's counseling, psychological testing, and job training to be highly effective. John C. Bullitt, director of the New Jersey branch of the Office of Economic Opportunity, described COPE as "a new breakthrough by private fundraising organizations in the war on poverty. The COPE neighborhood youth

corps has demonstrated in a very short time the value of government, sectarian, and private group cooperation in the cause of social action." "Where there's COPE," people involved in the program liked to say, "there's hope."[14]

From COPE's inception, the JVS began recruiting a board of directors and staff to run the program when it came time for the JVS to step aside. In November 1966, the JVS board decided that COPE was on such firm footing that the agency should spin it off and retain only a consultative role. In June 1967, Alvin D. Moore, Jr., an African American, became executive director of COPE. In 1967, the JVS won the William J. Shroder Award for COPE, given annually by the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds for superior "initiative and achievements in the advancement of social welfare by voluntary health and welfare agencies under Jewish auspices in the United States and Canada." The judges were particularly impressed with the spin-off mechanism, terming it "a unique pioneering program in the field of vocational service" and "a technique for Jewish involvement in general community problems while enriching the secular commitments of the agency. The entire COPE project offers other Jewish communities a visible instrument for participation in the war against poverty." The award came just months after the disastrous Newark riot of July 1967.[15]

Some of the riot's victims were Jewish shopkeepers. They had neither the resources nor the desire to resume operations in Newark's Central Ward, and the JVS was eager to help them relocate or find alternative employment. About ten persons were assisted by the agency. While this was a minor part of the JVS's work in 1967 and early 1968, the memories of destroyed Jewish stores and uprooted Jewish businessmen influenced the JVS's response when it was asked to become involved in another program of primary benefit to residents of inner-city Newark.

In 1970, Newark's Model Cities office and the Rehabilitation Commission asked the JVS to work with Newark drug addicts. Several members of the agency's Board of Trustees initially opposed this proposal. Not only were they bitter because of the 1967 riot, they were also skeptical that these addicts could be vocationally rehabilitated.

More fundamentally they questioned whether working with inner-city drug addicts would promote the interests of Essex County Jews. Other members of the board responded that the drug problem had become an important national concern, that the JVS would acquire techniques and expertise which might prove valuable in counseling Jewish suburban youth involved with drugs, and that the agency had a religious and civic responsibility to help alleviate the problems of Newark so long as this did not interfere with the agency's other tasks. The anxieties of doubters on the boards of the JVS and Jewish Community Council were relieved when it became apparent that the agency's participation would be temporary and that the spin-off technique would be utilized again.[16]

The JVS participated in the drug program between November 1971 and June 1974. With a grant of three hundred and fifty thousand dollars from the Rehabilitation Services Administration of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and Newark's Model Cities office, the JVS established a vocational rehabilitation program at Integrity House, a halfway home in Newark for addicts. Named Work Oriented Rehabilitation Community (WORC), the JVS administered the program until June 15, 1974, when it was transferred to Integrity House entirely. During these two and a half years, one hundred and thirteen former addicts were trained and/or placed in jobs. The results of WORC gratified both the JVS and Integrity House. The JVS's president described WORC as a "fabulous success," and David Gareley, the director of WORC, noted that it had "turned out better than anyone ever dreamed."[17]

Although the JVS had branched out into the general community beginning in the 1950s, it remained a Jewish agency and continued to respond to Jews in need of its services. Lest it forget, the JCC constantly reminded the JVS that its major responsibility was still working with Jewish clients. In 1956-57, as a result of the Hungarian revolt against the Soviet Union and communism, five thousand Hungarian Jews relocated to the United States. Twenty of these families settled in Essex County and received vocational counseling and job placement assistance from the JVS. Also, a few Jewish refugee families from Cuba received similar aid from the JVS after Fidel

Castro came to power in 1959. But these emigrants from Hungary and Cuba were few in number. The JVS Jewish refugee clientele would not significantly increase until the 1970s, when large numbers of Russian Jews began settling in Essex County, and even then refugee work would not remain the major Jewish component of the JVS's activities.[18]

After World War II, American Jewry experienced a fundamental social transformation. The immigrant generation of urban workers and shopkeepers was replaced by second and third generation of suburbanites, government and corporate employees, and professionals. The move to suburbia was particularly rapid in Newark as a result of the 1967 riot, and by 1970, the city's Jewish population was probably not more than a thousand. If the JVS's primary mission of aiding Jews was to be fulfilled, then it would have to offer Jews something more than placement and guidance services for the poor, the disabled, and immigrants.

In 1963, the JCC granted permission to the JVS to engage in educational counseling for what were termed "normal" teenagers, defined as those planning to attend college and become professionals. At a time when most non-Jewish American high school students did not go to college, the Jewish teenager not planning to continue his or her education after high school was considered unusual. Over 80% of Jewish high school graduates in Essex County went to college, and the question of which college to attend was not restricted to the affluent. The JVS believed the county's public high schools guidance counseling was inadequate and that it had a role to play in advising high school students. The JVS realized that not all Jews should go to college. But, in view of the importance of a college degree for employment, those lacking a university degree could become vocationally handicapped. The agency's program of educational counseling was a departure from its longstanding *raison d'etre.* But the problem of selecting the right college for suburban youth was too important to be ignored.[19]

College counseling took two forms. There was individual counseling, financed partly though a fee schedule based on the financial ability of client families. For the first time in its history, the JVS charged for counseling, reflecting its new policy of serving Jews without financial need. The JVS also engaged in group counseling.

In cooperation with the local YM-YWHA, it held college and career conferences and workshops for Jewish youth. The JVS also prepared a mini-directory of Jewish facilities at some of the nation's colleges. This contained information on the availability of kosher food, Hillel houses, and Jewish studies programs.

The JVS's counseling services expanded further in 1970 to meet the needs of women in their middle years entering the job market for the first time or reentering it after an extended absence. For the first time, women in large numbers were coming to the JVS for career counseling. This was due to several factors. The ideology of the feminist movement, which deprecated domesticity and encouraged women to seek work outside the home, was of some influence. But for most women, work was less a quest for personal fulfillment than an economic necessity. Often their husbands' income could not sustain the highly valued and expensive suburban life style. The expense of sending children to college, especially if they attended residential and/or private schools, was a further spur for women to seek employment. Finally, the rapid increase in the divorce rate left some women in fragile economic straits.[20]

Project Eve, begun in October 1970 with fifteen women, was a six-session seminar devoted to education, career counseling, and employment opportunities. Quite successful, within four years it boasted sixty-nine participants and a waiting list. Its schedule increased to twice a year to meet demand. Along with the group counseling of Project Eve, many women came to the JVS for individual counseling, placement assistance, and vocational testing. Throughout the 1970s the agency's case load for women continually rose.[21]

Working with the elderly became a more important aspect of the agency's activities during the 1960s. This was not merely a local phenomenon. Jewish communities throughout the United States became more involved with the elderly due to the growing percentage of American Jews who were over fifty years of age, the national interest in the elderly, and the increased political activity of the aged and the emergence of "gray power." Jewish vocational agencies realized that many of the aged, despite physical and emotional infirmities, would benefit economically and psychologically from working. These agencies developed new techniques and programs directed at the elderly.

In 1963, the JVS received the first of two one-thousand-dollar grants for its Employer Field Visiting Program from the Jewish Occupational Council, the predecessor of the National Association of Jewish Vocational Services.[22] These grants from funds provided by the Baron de Hirsch Fund and administered by the JOC enabled the JVS to hire a retired salesman to solicit positions of employment from business and industry for Jewish clients who were over fifty. Forty-six were placed in jobs during the program's first year, and the program was judged a success. When the Baron de Hirsch grants ran out in 1965, the Jewish Community Council allowed the JVS to absorb the expenses of the program within its regular budget.[23]

In May 1965, the JVS opened a workshop for the residents of the Daughters of Israel Home for the Aged (now the Daughters of Israel Geriatric Center) in West Orange. Established in 1906, the Daughters of Israel, the first Jewish home for the elderly in New Jersey, housed both men and women. A workshop had been proposed in 1957, but a few influential members of the home's board feared that the residents would be economically exploited. This opposition was not surmounted until the dissidents left the board a few years later. The workshop was an immediate success, with one member of the JVS board describing it as "the answer to a tremendous need, a challenge and a bold step forward." So great was the demand of the home's residents for work that the number of chairs at the worktables and the hours that the workshop was open had to be increased. The home's president believed the workshop had "significant therapeutic benefits for our residents; less medication, fewer doctor's visits, and less preoccupation with self have resulted for those who work in the shop. Attendance is high, absenteeism is minimal, and many would work longer hours if we could provide it." The home's executive director agreed. The workshop's effects had been "far greater than our expectations."[24]

The last of the JVS's undertakings for the elderly was establishing a workshop for the several hundred elderly Jews remaining in Newark. It was at first hoped that this workshop could be located in the Weequahic neighborhood, the one-time center of Newark Jewry. The JVS expected to receive funding from the state's Rehabilitation Commission for what was anticipated to be a pioneering vocational

service program for the elderly. The workshop's intake policy would, of course, have to be non-sectarian to receive public support. It soon became clear, however, that locating the workshop in Weequahic — by the 1960s a predominately black neighborhood — would be problematic. "A primary concern of the Jewish Community Council," the JVS board was told, was the possibility that the workshop "would be used by black militants to promote a confrontation with the Jewish community with disastrous results." To counter this possibility, it was proposed to use the spin-off technique, which had proven so successful in the COPE project. One person suggested that the spin-off mechanism would "demonstrate that a good mix of both black and white staff and black and white clientele was still possible in this day and age." A neighborhood workshop could thus benefit the Jewish elderly remaining in Newark and, at the same time, demonstrate a Jewish commitment to the welfare of Newark. In any case, the JVS was unable to find a suitable location in Weequahic.[25] An alternative was to locate the workshop near the building in East Orange that housed the JVS and Opportunity Workshop, and to bus in the elderly. East Orange was safer than Newark and more accessible to the elderly who did not reside in Weequahic. An East Orange workshop would also save money, since the counseling, testing, and other services of the two workshops could be combined. By coincidence a building next to the JVS was available for rent. The Jewish Community Council sanctioned the rental of the structure on North Clinton Street, and the Work Center on Aging opened its doors on November 12, 1973.[26]

The JCC approved the Work Center on Aging after it received assurances from the JVS that all its funding would come from Washington and Trenton. The increase in Federation monies going to Israel after the Six-Day War of 1967 made the Federation skeptical of new activities. In addition, the JVS's success in securing funds for previous programs from governmental sources resulted in an expectation among Federation leaders that other JVS proposals would also be funded by the government. The federal and state governments were interested in the JVS's plans for the workshop, and the Rehabilitation Services Administration of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare provided a seventy-thousand dollar grant to

renovate the North Clinton Street structure. The JVS intended to offer more than unskilled workshop employment for the elderly. It also proposed to provide recreational, medical, nutritional, social service, and educational programs, as well as vocational testing, job placement, and vocational counseling. The JVS had in mind a comprehensive vocational rehabilitation center and believed such a center would not only increase the income of the elderly, but would also improve their morale. Joseph Weinberg claimed that the workshop could "provide its clients … with a sense of purpose and promote feelings of self-worth with resulting benefits in both mental and physical health." The Work Center on Aging began with eleven clients, and by 1978 it had five times that number, along with a waiting list. It was the only place in New Jersey under private auspices that provided a comprehensive program of vocational rehabilitation services for the elderly.[27]

A large migration of Russian Jews into Essex County was taking place at the same time that the Work Center on Aging was getting off the ground. The most pressing of all the challenges facing the Russians was becoming economically self-sufficient, and the JVS was to be a crucial tool in achieving this. To the JVS and the Jewish Community Council, rapid employment would hasten the adjustment of Russians to American life, bolster their self-image as productive individuals, and lessen the financial pressures felt by the Jewish community in caring for them. The work of the JVS with the Russians was complicated by language differences, difficulties in translating Russian job skills and professions into American categories, licensing barriers for foreign professionals, the newcomers' unfamiliarity with a flexible, free-enterprise economy, and their suspicion of all authority, whether public or private.

Initially the JVS services to Russians was part of its ongoing case load. They received vocational evaluations, job placements, job seeking skills, and temporary or extended employment in the Opportunity Workshop. The agency, however, soon concluded that the Russians had problems that demanded unique treatment. It took longer to place a Russian in employment because of the need for distinct job skills evaluation and for instruction in English. Russians also had high employment expectations, and many had chosen to settle in the

United States rather than in Western Europe or Israel because of these expectations. The JVS leadership feared that the growing number of Russians settling in the Newark area could swamp its staff, making it difficult to counsel and place non-Russians. As early as November 1974, the JVS's board was told that "should the number of Russian and other immigrants continue to grow … JVS would need additional staff time for this program, or have to consider cutting back on some other job placement services."[28]

The ideal solution was to establish an absorption center in which the JVS, the Jewish Family Service Association, the YM-YWHA, and the local Jewish day schools could serve the Russians. Absorption centers were common in Israel, but they did not exist in the United States. Nor was the early 1970s a propitious time to establish them. Because of the difficult financial straits of Israel, exacerbated by the Yom Kippur War of 1973, the bulk of funds raised by local campaigns of the United Jewish Appeal was forwarded to the Jewish state. Other sources of money would have to be found. In the meantime, the JVS continued working with an ever-increasing number of Russians. By the end of the decade the agency had served eight hundred Soviet emigres and had placed over five hundred of them in jobs.

Until 1978 the Jewish Community Federation, the successor to the Jewish Community Council, had paid all expenses incurred in helping the Russians. The JVS then learned that the Jewish communities of Miami and Philadelphia had received grants under the Comprehensive Education and Employment Act (CETA) for the resettlement of Russian immigrants. The JVS, in conjunction with the local Jewish Family Service agency, successfully applied for a CETA grant for language and vocational training for the Russians. This paid the salaries of two employment specialists and provided stipends for the immigrants while they were enrolled in job-training programs. CETA also paid the tuition for ten immigrant women to attend the Katherine Gibbs Secretarial School in New York City. The JVS used part of the CETA grant to work with the Russians in developing job-seeking skills. This included instruction in the American job process interview, personal hygiene, and preparation of a resume. The CETA grant enabled the JVS to expand its services, and the time required to

find employment for the Russians was cut in half. CETA officials were pleased with the results of the grant, since it seemed to demonstrate that a comprehensive employment program could be effective and cost efficient.[29]

The state of New Jersey also aided in the vocational rehabilitation of the Russians. In October 1976, the State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, formerly the Rehabilitation Commission, provided the JVS with a three-year grant of one hundred and thirty thousand dollars for an expanded placement, counseling, and job-seeking skills program for the handicapped. Since Russians were classified as vocationally handicapped, they were included in this program. In September 1978, the agency's assistant executive director noted that "our new job-skills seeking training program has been underway a few months, and the group of Jewish Russian emigrants trained … have done very well on job interviews."[30]

The JVS pioneered in providing a comprehensive vocational program for Russian immigrants. Other Jewish vocational agencies in the United States and Canada were interested in the success of the JVS, particularly its ability to tap government sources for funds. These agencies, the JVS's Joseph Weinberg said, sought "information from us in order to replicate the comprehensive program of services that we have designed with the help of CETA in our community." Because of these requests, the JVS sponsored a training institute for Jewish communal workers to acquaint them with its experience with the Russians.[31]

In 1979, the Jewish Federation purchased a four-story building in East Orange close to the JVS to house all of the Russian settlement work of the YM-YWHA, the Jewish Family Service agency, and the JVS, including that of the Opportunity Workshop and the Work Center on Aging. At last the Jewish community had a multipurpose absorption center for Russian immigrants, who now numbered over one thousand, with more scheduled to arrive shortly. With this, the Jewish Vocational Service had gone full circle from focusing on survivors of the Holocaust, to dealing with drug addicts, the aged, and women, and then to serving the needs of Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union. At the same time, the JVS continued to have a large

number of Gentile clients, particularly in its workshops. The JVS's attempts to satisfy the needs of Jews while simultaneously meeting those of non-Jews reflected the post-World War II movement of Jews into the American mainstream. The new responsibilities that Jewish leaders in Newark and elsewhere took upon themselves exhibited a confidence in their identity as both Jews and Americans, a confidence fueled by wartime experience and displayed at the 1954 tercentenary celebration of Jewish settlement in America. The decision of the JVS to provide services to non-Jews stemmed not only from the lure of governmental dollars, but also from the sense that the Jewish community of Newark had arrived. It was now incumbent on it to act the part. The needs of Jews had to be met because they were Jews, but the needs of non-Jews also had to be met because they were fellow Americans. The history of the JVS is thus a microcosm of modern American Jewish history.[32]

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Notes

[1] For the history of the JVS prior to 1950, see Edward S. Shapiro, "Ethnicity and Employment: The Early Years of the Jewish Vocational Service of Newark, 1939-1952," *New Jersey History,* 106 (Spring/Summer 1988): 19-39. For the history of Jewish vocational work, see Shapiro, "National Association of Jewish Vocational Services," in *Jewish American Voluntary Organizations,* Michael N. Dobkowski, ed. (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood, 1986), 325-33, and Ronald Baxt, "Jewish Vocational Service," *American Jewish Year Book,* Morris Fine and Jacob Sloan, eds., vol. 55 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1954), 103–9. In 1973 the official name of the agency was changed from the Jewish Vocational Service of Essex County to the Jewish Vocational Service of Metropolitan New Jersey. This corresponded to a name change of the Jewish Federation, and it reflected the movement of Jews out of Newark and Essex County into the suburban hinterland.

[2] *Jewish News,* June 30, 1950; Morrison J. Feldman, "President's Report," December 8, 1952, Jewish Vocational Service Papers, Jewish Vocational Service, East Orange, New Jersey.

[3] Morris Grumer, "The Program and Rationale of a Sheltered Workshop in a Jewish Vocational Service," *Jewish Social Service Quarterly,* 30 (Summer 1954): 399–406.

[4] "Final Report of the Committee on Unemployables," nd., JVS Papers.

[5] Minutes of Board of Trustees of the Opportunity Workshop, October 28, 1952, JVS Papers.

[6] "Recommendation for Change in Intake Policy of the Opportunity Workshop," April 1956, JVS Papers; Minutes of Board of Trustees of JVS, January 7, 1957, JVS Papers.

[7] Harry L. Lurie, *A Heritage Affirmed: The Jewish Federation Movement in America* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1961), 204; Martha K. Selig, "Implications of the Use of Public Funds in Jewish Communal Services," *Journal of Jewish Communal Services,* 36 (Fall 1959): 48–58.

[8] *Jewish News,* May 8, 1959.

[9] *A Study of the Contribution of Workshop Experience in the Vocational Rehabilitation of Post-Hospitalized Schizophrenic Patients* (mimeographed, 1963), pp. ix-x, JVS Papers.

[10] *Jewish News,* December 6, 1963; Minutes of Board of Trustees of JVS, December 2, 1963, and June 8, 1964.

[11] *Newark Evening News,* February 3, 1965; *New York Times,* January 24, 1966; Minutes of the Board of Trustees of JVS, April 5, 1965, and December 5, 1965.

[12] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of JVS, May 3, 1965.

[13] *"COPE": Career Oriented Preparation for Employment* (mimeographed, 1965), 1–5, JVS Papers; *Newark Sunday News,* March 26, 1967; Joseph L. Weinberg and Albert I. Ascher, "COPE: First Comprehensive Report," 1967, JVS Papers.

[14] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of JVS, December 12, 1966.

[15] *Jewish News,* June 16, 1967; *William J. Shroder Memorial Awards, 1967 Winners* (New York: Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, 1967), 5–6.

[16] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of JVS, September 14, 1970, January 11, 1971, and December 6, 1971.

[17] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of JVS, March 5, 1973, and June 17, 1974; *Community News Reporter,* July 26, 1974.

[18] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of JVS, January 7, 1957, and November 6, 1961; *Jewish News,* February 13, 1959.

[19] *Jewish News,* March 20, 1964.

[20] *Jewish News,* December 11, 1970; Minutes of Board of Trustees of JVS, March 1, 1971.

[21] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of JVS, May 6, 1974, and December 5, 1977.

[22] The name of the Jewish Occupational Council was changed to the National Association of Jewish Vocational Services in 1975 to correspond to a change in the agency's role. See Shapiro, "National Association of Jewish Vocational Services," 331.

[23] *Jewish News,* January 17, 1964; "Report of the Year's Activities of the Baron de Hirsch Project for Older Workers," April 1, 1964, JVS Papers.

[24] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of JVS, November 4, 1957, November 4, 1963, and February 1, 1965; *Jewish News,* November 5, 1965; Esther M. Balowe to Joseph L. Weinberg, September 7, 1965, JVS Papers.

[25] Ronald L. Coun, "Establishing a Community Rehabilitation Center on Aging," *Selected Papers and Materials: Practitioners' Conference,* 1973 (New York: Jewish Occupational Council, 1973), 46-51; Minutes of Board of Trustees of JVS, April 1, 1968, January 6, 1969, and February 3, 1969.

[26] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of JVS, May 3, 1971, and June 5, 1972; *Jewish News,* January 10, 1974.

[27] *Congressional Record* (Senate), CXXI, #132, September 10, 1975; Minutes of the Board of Trustees of JVS, September 10, 1973, and June 17, 1974.

[28] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of JVS, November 4, 1974; Ronald I. Coun, "The Metropolitan New Jersey Experience," in *The Job Scene: Russian Jews in the U.S. and Canada,* Workshop #3 (New York: Jewish Occupational Council, 1975), 1–5.

[29] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of JVS, March 6, 1978, May 1, 1978, June 5, 1978, and March 5, 1979.

[30] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of JVS, September 11, 1978, and June 11, 1979.

[31] Minutes of the Board of Trustees of JVS, May 2, 1977, and May 1, 1978.

[32] For the post-World War II mode of American Jewry, see Edward S. Shapiro, *A Time for Healing: American Jewry Since World War II* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

Jewish Chautauqua, Jewish History, and a Jewish Correspondence School

Jonathan Krasner



Rabbi Henry Berkowitz (1857-1924)
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

By any objective account the Jewish Chautauqua Society (JCS), which was founded in 1893 by Rabbi Henry Berkowitz (1857-1924),[1] was a failure. Berkowitz, a disciple of Isaac M. Wise and a member of the first graduating class of the Hebrew Union College (HUC) in 1883, founded JCS to be "in fact, if not in name, The National Jewish Education Society."[2] While it achieved nominal but fleeting success operating reading circles, summer educational institutes, and later educational programming on university campuses, promoting the understanding of Jews and Judaism among non-Jews, the society never approximated the accomplishments of the Protestant Chautauqua Movement from which Berkowitz had derived inspiration.

Nevertheless, the JCS experiment was a formative chapter in the history of American Jewish education. JCS organized the first national Jewish teachers institute, a correspondence school for religious-school teachers, and was a pioneer in the areas of adult education, textbook publication, audio-visual production, and curricular development. These endeavors served as precursors to subsequent, more successful, efforts to address key challenges confronting the field of American Jewish education.

From the outset teacher training was a central component of Berkowitz's agenda. Berkowitz had become familiar with the poor state of American Jewish education through his eight-year teaching stint at the Talmud Yelodim Institute in Cincinnati and his tenure as co-editor of the *Sabbath Visitor,* a journal for Jewish youth founded

by Max Lilienthal (1815-1882).[3] Raising the quality of education in the religious school, he argued, was "the first and most immediate concern" of his generation of newly minted American-trained rabbis from both HUC and the more traditional Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

He was particularly distressed that many religious-school teachers were trained in Europe. "These were generally men of excellent traits of character and possessed the requisite knowledge," he admitted. Yet, they were also "grievously handicapped in teaching children born and reared in America, by reason of their defects in English speech and their outlandish mannerisms." Generally, the acculturated children of German and East European immigrants alike did not respond well to these teachers and their old-world pedagogy. "[T]he European notions of discipline they sought to apply were harsh and ineffectual, breeding resentment in the hearts of the pupils or creating ludicrous situations that often defeated the ends of instruction." Berkowitz took a particularly dim view of rote memorization, catechisms, and the insistence by many teachers in Reform settings that the acquisition of German was essential.[4]

JCS's early annual assemblies were essentially summer schools for Jewish educators and knowledge-hungry lay people. A Teachers Institute was organized at the first summer assembly in 1897. For three weeks participants attended classes in Jewish studies as well as pedagogy. Recognized scholars, practitioners, and leading rabbis often conducted the classes. Master teachers were invited to conduct model lessons.[5]

The centerpiece of JCS's teacher education program, however, became the correspondence school. As early as 1893, teachers were able to avail themselves of a range of course books published by the society in a variety of subjects, including Bible, history, and Jewish literature. The course books were designed primarily for reading circles. Each lesson included a reading assignment, a short outline or list of themes to guide reading and discussion, review questions, and a list of recommended books for further study. By 1910, however, Berkowitz and other members of JCS's board of directors perceived the need for a

formal correspondence school, with a prescribed curriculum.[6] Students would submit their work for evaluation and receive certificates upon satisfactory completion of a course of study.

According to Berkowitz's memoir, the correspondence school was designed to serve teachers in small towns and cities outside of the northeast corridor and the Cincinnati vicinity. In 1908 financier and philanthropist Jacob Schiff had established a one hundred thousand dollar trust fund for the training of Jewish teachers at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York. Gratz College, which opened its doors in 1895, also provided teacher training for educators in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. But none of these ventures deterred Berkowitz, as their programs "lay beyond the reach of that great host of those scattered in cities, towns and villages throughout the land." Even the cost of attending JCS's assemblies, which in the early years were held in Atlantic City, was prohibitive for many.

Berkowitz and JCS Vice Chancellor William Rosenau (1865-1943)[7] looked to successful correspondence school models at the Universities of Chicago and Wisconsin, as well as the International Correspondence School in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Their efforts were spurred by the warm reception that the correspondence school idea received from teachers at the first JCS Western Assembly in 1911. In search of financial backing, they took their plan to Schiff that fall. Schiff hesitated, although there is no record of why he may have doubted the efficacy of the proposal. Ultimately, however, he was won over, and agreed to provide five thousand dollars in seed money to pay for the creation and publication of textbooks. Schiff also contributed a challenge grant of two hundred and fifty dollars towards a twenty five hundred dollar "Maintenance Fund" on the condition that JCS raise the balance by January 1912. Although his gift was modest, Schiff's involvement conferred legitimacy upon the correspondence school and made it easier for Berkowitz and the board to attract further funding. In the first years of the school's existence, Schiff continued to donate two hundred and fifty dollars annually toward the Maintenance Fund.[8]

With funding in hand, Berkowitz and Rosenau assembled a faculty who would be responsible for writing textbooks and correcting papers.[9] Rosenau was appointed dean of the faculty at the Correspondence School and was responsible for day-to-day administration and textbook editing. Berkowitz formulated the correspondence school curriculum in his 1913 publication *The New Education in Religion* (Jewish Chautauqua Society).

In his memoir Berkowitz claimed that the school opened on November 1, 1915. Yet the JCS minutes indicate that eighteen students were enrolled in the school as early as January 1912. November 1, 1915, probably marks the date by which all of the course materials were published and ready for distribution. Some textbooks, like Berkowitz's *Education of Religion* and Ella Jacobs's guide to teaching Bible in the primary grades, were rushed to publication. Early students used mimeographed experimental editions. The first certificate of completion was awarded to a Miss Flora Daniels of Baltimore, Md., in March 1913.[10]

Values Education

The most enduring achievement of the correspondence school experiment was in the area of textbook publication. Between 1913 and 1915 the society published thirteen textbooks. Read today, the manuals' didacticism and underlying pedagogy seem dated. Yet the textbooks are valuable because they shed light on the Jewish educational priorities of acculturated American Jews in the first decades of the twentieth century. The leaders of the JCS and many of the textbook writers were part of a more general Jewish revival movement that got underway in the final decades of the nineteenth century. The next three sections of this article will explore how textbook authors conceptualized and formulated one particular component of the religious school curriculum – Jewish history. Berkowitz and other Jewish leaders of the period considered the teaching of biblical and post-biblical history to be crucial, and granted it a primary place in the school curriculum.[11] Through an in-depth analysis of the textbooks' treatment of Jewish history, one can extract the communal values and concerns, educational philosophy, and perceptions of self and others of the authors and their general milieu.

Even before Berkowitz published his *New Education in Religion* and decided to commission the correspondence school textbooks, lectures on pedagogy were prominently included in JCS's Summer Institute programs. Lectures on the teaching of Jewish history influenced Berkowitz's own epistemology. At the 1908 institute David E. Weglein, principal of the Baltimore Normal College and supervisor of that city's Oheb Shalom Religious School, outlined what he believed to be the two central objectives of the teaching of Jewish history in the religious school: the promotion of "Jewish consciousness" – or identity – and the inculcation of morality. Although the language of identity politics would not enter the public discourse until Erik Erikson wrote on the "Identity Society" in the 1950s, Weglein drew upon the analogy of American civics education in the public schools to argue that studying Jewish history, culture, and ritual would enable students "to perform their duties as Jews and Jewesses when they grow into manhood and womanhood."[12]

Weglein asserted that a knowledge of the Jewish past would help students "better understand the position of Jews to-day. For it is only through a knowledge of the occurrences of the past that we can solve successfully the problems which confront us at the present time."[13] A century earlier David Hume recognized the power of memory to invest a person with a sense of belonging and continuity. Weglein's conception of history as a modern-day sculptor of group memory was hardly novel. The publication in America of Heinrich Graetz's *History of the Jews* ten years earlier, by the Jewish Publication Society of America, had illustrated to many American Jews the power of history to bind generations in a way that ritual observance no longer could. Berkowitz believed that the JPS's edition of Graetz's book ranked among the most important milestones in the history of Anglo-Jewish publishing. Graetz succeeded in fostering within his readers Jewish pride and a sense of "religious consciousness," a sentiment that Berkowitz felt was essential to instill in religious school students.[14] "[T]remendous force … inheres in tracing the unfolding of a mighty tradition and the revitalization on the part of the student that, as heirs of that tradition, we are carrying forward the latest phases of the longest continuous and heroic history of any people on earth."[15]

In relation to the second aim, character development, Weglein extensively quoted from James Anthony Froude's *Essays in Literature and History,* published only a few years earlier,[16] including the historian's contention that the interest in history derives, in part, from its function as an object lesson in the forces of good and evil. Looking once more to the public schools for inspiration, Weglein asserted that educators, prefiguring Froude in their recognition of this particular aspect of history's allure, have chiefly employed history as a vehicle for moral inculcation. "Now, if moral education can be derived from the study of history in secular schools, it needs practically no argument to prove that the moral aim should greatly influence the teaching of history in religious schools."[17]

Some of the teachers who read Weglein were probably already using Lady Katie Magnus's *Outlines of Jewish History,* published by JPS in 1890, which doled out a heavy dose of moralizing to its student readers. For others, the elevation of moral inculcation to the level of a primary educational goal represented a departure from an emphasis on rote memorization of facts, figures, and biblical passages. Weglein's treatment of "the moral aim" of education clearly hit a chord with his audience. Speaker after speaker voiced his and her agreement.[18]

Six years earlier Dr. Emil G. Hirsch endorsed a similar pedagogical approach in 1902, at JCS's Sixth Summer Assembly. Hirsch had harsh words for the religious schools:

> [T]he conviction has deepened that our religious schools are a failure; that far from contributing what they should to the rounding out of character and building up of strong men and noble women through the spread of religious influences, they have operated unintentionally in the opposite direction. For much of the current atheism and arrogant agnosticism parading with stolen plumes, no one source is to be held so greatly accountable as the ordinary religious schools.

Hirsch's solution for this lamentable state of affairs included a reorientation of the Jewish history curriculum. He called Jewish history "the store-house from which we can draw power and inspiration." And if his rhetoric were to be taken literally, he would have teachers promote Jewish consciousness and moral behavior in the most blatant and manipulative of ways. Hirsch recommended that

teachers exploit the stories of Jewish suffering in medieval times for all their sentimental and heart-wrenching value.

> It is necessary for us … to bring our children to the understanding that to be a Jew may mean to be a martyr. Being a martyr confers the distinction of being the redeemer of the world, and every Jew in the mediaeval [sic] age was a redeemer. While suffering he sang his sweetest, he thought his deepest, he prayed his most fervent prayers, and believed, notwithstanding the irony of fate, which seems to accentuate the contrary doctrine, that God reigns and the world is good, that it is a privilege to be a man, and a prerogative among men to be one of the missionary people. Tell that story to the children until their hearts bleed and every nerve tingles, and you are safe against the blandishments among the gods and goddesses that throng the streets crying to our children "Forget the old." Tell that story to the young ones and they will go out and know that in these days to be a Jew is, by comparison, an easy matter, and is withal, whether easy or hard, a crown of distinction.[19]

At various JCS institutes many speakers, including Berkowitz himself, echoed Hirsch's concerns,[20] and the association of values education, with the teaching of history, was encouraged in the correspondence school manuals. In her 1915 primer for teaching Bible stories to young children, Ella Jacobs[21] asserted that "[t]he general object of the work of the Religious School is to develop the heart and soul of the children, to form their characters and awaken their minds to the high ideas of God." In Jacobs's opinion biblical history was particularly well suited to achieve this end.[22]

Each chapter of Jacobs's manual outlined a lesson designed for a single class period. The lessons focused on familiar stories from the Hebrew Bible and the Apocrypha. Under the general heading of each lesson, Jacobs presented an "Aim of the Lesson," which involved the inculcation of a moral attribute. The suggested "Point of Contact," and the subsequent summary of the Bible story, were geared to emphasize the moral. For example, the aim of the lesson on the Garden of Eden, predictably enough, was "to show the happiness of obedience, contrasted with the unhappiness of disobedience." Jacobs's account of 3 Genesis, which was designed to be recited verbatim by the students, included the admonition that

> While [Adam and Eve] were good and obedient, they were happy. But, alas! One sad day they disobeyed God, and all in their lives changed … When Eve realized what she had done, she was very sorry. People are often sorry after they have done wrong. Then it is too late to undo it … Each one of us is responsible for his own actions. We must learn to be strong, and to say, 'No,' bravely and emphatically, when we are tempted to do wrong.

Comparing the relationship between Yahweh and the fabled First Couple to that between a parent and child, Jacobs designed a lesson geared to promoting the obedience of religious school students to their parents, thereby justifying submission in the face of established hierarchies. "God was sorry that Adam and Eve had disobeyed Him, but He had to punish them," she wrote. "In a like manner, a parent feels compelled to punish a naughty child, hoping thus to teach him to be good in the future."[23]

Edward Calisch's[24] 1915 primer for middle school Jewish history teachers similarly placed a heavy emphasis on moral indoctrination. His lessons' messages were consistent with those in the Jacobs manual, though somewhat more sophisticated, reflecting the age of the students. For example, the lesson devoted to 1–3 Judges was intended "to teach that the safety and welfare of a community depend upon the establishment and maintenance of law and order, and the recognition of constituted authority,"[25] a message that provided rationale for the obedience and respect for authority ingrained in the younger pupils.

Only the primer aimed at high school teachers, prepared by Martin Meyer (1879-1923)[26] and also published in 1915, dispensed with moral aims for each lesson plan, focusing instead on historical themes or messages. Still, the inculcation of morals was not far from Meyer's mind. In his introduction, he wrote that postbiblical history was just as suitable for values education as biblical history. In particular, he touted its power to "demonstrate the value of Jewish teachings as a basis for conduct and for living under new and ever-changing circumstances." Indeed, Meyer included numerous asides in his text that underscored the ethical message he perceived in the subject matter. For example, he began his lesson on the Spanish expulsion by asserting that "[w]ithin the entire scope of world history, there is no grander example of self-

sacrifice and loyalty to truth than the heroic determination of these 300,000 Jewish exiles …"[27]

The correspondence school manuals, with their detailed lesson plans, not only demonstrate the JCS's promotion of moral inculcation in Jewish history curricula, but also provide an explicit picture of precisely which morals and ethics were taught. Sociologist Peter Berger has written that a society's nomos, or ordering of experience, is almost always taken for granted. Though it is socially constructed, the nomos is typically fused with what are perceived to be the fundamental designs intrinsic to nature. "Nomos and cosmos appear to be co-extensive."[28] The nomos is typically concretized as a set of morals and precepts, which are legitimized through religion, legal codes, and folklore. With the realization that morality is historically and discursively constructed, the two-pronged task of recognition and deconstruction becomes essential to the cultural historian.

Among the most common themes in Jacobs' book were obedience and respect for authority. We have already seen that the presentation of the Garden of Eden story was designed to instill these values. The message was reinforced in the tales of Noah, Abraham, and Moses. When teaching the flood story, for example, the manual advises the teacher to justify the disturbing image of God destroying the world, as a "remedy" for the wickedness of humankind. "While this wholesale destruction of all inhabitants of the earth seems dreadful, justice demanded that widespread sin should have full punishment." As a point of contact, Jacobs suggested that the teacher draw comparisons between the wicked generation of the flood and a child who refuses to wear his overcoat in the rain, or a child who ignores her parents' warnings not to read by a dim light. In both cases, the consequences (i.e., catching a cold and impairing one's vision, respectively), which she terms as the "punishment," are "sure to follow sooner or later." Jacobs can be accused of perpetrating and thus implanting a degree of callousness. "If pain and punishment did not follow sin, people would easily drift into wrongdoing," she wrote. One hardly remembers that God's drastic punishment left nary a human being, save for Noah and his family, to learn the lesson.[29]

But if the examples seem disproportionate to the magnitude of the scenario described in 6–9 Genesis, the sentiment is clear enough. Jacobs' focus was not on the particularity of the sin or its consequences. Rather, she sought to establish a nomos, in which calamity and chaos are interpreted as punishment for misconduct, while right behavior and obedience ensure the maintenance of order. Jacobs's enterprise was fundamentally conservative. Her enlistment of sacred history — as opposed to cosmological mythology or the empirical history associated with the Greeks — to reinforce conventional morality may be viewed as distinctively Jewish.[30] But the larger project amounted to an emblematic use of religion. The political implications of her message were hinted at in her statement that "nor should maudlin sentiment be displayed about seeing sin punished." She went as far as to apply this admonition to a perceived contemporary example of comparable behavior that could lead to moral degeneration: "Nowadays, it often happens that prisoners convicted of the most heinous crimes are made heroes by people with mistaken sentiment and compassion."[31] A similar motivation underpinned many of Calisch's lesson plans.[32]

Other popular themes in the primers included the endorsement of blind faith in God, the importance of self-control, the sacredness of duty and honor, the necessity to subordinate the individual interest to the common good, the advisability of choosing one's friends wisely, the association of luxury with vice, the redemptive power of repentance, and the celebration of freedom. Many of these themes are interrelated; all of them concern and reflect societal behavioral norms and buttress the legitimating forces that gird socially constructed reality, particularly religion. The goal of the manuals was to impact and effect what Berger calls the "primary socialization" of the child. "In primary socialization … the individual's first world is constructed … [T]he world of childhood is so constituted as to instill in the individual a nomic structure in which he may have the confidence that 'everything is right' … If the nomos of a society is to be transmitted from one generation to another, so that the new generation will also come to 'inhabit' the same social world, there will have to be legitimating formulas to answer the questions that, inevitably, will arise in the

minds of the new generation. Children want to know 'why.' Their teachers must supply convincing answers."[33]

American Values as Jewish Values

JCS's German-dominated leadership considered socialization an all-the-more urgent educational goal given the influx of emigrants from Eastern Europe. Supporters of JCS naturally assumed that the immigrants would look to the more acculturated German Jewish community for educational models,[34] and their attitudes toward the East Europeans sometimes dripped with condescension. Frederick De Sola Mendes (1850-1927), the traditional rabbi of New York's Shaaray Tefilla, told a gathering at the Second Summer Assembly that, when working with the children of immigrants, the primary task of a religious school educator must be "removing powerful poisonous agents, which sap the vitality of the religious plant." The "agents" he referred to were "first, a certain amount of crude formalism, ceremonialism, call it superstition, if you will … second, a painful and deep-seated contempt for people and things non-Jewish." Mendes characterized the typical immigrant home as "so-called orthodox," where "the punctilious performance of ritual was made, like charity, to cover a multitude of deviations from the path of integrity and sincerity." Mendes did not exactly blame the immigrants for this predicament. He counseled his audience "not to be hard on our Eastern European brethren; tyrannized, trampled and wronged, their very existence drives them to such lessons." But the immigrants, he argued, particularly the children, must be weaned from these "crude" characteristics if they were to become acculturated. "We are to rear American citizens out of these legacied children of Russia and Austria; we must cultivate in them appreciation for the best in American institutions and American principles."[35]



Frederick De Sola Mendes (1850-1927)
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

Significantly, Mendes, Berkowitz, and other Jewish revivalists did not

confer upon East European Jewish culture a special sense of Jewish authenticity. Nor did they see the Judaism they were promoting as watered-down. But American Judaism had become so sufficiently Protestantized and, indeed, Americanized, that Berkowitz and his colleagues saw no conflict between their desires to acculturate immigrants into American society and to encourage their identification as Jews. To be a "good Jew" was synonymous with being a good American.[36] At JCS's Twelfth Annual Assembly, in 1907, educator Ella Mahler instructed teachers that "if our children have been made to love their ancestors for some beautiful traits these ancestors have displayed … I say we are making better Jews, and when we lead our boys and girls to try and reach the highest standards set up by those Jews of long ago, we are doing our part in making honest, square, loyal American citizens."[37]

Reform Jews, who predominated in the JCS, were particularly adamant in their insistence of a lack of contradiction between their religious heritage and American values. As historian Michael Meyer has observed, the American Reform movement found that its sense of mission dovetailed nicely with its own sense of providence. Jews in America were encouraged to resist compartmentalization by America's lack of an "endemic heritage" and its tradition of religious tolerance and inclusion.

> Puritans, Transcendentalists, Evangelicals, Liberals – all clothed American destiny in religious terms, linking it to their own particular beliefs. All of them perceived God's hand in the shaping of America. So too Isaac Mayer Wise … could believe that Washington and his compatriots were 'chosen instruments in the hands of Providence,' that in its unique environment of liberty the American people would 'work out a new and peculiar destiny.' Judaism, Wise believed, would help shape that destiny – the people chosen of old would play their role as part of a people chosen of new.[38]

One of the most telling ways in which the textbook writers reinforced this sense of shared destiny and lack of conflict between their Jewish and American identities was by drawing parallels between American and Jewish history. To be sure, the use of historical parallels reflected a progressive pedagogical approach to the teaching of history.[39] Nevertheless, the precise parallels and relationships that were drawn

are revealing. Calisch, for example, compared premonarchial Israel with colonial America. "Like the colonies before the Revolution, [the Israelite tribes] were not united, except when they came to fight together against a common enemy." Moreover, the Israelite judge Gideon, who refused to accept the crown upon repulsing Israel's foes, was compared to George Washington. "When George Washington had won the victory over the English army and established freedom for the American people, he refused to be made king and retired quietly to his home in Mount Vernon … Thus, too, Gideon taught the people of Israel the lesson …"[40]

By choosing to compare Gideon with Washington, and by extension, Israel's past with that of the United States, Calisch was trying to evoke within religious school students the same level of emotional connection with Jewish history and heroes that they were conditioned to feel for American history and heroes. However, the implicit message goes far deeper. JCS's leaders harbored an enthusiasm for America that approached that of Isaac M. Wise. They shared Wise's conviction that Judaism and its values were well suited to American values. And they endorsed his suggestion that, in Meyer's words, "American Judaism … was the prototype of American democracy." Calisch might even have drawn inspiration for his analogy between Gideon and Washington from Wise's *History of the Israelitish Nation,* where Wise makes a similar point.[41] Regardless, Calisch's manual shared Wise's Americanist philosophy.

Calisch was not the only writer who drew upon American analogies. In her lesson on Abraham's trek to Canaan, Jacobs compared the patriarch and his family to the Pilgrims' voyage to the "new Canaan." Like Abraham, she wrote, "they left their homes to seek a new country, in which they could secure religious liberty." The story of Hanukkah provided Jacobs with another opportunity to compare the ancient Jews to the American colonists. In this incarnation, it was Judah Maccabee who was compared to Washington. The Hasmonean revolt against forced Hellenization and the usurpation of the high priesthood were transformed into the archetypal liberation struggle, as the children were meant to be left with the message that both the Jewish and American value systems cherish liberty. Liberty was also

the natural theme for the story of the Exodus. There, Jacobs compared Moses both to Abraham Lincoln, the emancipator of the slaves, and to Washington, the liberator of America from the tyranny of British colonialism.[42] It hardly needs to be mentioned that the conception of liberty and autonomy as Jewish values is peculiarly American. Indeed, historian Jonathan Sarna sees evidence of the impact of American ideals on American Jewish institutions and religious practices as early as the Revolutionary period.[43]

With Martin Meyer's manual, the attempt to conflate American values with Jewish values took on a new level of sophistication. Comparisons were still frequently made between American and Jewish history. For example, Ezra the Scribe's religious program was labeled "democratization," and his assembly of the Jews at the Water Gate for a public reading of the Book of the Law was compared to an Evangelical revival meeting. But Meyer did not stop there; he read American values into Jewish history in more subtle ways. The values package that comprised his interpretive lens was quintessentially American, as he championed ideas such as the separation of church and state, democracy, and the tenets of progressivism. His interpretive lens sometimes yielded unconventional interpretations. A prime example was his treatment of the medieval Karaites and Rabbinites. Whereas most textbooks portray Karaite Judaism as a threat to Rabbinic Judaism and make a hero out of Sa'adia Gaon, the best-known rabbinic critic of Karaism, Meyer emphasized the reformation that Rabbinic Judaism underwent in response to the Karaite threat, crediting Karaism with providing an impetus for the Rabbinites to rediscover biblical and philosophical study. The principle that Meyer championed was competition, a hallmark of the American system. In an age of trust-busting, Meyer was particularly sensitive to the drawbacks of monopolies. The lessons extended well beyond the spheres of business or politics. In America, the competitive marketplace encompassed the realms of ideas and beliefs, including religion.[44]

Meyer may have been making an indirect allusion to the relationship between the various Jewish movements in America at that time. He was an unabashed advocate of moderate Reform Judaism. But he made much of the impetus created by the Reformers for the

Orthodox to inaugurate their own reformation. Thus, in Meyer's estimation healthy competition — in the American fashion — can only be beneficial, as religion is compelled to adapt to the needs of the population or risk the defection of its adherents. (Meyer even made a direct reference to the charge that the Reform movement amounted to a modern-day Karaism.)[45]

Another example of Meyer's approach was his championing of separation of powers when discussing the Hasmonean period. He criticized the Hasmonean rulers for assuming both the priestly and juridical functions.[46]

Yet, if the JCS correspondence school manuals endorsed the premise of shared values between Americans and Jews, they did not convey the sense that American Jews felt completely at home in their country. This is not to say that they did not embrace the notion of American exceptionalism, the belief that the United States constituted the most hospitable diaspora that the Jews had ever known. Meyer gushed with optimism about the Jewish encounter with America, which represented for him the culmination of the American Jewish encounter with modernity, a vindication of the experiment of emancipation.[47]

Nevertheless, the upsurge of antisemitism and xenophobia in the late nineteenth century deeply disturbed Meyer. But rather than dwell upon it, he engaged in the rhetoric of boosterism, trying to portray the Jews as loyal and contributing citizens. He underscored examples of Jewish patriotism, such as Asser Levy's insistence on performing the responsibilities of a citizen-soldier in New Amsterdam. The story of how Haym Salomon bailed out the Second Continental Congress, and was never repaid, was also recounted. Meyer made sure to point out that "there was a goodly number of Jews in the armies of the Revolution, one of them, Col. Frank, being an aide-de-camp to General Washington." And, of course, he repeated the oft alleged but completely unsubstantiated rumor that Christopher Columbus was of Marrano stock. Meyer stressed that Jews were an "industrious, active group; and while retaining their religious identity, did not fail to take part in the civic and political affairs of the day."[48]

Meyer's boosterism was matched by that of Berkowitz, who published a JCS American Jewish history syllabus on the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the first Jewish community in colonial America. The syllabus was designed to fill a void; at the time, there was no published comprehensive history of the Jews in America. Berkowitz believed that the popularization of American Jewish history would enable "the sons and daughters of American Israel to get the true perspective by which to apprehend the place of our own generation in time and to understand the part we are to play in this great drama of real life." More specifically, Berkowitz wished to convey both to his fellow Jews and to Americans in general that "every concern of the American citizen had during the past two-hundred and fifty years, elicited the ardent and devoted participation of the Jewish people."[49]

The syllabus was divided into sixteen lessons. He provided general topic headings and discussion subjects, as well as an extensive bibliography. His thematic presentation was innovative in its deviation from the usual chronological approach. And his bibliography provided a great service to the layperson, who had no other comparable study tool. His underlying purpose in publishing the guide – promoting the Jew as model citizen – was everywhere in evidence. One need not look beyond lesson titles like "The Jew as Patriot" or "The Jew as a Factor in the Development of the United States."[50]

There is nothing exceptional about the boosterism practiced by Meyer and Berkowitz. "[Public] schools [were designed] to fashion Americans out of the wretched refuse of teeming shores"[51] and rarely focused on stories designed to bolster ethnic pride. Such tales were left for the home, the supplementary school, or informal educational settings. Moreover, in an environment that privileged the melting-pot ethic, a popular way to foster ethnic identity was to stress how successful the ethnic group had been in becoming fully Americanized and how it contributed to the making of America. Even today, in the age of multiculturalism, minority groups often engage in this mode of storytelling.

In an environment rife with antisemitism, populism, and xenophobia, filiopietism designed to highlight patriotic conduct

was an act of justification directed by the writers both to members of their own group and to the general public. By 1915, when the correspondence school manuals were published, there was much concern among Jews about congressional attempts to stem the tide of immigration. Thus, it comes as no surprise that Meyer labored to counter popular stereotypes about the *Ostjuden.* Eschewing the critical tone adopted earlier by Mendes, which was meant for internal consumption by an acculturated Jewish audience, Meyer stressed the immigrants' education, artisan skills, and self-sufficiency. He also encouraged the settlement of immigrants in fledgling agricultural colonies, which was hardly surprising given JCS's coordination of Jewish education programs in two colonies between 1910 and 1920, and the crucial role played by Berkowitz's brother-in-law, Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf, in the promotion of immigrant dispersal through the establishment of the National Farm School in Doylestown, Pennsylvania.[52]

Conceptions of Jewish History

If Meyer refused to adopt a condescending attitude when writing about East Europeans, bucking an earlier trend among textbook writers, he did agree that that the immigrants' Judaism needed to be modernized.[53] One of the prominent themes of his primer was the internal conflict between the progressive and conservative forces within Judaism. Lest there be any confusion, Meyer made his own liberal disposition clear in his introduction. The forces of progress within Judaism, he argued, had saved the religion from becoming ossified and irrelevant. The climax of his narrative was the story of Moses Mendelssohn and, what Meyer called, the "internal reformation" within Judaism that followed emancipation. Meyer referred to Mendelssohn as the Emancipator of the Jews … a man who, in the face of insuperable obstacles, brought relief and light to his suffering co-religionists … He freed them from the degradation and antagonism that the Jewish Dark Ages had produced. He freed them from intolerance and bigotry, and inaugurated a new era for the Jews.

The granting of citizenship to Western and Central European Jewry and Jewish acculturation were deemed by Meyer to be "the most important epoch in Jewish history since the dispersion."[54]

Meyer's reference to the "Jewish Dark Ages" was clear enough. But in order to make his point explicitly, he constructed his chapter on Mendelssohn so as to use East European intellectual Solomon Maimon as a foil. The result is a casebook demonstration of Froude's claim that history is "a child's box of letters with which we can spell any word we please."[55] Or, to quote R. G. Collingwood, who put the matter more delicately, "history is the re-enactment in the historian's mind of the thought whose history he is studying."[56] While acknowledging that the Lithuanian-Polish Maimon was an "unmistakable genius … dominated by an insatiable thirst for knowledge," Meyer portrayed Maimon as "the direct antithesis" of Mendelssohn. "He led an aimless life wandering over Germany … flitting back and forth between Dessau and Berlin; seeking through conversion to Christianity his better position." The tragedy of Maimon's life as a misfit, in Meyer's mind, was a testament to the inferiority of the Polish Jewish culture of which he was a product. "The vagrant spirit, outlandish manners and jargon of German-Polish-Hebrew typified the low civilization to which persecuted Jews in Poland had sunk." Maimon's "aimless, purposeless existence without definite aim to give it poise stands in marked contrast to the well-organized, systematic, purposeful life of Moses Mendelssohn."[57]

Only thirty-two years later Moses Hadas would offer a radically different assessment of Maimon. "Roguery is itself a manifestation of human excellence," Hadas asserted. "Before the exodus from the Eastern ghetto became organized, only a resourceful and determined man could find his way to the West, and only a singularly gifted one could win a place in the new spiritual environment."[58] Hadas' reassessment of Maimon is indicative of a radical shift in the Zeitgeist. It is not so much that Meyer took a dimmer view of East European Jewish culture. Rather, it seems that while Hadas viewed Maimon's experience as a tale about the struggle to overcome a disadvantaged upbringing, Meyer could not get beyond seeing Maimon as a representative of his breeding. Meyer saw within the Maimon story a potential nightmare scenario when applied to the contemporary East European immigrants. If the eager immigrants failed to refine their uncouth habits, jettison their Jewish jargon, and adopt a "German"

respect for order, not only would they fail to assimilate, but they would reflect poorly on the established Jewish community, perhaps jeopardizing the German Jews' position vis-à-vis gentile America.[59]

Meyer might have had another reason for disliking Maimon. Like many *Ostjuden* in Meyer's day who viewed Reform Judaism as utterly foreign, Maimon was a religious purist. Either one professed one's faith and followed traditional Jewish law rigorously, or one renounced Judaism entirely, as Maimon would ultimately do. As one scholar recently put it, "Maimon took a stance of either-or … He was not a reformer of Judaism. In fact, his arguments for excluding a third possibility between orthodoxy and apostasy would later be used by opponents of the Reform movement."[60]

If Maimon's story was a cautionary tale, Mendelssohn's epitomized, for Meyer, the quest of the Jew in America. He overcame great adversity; mastered the vernacular language; succeeded in business; concentrated on self-improvement; and cultivated social and intellectual contacts with his enlightened gentile neighbors, all while remaining faithful to his Jewish creed. Reflecting the moralizing posture of the correspondence school manuals, Meyer made a lesson of the contrast between Mendelssohn's outer appearance and his inner virtue:

> How many Jews in America, where the opportunities for education are unsurpassed, are dominated by the same motives as Moses Mendelssohn? His repellent personal appearance failed to discourage him. His character was so beautiful, and his personality so charming, that people forgot his physical traits. Mendelssohn ought to be a pattern for every Jewish boy and girl.[61]

Meyer's reflections on Mendelssohn's loyalty to his Judaism should not be minimized. Textbook writers deemed Jewish loyalty a cardinal principle. Although Meyer was an advocate of moderate Reform, and a promoter of acculturation, he had no desire to tear down the religious barriers between Jew and Christian. He condemned Mendelssohn's children for betraying their father's example of "loyalty to his ancestral religion." Whether this denunciation reflected defensiveness in response to those for whom Reform represented a Christianization of Judaism and a stepping stone to conversion is a matter of interpretation. In light of his discussions elsewhere in the primer, it is fair to read within

Meyer's statement a conviction that adherence to Judaism need not be a barrier to success in America. In any event, the established Jewish community, typified by laxity of Sabbath observance and annulment of the dietary laws, needed to cling to some aspect of distinction if it were to maintain its separation from the host culture. Meyer wrote, "Mendelssohn demonstrated a truth that retains its vitality even today, that adherence to Judaism and intercourse with Gentiles are not inconsistent. Each Jew, like Mendelssohn, must reflect credit upon the Jews as one of them; however strong the temptation, renunciation of Judaism must never be made for selfish worldly reasons."[62] Meyer's unfounded insinuation that Maimon converted can therefore be interpreted as yet another attempt to discredit the disagreeable *Ostjude* and contrast him with Mendelssohn.

A potential blurring of the lines between Jew and Christian deeply troubled the JCS. No particular controversy exemplified this better than that over the celebration of Christmas. Christmas was recognized as a legal holiday in all of America's states and territories by 1890. The holiday's major themes – "generosity, family togetherness, peace, goodwill and sharing" – were universally proclaimed civic virtues, which made the holiday tempting for Jews to embrace. But Christmas had never been fully shorn from its religious roots. Sarna suggests that Jewish responses to Christmas have historically fallen into three categories: acceptance, rejection, and accommodation. Those who accepted Christmas chose to downplay its religious significance or "rationalized their actions as based on religious tolerance, respect for Christianity, and the quest for national unity." The rejectionists questioned whether Christmas could ever be truly secularized and tended to associate its celebration among Jews with assimilation. The revival of Hanukkah in the 1870s, including the modification of its customs to include gift giving, can be viewed as an example of accommodation, although Sarna points out that its celebration did not address the root of the problem: the status of Christmas as a national holiday.[63]

Applying Sarna's categories, the JCS encouraged educators to steer an accommodationist course. For example, Martin Meyer's lesson on the Maccabees chastised those Jews who celebrated Christmas, but

eagerly propagandized on behalf of Hanukkah. Ella Jacobs adopted a similar approach in her manual.

> The celebration of Christmas should be discountenanced in Jewish families. Many Jewish people say that they keep Christmas as a social, not a religious holiday. This is self-deception. As Jews we must frown upon all observances of a non-Jewish festival. It is observed by Christians to observe the birthday of their "God," an idea which is utterly absurd from a Jewish standpoint. Christmas trees and Christmas gifts are naturally attractive to children. Explain that when others are lighting the lights on their Christmas trees, Israelites should be thanking God for their own Hanukkah Festival, and should be lighting the Hanukkah lamp and exchanging Hanukkah gifts.

An indication of how relatively recently the elaborated celebration of Hanukkah had become prevalent can be gleaned from Meyer's suggestion to teachers that they brainstorm with their students how Hanukkah might be satisfactorily celebrated.[64]

Meyer's apologia for Hanukkah is interesting on two counts. First, despite his tacit recognition that the elaborated celebration of Hanukkah was a novelty, he tried to mask this by dwelling upon "the value of traditional customs," like lighting the *Hanukiya* (Hanukkah menorah). The tendency of reformers to cast their innovations as returns to tradition in order to give them the cover of legitimacy is a time-honored tactic, not unknown to Jewish history. (The archetypal "tradition"– based reformer, of course, was the Judahite king Josiah, who initiated the Deuteronomistic reforms.)

More intriguing is Meyer's sophisticated anthropological discussion of the origins of both Hanukkah and Christmas, tracing them both back to a primordial winter solstice festival. Meyer invoked *Wissenschaft* scholarship to effectively blunt the allure of Christmas. He hoped that once the holidays were demystified and deconstructed, Jews would see no reason to celebrate the Christian version of a holiday they already possessed. But his argument unintentionally exposed the weakness of the accommodationist approach; it didn't address the pervasiveness of Christmas in the civil culture and the holiday's contemporary associations.[65]

Wissenschaft des Judentums was a primary tool in the Reform movement's bid to be seen as restorationist.[66] Meyer understood this

well and endorsed Reform innovations and the scholarly methodology that girded them. But unlike the revival of Hanukkah, reforms like the de-Zionization of the prayer book and the abandonment of the dietary laws had little or no basis in classical tradition. It was the reinstatement of rabbinic authority to institute wide-ranging reforms, designed to allow Judaism to adapt to new political and social realities, that nineteenth-century Jewish studies scholars legitimated.

Meyer's presentation of Moses Mendelssohn as the spiritual father of "the Jewish Reformation" presented a problem that he could not completely ignore. Mendelssohn remained an observant Jew and had not abandoned rituals that appeared to be outdated and meaningless. "As long as we have not yet achieved complete certainty," Mendelssohn wrote, "we must, in regards to matters of practice, adhere to the principles according to which we were brought up and which we have received from other men worthy of our respect." Mendelssohn believed the Jewish law "was based upon the eternal truths of reason or remind and awaken one to the contemplation of them …" When Mendelssohn did advocate ritual reform, such as his endorsement of delayed burial, he built his case with halakhic arguments and rabbinic sources, as well as appeals to reason and contemporary medical literature. The ritual innovation that Mendelssohn had sought had a measure of precedence in the tradition.[67]

Meyer wasn't oblivious to the seeming contradiction. To his credit, he acknowledged that "Mendelssohn was in no wise a reformer in the modern use of the word. He carefully observed all the old forms and ceremonies, though his philosophic viewpoint was greatly influenced by the popular deistic thought of the day." Meyer reconciled the inconsistency by describing men like Abraham Geiger and Israel Jacobson as Mendelssohn's spiritual heirs, much the same way in which the midrash portray's Rabbi Akiba's relationship with Moses.[68] Mendelssohn, wrote Meyer, "paved the way … for movements more far-reaching than he could have anticipated."[69]

Meyer's co-option of Mendelssohn allowed him to assert the importance of grounding the reformist enterprise in tradition, an essential endeavor for a man who elsewhere in the same text contended that "the past is the only solid basis for the future. A people which

disregards its past is like a ship broken away from its moorings." In fact, much of his presentation of ancient and medieval history was designed to achieve this purpose. We have already seen that Meyer considered the ongoing struggle between progressive and conservative forces to be one of the great themes of Jewish history. His text capitalized on every opportunity he could think of to make his point, ranging from the career of Ezra the Scribe – "the founder of modern Judaism" – who Meyer believed founded the synagogue and edited and published the Torah, to that of fourteenth-century French Jewish philosopher Gersonides (Levi ben Gerson) – "a scientist rather than a theologian" – who invented "the first practical telescope, three centuries before Galileo" and "set out with no preconceived opinions, caring little if his conclusions seemed to contradict the Torah." Meyer contrasted Gersonides favorably with the philospher's German contemporary, Asher ben Yekhiel (Asheri), who "exercised a harmful censorship upon the life of his people, as he held the obscurantist position that secular learning was unnecessary and even wrong." Meanwhile, Benedict Spinoza, the rationalist philosopher who was excommunicated as a heretic in 1656, was recovered and restored to the Jewish fold as "the very embodiment of Jewish ideals of life." Meyer wrote that while "Spinoza rejected Judaism; unconsciously he was its most loyal adherent."

Meyer also painted a dreary picture of Judaism during the "Jewish Dark Ages." Joseph Caro's *Shulkhan Arukh* "threatened to throttle [Judaism's] ability to grow and expand … In no small measure did this new code contribute to the darkness of the succeeding ages in which the Jewish soul seemed threatened with extinction." The Kabbalah was "a strange combination of religious philosophy, esoteric speculation, exaggerated spirituality, mysticism and later, necromancy … an essentially irrational and unintelligible religion," a perversion of Judaism, whose popularity could be traced "to the temporary gloom of Jewish misfortunes." His bleak portrait of pre-Emancipation Judaism was tactical in that it made Mendelssohn and the reformers seem that much more revolutionary, indeed, Messianic. "Jewish learning was at its lowest ebb" prior to Mendelssohn. His "mighty work broke the shackles which bound Jewish life."[70]

Of course, the groups most central to Meyer's thesis, excepting the reformers themselves, were the Pharisees and their successors, the classical rabbis. For Meyer, it was essential to illustrate that the rabbis were innovators, reformers who utterly reinterpreted Judaism, saving it from ossification and decay. Recalling the terminology he used in his introduction, he specifically identified the Pharisees as "Progressives," and their rivals, the Sadducees, as "Conservatives." The Sadducees were "strict constructionists" of Torah law, he wrote, whereas "the Pharisees were democratic." The Pharisaic sage Hillel the Elder, who enacted the *pruzbul* and enunciated "the Golden Rule," was lauded for his "liberal views."

Meyer's conception of Jewish history as a struggle between progressive and conservative forces was hardly unique. In fact, his periodization and many of the historical details in his primers were culled (and, at times, embellished) from the pages of Heinrich Graetz's *History of the Jews,* as published by the Jewish Publication Society (1891-1898). Meyer also seems to have derived inspiration from the scholarship of Maurice Harris, rabbi of Temple Israel in New York and a frequent faculty member at JCS's summer assemblies. Harris was fond of comparing Reform leaders like Jacobson and Geiger to Yohanan ben Zakai and his colleagues at Yavneh.[71]

Meyer's equation of Reform with progress and the near absence of any discussion of Jewish ritual observance in any of the manuals may have been responsible for their limited appeal. Calisch and Jacobs, who aimed their books at the teachers of younger grades, spared no attempt to use their subject matter to encourage values education, but they seldom mentioned ceremonies and customs. For example, Jacob's manual, which focused on the Genesis and Exodus stories, omitted treatment of the Torah's explicit discussions of Sabbath observance, circumcision, *kashruth,* and prayer, not to mention civil law and the laws pertaining to the construction of the Tabernacle. It is useful to remember that in some of the more traditional schools, young children began their biblical study with Leviticus, rather than Genesis, underscoring the focus of biblical education on teaching *mitzvot* rather than morality.

Although the JCS would ultimately be incorporated into the Reform-affiliated North American Federation of Temple Brotherhoods,

Berkowitz never envisioned the organization as denominationally exclusive. Yet its avid defense of Reform Judaism, and its implicit support for a moderate Reform agenda, probably limited JCS's appeal and may have contributed to its failure as a Jewish educational organization. What would a traditionally sympathetic congregation make of a guidebook that included the following question in its lesson on Hanukkah: "The sense of defilement on the part of the Jews so persecuted keeps them loyal to the ideal of purity. Eating pork symbolizes this to the old Jew. What symbolizes it to the modern Jew?"[72]

One area where the society appeared to make concessions to more traditional sensibilities was on the subject of Zionism. Perhaps this was because Zionism divided the society's leadership as well as the rank and file. JCS supporters' public struggles with Zionism at the summer assemblies exposed the deep ideological rifts that existed within the Reform movement and the American Jewish community as a whole. Berkowitz and Rosenau, both opponents of political Zionism, tried to transcend the controversy and presented JCS as a big tent where both Zionists and anti-Zionists would feel welcome. Ultimately, however, the society got off the fence and adopted a moderately pro-Zionist stance in its educational literature.[73]

The sparring began as early as the Second Summer Assembly, in 1898, when Maurice Harris launched into an *ad hominem* attack on Zionists during a lecture otherwise devoted to the Crusades. Comparing Christian crusaders to modern Zionists, Harris not only tarred them with the brush of zealotry, but insinuated that modern, Western Judaism had transcended the religion's more primitive, nationalistic elements, of which Zionism was a manifestation. Referring to Zionism pejoratively as "this craze for Palestine," Harris rebuffed the movement, exclaiming that "our Zion … is not limited to one place; let us take that fact with us as we march through life."[74]

Berkowitz sat quietly through the spirited debate that followed, but in a 1903 lecture entitled "The Purpose of Jewish Chautauqua," he almost begged audience members not to let their ideological differences tear the society apart.[75] The summer assemblies continued to provide a platform for a multiplicity of views on Zionism. Considering how

divided the society was on the subject, it seems significant that Berkowitz would choose Meyer, an avowed Zionist, to author the postbiblical history teacher's guide. Meyer's views were well known to Berkowitz; the San Francisco rabbi presented a sympathetic portrait of the Zionist movement in an "Illustrated Address on Palestine" at the Twelfth Summer Assembly in 1908.

Meyer did not conceal his Zionist sympathies in the manual. He commended Zionists for their "splendid work in developing the resources of Palestine," their "remarkable results in the cultivation of the Hebrew language," and asserted that "the practical work in Palestine … has been of worldwide significance and lasting benefit to Judaism" because it instilled "self-respect" and "pride" into the hearts of Jews everywhere. Meyer's support for Zionism was not entirely unbridled. In an effort to placate the anti-Zionists, Meyer allowed that "so far as a comprehensive solution to the Jewish problem is concerned, Zionism is little short of an absurdity" and stopped short of advocating for an independent Jewish state. Nevertheless, his sympathies were clear, and his lesson on modern Palestine was likely an anathema to anti-Zionist stalwarts.[76]

Why had Berkowitz and Rosenau decided to publish educational material that planted the society firmly within the Zionist camp? It is tempting to see their concession as emblematic of a more general stirring within the Reform movement. Many of the Reform movement's most outspoken early Zionist advocates, including Max Heller, Emil Hirsch, Gustav Guttheil, and Berkowitz's brother-in-law, Joseph Krauskopf, were heavily involved in the JCS. But the society was also supported by rabid anti-Zionists and the ambivalent. Classical Reformers who eschewed expressions of Jewish nationalism still controlled the Reform movement into the 1920s, despite high-profile conversions to Zionism like those of Bernard Felsenthal and Krauskopf. But the expressions of support for Zionism from the nascent Conservative movement, as well as the newfound respectability conferred upon the movement by the ascendancy of Louis Brandeis to the leadership of the Federation of American Zionists, compelled the society to take Zionism seriously.[77]

Perhaps Berkowitz and Rosenau realized that equivocation on Zionism was increasingly untenable, while support for the practical

accomplishments of the Zionist pioneers provided a comfortable middle ground between the political Zionists and the classical Reformers.[78] Practical Zionism enjoyed the sympathy of the East European Jewish masses and proved less controversial than Herzlian statism to the Jewish establishment. Indeed, even Jacob Schiff, who denounced political Zionism as a chimera from a JCS podium in 1909,[79] purchased shares in the Jewish Colonial Trust and offered financial assistance to multiple projects aimed to support agricultural and educational endeavors in Palestine.

The JCS Correspondence School: Anatomy of a Failure

With the textbooks printed and the faculty assembled, Berkowitz and Rosenau expressed optimism that the correspondence school would thrive. Yet almost from the beginning the school was beset with problems. Most serious was its inability to attract a committed student body. Enrollment grew steadily between 1912 and 1917. In January 1915, it stood at one hundred and fifty-five students; by September 1917 three hundred and forty-four students were listed on the roster. But these statistics are misleading, as many students were inactive. As early as May 1912, a report to the JCS board about the correspondence school enrollment distinguished students who were doing "earnest, conscientious work" from the rest of the student body. Efforts were made to "eliminate the dead timber" and inactive students were sent periodic reminder letters. But inactive students continued to greatly outnumber active students on the correspondence school roster. Out of the three hundred and forty-four students enrolled in September 1917, only thirty-seven were active.[80]

Concern compelled Rosenau to send a survey to the student body in the fall of 1917 ascertaining the reasons for the high rate of inactivity. Students cited stress related to World War I and a general lack of time. An effort to reorganize the school was made in 1918–19. In an address to the JCS board on January 8, 1919, Rosenau affirmed his conviction that the correspondence school had a real *raison d'etre.* He also expressed continued faith in the correspondence method of instruction. He tried to put a positive face on the correspondence school by highlighting its achievements, noting that eighty-six certificates of completion had been granted, and citing the production

of needed textbooks. But he also acknowledged what he termed an enrollment problem. Many of the reasons he cited reflected weaknesses endemic to the Jewish education field. Teachers who were poorly paid or working as volunteers were disinclined to spend the time and money on professional development. As a matter of fact, the only students who enrolled in the correspondence school had their tuition covered by their synagogues and temples. Many religious school instructors were public school teachers for whom teaching religious school was a means of supplementing their income. These teachers had "little time for leisure and extension work." Rosenau also cited a "preoccupation" with activities related to the war and "concomitant disturbances of the mind resulting in an inability to concentrate on specific intellectual endeavors."[81]

But Rosenau's proposed remedies suggest that the correspondence school also suffered from a lack of funds and poor management. Rosenau all but admitted that poor oversight on his part might have been partially to blame. More communication was needed between the school and the students. The grading procedure was also problematic. Students were frustrated by the lack of written feedback and guidance on their exam papers, which were all the more important given the lack of direct instructor contact.

The root of the correspondence school's problems was largely financial. Unpaid tuition dues were an ongoing headache.[82] Moreover, Berkowitz and Rosenau never succeeded in following up their original fund-raising effort. They grossly underestimated yearly operating costs. By 1916 expenditures were far exceeding receipts. An austerity budget adopted for 1917 made no allowances for advertising or the publication of new books. Thus, when Rosenau suggested in his 1919 address that the school increase publicity through advertisements in the Anglo-Jewish press, promotional literature to be sent to every teacher and religious school in the United States, and promotional tours to communities large and small, he was whistling in the wind. Nor could JCS realistically hope that financial relief could be sought from the religious schools. To be sure, they sorely needed qualified teachers. But given their tight operating budgets, Rosenau's suggestion that the JCS "communicate with congregations, asking them to raise salaries of

teachers where salaries are paid, or to grant small honorari, as a token of appreciation where extension work in Correspondence school is done successfully by teacher students" was well intentioned but probably unrealistic.[83]

Among Rosenau's more practical suggestions was that the JCS seek out organizational or institutional partners, who would, at the very least, encourage their members to enroll in the correspondence school courses and at best co-sponsor the school. JCS had seriously explored a partnership with HUC as early as 1912. But after flirting with the idea, HUC's board of governors decided to pass. Rosenau then looked to the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods and the National Council of Jewish Women, hoping to "enroll mothers as students." Rosenau suggested that JCS appeal to a market of Jewishly illiterate parents who despaired at their inability to supervise their children's learning.[84]

In the end, however, JCS's board of directors charted a different course. In an effort to boost enrollment, they waved the five dollar matriculation fee, requiring students or their sponsoring institutions to pay only a one dollar enrollment fee. In addition, a donation of one thousand dollars was enlisted from Berkowitz's son-in-law, Eugene Reefer, for the establishment of an honorarium program. Up to sixteen students would be selected annually to receive honoraria of twenty-five dollars each upon successful completion of three correspondence school courses. The program was to be piloted in the Philadelphia area, where the society's field secretary, Jeannette Goldberg, would meet regularly with the students and oversee their instruction. It was hoped that if the honorarium program proved successful, the congregations and communities of the awardees would be "easily persuaded to undertake the continuance of these payments as remuneration to the students who have taken the courses. In this manner, the congregations would raise their standards by instituting salaries, which only those could receive who had taken our courses of study and presented our certificates."[85]

The honorarium program was initiated in 1919. In conjunction with the local YMHA, eight honoraria were offered to students in Trenton, New Jersey, who would attend a teacher's institute. Awards were also granted to students in Wilmington, Delaware, who initiated

a study circle at their YMHA-YWHA. Berkowitz and Rosenau were so elated by the cooperation of the Ys that they appointed a committee to study the feasibility of a more formal partnership. Alas, the initial flurry of activity and renewed excitement gave way to the reappearance of the perennial problems: financial woes, poor oversight, and a lack of stick-to-it-iveness on the part of students. The retirement of both Berkowitz and Rosenau, the most enthusiastic champions of the correspondence school, from the leadership positions of the JCS in October 1922 may have sunk any further efforts at revival.[86]

A measure of the more general atmosphere of disillusion and despair that pervaded the society during this period was Berkowitz's flirtation, in 1921, with changing the society's name to the National Jewish Educational Association or the American Jewish Educational Association. The board ultimately shot down the idea, wisely seeing little point in advertising old wine in new flasks.[87] The society would reinvigorate itself through a redefinition of its mission: rather than focusing on Jewish education, JCS put its energies into the education of non-Jews about Judaism.[88] Efforts to find institutional partners also eventually succeeded. JSC was incorporated into the North American Federation of Temple Brotherhoods in 1939. But the eleventh-hour attempt to revive the correspondence school ended in failure, and the school was phased out.

JCS's efforts to raise awareness about the lack of qualified religious school instructors and appropriate teaching materials were not a complete failure. Better-funded operations, like the Union of American Hebrew Congregations' Department of Synagog [sic] and School Extension stepped into the breach, with more consistent visits to far-flung communities and handsomely designed textbooks. In addition a network of Hebrew teachers' colleges and bureaus of Jewish education arose in Jewish population centers. Ironically, these new endeavors may have contributed to the decline of the correspondence school and JCS's more general Jewish educational efforts.

Conclusion

Why did the JCS fail in its mission to become the Jewish community's premier organization for the advancement of Jewish education? Conceived and brought to life in the same environment and by the same community of Jewish leaders who were responsible for building so much of the communal and organizational infrastructure that exists to this very day, why had the JCS failed to live up to its founders' hopes? Some partial and interrelated answers present themselves from this research: the failure of the JCS to attract the Eastern European immigrants and the desire of the immigrants to build their own educational institutions; the failure to conceptualize and promote an educational philosophy and ideological orientation to Torah, Jewish ritual practice, and Jewish history that could transcend the differences between Reform and traditionalist camps; a perennial lack of financial resources; and the failure of the Chautauqua vision to take hold in an assimilationist, largely apathetic Jewish community.

Despite the failures, however, the JCS's teacher institutes and correspondence schools were significant in that they were precursors to more successful experiments in Jewish education, teacher training, and textbook publication. Moreover, for Jews today who find themselves confronting some of the same challenges that faced Berkowitz and his colleagues, the experiment and the educational materials it produced elucidate much about an acculturated community that was struggling to define a viable educational agenda, which would produce a thoroughly Americanized generation with strong Jewish values and a rooted sense of Jewish identity. Educational leaders will not find a blueprint for contemporary educational initiatives. But their thinking would no doubt be enriched by the historical hindsight that the challenges they face are by no means unprecedented and the solutions they reach for by no means unique.

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Notes

[1] Berkowitz's rabbinical career included positions at Congregation Sha'are Shomayim, Mobile, Alabama (1883-1888) and Congregation B'nai Jehudah in Kansas City, Missouri (1888-1892). In 1892 he accepted a position at Rodeph Sholem in Philadelphia, where he spent the last thirty years of his career.

[2] Max Berkowitz, *The Beloved Rabbi: An Account of the Life and Works of Henry Berkowitz* (New York: MacMillan, 1932), 189. The appendix of this volume contains an account of the origins and activities of JCS by Henry Berkowitz.

[3] Lilienthal was a renowned educator in Eastern Europe before he immigrated to the United States in 1845. He was best known for his attempt to set up a network of state Jewish schools in czarist Russia between 1841 and 1844. A few years after arriving in the United States, he served as rabbi for a short-lived union of German congregations in New York City and also ran an all-day Jewish school. In 1855 he accepted a position as rabbi of Congregation Bene Israel, Cincinnati, Ohio, where he served until his death.

[4] Max Berkowitz, *The Beloved Rabbi,* 127–8.

[5] By 1906, due largely to budgetary considerations, the assemblies became more limited in both scope and duration. Regional assemblies took on some of the educational work originally carried out at the organization-wide assemblies.

[6] "Minutes of the Jewish Chautauqua Society, 1906-1939," January 30, 1910, Microfilm no. 143, American Jewish Archives.

[7] Rosenau served as rabbi of Temple Israel, Omaha, Nebraska (1889 to1892). He then accepted a position at Congregation Oheb Shalom in Baltimore, Maryland, where he spent the remainder of his career. He retired from the active rabbinate in 1939 but continued on as rabbi emeritus until his death.

[8] Max Berkowitz, *The Beloved Rabbi,* 167–9; "Minutes of JCS, 1906–1939," October 17, 1911.

[9] Although contracts with the textbook writers stipulated that they would be responsible for grading the first one hundred papers received, it soon became clear that the society would require the services of a full-time grader. Rabbi Eli Mayer, Berkowitz's associate rabbi at Congregation Rodeph Shalom in Philadelphia, filled this position from 1913 until his departure for a pulpit in Albany, New York, in 1919. Berkowitz's new associate rabbi, Harry Ettelson, succeeded Mayer. "Minutes of JCS, 1906-1939," [date illegible] 1913; May 17, 1919.

[10] Max Berkowitz, *The Beloved Rabbi,* 171; "Minutes of JCS, 1906-1939," January 16, 1912-November 17, 1914.

[11] See Berkowitz's curriculum in his *The New Education in Religion* (Philadelphia: Jewish Chautauqua Society, 1913), 111–28. See also Henry Berkowitz, "Closing Address: Second Assembly," *Second Summer Assembly of the Jewish Chautauqua Society: Official Account* (Philadelphia: Jewish Chautauqua Society, 1898), 8; and Isaac M. Wise's oration in the same proceedings (6). Wise voiced their position colorfully: "There are many infidels in the country who know a great deal more about Judaism than Jews themselves do; the reason is because they have not studied

and read and learnt their history; consequently the Chautauqua leads us to better acquaintanceship with the Jewish religion and history. And every intelligent Israelite must confess that it is a school in the right direction."

[12] David Weglein, "The Teaching of History in the Religious School," *Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Summer Assembly* (Philadelphia: Jewish Chautauqua Society, 1908), 77-8.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] The Graetz translation became the centerpiece of JCS's Jewish history curriculum for its reading circles. JCS published four course books, prepared by Richard Gottheil and Maurice Harris. For a discussion of the impact of the Graetz translation in America, see Jonathan Sarna, *JPS: The Americanization of Jewish Culture,* 1888-1988 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 34.

[15] Henry Berkowitz, *Intimate Glimpses of the Rabbi's Career* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1921), 63.

[16] James Anthony Froude, *Essays on Literature and History* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co, 1906).

[17] David Weglein, "The Teaching of History in the Religious School," 78.

[18] *Ibid.* 83-4.

[19] Emil G. Hirsch, "The Jewish Religious School," *Record of the Sixth Summer Assembly of the Jewish Chautauqua Society* (Philadelphia: Jewish Chautauqua Society, 1902), 18-20.

[20] See, for example, Henry Berkowitz, "Personality in Teaching," *The Tenth Assembly* (Philadelphia: Jewish Chautauqua Society, 1907), 19.

[21] Jacobs was an educator and communal leader in Philadelphia. She served as principal of the Warner School and on the board of the Jewish Publication Society.

[22] Ella Jacobs, *Methods of Teaching the Primary Grades: Course A: Foreword* (Philadelphia: Jewish Chautauqua Society, 1915), 8.

[23] *Ibid.* 6-7.

[24] A distinguished liturgist, Calisch served for four years as a rabbi in Peoria, Illinois, before assuming the pulpit of Beth Avodah, Richmond, Virginia, where he spent the remainder of his career.

[25] Edward Calisch, *Methods of Teaching – Jewish History* (Philadelphia: Jewish Chautauqua Society, 1915), 11.

[26] Meyer served as rabbi of Congregation Beth Emeth, Albany, New York, (1902-1906) and Temple Israel in Brooklyn (1906-1910). He then accepted a position as rabbi of Temple Emanu-El in San Francisco, where he served until his death. Meyer was also a scholar in Semitics and served as a lecturer at the University of California from 1911 until his death.

[27] Martin Meyer, *Methods of Teaching – Post Biblical History* (Philadelphia: Jewish Chautauqua Society, 1915), 17, 141.

[28] Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 25.

[29] Jacobs, *Methods of Teaching: Course A:* "Lesson VIII," 3-9; "Lesson X," 3-12; Course B: "Lesson IX," 3-10.

[30] See Berger, *The Sacred Canopy,* 35.

[31] Jacobs, *Methods of Teaching – The Primary Grades: Course A:* "Lesson VIII," 4, 8.

[32] See, for example, his handling of David's flight from Saul in I Samuel, chapters 21–31, in Calisch, *Methods of Teaching – Jewish History,* 15–57, 149.

[33] Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 135–6; Berger, Sacred Canopy, 30-1.

[34] Despite the hopes of its leaders, the JCS never emerged as a central force in the education of the immigrants due to a lack of funds and the immigrants' preference for their own self-help organizations and educational institutions. The former doomed a well-meaning proposal at the 1908 annual meeting to translate JCS's course materials into Yiddish. It was also responsible for ending JCS's most successful foray into immigrant education: the organization's coordination of Jewish education programs for East European Jewish farm colonies in New Jersey and North Dakota between 1910 and 1920. The farm schools succeeded in assimilating the education of the immigrants into JCS's previously articulated agenda of reaching out to small, disconnected Jewish communities. "Resolutions," *Thirteenth Annual Summer Assembly* (Philadelphia: Jewish Chautauqua Society, 1909), 149; Peggy Kronsberg Pearlstein, "Understanding Through Education: One Hundred Years of the Jewish Chautauqua Society, 1893-1993 (George Washington University, 1993), 202-22.

[35] F. De Sola Mendes, "Some Phenomena of Institutional Teaching," *Second Summer Assembly,* 30-31.

[36] On American Jewish syncretism, see Jonathan Sarna, "The Cult of Synthesis in American Jewish Culture," *Jewish Social Studies* 5:1-2 (1998–99): 52–79.

[37] Ella Mahler, "The Teaching of Ethics in the Religious School," *Twelfth Annual Assembly,* 90.

[38] Michael A. Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1988), 226–7.

[39] See John Dewey, *The School and Society/The Child and the Curriculum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 150-9.

[40] Calisch, *Methods of Teaching – Jewish History,* 14, 42.

[41] Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity,* 239–40.

[42] Jacobs, *Methods of Teaching – the Primary Grades: Course A: "Lesson X," 7; Course B: "Lesson XI,"* 4.

[43] See Jonathan Sarna, "The Revolution in the American Synagogue," in Karen Mittleman, ed, *Creating American Jews: Historical Conversations about Identity* (Philadelphia: National Museum of American Jewish History and Hanover, N.H.: Brandeis/University Press of New England, 1998), 14-21.

[44] Meyer, *Methods of Teaching – Post-Biblical History: First Part,* 59, 64; *Second Part,* 26.

[45] *Ibid.*, *Second Part,* 194–95, 202–03. Interestingly, Meyer's tolerance was not extended to the so-called radical wing of his own movement. He called them "extremists" for advocating the abolition of circumcision and the celebration of the Sabbath on Sunday. Similarly, he took a dim view of the emerging Conservative movement. In a gross miscalculation he pronounced its birth to be a stillborn. Perhaps its relative ideological proximity to his own point of view, as opposed to Orthodoxy, made it more threatening.

[46] *Ibid.*, *First Part,* 88.

[47] *Ibid.*, *Second Part,* 215.

[48] *Ibid.*, *Second Part,* 212-15; On the early development of American Jewish historiography, see Robert Liberles, "Postemancipation Historiography and the Jewish Historical Societies of America and England," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 10 (1994), 45–65.

[49] Henry Berkowitz, *American Jewish History* (Philadelphia: Jewish Chautauqua Society, 1905), 3.

[50] *Ibid.*, 5–9.

[51] Neil Postman, *The End of Education: Redefining the Value of School* (New York: Random House, 1996), 14. On the impact of the public schools on East European Jewish immigrants, see Stephan Brumberg's *Going to America, Going to School* (New York: Praeger, 1986).

[52] Meyer, *Methods of Teaching – Post-Biblical History: Second Part,* 214.

[53] For a discussion of the treatment of East European Jews in late-nineteenth-and early-twentieth-century textbooks, see the second chapter of my dissertation, "Representations of Self and Other in American Jewish History and Social Studies Schoolbooks: An Exploration of the Changing Shape of American Jewish Identity" (Brandeis University, 2002).

[54] Meyer, *Methods of Teaching – Post-Biblical History: Second Part,* 182–83, 189.

[55] James Anthony Froude, *Short Studies on Great Subjects,* vol. I (London: Longmans, Green, 1894), 21.

[56] Quoted in Edward Hallett Carr, *What is History?* (New York: Vintage, 1961), 24.

[57] Meyer, *Methods of Teaching – Post-Biblical History: Second Part,* 183–4.

[58] Moses Hadas, ed, *Solomon Maimon: An Autobiography* (New York: Schocken, 1975), ix-xiv.

[59] On the image of East European Jews in American Jewish textbooks during the immigration years, see Jonathan Krasner, "Representations of Self and Other in American Jewish History and Social Studies Schoolbooks, 77–108.

[60] Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity,* 20.

[61] Meyer, *Methods of Teaching – Post-Biblical History: Second Part,* 178.

[62] *Ibid*., 181.

[63] Jonathan Sarna, "Is Judaism Compatible with American Civil Religion? The Problem of Christmas and the 'National Faith,'" in Rowland Sherrill, ed., *Religion and the Life of the Nation* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 153. On the evolution of Christmas, see William B. Waits, *The Modern Christmas in America* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), chaps. 1-5; J. M. Golby and A. M. Purdue, *The Making of Modern Christmas* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986); and John R. Gillis, *A World of their Own Making* (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 101–04.

[64] Meyer, *Methods of Teaching – Post-Biblical History: First Part,* 81-2; Jacobs, *Methods of Teaching the Primary Grades: Course A:* Lesson XVI, 8-9.

[65] Meyer, *Methods of Teaching – Post-Biblical History:* First Part, 81–2.

[66] For background on *Wissenschaft* and history, see Ismar Schorsch, *From Text to Context: The Turn to History in Modern Judaism* (Hanover, N.H.: Brandeis/ University Press of New England, 1994).

[67] Michael Meyer, *The Origins of the Modern Jew* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1967), 50–1; Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity,* 14–15.

[68] B.T. Menakhot 29b; see also Louis Ginzberg's rendering in *The Legends of the Jews,* Vol. III (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1911), 114–15.

[69] Meyer, *Methods of Teaching – Post-Biblical History: Second Part,* 190–91.

[70] *Ibid*., *First Part,* 45, 55–7; *Second Part,* 72-73, 121, 158–60, 166–9.

[71] See, for example, Maurice Harris, "Yochanan ben Zakkai and his Time," *Second Summer Assembly,* 15.

[72] Meyer, *Methods of Teaching – Post-Biblical History: First Part,* 79.

[73] On pro-Zionists within the Reform camp prior to the 1937 Columbus Platform, see Jonathan Sarna, "Converts to Zionism in the American Reform Movement," *Zionism and Religion* (1998), 188–203; Michael Meyer, "American Reform Judaism and Zionism: Early Efforts at Ideological Rapprochement," *Studies in Zionism* 7 (1983): 49–64; Howard Greenstein, *Turning Point: Zionism and Reform Judaism* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1981).

[74] Maurice Harris, "The Crusades," *Second Summer Assembly,* 37.

[75] Henry Berkowitz, "The Purpose of Jewish Chautauqua," *Sixth Summer Assembly,* 7.

[76] Meyer, *Methods of Teaching – Post-Biblical History: Second Part,* 204–06.

[77] On Brandeis and the American Zionist movement, see Melvin Urofsky, *American Zionism: From Herzl to the Holocaust* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press, 1975); and Allon Gal, *Brandeis of Boston* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980). For a different approach, see Ben Halpern's classic essay "The Americanization of Zionism," in *American Jewish History* (September 1979), 15–32.

[78] On a personal level, Berkowitz and Rosenau continued to oppose Zionism even after the British government issued the Balfour Declaration in November 1917. Both rabbis affixed their signatures to an open letter to President Woodrow Wilson opposing the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine on March 4, 1919. The letter, which three-hundred prominent American Jews signed, was published under the headline, "Protest to Wilson against Zionist State: Representative Jews Ask Him to Present it to the Peace Conferences," in the *New York Times,* March 5, 1919.

[79] Jacob H. Schiff, "How to Solve the Problem of the Jew in America," *Thirteenth Summer Assembly,* 145.

[80] "Minutes of JCS, 1906-1939," May 20, 1912-October 16, 1917.

[81] *Ibid.*, January 8, 1919.

[82] In May 1916 the Education Society of Boston, which had agreed to defray the tuition costs of sixty-eight local teachers, suddenly announced that it could not meet its financial obligations and offered JCS a measly twenty-five dollars. Subsequent efforts to contact the Education Society were unsuccessful, and the account was finally closed the following November.

[83] "Minutes of JCS, 1906-1939," October 16, 1916; January 8, 1919.

[84] *Ibid.*, January 16, 1912; January 8, 1919.

[85] *Ibid.*, February 19, 1919.

[86] *Ibid.*, March 19, 1919; May 17, 1919; April 21, 1920.

[87] *Ibid.*, January 14, 1921; April 20, 1921.

[88] Gentile-directed education began as early as 1909 with Rabbi Julian Morgenstern's lectures at the Summer School of the South at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. According to Selma Berrol, even growth in this direction remained slow because of JCS's persistent financial woes. See Berrol's entry on the Jewish Chautauqua Society (misspelled "Chatauqua") in Michael N. Dobkowski, ed., *Jewish American Voluntary Organizations* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 206–12.



Abba Hillel Silver signing books at a UAHC convention in Toronto in 1957.
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

The Jewish State in Abba Hillel Silver's Overall World View

Zohar Segev

Introduction

Abba Hillel Silver's rise as a leader of American Judaism between 1938 and 1948, the decade that saw both the Holocaust and the struggle to establish the state of Israel, constituted an outstandingly significant change in American Zionism and in the world Zionist movement. Careful examination shows clearly that Abba Hillel Silver and his political associates were intensively involved in the historic events taking place at the time in the Zionist movement, in the land of Israel, in the United States, and in world affairs.

This article focuses on the overall political and ideological outlook of Silver, and the connection between his Zionist activity and his overall world view. Such an examination is especially important in light of the scale of Silver's involvement in the processes that led to the establishment of the state of Israel, as well as his outstanding contribution to shaping the political and organizational structure of American Judaism in general and the American Zionist movement in particular.

The centrality of Abba Hillel Silver in those processes has inclined American and Israeli researchers alike to stress this special aspect of Silver's biography and has focused most research on Silver within a relatively brief time, from 1943 until 1948, when Israel became a state. This period is the core of the pioneering biography written by Marc L. Raphael on Silver. A similar picture emerges from a doctorate in Hebrew on Silver's political role during the 1940s.[1] Because of Silver's central status, books and papers on the Zionist political system during the 1940s gave him a central place. But these publications dealt with Silver mostly in connection with the struggle in the United States on behalf of the formation of the state, and his role in the Zionist movement during the 1940s. Similarly, contemporary memoirs in the main presented Silver's contribution to the creation of the Jewish state.[2]

Since the 1980s, however, the horizon of research on the history of Zionism has expanded beyond the formative event of the establishment of the state.[3] Research on Silver has expanded accordingly into other aspects concerning his lifework. In 1994, a microfilm edition of the Abba Hillel Silver Archives in Cleveland appeared, rendering his papers more accessible to researchers and making broader research possible.[4] The new studies began to focus on Silver as an American liberal, presenting his struggles in relation to issues like the rights of the individual, social justice, freedom of speech, prevention of unemployment, and workers' rights in the United States. They also discussed Silver as a Reform rabbi and concerned themselves with his special path regarding Zionism.[5]

This paper attempts to widen the opening made by previous researchers, forging the necessary link between Silver's view regarding the United States and the world following World War II and his Zionist activities. This study assumes that Silver's activities within the Zionist arena can be fully comprehended only after examining what he accomplished in the American social, economic, and political milieu. We can better understand Silver's ideas and activities toward the establishment of a Jewish state against the background of his view of the desirable world order after World War II. The expanded discussion on Silver, moreover, continues into the 1950s.

Although this paper will focus on Abba Hillel Silver, part of it will be devoted to Emmanuel Neumann, Silver's right-hand man from 1939 on, who filled senior positions in the Zionist movement in America as well as in Palestine. *Inter alia*, Neumann served as the head of the economic department of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem during the first half of the 1930s and was chairman of the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) in the years 1947-1949 and 1956-1958. In his memoirs, Neumann recalls his first political meeting with Silver at the Zionist Congress in 1939, noting the encouragement he derived from Silver's readiness to devote himself to the political problems of the Zionist movement. Neumann told Silver that he would like to be at his side and assist him, and he called the conversation an unwritten covenant that both considered binding.[6]

Abba Hillel Silver's View of Britain

The links between Silver's Zionist activities and his general world view and activities in the American political sphere come into full focus in his attitude toward Britain. Silver's anti-British stance was a foundation of his Zionist platform in the latter half of the 1940s. He regarded their differing views of Britain as the reason for his break with Weizmann, which he explained made it impossible for them to cooperate politically in that period.[7] Silver called for a complete separation of the Zionist movement from Britain. He demanded that the question of Palestine should pass into the hands of the United Nations and that Britain be kept out of any involvement there. Newspapers noted Silver's anti-British stance as a characteristic of his public image in the second half of 1946. The triumph of the anti-British line in the 22nd Zionist Congress of 1946 was seen as Silver's most important victory, and his anti-British policy was described as a central factor in making him a leader of the Zionist movement.[8] Silver acted against Britain not only within Zionism. He was against a large American loan to Britain after World War II and cooperated closely with elements in the Senate and the House that attempted to prevent ratification of the loan, or at least to reduce it and make the conditions less favorable.[9]

Stephen Wise, Silver's rival in the American Zionist arena, was a committed Anglophile, and argued that while many American Zionists, such as Silver were against the loan to Britain, he supported it. Wise claimed to have worked for ratification of the loan, although it weakened his public standing and was politically dangerous. Since he had already been ousted from the leadership of American Zionism, Wise was willing to absorb the additional hardship that came with his support of Britain.[10] Silver, by contrast, led a public campaign against a money transfer from the United States to Britain.

The importance of the loan issue is evident in that both the British government and pro-British elements in the United States worried about it, concerned lest Zionist activity delay or even prevent Congressional ratification. According to them, the Palestine question replaced the Irish question as the major shadow over American-British relations and could hinder political cooperation between the two states.[11]

Silver's opposition to the loan to Britain in 1946 was not a one-time event. Even in the early 1940s Silver wrote to Neumann about his opposition to Wise's pro-British policy. Silver claimed that total support for Britain during World War II caused the Zionist movement severe political harm. In his opinion, Wise tried to minimize Zionist anti-British propaganda in the United States in order to avoid embarrassing Roosevelt's government or hindering cooperation between the two countries, and he tried to foster understanding of the British position on the Palestine question among American Jews. That policy tied the hands of American Zionists, prevented them from applying political pressure to their government and Britain, and gave the British government freedom of action in its Palestine policy. Silver's criticism of British policy extended to Churchill: he refused to recognize Churchill as a friend of the Zionist movement and claimed that some of his political actions harmed Zionism. These included the White Paper of 1922, as well as his failure to reverse the White Paper of 1939 when he became prime minister in 1940.[12]

Throughout the 1940s Silver maintained extensive connections with anti-British elements in the United States, from Republican senator Robert Alphonso Taft, to whom he was a close political and personal associate, to Americans who supported independence for India.[13] Silver's activities against Britain were important enough for Pierre Van Paassen, a well-known American author close to Jabotinsky, to claim that Silver's anti-British views were the reason for their close association. Van Paassen saw himself as more anti-British than pro-Zionist and said that the basis of his collaboration with Silver was the fact that both were anti-British.[14]

Silver's anti-British position shows also his resistance to an automatic collaboration between the United States and Britain against the Soviet Union. He claimed that the British Empire indeed had many points of contention with the Soviet Union, but that the United States did not. In his opinion, Britain was dragging the United States into a conflict in which it was not involved and need take no part. He opposed the idea of a united Anglo-Saxon world, which was supposed to move the United States to support British interests worldwide, although the only interests actually served, in his view,

were those of the British.[15] Silver was also strongly against American economic support to Britain: the transfer of money through lend-lease settlements, the British loan after the war, and the money it was to receive via the Marshall plan. In his opinion there was no need to transfer such large sums that would be used by the British to harm American economic interests.[16]

Silver's anti-British policy was a central element of his political and public activity in the Zionist arena in the United States, in the world Zionist movement, and in the American political arena. But, as we shall see later and contrary to first impressions, Silver's anti-British views stemmed not just from Zionist considerations. His activity against British interests in the American political arena combined resistance to British policy in Palestine with a more general opposition to British colonialism and insistence on the need to break up the British Empire as a part of the international realignment after World War II.

The Jewish State and the Middle East

The policy of Silver and his associates toward Britain displays the interrelationship between his overall political view and his Zionist activities. Silver and Neumann's anti-British policy went hand in hand with their opinions about the desirable international arrangements after World War II and the role of the future Jewish state in that world. They wished the state to come into being as a part of a series of international arrangements founded on the United Nations policies, minimizing East-West conflict, and advanced economic development in former colonies.[17]

Neumann, Silver's political ally and personal friend, described in the *Free World* the guidelines that should, in his opinion, shape the political and social order in the Middle East after the war.[18] His premise was the impending and necessary demise of Western imperialism in general and British imperialism in particular as a political and social system. He claimed that the Western powers should involve themselves in the Middle East not only on the political level, but on economic, social, and intellectual levels to develop the region rather than exploit it. Neumann explained that exploitation of the Middle East by elements from without and within must stop and

instead its natural resources should be preserved and developed for the benefit of all the inhabitants. In his opinion, such plans necessitated international cooperation, since no single state, even a democratic and well-meaning one, could do the task, and only an international force with both authority and executive ability could rise to the Middle East challenge. To ensure that such a power would not become an instrument of exploitation by states with interests in the region, Neumann suggested that the international supervision committee be made up of progressive nations, like Norway and Switzerland, with no history of imperialism and without direct interests in the Middle East. To prevent European/American control over the committee, Neumann suggested including Asian states like China and independent India as full members. Neumann stressed that the aims of the international committee should be not to impede the development of independent states of the Middle East but to help them become independent, knowing that they were too weak to stand alone against an international reality that could threaten their existence. He warned that the committee's objectives were not simple and could take a long time to reach, since they required not only superficial political changes in the various states, such as switching to democratic elections, but also a change in the regional, social, and economic structure. For such an in-depth change, one would have to change the way of life of as many people as possible, change the economic structures that caused exploitation and poverty, and raise the economic and educational levels of the general public. Neumann stressed that this would be an especially difficult task, as it would involve struggling with ruling groups that tended to reject change.[19]

In a lecture on the Middle East's economy, Neumann developed further the idea of international responsibility for it.[20] He suggested establishing two institutions that would work together for that purpose: the first, under the United Nations, would direct all economic development initiatives for the Middle East; the second would be a council of representatives of all inhabitants of the region.[21] Neumann went on to describe the tasks facing the various councils that were supposed to cooperate: establishing a central repository of data on natural and human resources of the Middle East, encouraging proper

use of natural resources, improving health and education systems, constructing large-scale engineering projects that by their very nature require international cooperation, and encouraging advanced industrial production. Neumann stressed that any developing should be done by transfer of knowledge and support from advanced nations without expectation of immediate economic gain, and not on the earlier basis of imperialistic exploitation.[22]

Neumann's understanding of Zionism went hand in hand with his overall view of the political and economic future of the Middle East. Carrying out these plans would have created a new and positive political and social environment in the region and solved the difficult political problems it was facing, providing a solution to natural increase in population and to massive Jewish immigration to Palestine. Neumann portrayed an idyllic, multicultural Middle Eastern society made up of Moslems, Christians, and Jews, all acting together for mutual benefit. He stressed that stability and economic well-being would help prevent enmity and hatred, which thrive on poverty and deprivation.[23]

Neumann's labors to involve the international community were coordinated with Silver and carried out with his collaboration. In a letter to Silver, Neumann surveyed a list of publications and lectures on the subject and added details about international activity to carry out the ideas that he put forth.[24] He also presented the main guidelines and objectives of the political activity he was suggesting for the Middle East: that colonial powers such as Britain, France, and Italy, which had ruled over large segments of the territory involved and whose role was to preserve order and stability there, should be replaced by United Nations forces. Neumann expected that the United Nations forces would protect the interests of a Jewish national homeland, as well as support the whole population of the region and oversee the use of oil, all subject to United Nations decisions and in a manner that would increase the well-being of the region.[25]

The central position of the United Nations in the postwar world order was the topic of a sermon Silver preached in his synagogue in Cleveland.[26] He said that founding a strong organization was the key to establishing security, stability, and world peace after the war;

the United Nations would succeed only if the organization had an international military force at its disposal and an international judicial system under its administration. Silver did not overlook the difficulties that might prevent the smooth functioning of the United Nations. He was particularly opposed to giving the superpowers the right of veto in the Security Council, stating that it would place them above international law, giving them too much strength and endangering the very goals for which the United Nations was established.[27]

Silver's views of the central role of the United Nations in the post-World War II era came up again when he dealt with the Truman Doctrine and the involvement of the United States in Greece and Turkey.[28] Silver strongly opposed American and British involvement in those countries. He claimed that if there was a real danger to the independence of the two countries, the United States and Britain should turn to the United Nations rather than act alone. When the United Nations was established its goal was to solve precisely that kind of international problem. He stressed that one of the main objectives for which the organization was founded was that no one nation should take upon itself the role of guaranteeing peace and justice in the world: that role should devolve only on the international community. In his opinion the policy of the United States in Greece and Turkey endangered the existence of the United Nations from its very start as a meaningful organization in world affairs.[29] The way the United Nations intervened in Greece and Turkey would affect the form of the Middle East and its international position. The Middle East could become a cause for World War III or, conversely, become a starting point for strengthening the United Nations and international cooperation. If the United Nations, rather than the superpowers, was to be responsible for dealing with international crises in the Middle East, it would symbolize an international political turning point that would prevent war and lead to many years of international stability.[30]

Silver's View of the East-West Conflict after World War II and Reactions to It

Silver and Neumann viewed the United Nations as a central factor in stabilizing world affairs as part of their overall rejection of the East-West conflict and their call to improve relations between the

Soviet Union and the United States. This position emerged clearly in Silver's opposition to the Marshall Plan.[31] He claimed that the plan would only intensify the political struggles in Europe and finalize the division between Eastern and Western Europe. In Silver's opinion the main danger to world peace and security was not the Soviet Union but Germany. For that reason he opposed sending American money to restore Germany and claimed that the Marshall Plan created unnecessary tension between the United States and the U.S.S.R. The solution, he said, was not to intensify that conflict by following the Marshall Plan, but to increase communication between Soviet and American leaders and have an immediate summit meeting between Stalin and President Truman.[32] He also claimed that declarations by government officials about sending billions of dollars to Europe to fight communism were not sufficient reason to approve the plan.[33] One could not bring about a true economic and social recovery in a divided Europe. The Marshall Plan could cause a rift between an industrial West and an agricultural East and an internal social struggle in European society. Silver stressed the need to view Europe as one economic unit; in order to create a stable and healthy economic system, one would need to have free trade not only among the Western states, but among all the states of Europe. Cutting off the states of Eastern Europe from the West and taking them out of the sphere of economically developing countries would impede the rise in quality of life there and cause political unrest that might lead to a war triggered by nations with nothing to lose.[34] He claimed that one must start an intensive diplomatic effort for communications between the Soviet Union and the United States and suggested that the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union should meet before the Marshall Plan was carried out. Silver believed it was possible to foster understanding between the superpowers and that the American government was not sufficiently active diplomatically in pursuit of such an understanding.[35]

Silver was not against American participation in rebuilding Europe, he was against the manner in which the Marshall Plan did so. His aim in criticizing the plan, he said, was not to cancel it but to broaden it to include Eastern Europe. Silver was aware of the Soviet

Union's refusal to take part in it, but claimed that the Soviet rejection was a reaction to the Truman Doctrine. He felt that changing the attitude of the United States could effect collaboration with the states of Eastern Europe. He explained that one could restore Europe's economy only by joining its Eastern and Western parts in one pan-European effort. A plan for economic recovery aimed only at Western Europe, excluding half the European states, would reduce the chance of rebuilding the continent.[36]

Silver's rejection of the Marshall Plan was a part of his overall world view, which called for communicating and reaching agreements that would make international collaboration possible. In his opinion the United States and the West should have found a way to coexist with the Soviet Union. True, the Communist world chose a way of life and a world view different from what he would have chosen for himself or the United States, but they had every right to conduct their lives as they wished.[37]

Silver also claimed that the United States must not oppose the choice of some European states to become Communist. American policy in Europe could deepen the East-West conflict, and he feared that American money streaming into Western Europe would be used not only for economic goals, but also to develop military forces against the Communists. Silver was strongly opposed to such policy. He even feared that by adopting anti-Communist policies, the United States could drift into the anti-Communist patterns of action and world view that characterized Nazi Germany. He added that he did not underestimate the difficulties involved with changing the American anti-Communist policy, and building a collaboration with the Soviet Union, but said it was essential to do so. He defined those who supported war against the Soviet Union, cold or hot, as murderers who would not let the world recover from the previous war.[38] One could bridge the difference between the United States and the Soviet Union through the United Nations; he said that he and many economists and politicians too thought that even countries with different economic and social policies could collaborate.[39]

Silver's support during the 1940s and 1950s for augmenting United Nations power and for reducing the interbloc struggle can be

understood as part of his broad view on other key issues on the public agenda in America and the world, which he addressed in speeches and sermons during his many years of public activity. Especially prominent was his historical opposition to American separatism and his support for the United States entering World War I on the side of the Allies, in recognition of America's international responsibility. In Silver's opinion it was preferable to end the war without victory and to work toward the creation of an international force with enough power to ensure world peace based on international cooperation and recognition of the independence of all nations — great and small alike — while ensuring freedom for all humanity and the democratization of European society. Such a structure was supposed to be based on common interests, not on a military presence motivated by fear and suspicion of one nation toward another.[40]

In light of this world view, Silver spoke out particularly against the Paris agreements that were meant to ensure peace, the end of imperialism, and the democratization of the entire world, but in Silver's opinion only strengthened opposite trends that were likely to give rise to additional wars, similar to what happened in the wake of the Congress of Vienna. Silver stressed that just like that of the Labour Party in Britain and the Socialist parties in Italy and France, his own opposition to the agreement did not stem from support for Germany, but from a desire to prevent harm to the masses in Germany and from the assumption that peace agreements based on degradation of an opponent would only lead to another war. In his opinion, the system of compensation imposed on Germany, together with decreasing its European territory, would seriously impede Germany's rehabilitation and perpetuate tension in Europe. Silver's objection to the Paris agreements did not stem from the German issue only. He severely criticized the treatment of China and the recognition of Japan's rights there. In addition, Silver claimed that the League of Nations, in contrast to the great goals for which it had been established, had become a tool in the hands of England, France, Italy, and Japan to maintain their own interests in the international system.[41]

Silver's statements on the peace agreements following World War I, and his opposition to the Marshall Plan, are part of a complete set

of sermons and speeches he delivered as a rabbi in Cleveland. They deal with basic issues concerning American foreign policy and the American political system. In all speeches, from his views on the Paris agreements, through his sermon at the San Francisco convention in 1945, up to the sermon on his impressions on visiting the Soviet Union in 1961, one finds the same general guidelines. Consistently, Silver supports American involvement in international settlements following World War II, an involvement based on recognition of the need for the Soviet Union and America to compromise and a struggle against McCarthyism in America.[42]

A clear example of Silver's public activity connected to international issues was his opposition to the Korean War. Since Silver considered this issue most important, he not only expressed his opinion only in his Sunday sermons but also by means of an open "Letter to President Truman," published in Jewish as well as general newspapers and sent to rabbis and Jewish community leaders throughout America.[43] Silver explained that his opposition to the war stemmed from a combination of legal and relevant factual material. Legally, he objected to going to war without the ratification of Congress and without the agreement of the United Nations, which ratified the war against Korea only after the fact. This, he felt, weakened the United Nations. With regard to relevant facts, Silver maintained that there were no strategic reasons to go to war, and that Truman's decision to fight in Korea should be understood against the background of his desire to prove that the Democratic Party government was acting against Communism, and as a reaction to Republican propaganda.[44]

Silver maintained that the Korean War symbolized the failure of the Truman Doctrine. America could not carry out a policy of opposing Communism everywhere, and in trying to do so the United States was bonding with fascist regimes and dictatorships. Such a policy



Silver as a young rabbi in Cleveland.
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

endangered world peace more than the Communist threat did. Silver stressed that America had to recognize the Communist regime in China and refrain from supporting Chiang Kai-shek. Silver called supporters of an uncompromising policy toward the Soviet Union and Communism dogmatic, conceited warmongers who were pushing America into a war not out of a love for country, but for personal interests and a desire to undermine any possibility for compromise. By contrast, Silver maintained that there was room for the Soviet Union and the United States to exist side by side, though such a view had become almost taboo in America, adding that agreement with the Soviets following negotiations based on compromise was the only way to ensure world peace.

The extensive publicity given his letter to President Truman precipitated a wave of supportive as well as critical responses from Zionist and Jewish activists, well beyond the usual reactions to Silver's sermons. The critics opposed Silver's expression of an opinion on military and political issues outside his expertise, and maintained that the publicity embarrassed their community.[45] His supporters encouraged and agreed with him, declaring that the right to criticize was fundamental to American democracy.[46]

One would have expected Silver's opposition to the Korean War, and views in favor of recognizing Communist China and compromising with the Soviets, to have resonated more widely and merited broader media coverage and sharper criticism than in fact they did. Remarkably, Silver's addresses on political issues evoked minor responses; even his letter to Truman did not receive the expected coverage. Why indeed was such scant attention paid to his political pronouncements? Reports on them appeared primarily in local Cleveland newspapers, and even there only on inside pages, without comments and in a desultory fashion. This was how the public was informed of Silver's support for increasing Soviet involvement in the Middle East and the Palestine issue and of his opposition to the Truman Doctrine and America's support for Greece and Turkey. Silver was quoted in the Cleveland papers as one calling for a change in the anti-Communist policy of America, which was positioning America alongside Franco's regime in Spain and Peron's in Argentina. In the

same way, information was transmitted about Silver's support for a settlement between the Soviet Union and the United States and about his opposition to anti-Soviet elements in the Marshall Plan.[47]

At the end of the 1940s Silver acted intensively towards the establishment of a Jewish state and minimized discussions of international issues in his sermons.[48] He began speaking out on international issues once again in 1950, and Jewish newspapers in Cleveland and North America continued to publish what he said in the same limited manner as before. The reports reflect the wide variety of international and internal political topics that Silver dealt with in his addresses. Thus, for example, they write about his blaming the West for the political crisis, for exacerbating the Cold War, and for the danger to world peace in consequence of intensifying the interbloc struggle. Although he supported American aid to underdeveloped countries, he declared that Washington's international policy could lead America and the entire world to tragedy. From the articles, Silver's opposition to what he called anti-Communist hysteria in the United States becomes clear, and his call for world leaders to cooperate actively to promote world peace based on recognizing the right for common existence of the United States and Communism is explicit. Other articles report on Silver's strong opposition to McCarthyism. It was also reported that he favored a summit meeting between Eisenhower and Stalin. The newspaper articles lead one to understand that Silver did not disregard the anti-Zionist and anti-Israel aspects of the Soviet regime, but nevertheless wished to maintain the communication channels between Jewish organizations and the Soviet Union. He explained the Soviet antisemitic policy as political, based on Israel's decision to identify with the West and the United States. In additional articles we learn of Silver's support for ending nuclear experiments and his view that Communist China was not a threat to America.[49]

Reports of Silver's political views appeared in newspapers of the American Left as well. Great attention was paid to those statements that made headlines, which emphasized Silver's support for interbloc compromise and for bringing America and the Soviet Union closer together. Especially conspicuous was the *Daily Worker*'s front-page headline in the winter of 1950, indicating that Silver blamed President

Truman for dragging America into the war. The body of the article stressed Silver's past support of Senator Robert Taft, known for his opposition to the Soviet Union. Thus Silver's new opinions seem to be a sort of "repentance" that renders them more significant.[50] Another report claimed that the relatively scant media coverage of Silver's views was directed at and sprang from a desire to conceal them so they would not influence the Jewish public.[51]

Indeed, the low-key reaction to Silver's words arouses wonder, but it does not stem from any conspiracy theory. It is complex and based on Silver's public political activity. The years 1943 to 1948 were central in Silver's political activity, during which he struggled for the creation of the state of Israel. This struggle was the focus of his activities. His other concerns remained on the edges of public interest, and therefore, his view on international political concerns received slight attention. Newspapers and the Jewish public interested themselves primarily in his struggle for the formation of a Jewish state. Even when Silver expressed pro-Soviet views, they were thought to arise from his desire to harness the Soviet Union to that end. Moreover, possibly much of the Jewish public did not consider Silver's views worthy of opposition, in view of the tremendous Soviet contribution to the struggle against the Nazis.[52]

Silver remained at the center of Zionist activity only during the second half of the 1940s. Following his retirement from all official Zionist positions in 1948, his involvement in public activities was primarily behind the scenes and within his position as a Reform rabbi in Cleveland. After Silver withdrew from the spotlight, his controversial statements that precipitated a certain public reaction before 1948 produced an even milder one. Despite his status, Silver did not fill any official Zionist or Jewish position and thus naturally received relatively little public attention from the media or the Jewish public.

Furthermore, despite his liberal views, Silver's public image derived primarily from his close ties with Republican Senator Robert Taft, who was identified with separatism and anti-Communism. The personal and political ties between Silver and Taft reflected on Silver's political image; he was deemed not only close to Taft, but also close to Taft's

political views. Silver's political declarations could not obliterate this reflection, which continued to dominate his public image during his lifetime and after his death. The eulogy published in a Cleveland paper surveyed Silver's public activity and stressed his readiness to adopt views unpopular in his community. These included support for workers organizations in Cleveland during the 1920s and his ties with Senator Taft. His views on the international issues presented in this paper were not mentioned at all.[53] A similar skewed picture emerges in the eulogy by his aide and friend Emmanuel Neumann, who dealt only with Silver as a Zionist and completely disregarded his opposition to the Cold and Korean Wars and his support of interbloc compromise.[54]

Unlike the low-key public and communal response to his views and activities, the Passport Office of the State Department responded to them sharply. A letter from the Passport Office informed Silver of the decision not to renew his passport immediately and to examine his request for renewal in view of information regarding Silver's membership in and support for organizations defined as pro-Communist or Communist. The letter gives one to understand that Silver's passport was frozen and the director of the Passport Office wished Silver to respond, suggesting that he appeal if he considered the decision mistaken.[55]

Clearly the attempt to freeze Silver's passport can be understood against the background of anti-Communist hysteria and McCarthyism. Nevertheless, the letter from the Passport Office adds significance in that it indicates the gap between Silver's image as a loyal follower of Senator Taft and a Republican and his views on America's international status following World War II, which barely reached general public awareness and received only minor expression in the Jewish and general press.

Silver responded in a letter stating that he met personally with officials in the Office of the Secretary of State and that his passport was returned, possibly with the assistance of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, with whom Silver maintained a close personal relationship.[56] Despite the return of the passport, Silver objected in the letter to the attempt to delay renewing it, explaining his political principles and his place on the American ideological and political map of the

1950s. He described the Passport Office director's letter as unforeseen and troublesome, and maintained vehemently that he had never belonged to any organization identified with Communism in any way. Like many other Americans holding key positions in education, politics, or religion, he had joined organizations fighting on behalf of American democracy against any form of dictatorship: Nazi, Fascist, or Communist. Silver explained that sometimes being a member of an organization meant nothing more than agreeing to have one's name published as such, and he had no way of knowing if subversive forces had exploited some organizations for a time. Silver stressed that his public activity over the previous forty years was open, and he had never expressed a view that could harm American interests.[57] These statements do in fact accord with views Silver expressed in his sermons, which included severe criticism of Stalin's management of the Communist regime in the Soviet Union. At the same time he recognized the need for the United States and the Soviet Union to coexist and the right of other states to choose a Communist lifestyle without American intervention, emphasizing too the vital need for international cooperation in the sciences and other facets of humanity's common good.[58]

Silver's response opens a window through which we see his status within the American public discourse at the conclusion of World War II and at the beginning of the Cold War. Silver did not consider himself a Communist or pro-Communist. He viewed his struggle against the Truman Doctrine, his support for interbloc compromise, and for augmenting United Nations power as support for a world order that would best serve American interests. Moreover, his desire to prevent anti-Communist hysteria and McCarthyism sprang from loyalty that made him speak and act to strengthen the United States internally as well as externally.[59]

In consequence of his views, Silver maintained a close political and personal tie with Henry Wallace, vice president during Franklin D. Roosevelt's third presidential term and secretary of commerce from 1944 to 1946. Wallace was fired following his speech and public letter to President Truman in September 1946, in which he attacked America's hard-line policy toward the Soviet Union. Silver opposed

some issues Wallace raised, particularly his position that America had no right to involve itself in events in Eastern Europe, but he agreed with most of the speech, especially with Wallace's demand that agreement be reached with the Soviet Union while conducting an American policy independent of Britain's.[60]

Despite his support for a compromise in relations with the U.S.S.R., and his opposition to removing Wallace from office, Silver did not agree with the pro-Soviet components of the views of Wallace and his associates. Unlike them, Silver did not support disarmament, although he objected to increasing the American defense budget.[61] His merely partial support for Wallace indicates that Silver's position and political status within the American public discussion right after World War II and during the 1950s cannot be understood by labeling him a pro-Communist.

Silver's views on international issues reveal his alignment to the liberal section of the Democratic Party. It is evident as well from his backing of Roosevelt's appeasement policy toward the Soviet Union, which he considered very different from Truman's, and from his support for persons with like views in the American government, such as the under-secretary of state from 1937 to 1943, Sumner Welles, with whom he had maintained close ties and shared similar views, not only on Zionist issues.[62]

Silver's closeness to liberals in the Democratic Party constitutes only part of his political activities following World War II. Silver maintained a system of political and personal ties with Senator Taft who, unlike Silver, represented a political view that included separatism, opposition to compromise with the Soviet Union, and support for prosecuting Communists or anyone in the United States suspected of being one.[63] Taft's opposition to the Marshall Plan and to American support for Britain created a primary political base for cooperation between him and Taft in specific areas, though they opposed the plan for different reasons. Silver objected to it because it harmed the Soviet Union and because he wanted to transfer American support to Europe through the United Nations, to strengthen that organization. Taft, on the other hand, objected to the plan because of his separatist philosophy.[64] In light of Silver's positions, his readiness

to maintain this collaboration calls for some explanation, which lies in Silver's status as a Zionist activist and Jewish leader in America. Throughout his years of public activity, Silver took care to emphasize that he was not a declared supporter of either the Democratic or Republican Party. In his opinion only non-identification ensured the status of Jews in American society and enabled them to function as a political force working to establish the state of Israel and assure its security during its early years.[65] One assumes that Republican control of Congress after 1946, and Eisenhower's victory in the 1952 presidential election, only strengthened Silver's view on the need to maintain Republican ties. The combination of liberal views and Republican Party ties enabled Silver to escape political harm as a Jewish leader and Reform rabbi and to continue to act on behalf of Israel. He did not have to refrain from expressing controversial political views, because his Republican ties dulled their significance, limited negative responses to them, and at times, as in the passport incident, prevented personal harm to Silver in the hostile milieu of anti-Communist hysteria and McCarthyism.

The Place of the Jewish State in World Affairs after World War II

Silver's and Neumann's views as to the desirable postwar world order guided their suggested solutions for the Palestine question, the anticipated state, and its place in world affairs. Neumann's support of the United Nations was an integral part of his view of the political solutions to the Palestine question. The United Nations, and the other international institutions whose establishment he suggested, were to play a central part in building the Jewish state, against a background of Middle East cooperation and peace, and as a part of an international effort to empower the United Nations.[66] The demands of Neumann and Silver to transfer most of the authority over Palestine to the United Nations was not merely tactical, but came in part from their strenuous rejection of the East-West struggle and of political methods they characterized as imperialistic.

During his visit to Israel in 1948, Silver gave a news conference on the state of Israel and world affairs.[67] He claimed that Israel's orientation should be the United Nations, neither East nor West. He

remarked: "More than two years ago, when the Anglo-American Committee was established, I already criticized it for excluding Russia."[68] Silver emphasized that Israel must maintain full neutrality in the East-West conflict. This policy made possible the establishment of the state and won the Zionist movement significant political gains. The Zionist issue brought about East-West collaboration and helped break the Iron Curtain, a fact of political importance beyond the Zionist context.[69]



David Ben-Gurion, first Prime Minister of Israel (Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

Silver repeated his position about transferring responsibility for Palestine to the United Nation rather than to an individual superpower in the draft of his memoirs.[70] On another occasion he claimed that the United Nations made it possible to redress historical wrongs and that resolving the issue of Palestine was a part of a world process of justice and peace that was supposed to be guided by the United Nations.[71]

Silver's view of the Jewish state in world affairs ran counter to that of David Ben-Gurion's, who supported American intervention in the Land of Israel and stationing American soldiers in the region. Ben-Gurion stressed that "there will be an army in every country, there will be an American army in every country, I saw it start in Africa, I hope they will come to the Land (of Israel) too, I pray that they come to the Land (of Israel), they will have the strength. America can send 100,000 soldiers, and that would be enough to keep the peace."[72] An American army in the Land of Israel, according to Ben-Gurion, would involve the Jewish state in the East-West conflict as a member of the anti-Soviet block. This opposed Silver's position, who wished to dissociate the Jewish state from the East-West conflict and to ensure its survival by integrating it into the region.

This difference of opinion between the two men corresponds with the differences between them on other political questions. Silver's anti-British stance may be compared with Ben-Gurion's position on the desirable relations with Britain after establishing a state. To Ernest

Bevin, the British foreign minister, Ben-Gurion said that the future state would be willing to become a partner of Britain and to give it army bases in the Land of Israel.[73] For Ben-Gurion a British presence in the Jewish state would be accepted willingly. He said: "The few million future Jews in the Land of Israel would still be a small people, but a European one, the only European people on the continent. Just as we are concerned about our national identity, so we must preserve our connection with Europe; but Europe is split between two blocks: one led by Russia, and the other led, more or less, by England."[74] Ben-Gurion went on to say that it was very important for Britain to stay strong, and that it might be of vital interest to the Jewish state to provide for the legitimate strategic needs of Britain.[75]

Silver's position on the Palestine question went hand in hand with positions on key issues on the world agenda, as seen in an exchange of letters between him and his assistant Harold Manson shortly after Israel was established. Manson wrote Silver after some American general Zionists published a statement calling on the state of Israel to conduct a pro-Western policy and to the United States to initiate a plan similar to the Marshall Plan in the Middle East, providing massive aid to Israel.[76] Manson called the statement irresponsible and unwise and said it was published without coordination with Silver, who would have prevented such a step. Manson claimed that the United States wished to involve Israel in the Cold War and use its economic aid to that end.[77] He and Silver were fully aware that Israel must not sell its freedom, despite Israel's economic and defense needs. Manson remarked further on Silver's opposition to the East-West struggle and to embroiling the Zionist movement and the state of Israel in it. Silver was the only Zionist leader to oppose the Marshall Plan and stress his consistent position that Israel must stay neutral in the East-West struggle.[78]

Silver's and Manson's positions were exceptional in the American social and political climate in the late forties and early fifties. Opinions against the Cold War and for collaboration with the Soviet Union were so rare that Manson added in the margin of one letter an underlined remark to the secret agents who would read it, clarifying that neither sender nor receiver were Communists or supporters of Communism.[79]

The need for secrecy makes it difficult to reconstruct fully Silver's positions about involving the Zionist movement and Israel in the East-West struggle. Even so, his opposition to pulling Israel into the East-West struggle was clearly inseparable from his criticism of the Marshall Plan and from the opinion that favored collaboration and communication between the United States and the Soviet Union. Silver also tried to ensure that the establishment of Israel would be monitored by the United Nations, not by a single superpower, and thus ensuring the neutrality of the future state. The questions of Palestine and the Middle East were among the most important problems facing the international community at the end of World War II, and the solutions could influence the entire international system. Removing the solution to the Palestine question from the East-West struggle and putting it in the hands of the United Nation would, in their view, have contributed not only to an adequate solution to that specific problem, but also to strengthening the organization, thus helping to stabilize the entire Middle East and making it a building block in the new world order.

Silver's political and Zionist views and his notion of Judaism's place in modern Western society are closely linked. He claimed that Judaism advocates constant human progress, a view not held by other religions. Human progress, he claimed, involves not only science and technology, but social issues and especially increased political freedom and the end of imperialism and colonialism. The essence of Judaism, he maintained, even from a religious point of view, was not the coming of the Messiah but the direction of human society, whose goals are eradicating ignorance and racism, promoting peace and international collaboration, preventing and reducing poverty, and ending ethnic rivalries and war. Silver claimed that those were the fundamental goals of the twentieth century, and that in this respect there was no difference between East and West, Communists and non-Communists. For Silver, any human progress was at risk from reaction and retreat, and Judaism and Jews had an important role to play in the struggle against reaction.[80]

Conclusion

The importance of American Zionists in the Zionist struggles of the 1940s and their decisive contribution to the founding of Israel has overshadowed the study of other central aspects of American Zionist history in the decade before that historic era. A clear example is the research discussion around Abba Hillel Silver, which focuses on his contribution to the Zionist effort and his activities in 1947 leading to confirmation of the United Nations partition resolution. Of course, these topics are not to be overlooked. Nonetheless, the Zionist policy of Silver and his group must be understood in connection with the place of American Zionists in the American political and social framework and Silver's Zionist policy must be seen within his overall world view.

The United States, American Jewry, and the Zionist movement in the United States became increasingly important factors in Zionist policy in the 1940s. From the late 1930s on, American Jews became steadily more prominent in the international Jewish community and in the Zionist movement, as a consequence of the ever-increasing role of the United States in world affairs, the growing American involvement in the Middle East, and the disastrous condition of the Jews in Europe, which climaxed tragically with the Holocaust. Reviewing their political activities on the Zionist issue, the Palestine question, and world affairs, one sees American Zionists intensively involved in historical events that started in the late 1930s and continued until the declaration of the state of Israel. American Jews and Zionist movement members acted then under the shadow of the disaster of European Jews and in light of the clear prospect of fulfilling the Zionist vision and establishing a Jewish state in Palestine. As a result, there was an unusual surge of support for Zionist activity among American Jews, and the leaders of American Zionism had an extraordinary window of opportunity through which they could influence Zionist activity and the nature of the state could be established.[81]

The American Zionist attempt to guide the process of establishing the future Jewish state in the Middle East marks a fundamental change in the methods of America's Zionists, now eager to have a hands-on role in shaping the Jewish state and the Zionist movement, going beyond their former role of providing economic and political support

to the Yishuv in Palestine. The wish to influence the structure of the Zionist movement arose in the late 1930s as a reaction to patterns of the 1920s (when America's Zionists gave up trying to influence the Zionist movement), as their movement itself grew and expanded.

The question of the Jewish state and its influence on the Middle East and world affairs were key issues facing world leaders at the end of World War II. The involvement of the American Zionist leaders in establishing and shaping the future state gave them influence in most important political issues, whose significance went beyond the borders of the Jewish state and, in their opinion, affected the Middle East, the United Nations, and the mode of operations between East and West.

Silver's anti-British activities and the world view he and his group shared regarding the role of the Jewish state in the Middle East indicate the way the leaders of America's Zionists merged their Zionism with their world view as a whole. They tried to fit the nascent Jewish state into their plans to increase the power of the United Nations, mitigate the East-West conflict, and allow for the progressive economic development of former colonies. Silver and Neumann's support of the United Nations was inseparable from their view of the right political approach to the Palestine question. The United Nations, and other international institutions they suggested creating for the Middle East, were supposed to produce a regional climate of cooperation and be part of the international effort to strengthen the United Nations as a world player.

Solving the question of Palestine the way Silver, Neumann, and their collaborators in the Zionist leadership of the United States suggested would serve two complementary goals: building a Jewish state that would fit their political and ideological world view, and strengthening world trends they supported in the international arrangements of the post-World War II era. Founding a Jewish state and solving its basic problems were each goals in their own right and, in addition, the means for building political, economic, and social arrangements that fit into their world view.

Once Israel became independent, efforts by the leaders of American Zionism to mold it came almost to a complete stop. Their activities, opposed earlier by the Zionist establishment in the Land of Israel, were



Silver in May 1947
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

prevented almost totally after 1948 and were seen by the heads of the new state as crude meddling in Israel's internal affairs.[82] When in 1948, Ben-Gurion ousted Abba Hillel Silver, the most important American Zionist leader of the 1940s, it marked the end of a unique decade during which the Zionists of the United States, led by Silver, tried to take part in the shaping of the Jewish state. Silver's sudden exit from the center of Zionist activities is especially noteworthy, as it followed intensive activity in the United States and in the World Zionist movement in the 1940s, exemplified by the pro-Zionist motions in the United States Congress in 1944, the 22nd Zionist Congress, and the struggle in the United Nations for the partition plan.[83]

The inability of the Zionists of America to realize their ideas about the place of the Jewish state in the Middle East indicates their fundamental problem: they wished to direct the development of the Jewish state while they remained in the United States. This was impossible, since the relations between Jews and Arabs in Palestine and the position of the Jewish state in the Middle East were determined and carried out by leaders of the Zionist establishment there, according to their own world view and the political and social reality of Israel — quite different from the ideas expressed by American Zionists.

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Appendix – Selected Sermons on International Affairs

1. 22.4.45 "Crossroads at San Francisco" Silver Archive 4/730.

2. 14.10.45 "Enter the Atomic Age" Silver Archive 4/732.

3. 5.5.46 "The Fear of Russia" Silver Archive 4/747.

4. 20.10.46 "The Role of America in the World Today" Silver Archive 4/749.

5. 13.4.47 "The New American Foreign Policy — Is there Danger in it or Promise?" Silver Archive 4/762.

6. 19.10.47 "Russia and the United States — Is there a Bridge Between Them?" Silver Archive 4/767.

7. 16.11.47 "The Marshall Plan" Silver Archive 4/769.

8. 30.1.49 "The Vision of the One World" Silver Archive 4/789.

9. 30.4.50 "The Cold War" Silver Archive 4/821.

10. 8.10.50 "The Lessons of Korea" Silver Archive 4/824.

11. 22.10.50 "The Cold War" Silver Archive 4/826 .

12. 29.10.50 "Freedom in the United States" Silver Archive 4/827.

13. 4.3.51 "Shall We Re-Arm Germany" Silver Archive 4/843.

14. 22.4.51 "The Recall of MacArthur — and What Next?" Silver Archive 4/849.

15. 26.10.52 "Some Reflections on the Present Political Campaign" Silver Archive 4/879.

16. 2.11.52 "Some More Observations on the Coming Elections" Silver Archive 4/880.

17. 15.3.53 "Stalin and After" Silver Archive 4/895.

18. 28.2.54 "The Berlin Conference — its Success and Failure" Silver Archive 4/922.

19. 4.4.54 "Just What is Loyalty to America?" Silver Archive 4/926.

20. 7.11.54 "Where is our Foreign Policy Taking Us?" Silver Archive 4/7932.

21. 20.2.55 "Changes on the International Scene" Silver Archive 4/944.

22. 16.10.55 "The Soviet Union and the West" Silver Archive 4/956.

23. 29.4.56 "Communist Salesmen in Democratic Lands" Silver Archive 4/976.

24. 14.10.56 "Communism in the Confessional: Soviet Dictatorship in Self-Appraisal" Silver Archive 4/979.

25. 20.10.57 "The Russian Space Satellite" Silver Archive 4/1000.

26. 27.10.57 "Segregation and American World Leadership" Silver Archive 4/1001.

27. 3.5.59 "A New Secretary of State, a New Foreign Policy" Silver Archive 4/1024.

28. 15.10.61 "My Visit to the Soviet Union, Part I" Silver Archive 4/1049.

29. 22.10.61 "My Visit to the Soviet Union, Part II" Silver Archive 4/1050.

Notes

[1] Marc Lee Raphael, *Abba Hillel Silver* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1989). Noach Orian, "The Leadership of Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver in the American Arena, 1939-1949" (Hebrew) (Ph.D. diss., University of Tel Aviv, 1982).

[2] See Tzvi Ganin, "Disagreement between activists and moderates in the leadership of American Zionists in the 1940s -- the case of Stephen Wise and Abba Hillel Silver" (Hebrew), *Ha-Tziyonut* vol. 9 (1984): 317– 58. Meir Avizohar, *Towards the End of the Mandate, Memoirs* (Hebrew) (Ben-Gurion University, 1993), (hereafter: Avizohar, *End of the Mandate*), 424. Allon Gal, *David Ben-Gurion — Preparing for a Jewish State, Political Alignment in Response to the White Paper and the Outbreak of World War II, 1938-1941* (Hebrew) (Sde Boker, 1985), (hereafter: Gal, *Preparing for a Jewish State*). An English version appeared as *David Ben-Gurion and the American Alignment for a Jewish State,* (Jerusalem, 1991). Amitzur Ilan, *America, Britain, and Palestine: the Origin and Development of American Intervention in Britain's Palestine Policy 1938-1947* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1979). Eliyahu Eilat, *The Struggle for Statehood* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 1979), 444. *The Struggle for the Statehood* is the memoirs of Eliyahu Eilat, then Epstein, the Jewish Agency representative in Washington in the 1940s and afterwards Israeli consul and ambassador in Washington and London. (hereafter: Eilat, *The Struggle.*) Memoirs, see Emanuel Neumann, *In the Arena, an Autobiographical Memoir,* (trans. into Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1977), hereafter: Neumann, *In the Arena.* (New York, 1976.) Benjamin Akzin, *From Riga to Jerusalem — Memories* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1989). The dominance of the establishment of the state as an issue in the literature on Silver is expressed as well in the title of his collected speeches and sermons, trans. into Hebrew: Abba Hillel Silver, *The Struggle for a Jewish State: Collection of Speeches and Articles* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1968). Emanuel Neumann, *Abba Hillel Silver - Militant Zionist* (New York, 1967).

[3] See e.g. Yechiam Weitz, ed, *From Vision to Revision: A Hundred Years of Historiography of Zionism* (Hebrew) (Israel, 1997).

[4] The Western Reserve Historical Society, "A Guide to the Microfilm Edition of the Papers of Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver," Cleveland, 1994, which relates to the microfilm edition of Abba Hillel Silver Archive in Cleveland: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, The Temple, Cleveland (hereafter: Silver Archive).

[5] Allon Gal and Ofer Shiff, "Abba Hillel Silver: Judaism and Zionism (sources)" (Hebrew), *Iyunim* vol. 8 (1998), 687–98; Allon Gal, "The United States in the World View of Abba Hillel Silver" (Hebrew), in *Michael, a Collection for the History of the Jews of the Diaspora* (Hebrew), vol. 15 (2000), 9–25; and papers in the special Silver issue: Abba Hillel Silver and American Zionism, *The Journal of Israel History,* vol. 17, no. 1 (1996).

[6] Neumann, *In the Arena,* 162, 163.

[7] Silver's draft for his autobiography, 1963, Silver Archive, 7/3. For a general discussion of the view of Britain and the Arab question in the Yishuv (Jewish community in the Land of Israel), see Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak, *The Origins of the Israeli Policy: The Political System of the Jewish Community in Palestine under the Mandate* (Hebrew), (Tel Aviv, 1977), 199–203.

[8] See, e.g., an editorial about the 22nd Zionist Congress in the *New York Herald Tribune,* November 12, 1946.

[9] Silver's autobiography, loc. cit.

[10] Wise's letter to Lady Reading, July 10, 1946, Central Zionist Archives in Jerusalem, A-234/12 (hereafter: Central Zionist Archive). About Silver's opposition to the loan see Richard P. Stevens, *American Zionism and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1942-1947* (New York, 1962), 117–18. Neumann and Silver's opposition to the loan was a leading cause of their difference of opinion with large segments in the State Department, which Neumann characterized as pro-British. Neumann noted especially his conflict with Acheson, under-secretary of state and later secretary of state, on this matter. See Neumann's note regarding Acheson, undated, Central Zionist Archive, A-123/97.

[11] See a memorandum by Benjamin Akzin, who headed the Washington office of the Emergency Council, to Harry Shapiro about his meeting with the *London Times* reporter in Washington, August 11, 1948, Silver Archive, 2/277. Also, a letter from Eliyahu Ben Horin to Silver about information he received from State Department sources, October 9, 1947, Silver Archive, 2/394 (Shapiro and Ben Horin, Silver's faithful followers, were both active on the Emergency Council). On the importance of the loan to Britain see Forbes Roy Harrod, *The Life of John Maynard Keynes* (London 1951), 586–623. About American political elements opposed to the loan, see John Lamberton Harper, *American Vision of Europe: Franklin D. Roosevelt, George F. Kennan and Dean G. Acheson* (Cambridge, 1994), 274–7.

[12] Silver's letter to Neumann, December 2, 1940, American Jewish Historical Society P-134/119. For criticism of Churchill, see Silver, "We Have Nothing To Lose But Our Illusions" (Hebrew), March 21, 1945, Central Zionist Archive, A-123/348.

[13] As to support of Indian independence and the end of British rule, see Pearl S. Buck's letter to Silver about him joining the Emergency Council for India, November 11, 1943, Silver Archive, 1/731. See, also, thanks from the president of the American Council for India to Silver for adding his signature to, and helping fund, an advertisement in support of Indian independence in the *New York Times,* September 23, 1942, Silver Archive, 1/731. The close relationship between Silver and Taft goes beyond the subject of this article; see, e.g., Silver's letter to Taft July 1, 1945, Silver Archive, 3/244. About Taft's anti-British policy and its importance to his world view regarding American international relations see, Robert A. Taft, *A Foreign Policy for Americans* (New York 1951), 84–85.

[14] Van Paassen's letter to Silver, June 1, 1945, Central Zionist Archive, A-103/123.

[15] Silver's sermon in Cleveland on the United States' role in the world, October 20, 1946, Silver Archive, 6/749.

[16] Silver's sermon on United States-Soviet relations, October 19, 1947, Silver Archive, 6/767. About the British Loan, see Judd Polk & Gardner Patterson, "The British Loan," *Foreign Affairs,* vol. 24, no. 3 (1946): 429–40.

[17] The issue of Palestine was intertwined with the East-West conflict due to the U.S. governments increasing concern that the Soviet Union might get involved in the Middle East. See Gaddis Smith, *The American Secretaries of State and their Diplomacy,* vol. 16, *Dean Acheson,* (New York, 1972), 33–5.

[18] *Free World,* published in New York, 1941–46. It dealt with constructing the new world order after the war and defined itself as supporting democracy and world peace. To increase its influence the magazine published special issues in Chinese and Spanish. Offprint of Neumann's article in *Free World*, August 1942, Central Zionist Archive, A-123/256. See Emanuel Neumann, "Arab Alignments in the Near East," *Free World* 3 (1942): 3–15.

[19] Neumann, *Free World*, loc. cit.

[20] Text of a lecture by Neumann about the Middle East economy, January 30, 1943, Central Zionist Archives, A-123/256.

[21] Neumann lecture, loc. cit.

[22] Neumann lecture, loc. cit.

[23] Neumann lecture, loc. cit. Neumann presented similar opinions in a position paper on new policy for the Middle East. See "New Policy for the Middle East" (no date), Central Zionist Archives, A-123/256.

[24] Letter from Neumann to Silver, June 16, 1944, Silver Archive, 2/165.

[25] *Ibid.* See also Neumann on the critical need for strengthening the United Nations and peace in the world in *New Palestine,* December 16, 1947, Silver Archive, 1/886.

[26] Silver sermon in Cleveland on the turning point in San Francisco, April 22, 1945, Silver Archive, 6/730.

[27] Silver sermon, loc. cit.

[28] Silver sermon in Cleveland on the Truman Doctrine and American foreign policy, April 13, 1947, Silver Archive, 6/762.

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] On the Marshall Plan, see Robert Ferrel, *George Marshall, Secretary of State* (New York, 1966), 99–134.

[32] On the debate in the United States about restoring Germany, and about the Soviet Union and the Marshall Plan, see, e.g., Ronald W. Pruessen, *John Foster Dulles, The Road To Power* (New York, 1982), 348–49; M. Martin Walker, *The Cold War* (New York, 1993), 50–56; John Gimbel, *The Origins of the Marshall Plan* (Stanford 1976); Shlomo Shafir, *Ambiguous Relations, The American Jewish Community and Germany Since 1945* (Detroit, 1999), 37–52; George Bidault, "Agreement on Germany: Key to World Peace," *Foreign Affairs,* 24, no. 4 (1946):571–78; Allen W. Dulles, "Alternatives for Germany," *Foreign Affairs,* 26, no. 3 (1948):457–69. A similar controversy took place about Japan: see Hu Lin, "How to Deal with Japan," *Foreign Affairs,* 24, no. 2 (1946):253–61. A detailed bibliography on these issues can be found in the relevant chapters of Gary B. Nash, eds., *The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society* (New York, 1994).

[33] Silver sermon about the Marshall Plan, November 16, 1947, Silver Archive 6/695.

[34] *Ibid.*

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] Silver sermon in Cleveland, "Russia and the United States: Is there no bridge between them?" October 19, 1947, Silver Archive, 4/767.

[37] Silver's draft of his autobiography, 1963, Silver Archive, 7/5.

[38] Silver, October 19, 1947, loc. cit.

[39] *Ibid.*

[40] See Silver's talk "The Inauguration of President Wilson," February 3, 1917, Silver Archive, 4/8 (place not mentioned) and a printed copy of Silver's Sunday sermon at The Temple in Cleveland: "Woodrow Wilson — an Appreciation" April 13, 1919, Silver Archive, 4/46.

[41] Silver's Sunday sermon at The Temple in Cleveland about the Paris agreements, 1/6/19, Silver Archive 4/52.

[42] A detailed list of Silver's sermons on political issues is given in the appendix.

[43] Silver's talk "A Letter to Mr. Truman," December 17, 1951, Silver Archive, 3/833.

[44] For general background on the Korean War, see Joseph C. Goulden, *Korea, The Untold Story of the War* (Toronto, 1982). For another of Silver's statements against the Korean War and in favor of recognizing Communist China, see "The Lessons of Korea," Silver Archive 4/824.

[45] See letters in this spirit: January 29, 1951, January 31, 1951, Silver Archive, 1/1405, and article in *Intermountain Jewish News,* March 1, 1951.

[46] Support letters February 1, 1951 (two letters), January 14, 1951, January 15, 1951, January 16, 1951, January 17, 1951 (two letters), January 18, 1951 (three letters); Silver Archive, 1/1405.

[47] *Cleveland Plain Dealer,* December 9, 1945, April 14, 1947, November 11, 1947, December 29, 1947.

[48] See the appendix.

[49] *Chicago Sentinel,* January 4, 1951, March 20, 1952; *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, May 28, 1951, October 29, 1952. February 18, 1959; *Jewish Life*, April, 1952; *The Daily Pennsylvanian,* November 13, 1952; *San Francisco News,* November 13, 1952, February 24, 1953; *South African Jewish Times,* February 13, 1953; *The Cleveland Press,* December 30, 1956, *Jewish Record,* December 4, 1960.

[50] *Daily Worker*, December 27, 1950.

[51] *The Morning Freiheit,* January, 1951.

[52] On the positive attitude toward the Soviet Union in wide sections of the American public shortly after the war, see Richard M. Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism, Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics and International Security, 1946-1948* (New York, 1985), 67–69, 179. (hereafter, Freeland, Truman). On American-Soviet relations before the Cold War, see John Lewis Gaddis, *The Long Peace, Inquiries into the History of the Cold War* (New York, 1987), 3–19.

[53] *Cleveland Press,* November 30, 1963.

[54] Neumann's eulogy, opening session of the Zionist Actions Committee, Jerusalem, March 16, 1964, Silver Archive, 8/81.

[55] Letter from the director of the U.S. Department of State Passport Office, May 23, 1955, Silver Archive, 3/270.

[56] Letter from Silver to the director of the Passport Office, June 3, 1955, Silver Archive, 3/270.

[57] Silver's letter June 3, 1955.

[58] Silver's sermons — "Stalin and After," March 15, 1953, Silver Archive, 4/895; "The Russian Space Satellite," October 20, 1957, Silver Archive, 4/1000.

[59] On Silver's view of anti-Communist hysteria and McCarthyism, see "Freedom in the United States," October 29, 1950, Silver Archive, 4/843; "What is Loyalty to America?" April 4, 1954, Silver Archive, 4/932. On the general subject, see David Caute, *The Great Fear, The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower* (New York, 1978).

[60] Silver's sermon, Cleveland, October 20, 1946, "The Role of America in the World Today. Are We Leading towards Peace? Are We Heading for War? The Implications of the Byrnes-Wallace-Baruch Controversy," Silver Archive, 4/749.

[61] One finds no support from Silver for Wallace as an independent presidential candidate in November 1948, possibly indicating the partial nature of Silver's support for him and his views. On Silver's objection to increasing the defense budget, see "Letter to President Truman," December 17, 1951. That Silver did not consider himself pro-Communist is evident from his sermon in Cleveland, April 30, 1950, "The Cold War," Silver Archive, 4/821.

[62] Silver's sermon, October 20, 1946. On the Democratic liberals' opposition to Truman's Soviet policy, see Walter Lafeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War 1945–1980* (New York, 1980), 46–47.

[63] This paper mentions the close ties between Silver and Dulles. In addition, Silver testified to close ties with President Eisenhower and his government in his 1963 autobiography, Silver Archive, 7/3. More on the ties between Silver and Taft in the Senate election in 1944, see Paul W. Walter's letter to Daniel Silver, January 27, 1989, Silver Archive, 7/154. On Sumner Welles' views, see Sumner Welles, *The Time for Decision* (Cambridge, Mass., 1944); *We Need Not Fail* (London, 1948). On the agreement between Silver and Welles on these issues, see letters of June 30 and July 8, 1948, Silver Archive, 1/1964.

[64] On Taft's activity against aid to Europe see Susan M. Hartmann, *Truman and the 80th Congress* (Columbia, 1971), 161–3. On Silver's view, see his sermon of April 13, 1947, "The New American Foreign Policy — Is there Danger in it or Promise?" Silver Archive, 4/749. On possible collaboration between opponents of the Marshall Plan on different grounds, see Freeland, *Truman,* 139–40. One such example was Taft's inclusion of Silver's open letter in the Congressional Record for February 5, 1951, Silver Archive, 1/1405. Silver's openly held views against an uncontrolled transfer of money to Europe in the name of fighting Communism, and the resulting harm to the American economy, fit in with Taft's views as well.

[65] See, e.g., the open letter by Silver, 1940, Central Zionist Archive, A/243-132; Silver's letter to Emmanuel Neumann, October 27, 1944, Silver Archive, 1/133

[66] Neumann's article in *New Palestine,* December 16, 1947, Silver Archive, 1/886.

[67] See *Hatzofeh* (a Hebrew daily) on Silver's news conference, December 18, 1948, "Silver: Our Orientation is Neither East Nor West, But United Nations."

[68] *Hatzofeh*, December 18, 1948, loc. cit.

[69] *Ibid.*

[70] Silver's draft memoirs, July 3, 1963.

[71] Silver's lecture in New York, April 29, 1945, Central Zionist Archives, S-3/271-a. In supporting the transfer of the Palestine question to the United Nations, Silver and Neumann differed from Nachum Goldman. He claimed that the Zionist movement would achieve even less in the United Nations than it had in the League of Nations and that Zionist interests would be harmed if the United Nations dealt with the Land of Israel. See the Goldman letter to Ben-Gurion, September 18, 1945, Central Zionist Archives, Z-6/2759.

[72] Ben-Gurion at the Jewish Agency Executive, October 6, 1942, Central Zionist Archives S-100. Goldman, too, viewed the possibility of British army bases in the independent Jewish state favorably. Such bases would have an obvious function in the Cold War. Goldman at the Jewish Agency Executive, August 2, 1946, Central Zionist Archives, S-100.

[73] Avizohar, *Toward the End of the Mandate* (Hebrew), 50

[74] According to Avizohar, loc. cit., 50–51.

[75] Avizohar, loc. cit., 51.

[76] Letter from Manson to Silver, July 25, 1949, Silver Archive, 1/1147.

[77] About the Cold War, see letter from Manson to Silver, June 5, 1950, Silver Archive, 1/1148.

[78] Letter from Manson to Silver, July 25, 1949, loc. cit. There is a general discussion of Palestine and the superpowers in Michael J. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers 1945-1948* (Princeton, 1982); and Jehuda Reinharz, *Zionism and the Great Powers: A Century of Foreign Policy* (New York, 1994).

[79] Letter from Manson to Silver, July 25, 1949, loc. cit.

[80] On these subjects, see Silver, "Rabbis and Their Critics," in Silver, *Therefore Choose Life,* 391–92. Silver, "There is Yet Room for Vision," 428–30. On the mission of the Jewish religion and the vital role of religion in Jewish life for Silver, see Michael Meyer, *Between Tradition and Progress* (Hebrew), (Jerusalem, 1989), 550–51. (first published in English as *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism* [Oxford, 1988]). See related detail in Michael A. Meyer, "Abba Hillel Silver: Zionist within the Camp of Reform Judaism," *The Journal of Israel History* 17, no. 1 (1996): 9–31.

[81] About the increasing importance of American Zionism see, e.g., David H. Shapiro, "The Forming of the Zionist Emergency Council as the Public Political Action Branch of American Zionism, 1938-1944" (Hebrew), (Ph.D. diss., The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1979), 31–32. See also, on the same subject in English: Shapiro, *From Philanthropy to Activism: The Political Transformation of American Zionism in the Holocaust Years 1933-1945* (Oxford, 1994). On the political aspects of the rise of American Zionists and their subsequent contribution to the Zionist political struggle, see Gal, *Preparing for a Jewish State* (Hebrew), 1–14.

[82] Typical examples of opposition to activities of American Zionists and of Silver and Neumann in Israel in the 1950s can be found in *Hador* (Hebrew), the mouthpiece of the Labor Zionist (Mapai) movement. See articles on May 30, 1951, November 26, 1950, and November 24, 1950.

[83] Many details of Silver's contribution to Zionist political activity in America are found in Eliyahu Eilat's memoirs (N. 2). See Eilat, *The Struggle.* On the conflict between Silver and Ben-Gurion and the ousting of Silver in 1948, see Neumann's letter to several Zionist leaders in the United States, April 12, 1947, Central Zionist Archives, A-123/320; a letter from Silver to Neumann, Central Zionist Archive, January 23, 1948, loc. cit; a protocol of a Jewish Agency Executive meeting in Jerusalem, August 19, 1948. Central Zionist Archive, S-100.



Jerusalem in the late 1920's
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

Galveston and Palestine: Immigration and Ideology in the Early Twentieth Century

Gur Alroey

Introduction

The mass Jewish emigration from Eastern Europe, lasting from the 1870s to the mid-1920s, brought about a genuine change in Jewish life. Some 2.5 million Jews left their countries of origin during this period. The peak years of Jewish emigration were from 1899 to 1914, when 1.7 million Jews emigrated — about 70 percent of those who left during the aforementioned period. Almost half of these Jews migrated between 1904 and 1908. The vast majority went to the United States; others debarked in Argentina, Canada, Palestine, South Africa, and Australia. Thus, the story of this Jewish migration takes place between the turn of the century and World War I.

The emigration of hundreds of thousands of East European Jews emptied the shtetls of their Jewish inhabitants and, consequently, elicited growing interest in migration westward. At the height of this mass migration, the phenomenon commanded public attention among the eastern Jewish society and elicited a broad, in-depth debate revolving around two main questions: whether to emigrate and where to go. One may say without a trace of exaggeration that virtually everyone in Eastern European Jewish society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries wrestled with at least one of these questions in one way or another.

The answers of hundreds of thousands of Jewish migrants to each of the questions produced, within just five decades, one of the most important and quietest revolutions in Jewish history. It was a revolution because the decision to emigrate engendered a fundamental, radical change in all Jewish ways of life; it was quiet because its instigators were ordinary East European Jews who, by making a subjective decision that was multiplied hundreds of thousands of times over, altered their own fate and that of the entire Jewish people.

Furthermore, unlike bloody revolutions led by people who sweep the masses in their wake, this silent revolution was not prompted by leaders of a migrants' "camp" who blazed the trail for others. In our case, it was the individual migrants who spearheaded and ultimately carried out this historic act of mass Jewish migration.



Jacob Schiff
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

However, various organizations and individuals made several attempts to alter the dynamics of the migration during the period of mass emigration from Eastern Europe, redirecting it from the cities on the American East Coast to other countries overseas. The most salient attempt was that of the Jewish Colonization Association (ICA), founded by Baron Maurice de Hirsch in 1891.[1] Under ICA auspices East European Jews were sent to Argentina in an orderly, organized fashion, beginning in the 1890s. Although the Zionist movement also attempted to channel Jewish migration, it never sent organized settlement groups to Palestine in an orderly manner. For the most part, Zionist migrants were associated with local initiatives and groupings in Eastern Europe that had the blessing of the local and general Zionist leadership. Nevertheless, the speeches and writings of Zionist leaders across the spectrum of their movement show — as explained below — that attempts were made to deliver a selective immigrant population to Palestine, one capable of building the land and settling in it. The Galveston Plan was another attempt of the Jewish Territorialism Organization (ITO) and the Jewish banker Jacob Schiff to intervene in the course of Jewish migration. Its main idea was to divert the flow of Jewish immigration from the poor, congested cities of the American East Coast to sparsely populated towns in the western United States, via the port of Galveston, Texas.[2]

Most Jewish migrants were not involved in any of the three initiatives, which collectively had a minimal effect on the total migration. Only a small minority chose to migrate under the auspices of the three organizations. This article will focus on this small group and make a comparison between those who came to Palestine and

those who landed in Galveston's port at the beginning of twentieth century. Thus, the aim of this paper is threefold: first, a focus on the migration policies which characterize the immigrants to Palestine and Galveston; second, an exploration of the demographic composition of the Jewish immigrants who debarked in Galveston between 1907 and 1914 compared to the composition of immigration to Palestine during the same years; third, since both cases — the Zionist and the "Galvestonian" — involved attempts to deliver a productive population of immigrants capable of self-sufficiency to the destination countries, a determination about which of the two was more successful. Before making this comparison, however, an examination of the migration policies of each movement as they took shape during the mass-migration period in the early twentieth century is prudent.

Shaping the Immigration Policy: Galveston

The Galveston Plan was the product of a convergence of interests between the president of the ITO, Israel Zangwill, who at the time was pursuing diplomatic contacts with various countries for the purchase of a piece of land, and the Jewish banker Jacob Schiff, who was gravely concerned by the concentration of Jewish immigrants in New York.[3]

Since the early nineteenth century, New York had been attracting a diverse population from all over the world due to its economic advantages and potential. The city had become a modern Tower of Babel, with millions of people of different nationalities intermingling and coexisting on an island no larger than 57 square kilometers. East European Jews started coming in large numbers in the 1870s, fleeing economic hardship and political persecution in their countries of origin. Their population in the city climbed from year to year — from sixty-thousand in 1880 to six hundred and seventy-two thousand in 1905, and approximately 1.3 million around the time of World War I (estimates). The vast majority of the immigrants lived on the Lower East Side



Israel Zangwill
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

of Manhattan, an area that soon became poverty stricken, congested, and crime ridden.[4]

The fears from the poor living conditions of Jewish immigrants and the concern that the U.S. government was going to close the gates brought several prominent American Jews, including Jacob Schiff, to try to solve the distress of the Jews on the East Coast. The Industrial Removal Office (IRO) was founded in January 1901 with the aim of reducing the number of immigrants in New York and the other large cities on the East Coast by sending them to inland towns, where jobs were more plentiful and varied.[5] By 1905 some forty thousand Jews had left New York with the help of the IRO and at its expense. Then, however, the huge wave of immigration of the early twentieth century began, bringing hundreds of thousands Jews to the United States, the vast majority of whom settled in New York.

As living conditions for Jewish immigrants on the East Coast deteriorated, Schiff reached the conclusion that the diversion of immigration to inland towns in the American West should take place in the immigrants' countries of origin, i.e., before they reached New York. On this point there was agreement between Zangwill, who was searching for land for Jewish settlement, and Schiff. Both men were aware of the Jews' plight. Zangwill was alert to the economic hardship and persecution in Eastern Europe; Schiff knew about the poverty and unbearable living conditions that beset Jewish immigrants in the East Coast American cities. The bleak situation led Zangwill and Schiff to cooperate in a venture that lasted until the outbreak of World War I.



Rabbi Cohen of Galveston meets with new immigrants.
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

Nevertheless, in spite of the cooperation between

Zangwill and Schiff, each saw completely different purposes for the Galveston Plan. For Schiff, the Galveston Plan was only philanthropy assistance to the East European immigrant Jews in the United States. For the president of the territorialist organization, the immigration to Galveston was much more than that. As a former Zionist and one of Herzl's closest associates, Zangwill understood the potential of this plan — to create an autonomous territory for the Jewish people in the West. In 1910 Zangwill explained the importance of this plan:

> Every Galveston emigrant therefore will have the *mitzvah* not only of preventing the closing of our present land of refuge but of opening up new places of refuge to our brethren. Every man who sails to Galveston and settles successfully in the town indicated by our committee is adding to its Jewish population and paving the way for those who will follow him. In this way a home will be ready for our people in case of new historic calamities in the lands of our Goluth … Only a land already half developed like Western America, holds the possibility of receiving and supporting vast numbers of immigrants, and provides by the ever-increasing development of its railway, towns and agriculture, sufficiently profitable opportunities for industry and investment.[6]

The purpose of the Galveston Plan, in Zangwill's view, was to establish a home for the Jewish people in the American West. The first to come would pave the way for their successors, and by settling in this undeveloped area they would establish a refuge for their persecuted brethren.

To carry out the Galveston Plan, three information bureaus were established: one in Kiev, in charge of recruiting emigrants and sending them to the port of departure; a second in Bremen, Germany (the port of departure for Galveston), for which the Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden (Relief Organization of German Jews), under the supervision of Dr. Paul Nathan, was responsible; and the third at Galveston port itself, in charge of dispersing newcomers to other locations.[7] Each bureau handled one phase of the program and Zangwill, from his residence in London, along with Schiff in the United States, supervised the process as a whole. Zangwill described the emigration process as unprecedented in Jewish history; it began, he said, "in countries in which Jews were persecuted, continued in Germany under the auspices

of the Hilfsverein, and ended in Galveston and the other cities in the western United States."[8]

Only the bureau in Kiev was under the direct supervision of the ITO. The other offices reported to their immediate supervisors — the Bremen bureau to Paul Nathan and the Galveston bureau to Jacob Schiff. The Kiev bureau (the Jewish Emigration Company) was headed by its president, Max Mandelstamm, and its secretary, David Jochelmann. They had agents — nearly one hundred in 1912 — throughout the Pale of Settlement. The main job of this bureau was to recruit emigrants who were deemed suitable, i.e., capable of integrating into western American towns with relative ease. Consequently, fairly stringent acceptance standards were set:

> The emigrant must not be over 40 years of age. If married, the emigrant, his wife and children must be strong and healthy, and able to satisfy all the requirements of the Immigration Laws of the U.S.A. The emigrant must pay his own fare from Bremen to Galveston which is 41 dollars. The emigrant must be … a strong labourer […]. The intending emigrant should clearly understand that economic conditions everywhere in the United States are such that strict Sabbath observance is exceedingly difficult, in many cases almost impossible.[9]

Women were not allowed to immigrate on their own: "No unmarried female or child of either sex under the age of sixteen who is unaccompanied by a parent or married relative will be admitted." Married women who wished to immigrate had to prove that "they are travelling at the invitation of their husbands who are already settled in America."[10]

After the admission requirements were determined, the ITO information bureau in Kiev started carrying out the plan. Its agents fanned out in the Pale of Settlement to persuade potential emigrants that west was better than east. Recruiting them was extremely difficult. Nevertheless, within about seven years, the ITO managed to enlist eight thousand people and send them to the port of Galveston, Texas.

Shaping the Immigration Policy: Palestine

The Zionist movement's policy about the quality of immigrants needed to settle Palestine was no different from that phrased by the authors of the Galveston Plan. In the early 1880s, the leader of the Hibbat Tsiyyon movement, Moshe Leib Lilienblum, stated, "If we are

encouraging [Jews] to settle [Palestine], we have only the rich in mind, those who can buy estates for themselves and prepare all the equipment they need at their own expense. There is no place for the poor in Palestine."[11] When the influx of immigrants to Palestine increased at the beginning of the twentieth century, the leaders of the Yishuv (the organized Jewish community of the pre-state of Israel) stepped up their efforts to lure productive immigrants who would be able to support themselves.

The personalities who had the greatest influence on migration to Palestine were Menahem Sheinkin and Arthur Ruppin. Sheinkin was a representative of the Odessa Committee of Hibbat Tsiyyon in Palestine and the head of the information bureau for Jewish migrants in Palestine that had been established in 1905.[12] Ruppin headed the Palestine Office of the Zionist Organization and was an agent of the Organization in Palestine starting in 1908. In this capacity, Ruppin answered the queries of potential immigrants who expressed their interest in immigrating to Palestine and advised them about whether they should make the move or stay in Eastern Europe for the time being. Sheinkin and Ruppin did not coordinate their efforts, and relations between them were sometimes strained.[13] Both agreed, however, that in the first stage the immigrants who should come to Palestine were those with means. Only such immigrants could establish a broad economic infrastructure that would facilitate the absorption of the poor and lower-middle-class immigrants who would follow. This policy was predicated on the realization that Palestine was too poor to absorb destitute immigrants.[14] Palestine, they said, was not a country of refuge for persecuted Jews and could not receive unfit immigrants. Accordingly, the natural destination of Jewish migrants, they claimed, should be not Palestine but the United States.[15]

As soon as it was established in 1905, the information bureau in Jaffa began to place advertisements urging only immigrants of means to come to Palestine:

> The current situation in [Palestine] is such that new immigrants without means have no hope of getting by. The other type of person, who can come without asking any prior questions, is one who has wealth, great or even small. For them, conditions in Palestine are excellent, even if they are not expert in any particular occupation.

> The well-off can establish themselves nicely in both towns and colonies.... The more moneyed people come to [Palestine], the broader a base for labor there will be for the many laborers who are already here.... The current situation requires a larger influx of people with means than of those who lack means, and it allows the affluent to find a broad base for various business enterprises, all of which prove fruitful for their owners.[16]

Reports in the contemporaneous press are not the only source of information about the Zionist movement's immigration policy. Each year the information bureau in Jaffa and the Palestine Office received thousands of letters from potential immigrants to Palestine. Sheinkin's and Ruppin's replies to these inquiries give evidence of their efforts to thwart indiscriminate mass immigration. Several examples follow:

> Dear Mr. S. Weisfeld: In response to your letter, we write the following: a young man with a wife, a child, and little money cannot come to Palestine and accomplish anything with 200 silver rubles. He will not be able to sustain his family on the daily wage of a worker in a moshava [farming village] (50 kopeks per day). With felicitations from Zion, M. Sheinkin.[17]

"Expert blacksmiths and makers of horseshoes," Arthur Ruppin wrote in response to one of the many inquiries that he received, "may find work that will support them. Thus, we tend to reply to unmarried blacksmiths that they can come: they are not burdened with a family and can move from place to place in search of work until they actually find it. However, we cannot answer in the affirmative to heads of household who have to start making a living at once."[18] In response to an inquiry from Abraham Persov of Chernigov province, who wished to find a teaching position in Palestine, Ruppin wrote, "The work is irregular and since you have a household, it is difficult to hope that you will be able to make a decent living."[19]

Analysis of Sheinkin and Ruppin's replies shows that 61 percent of inquiries were turned down categorically with a recommendation not to come to Palestine. Some 18 percent of correspondents were advised to come, check out the country, and then decide. Only 21 percent were told explicitly that they should come and settle. Examining the correspondence between the inquirer's wealth and the information

bureau's reply, we find that the wealthier the inquirers were, the lower the percent of rejections.[20]

The policy of preferring immigrants who could support themselves respectably remained in effect until World War I. In 1913, Sheinkin and Ruppin still adhered to the view that Palestine needed healthy immigrants who could afford to establish themselves. If other types of immigrants were to come, the entire Zionist enterprise would be in jeopardy. All of us, said Sheinkin, have one ambition, intention, and goal:

> To build up and improve [the country] by bringing in a larger number of healthy, solid elements who can afford to establish themselves, make a living, and generate life. We also know, by the same token, that the Yishuv and our work in general will be in great danger if undesirable elements, i.e., those who cannot possibly make do here, come here to settle on the basis of our advice and instruction. When they return to their countries of origin, they will be able to destroy in a moment everything that we can build over much time. It is easier, of course, to destroy than to build and rebuild.[21]

In view of the similarity between the two immigration policies and the attempts by Israel Zangwill and Zionist movement leaders to attract productive immigrants to each of the destinations — the American West and Palestine — we must compare the Zionist movement to the Territorialist movement, which as stated, was in charge of recruiting emigrants and sending them to Galveston port. Since the two movements were coterminous, operated in the same countries of origin, and wished to attract affluent emigrants, it is appropriate to examine which of them performed its mission more successfully.

The Demographic Composition of the Immigrants to Galveston and Palestine

The following demographic analysis of immigrants who reached the United States under the Galveston Plan and Palestine under the auspices of the Zionist movement is based mainly on the files of the ITO information bureaus and the Zionist movement at the Central Zionist Archives in Israel. In the case of immigration to Galveston, the ITO division of the Zionist Archives has a catalogue with the names of some five thousand Jewish immigrants who debarked at Galveston port from 1910 to 1914. The catalogue shows the exact number of

emigrants who reached the United States as part of this plan and their gender, age, family status, number of children (if any), occupation, town of origin, and intended town of destination.[22] The catalogue has no data on the first years of immigration to Galveston (1907–1909). In 1910, however, the ITO released statistics about this immigration in its initial years.[23] In the same year, demographer and economist Jacob Lestchinsky published a comprehensive statistical article about Jewish immigration to Galveston.[24] The combination of official ITO data, Lestchinsky's article, and the database of Galveston immigrants that was generated from the catalogue provides a credible rendering of the demographic complexion of Jewish immigration to Galveston from 1907 to 1914.

The Odessa Committee information bureau, seated in Odessa, and the official journal of the Zionist Organization, *Ha-'Olam* released statistical data on immigration to Palestine.[25] In the 1905–1914 period, clerks at the information bureau registered almost all emigrants who departed for Palestine from the port of Odessa. The published statistical data tell us about the socio-demographic composition of Jewish immigrants to Palestine in the early twentieth century, much as the catalogue informs us about the composition of immigration to Galveston.

Table 1. *Immigration to Galveston and Palestine in the Early Twentieth Century*[26]

Year	Number of Immigrants to Galveston	Immigration to Palestine from Odessa Port
1905	—	1,230
1906	—	3,450
1907	—	1,750
1908	—	2,097
1907-1909	2,349	2,459
1910	466	1,979
1911	370	2,326
1912	514	2,430
1913	2,664	3,050
1914	995	2,182
Total	**7,358**	**Total 22,953**

From the beginning of the twentieth century until the outbreak of World War I, three times as many Jews moved to Palestine as to Galveston. It should be borne in mind, however, that the Galveston Plan did not become operational until 1907 and the available data about immigration to Palestine cover the previous two years. However, even excluding the years 1905–1906, there was more immigration to Palestine than to Galveston. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the differences in the number of emigrants, there is a perceptible correspondence in 1911–1914 in the increase or decrease in immigration to each destination. In both cases, 1913 was a year of relatively large-scale immigration.

Table 2. *Immigrants to Galveston, Palestine, and Ellis Island, by Gender*

	Galveston	Pct	Palestine	Pct.	Ellis Island	Pct.
Men	5,925	77	13,805	60	832,000	55
Women	1,748	23	9,148	40	654,000	45
Total	**7,673**	**100**	**22,953**	**100**	**1,486,000**	**100**

The ratio of men to women among those who sailed to Galveston port with facilitation by the ITO between 1907 and 1914 was 77:23, on average. Women accounted for almost twice the share of immigrants to Palestine. When comparing immigration to Galveston and to Palestine and Ellis Island, it becomes clear that the demographic makeup of immigrants to Palestine most strongly resembles that of Jewish immigrants to Ellis Island.[27] The differences in the distribution of immigrants by gender indicate that hardly any families with children reached Galveston, whereas immigration to Palestine and Ellis Island was largely a family affair. Table 3, which describes the distribution of immigrants by age cohorts, supports this claim.

Table 3. *Immigrants to Galveston, Palestine, and Ellis Island, by Age*

	Galveston	Pct.	Palestine	Pct.	Ellis Island	Pct.
Up to 14-15	993	14	5,422	25	362,000	24
14-15 to 44-50	5,866	80	11,588	53	1,037,000	70
44-50+	493	6	4,644	22	87,000	6
Total	**7,352**	**100**	**21,654**	**100**	**1,486,000**	**100**

The data in Table 3 reinforce the assertion that Jewish immigration to Galveston was chiefly an endeavor for young people in their physical prime. Unlike immigrants to Palestine and Ellis Island, only 14 percent of immigrants to Galveston were children up to age fourteen. Such a small proportion of children indicates that immigration to Galveston was not undertaken within a family framework. By analyzing the 14–44 age cohort of immigrants to Galveston, we find that 20 percent of members of the cohort were aged 15–19, 40 percent were in their twenties (20–29), and 20 percent were aged 30–39. Only 6 percent of immigrants who reached Galveston port were more than forty-four years of age.

The percent of children among immigrants to New York and Palestine was much higher. About one-fourth of these immigrants were children up to 14–15 years of age. If we assume that members of this age group arrived with family members, it's possible to state that immigration to Palestine and Ellis Island was foremost a family enterprise. Much like the data in Table 2, Table 3 indicates that characteristics of immigration to Palestine more strongly resembled those of general Jewish immigration to the United States than to Galveston. The significant difference between Palestine and the American destinations was in the population of older immigrants, those over the age of forty-four. The share of the "elderly," as defined, was four times greater among immigrants to Palestine than among immigrants to Galveston and Ellis Island. The main reason is that Palestine attracted a population of immigrants who wished only to die and be buried in the Holy Land. Furthermore, people in this age group regarded the United States as a country that would subject Jewish immigrants to cultural decline and Palestine as a place where they might more easily practice the Jewish faith.[28] Thus, half of the immigrants to Palestine were children or the "elderly."

Table 4: *Immigrants to Galveston, by Occupation (4,029)*[29]

Occupation: men	Galveston	Pct.	Palestine	Pct.
Artisans	2,658	82	3,567	7
Merchants	475	14	2,977	35
Liberal professions	120	4	1,579	18
Total	**3,253**	**100**	**8,123**	**100**
Occupation: women	Galveston	Pct.	Palestine	Pct.
Seamstresses	302	38	—	—
Misc. crafts	100	12	—	—
No occupation	374	48	—	—
Total	**776**	**100**	**—**	**—**

Table 4 shows that the large majority of male "Galvestonian" immigrants were artisans. Within this group most of the artisans were, in declining order, cobblers, tailors, carpenters, and metalworkers. About 15 percent were merchants and only 3 percent practiced liberal professions. Among women immigrants who reached Galveston, the picture was slightly different. About half of adult women immigrants had no occupation; most were married and had reached the U.S. with their husbands or joined their husbands in one of the Western American towns. About 40 percent of the women were seamstresses; the rest practiced miscellaneous crafts. The occupational distribution of immigrants to Palestine was totally different. Some 47 percent of men were artisans, laborers, and farm workers. The available data does not allow historians to isolate the population of artisans and compare it with that of artisans who reached Galveston, but obviously the share of such people among immigrants to Palestine was much lower. The proportion of liberal professionals who reached Palestine was five times greater and that of petty merchants was two and a half times greater. The statistics from the Odessa information bureau do not allow for inference of anything about the composition of women immigrants who, as stated, accounted for an estimated 40 percent of the total immigrant population.

The Failed Galveston Plan

Although the Zionist movement and the originators of the Galveston Plan pursued similar policies in regard to the desired type of emigrant, the emigrants who reached Palestine did not resemble those who reached Galveston. The flow of migration to Palestine in the early twentieth century did not correspond to the Zionist immigration policy. The main reason was that Ruppin and Sheinkin were neither authorized nor able to determine who would pass through the portals of Palestine. Their entreaties to applicants to weigh their decision to move to Palestine were no more than recommendations; immigrants rushed to Palestine as soon as their lives in Russia were imperiled.

Many articles in the contemporaneous press, as well as letters by Sheinkin to the heads of the Zionist Organization, described newly landed immigrants with great concern and in bleak colors. "The Russian ships have begun to arrive in succession as before, now that the seamen's strike in Odessa has ended," the newspaper *Ha-Zeman* reported:

> New immigrants are arriving, many from the provinces of Poland.... Poverty among the immigrants has risen greatly, children have eye diseases, and the [immigrants] have no source of support and assistance. The past two months in particular, those of late summer, are the most difficult for new people with families. A soup kitchen for impoverished migrants opened up this week. It is able to serve meals to fifty immigrants for the time being.[30]

Sheinkin wrote the following to Otto Warburg, a member of the small executive council of the Zionist Organization:

> Until you directors make an effort to attract several millions in capital to Palestine, we will remain nil. Our positions will not be strengthened by means of the poor who are coming to Palestine on their own. On the contrary, I must state that such immigration is subjecting us to greater and greater disgrace in the eyes of officials and ordinary people with each passing day. They observe bitterly poor people, dejected and ragged, clutching bundles of rags, the dregs of the nation who are unfit to bring benefit to the country, and are getting accustomed to making light of our dignity. Unless affluent, dignified, well-dressed, and attractive people also begin to come, the name "Jew" in the port jargon will become synonymous for the weak, the poor, the lowly, and the contemptuous, and this view will pass from there to the rest of the

> people. This is the naked truth that I must bring to your attention due to my position at the information bureau, and I can present you with reports like these each and every week. Everything is standing still. Nothing is changing and [nothing] will change until moneyed [people] come to Palestine.[31]

Thus, the immigrant population that reached Palestine in the early twentieth century was totally different from the image of those young people who came to build the country and to be built by it. In the Galveston case, by contrast, the ITO seems to have managed to apply its selective policy. Therefore, the immigrants to Galveston were of higher quality than the "dejected," "bitterly poor" and "ragged … dregs of the nation" who landed in Palestine in the early twentieth century. They were certainly cut of better cloth than those who reached New York during those years.[32] In view of Sheinkin's and Ruppin's derogatory references to the immigrants who reached Palestine, and even though fewer emigrants were sent to Galveston than came to Palestine, it seems very likely that both would have preferred the quality of the Galveston emigrants to the quantity of those drawn to Palestine.

The ITO's struggle with the Zionist movement, however, concerned more than the recruitment of better and more productive emigrants. Its tough terms of acceptance were meant to assure the immigrants' full integration in the American West. The struggle was mainly ideological. In contrast to the Zionist movement, the Jewish Territorial Organization was altogether unwilling to place the entire fate of the Jewish people in a single piece of territory that might well never be acquired. In his many speeches, Zangwill frequently noted, "The most important matter, under present circumstances, is the saving and revivifying of our people and our culture, and that the land exists for people and not the people for a land."[33]

It is in view of this attitude and Zangwill's ceaseless attempts to look for a piece of land for the Jewish people that his enlistment in Jacob Schiff's initiative should be considered. For the president of the territorialist organization, immigration to Galveston was much more than philanthropic assistance for East European Jews. As a former Zionist and one of Herzl's closest associates, Zangwill understood the intrinsic potential of this plan. Here, however, in contrast to

his behavior in regard to other territorialist initiatives that he had promoted, Zangwill abstained from stating his goals explicitly. American immigration law barred immigrants who belonged to ideological and, a *fortiori,* national movements. Any utterance of a national nature would suspend a cloud over the Galveston Plan, subject it to unneeded difficulties, and might even endanger it. However, one could not expect the president of the ITO to abandon his national ideas and promote an immigration scheme that aimed only to ease the suffering of the immigrant population in the cities on the East Coast. Israel Zangwill, unlike Jacob Schiff, regarded immigration to the American West as an opportunity to establish a present and future home for wandering Jews.

The Galveston scheme, to Zangwill, was not intended to ease the suffering of Jewish immigrants in Manhattan. Thus, we may understand why the composition of the Galveston emigrants was totally different from that of immigrants who reached Ellis Island. The purpose of sending young and able-bodied immigrants to the American West was to fulfill Zangwill's covert aspirations and not to solve the congestion and housing shortages that typified the cities of the East Coast. The problem in New York was not childless young people in their twenties and thirties, but families who, burdened with child-raising responsibilities, had little chance of finding a respectable source of livelihood.

From this perspective, examination of Jacob Schiff's approach to the national ideas of the president of the Jewish Territorial Organization is of particular interest. A few months before the Galveston Plan was launched, Schiff correctly understood Zangwill's hidden intentions and his desire to exploit the immigration to Galveston in order to promote his own national objectives. "I am very clear in my mind," Schiff wrote to Judge Saltzberger in December 1906, "that when immigrants arrive here, they must cease to be under the protectorate of the ITO or any other society or individual."[34] Schiff needed Zangwill solely for the recruitment of immigrants in Eastern Europe and their dispatch to the West Coast. Nothing more. The power of the absorber, in Schiff's understanding, was far greater than that of the sender. Consequently, he perceived no cause for concern.

And, indeed, Schiff's prediction was fully realized. As soon as the Galveston immigrants dispersed to various cities in the western United States, Schiff's people made every effort to integrate them into the local communities. This concept was clearly articulated by Jacob Billikopf, who absorbed some of the Galveston immigrants in Kansas City:

> The process of Americanizing, of normalizing the Jewish immigrant begins when he embarks for America. The moment that immigrant enters our night schools, and acquires the rudiment of the English language; the moment he acquires a little competence; the moment he sends his children to school; the moment his boys go to the high school or university, which privileges were denied him and his children in his own country … that moment all his radicalism evaporates and he becomes a full-fledged and law-abiding member of the community.[35]

The difference between migration to Galveston and to Palestine, if so, should be sought not in demographic composition or the immigration policies alone, but also in the dynamic that developed between the host society and the recently landed immigrants, who were eager to integrate. Here lies the main difference between the Galveston emigrants and those who reached Palestine in the early twentieth century. In the Galveston Plan — as viewed by Israel Zangwill — it was not enough to create cities of refuge for persecuted Jews in the American West. In addition to the idea, a large measure of territorialist action in the intended country was needed. No such action took place in the western U.S., but a national endeavor of this type did occur in Palestine. A small minority, unrepresentative of the totality of Jewish migrants to Palestine, embarked on far-reaching settlement. Public and cultural activity began immediately upon its arrival. Thousands of Jews were drawn into the wake of this small movement, moved to Palestine, and subscribed to the Zionist idea. The Galveston immigrants, in contrast, who had come under the auspices of the territorialist movement, not only abstained from "spiritual" territorialist efforts in the towns of the American West, but were, in many cases, estranged from the territorialist idea. ITO did not establish branches in these immigrants' places of settlement and no real effort was made even to prepare the area for the absorption of the masses that were supposed to arrive. The territorialist idea expired as soon as the immigrants reached the United States.

It is in this respect that migration to Palestine differed from migration to other destinations and, particularly, to Galveston. In immigration countries other than Palestine, newly landed Jews spared no effort to integrate into the surrounding society, to do well economically, and to become equally empowered citizens. In Palestine, by contrast, immigrants were exposed not only to natural immigrant aspirations but also to the national idea, which started out as the "possession" of a small group but was gradually imparted to immigrants and their offspring during the period of their immigration and, especially, in the years that followed.

Conclusion

Jewish immigration between 1870 and 1914 transformed the condition of the Jewish people unrecognizably. New Jewish collectives took shape and gathered strength during this time; others began to decline in size and importance. The most conspicuous and important of the Jewish collectives that developed as a result of the mass Jewish immigration — to this day — are American and Israeli Jewry. Although both communities grew and developed as a consequence of the absorption of immigrants who came from the same countries of origin during the same period, two diametrically opposed historiographies evolved.

The historiography of the new Yishuv in Palestine and Jewish immigration to Palestine emphasized the dissimilarity and uniqueness of this migration relative to Jewish migration at large. It also credited the Zionist ideology with doing much to inspire this immigration. The point of departure of this differentiation is "quality, not quantity." The fact that fewer migrants chose Palestine than America alludes to the unique and exceptional nature of this migration.

The historiography of Jewish migration to the United States also stresses the uniqueness of the Jewish case but contrasts this migration to non-Jewish migrant groups who came to the United States at the same time. Unlike non-Jewish immigrants who reached the U.S. unaccompanied in order to make money and return to their countries of origin, most Jews came with their families and intended to settle in America permanently. One consequence of this behavior was a higher re-emigration rate among non-Jewish immigrants than among Jewish

immigrants. The historical research that deals with Jewish migration to the United States, however, hardly gives thought to differences among Jewish migrants who came from the same countries of origin but went to different destination countries.[36]

This article compares the difference between two small emigrant groups that reached different destination countries under the auspices of specific ideas. The comparison shows that Jewish migration to Palestine was less qualitative than Jewish migration to Galveston. Half of the immigrants in the former group were elderly and children, and Sheinkin's and Ruppin's descriptions of the immigrant population show great dissatisfaction with the "human material" that washed ashore in Palestine. For Israel Zangwill, the Galveston Plan was not an alternative to diplomatic negotiations, and Jewish settlement in the American West was not a surrogate for the autonomous territory that he sought. However, in view of the diplomatic difficulties and the persecutions of Jews, Zangwill sought, by arranging Jewish emigration to the American West, a way to solve the Jewish problem in Eastern Europe, if only temporarily and partly. The Galveston Plan was for the ITO what the Uganda scheme was for the Zionist movement — a provisional emergency shelter. For the territorialists, it was a scheme with limited national aims that dovetailed with the plans of the ITO. To fulfill it Zangwill searched for an emigrant population that could develop and build the American West.

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Notes

[1] On Jewish immigration to Argentina, see H. Avni, *Argentine: The Promised Land* (Jerusalem, 1973).

[2] On the Galveston Plan, see Bernard Marinbach, *Galveston: Ellis Island of the West* (New York, 1982). Also see Gary Dean Best, "Jacob H. Schiff's Galveston Movement: An Experiment in Immigrant Deflection, 1907-1914," *American Jewish Archives,* XXX, no. 1 (April, 1978): 43–79.

[3] Bernard Marinbach, *Galveston: Ellis Island of the West* (New York, 1982), 9.

[4] On the growth of the New York Jewish population, see *The Jewish Communal Register of New York City 1917–1918* (New York, 1918), 89–90. Much has been written about the Jews' living conditions in New York. For example: M. Rischin, *The Promised City: New York's Jews 1870-1914* (Cambridge, 1962); I. Howe and K. Libo, *How We Lived, 1880–1930* (New York, 1979); I. Howe, *The World of Our Fathers,* (New York, 1976); J. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (New York, 1890); C. Bernheimer, ed., *The Russian Jew in the United States* (Philadelphia, 1905). See also A. Goren, *New York Jews and the Quest for Community: The Kehilla Experiment 1908-1922* (New York, 1970).

[5] In regard to the IRO, see R. Rockaway, *Words of the Uprooted: Jewish Immigration in Early Twentieth Century America* (New York, 1998), and R. Rockaway, *Mehagrim, Poalim, Ve-gangsterim,* (Tel Aviv, 1990). Also see David M. Bressler, *The Removal Work, Including Galveston,* (St. Louis, 1910).

[6] I. Zangwill, "Preface to the Emigration Pamphlet" (1910), Central Zionist Archives (hereafter CZA) A36, file 95b, 3–4.

[7] CZA, A36, file 95b, 1.

[8] I. Zangwill, *Land of Refuge,* ITO Pamphlets no. 2, (London, 1907), 20.

[9] CZA, A36, file 95b.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] Moshe Leib Lilienblum, "Derekh la-avor golim," in *Ketavim otobiografi'im,* vol. 3, (Jerusalem, 1970), (Hebrew), 14.

[12] On Sheinkin's information bureau in Jaffa, see M. Shilo, "The Information Bureau of Menahem Sheinkin in Jaffa during the Second Aliya Period," XVII *Zionism* (1993), (Hebrew), 39–70.

[13] *Ibid.*, 58–61.

[14] M. Shilo, "Changing Attitudes in the Zionist Movement towards Immigration to Eretz Israel," Cathedra 46 (December, 1987): (Hebrew), 109–22.

[15] *Ibid.*, 111.

[16] "Yediot Me-Erets Yisrael," *Ha-yom,* No. 89 (November 16, 1906): 2.

[17] M. Sheinkin to S. Weisfeld, April 18, 1907, Labor Movement Archives IV-114-118, file 2.

[18] Arthur Ruppin to agent of Palestine Land Development Company in Vilna, January 20, 1914, CZA, L2, file 133I.

[19] Arthur Ruppin to Abraham Persov, June 29, 1914, CZA, L2, file 138.

[20] G. Alroey, *"Immigrants:" The Jewish Immigration to Palestine in the Early Twentieth Century,* (Jerusalem, 2003) (Hebrew), 75.

[21] Menahem Sheinkin in lecture on Jan. 5, 1913, CZA, A24, file 52.

[22] I wish to thank Metvei Beinenson, who helped me build the database of immigrants to the United States under the Galveston Plan. The database is part of a larger database on Jewish emigration from 1870 to 1924, developed at the Department of Land of Israel Studies of the University of Haifa, with funding from the Israel Science Foundation. For more about the demographic composition of Galveston's immigrants, see *American Jewish Archives* (AJA), Henry Cohen Papers, box 1, folder 4. See http://mjmd.haifa.ac.il.

[23] *Vas hot tunz gegebn di Galveston emigratsie* (What the emigration to Galveston has done for us), (Warsaw, 1910).

[24] Jacob Lestschinsky, "Die Auswanderung der Juden nach Galveston," *Zeitschrift fur Demographie und Statistik der Juden',* (December, 1910), Heft 12, 177–84.

[25] The tables relating to emigration from the Odessa port to Palestine appeared in the following additions of *Ha-'Olam:* no. 17, May 12, 1910, 14–15; no. 5, February 15, 1911, 17–18; no. 15, May 6, 1913, 9–10, and no. 9, March 19, 1914, 15. In 1910, *Ha-'Olam* released data for the years 1905–1909 for the first time. From 1910 on data were published for the years 1910, 1911, 1912, and 1913. *Ha-'Olam* did not release statistics for 1914. They may be culled from the lists of the Odessa information bureau in Ussishkin's personal archives, A24, file 54/2, in the Central Zionist Archives. These lists, unlike those in *Ha-'Olam,* give information only about the immigrants' distribution by gender and age. More than ten thousand immigrants came to Palestine from the Triest port from 1905 to1914.

[26] Precise figures on immigration in 1907, 1908, and 1909 are lacking. Jacob Lestchinsky, in his article about immigration to Galveston, states that two thousand three hundred and nine immigrants reached Galveston between 1907 and 1909. See Jacob Lestchinsky, "Die Auswanderung der Juden nach Galveston," 178.

[27] On the composition of Jewish immigration to Ellis Island, see Liebman Hersch, "International Migration of the Jews," in Walter Eillcox, ed., *Internal Migrations,* (New York, 1931), 471–520.

[28] For the views of East European rabbis about the United States and Palestine, see Kimmy Caplan, *Orthodoxy in the New World: Immigrant Rabbis and Preaching in America (1881–1924),* (Jerusalem, 2002), (Hebrew), 181–253.

[29] Table 4 does not include children up to age sixteen, nearly all of whom reached the United States with family members and without occupations.

[30] Ben Horin, "Letter from Palestine," *Ha-zeman 22,* no. 166, August 13, 1906.

[31] Menahem Sheinkin to Otto Warburg (1908?), CZA, A24, File 52.

[32] *Ibid.*, 5.

[33] "Our Aims and Objects," CZA, A36, file 8.

[34] *American Jewish Archives,* Jacob Schiff Papers, microfilm 692.

[35] *American Jewish Archives,* Jacob Schiff Papers, microfilm 678.

[36] See, for example, Ellen Eisenberg, "Argentine and American Jewry: A Case for Contrasting Immigrant Origins," *American Jewish Archives,* XLVII, no. 1 (1995):1–16.

Fascist Antisemitism and Jewish-Italian Relations in the United States

Stefano Luconi

Scholars have long contended that antisemitism in fascist Italy was a much milder version than its counterpart in Nazi Germany. In this view Italy was a latecomer to anti-Jewish legislation, since the country did not adopt any racial measures until 1938. Moreover, the Italian people boycotted fascist antisemitic provisions after their enactment and even risked their lives to save Jews from deportation when Germany occupied their nation and tried to implement the "Final Solution." As this argument further goes, the lack of an antisemitic tradition in modern Italy and the good-heartedness of the Italian population shielded Italian Jews from the hardships and excesses that German Jews conversely had to face under Nazism.[1]

The thesis of Italians' imperviousness to anti-Jewish sentiments also has been applied to their communities abroad. Specifically, it has been suggested that antisemitism failed to make significant inroads into "Little Italies" in the United States even after fascism started its anti-Jewish campaign.[2] Recent studies, however, have begun to reassess the meaning, implications, and consequences of fascist racial legislation. Their findings have revealed that the Italian people, too, shared antisemitic feelings and, far from protecting Jews, contributed to their persecution under both Mussolini's regime and the Nazi occupation.[3]

Against this backdrop this article examines to what extent that revisionist interpretation offers a viable model to account for the attitude of Italian Americans toward Jews in the United States in the late 1930s and early 1940s. In particular, it focuses on how fascist antisemitism affected the relations between these two ethnic minorities.

On June 24, 1937, Generoso Pope — a prominent New York City Italian American contractor — went back to the United States after a tour of his native country where he had been granted private audiences with Pope Pius XI, fascist Minister of Foreign Affairs Galeazzo Ciano, and Italian dictator Benito Mussolini. *Il Duce* had given

Pope a message for U.S. Jews. A number of antisemitic incidents that had occurred in Italy in the previous months were troubling Jewish communities in the United States as forewarnings that the fascist regime was about to align itself with the racial policy of its Nazi ally and launch a large-scale antisemitic campaign. The sanctions of the League of Nations for the 1935 unprovoked fascist invasion of Ethiopia had already weakened the Italian economy. Mussolini was afraid that Italy would further suffer from retaliatory measures similar to the boycott of the German goods and services that the Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League to Champion Human Rights had adopted in the United States after Adolf Hitler had begun to persecute Jews. For this reason Mussolini wanted to reassure Jews in the United States that they had nothing to fear for Italian Jews.[4]

Less than two weeks before Pope's return, Fulvio Suvich, the fascist ambassador in Washington, notified the American Jewish Congress that "the Italian Government plans no change in the policy towards its Jewish population whom it regards highly, and that recent attacks against the Jews in the Italian press are not significant of government attitude." Such a statement was unimpressive. Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, president of the World Jewish Congress, confined himself to issuing a press release in which he quoted Suvich's words without adding any comment or expression of relief. Likewise, after Suvich's declaration, the *Jewish Examiner* published an article by Paul M. Reid, the executive director of the American League against War and Fascism, who argued that "the recent outbreak of antisemitic violence in Poland can be directly traced to the persecution pattern set by the Nazi and adopted by Mussolini," although the latter had not launched his anti-Jewish crusade yet.[5]



Congressman Samuel Dickstein (Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

After Suvich's apparent failure to persuade Jews in the United States about the alleged goodwill of the fascist regime, it was Pope's turn. Following his arrival at New York harbor, Pope made a statement in which he cited Mussolini's words:

> I authorize you to declare and make known, immediately upon return to New York, to the Jews of America that their preoccupation for their brothers living in Italy is nothing but the fruit of evil informers. I authorize you to specify that the Jews in Italy have received, receive, and will continue to receive the same treatment accorded to every other Italian citizen and that no form of racial or religious discrimination is in my thought, which is devoted and faithful to the policy of equality in law and the freedom of worship. […] I thanked *Il Duce* for his message – Pope concluded - and I am sure that his explicit and unequivocal affirmations will be welcomed with sincere satisfaction by the Jews of America, among whom I count many dear and excellent friends.[6]

While the latter included Congressman Samuel Dickstein, they did not comprise Wise. Dickstein hurried to have Pope's statement included in the *Congressional Record* as an extension of his own remarks. Conversely, Wise did not even bother to acknowledge receipt of a personal letter that Pope had sent him to guarantee one more time on behalf of Mussolini that the fascist regime planned no form of discrimination against Jews.[7]

One year later, after *Il Duce* had indeed embarked on an antisemitic course, Wise admitted that he had "always believed" that Mussolini would eventually adopt a racial policy. Therefore, one can easily wonder what apparently induced another prominent American Jew like Dickstein to buy the fascist rationale and take Pope's words at face value.[8]

Unlike Wise, who was only a Jewish leader, Dickstein was a Democratic politician as well. His constituency – the Twelfth Congressional District in the East Side – was primarily Jewish. But it was also home to a significant number of Italian Americans. Many of them joined Jews in reporting to Dickstein's headquarters to ask for help, patronage, and other political services. A former protégé of Tammany Hall District chieftain John F. Ahearn, Dickstein had learnt from his mentor that every vote counted and that he could not rely on the Jewish electorate alone. Since Italian Americans and Jews were both pivotal components of the New Deal ethnic coalition that had elected Franklin D. Roosevelt to the White House and kept Dickstein himself in Congress, Dickstein could not risk losing Pope's

support. The endorsement of *Il Progresso Italo-Americano (The Italian-American Progress)* – Pope's Italian-language daily – was allegedly key to secure the Italian American vote in New York City. Pope himself was the chairperson of the Italian Division of the Democratic National Committee. As late as 1941, Dickstein twice took to the floor of the House of Representatives to deny accusations that Pope was a sympathizer of *Il Duce* and to guarantee that "he always condemned fascism and the Mussolini movement." Indeed, Dickstein was eager to win the Italian American vote. He was aware of the widespread fascist sympathies in New York City's Little Italy. Thus, in 1930 Dickstein even congratulated Domenico Trombetta on the establishment of the Lictor Federation. This organization was the heir to the Fascist League of North America that the U.S. Department of State had induced Mussolini to dissolve the previous year. After all, as the former deputy chairperson of the Special House Committee on Un-American Activities between 1934 and 1935, Dickstein had the investigation focus on the Nazi movements in the United States but largely ignore their fascist counterpart.[9]

Dickstein was not the only Jewish congressman from New York City who cherished the support of the Italian-American electorate. Italy's attack on Ethiopia in October 1935 worried many Jews in the United States. On the one hand, U.S. Jews resented a war that disrupted the lives of the roughly seventy-thousand Falashas and pitted the latter against Italian Jews. The invasion of Ethiopia made Abyssinian Jews fight against Italian Jews. As the *B'nai B'rith Magazine* put it, "As the Roman legions advance into Ethiopia, black Jews lay down the Torah to take up arms, and it is quite conceivable that under the tropical sun an Ethiopian Jew may even at this hour be coming to grips with an Italian Jew." The same journal also complained that "the Jew is the prime prophet of peace but ironic circumstances makes him a warrior in all the armies. […] The Italian Jew and the Ethiopian die in mortal embrace, each crying the 'Sh'ma!'" On the other hand U.S. Jews feared that, under the fascist regime, the Falashas might no longer enjoy the protection previously granted by Abyssinian Emperor Haile Selassie. Yet Jewish U.S. Representative William I. Sirovich attended an Italian American rally at Madison Square Garden in

mid-December 1935 to raise money for the Italian Red Cross, which — as antifascists had denounced — was nothing more than a surreptitious way of financing Mussolini's war machinery in Ethiopia under a humanitarian cover-up. Later on, as Italian Americans mobilized to prevent the United States from implementing economic sanctions against their ancestral country, Sirovich also made a point of joining Pope when the latter called on the White House and the Department of State in January 1936 to lobby against changes in the U.S. neutrality legislation that would enable President Roosevelt to restrict American oil exports to Italy.[10]

Yet the preservation of the Jewish Italian alliance within the New Deal coalition became extremely difficult in the aftermath of the passing of fascist antisemitic legislation. Indeed, that partnership had always been very troubled not only in politics but also in the labor movement, and even in everyday life. Besides a common militancy in the Democratic Party, Italian Americans and Jews shared membership in the same unions, lived in adjoining or overlapping neighborhoods, and worked the one next to the another. However, competition on the job market and for cheap housing in immigrant slums, conflicts over political recognition and patronage, as well as struggles for the control of labor unions had long pitted Italian Americans against Jews. These latter often charged their coworkers of Italian ancestry with being strikebreakers. Italian Americans usually retorted that Jews monopolized the ranking positions in the unions to the detriment of the other ethnic minorities. As one of them remarked about a Jewish officer of the Furriers Union, "most of these organizers […] were skunks, interested only in political power and not in uplifting the workers." Indeed, Arthur Hertzberg has suggested that "Jews were prominent among union officials and strike organizers, but that did not endear them to the workers." Italian Americans were also distressed by the fact that both their supervisors and the owners of many clothing firms for which they worked were generally Jews. Even in organized crime, Italian Americans initially held subordinate positions to Jews. In early Prohibition, they did not establish syndicates of their own, but joined rackets controlled by Louis "Lepke" Buchalter, Meyer Lanski, Arnold Rothstein, and Jacob "Gurrah" Shapiro. In addition, contrary

to Jews' tendency to place themselves on the radical and idealistic fringes of the Democratic Party, most Italian Americans were so much matter-of-fact and involved in machine politics that, to Horace M. Kallen's sister, Ida, they seemed to be largely Republican even in such a Democratic stronghold as Boston's Little Italy.[11]

These controversies caused ethnic tensions that made many Italian Americans responsive to antisemitism and prevented them from disavowing Mussolini's 1938 racial turn. New York City was the setting where such conflicts were especially manifest. After all, this city was home to the largest Italian American and Jewish communities in the United States, had a high concentration of unionized workers from both ethnic backgrounds, and included a sizeable district of clothing enterprises. As a reporter remarked about the attitude of New York City's Italian Americans toward Jews in 1939, "to the Italian who is exploited in sweatshops owned by Jewish employers, it sometimes appears logical that the Jew is the source of all his woes."

Actually, fascist propaganda relied heavily upon Italian Americans' hostility toward Jews in order to elicit support for *Il Duce*'s antisemitic stand. *Il Grido della Stirpe (The Cry of the Race),* an Italian-language weekly that received subsidies from Italy's Ministry of Popular Culture until the very eve of the Japanese raid on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, offers a case in point. In April 1938, in order to pave the way for a positive response to Mussolini's forthcoming provisions in New York City's Little Italy, this newspaper overlooked the so-called racial question in Italy and played on Jewish Italian rivalries in the United States. It echoed innuendos that Jews monopolized retailing, boycotted merchants of Italian extraction, and bypassed the Italian American destitute in enjoying relief benefits and jobs with the Works Progress Administration during the hard times of the Depression. The presence of a significant number of German Americans in New York City also contributed to the escalation of the quarrels involving antisemitism .[12]

Yet anti-Jewish feelings did not characterize Italian Americans in New York City only. In Providence, for instance, the *Italian Echo* urged its reader not to express sympathy with the fate of Jews in Germany and Italy because "we must not and cannot embrace the cause of those who have exploited us and continue to exploit us, of those who have

humiliated us, of those who have prevented us from working and have taken away our bread." Likewise, resentment toward Jews had let Boston's otherwise conflicting Irish and Italian Americans find some common ground since the turn of the twentieth century. In the view of the *Jewish Advocate,* in the late 1930s, the antisemitic stand of *La Notizia (The News),* a local Italian-language newspaper, was as vicious as that of *Il Grido della Stirpe* in New York City.[13]

Such anti-Jewish sentiments survived especially in New York City. As late as 1942, Tony Bommarito — an Italian American gangster who specialized in labor racketeering — was still able to exploit Jewish-Italian antagonism in order to disrupt union activities among his fellow ethnic members of the Congress of Industrial Organization. As he put it, "You begins [*sic*] your work by talking against the Jews and the nigger. […] The Jew is keeping labor down by controlling the money. It's the Jews who hires niggers and give them low wages. […] You ties in the niggers with the Jew, den [*sic*] you call the Jews Communists. That gets 'em."[14]

As long as Mussolini rejected antisemitism, *Il Duce* enjoyed a large popularity among both Italian and U.S. Jews. In the mid-1920s, for instance, Otto Kahn – an associate of the investing house Kuhn, Loeb and Company - called the Italian dictator "a remarkable man" and proclaimed himself an admirer of fascism.[15] Even more significantly, a 1933 poll by forty-three American Jewish publications listed Mussolini among the twelve Christians who "have been the most outstanding in their opposition to antisemitism " because "he took pains to demonstrate that Italian fascism does not tolerate racial or religious persecution." Yet, after an initial setback following the Italo-Ethiopian War, the fascist antisemitic turn brought Mussolini's honeymoon with American Jewry to a definitive end. Italian Americans were affected, too. Businessmen of Italian origin, for example, reported a decline in the number of their Jewish clients.[16]



Otto Kahn
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

The Jewish backlash at both the fascist regime and its Italian American supporters exacerbated the preexisting strains between the two communities. On the one hand, when Jewish leaders or even ordinary Jews criticized Mussolini's dictatorship, assailed the fascist antisemitic legislation, or planned to extend the anti-Nazi economic boycott to Italy as well, Italian Americans resented what they perceived as illegitimate interferences in the domestic affairs of their ancestral country. On the other hand, they were ready to fight back or, at least, threaten to do so when they thought that they were the targets of Jewish retaliation. For instance, when rumors circulated that Jewish employers had dismissed workers of Italian extraction or were planning to dismiss them, Philadelphia's Italian-language daily, *Il Popolo Italiano (The Italian People),* issued a dire warning. An editorial that unusually was published in English, made a point of advising

> the intelligent, patriotic Jew that numerically those of Italian birth and parentage are equal to, if not superior to the Jews. If the ill-advised among the recalcitrant, or trouble-making element of that race, attempt any such insane, foolish procedure, they will let loose the contents of a Pandora's box that will result in a terrible social confusion.[17]

It could even be suggested that anti-Jewish attitudes made inroads into Italian American communities long before antisemitism became the official policy of the fascist regime. In New York City's Lower East Side, for instance, the harassment of Sephardic Jews dated back to the early 1910s. In addition, two years before Mussolini's 1922 seizure of power, *Il Progresso Italo-Americano,* which Pope had not bought yet, claimed that the Jews were "the owners of New York City" and complained that nobody had denounced what it called a "Jewish invasion." Similarly, many Italian Americans lacked in sympathy with the fate of German Jews when Fascism and Nazism were still at odds over the so-called racial question. It is well known that Mussolini initially criticized Hitler's antisemitic policy and even made fun of his own future ally's arguments. However, when *Il Progresso Italo-Americano* – then in Pope's hands – came out against Nazi antisemitism in 1933, some of its readers took issue with the stand of their newspaper and contended that Hitler was only protecting Germany from Jewish subversives who wanted to undermine the political stability of the country. Likewise, from the fall of 1937



Rabbi Stephen Wise with New York City Mayor Fiorello H. La Guardia
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

through the spring of 1938, while the fascist regime still denied that it planned any discrimination of Jews, New York City's merchants with Italian-sounding names were a constant presence on the lists of violators of the moral boycott of German goods published in the bulletin of the Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League to Champion Human Rights.[18]

An Italian American, Mayor Fiorello H. La Guardia of New York City, was one of the vice presidents of the Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League and an outspoken advocate of the economic boycott of Nazi Germany. That he was of Jewish descent on the side of his mother (Irene Luzzato-Cohen), however, made La Guardia an exception among Italian Americans in the United States, although a wave of Italian Jews came to the United States in the wake of Mussolini's 1938 antisemitic decrees.[19]

Moreover, La Guardia turned rather soft-spoken when it came to fascist anti-Jewish policies. Although La Guardia assailed Nazism, he refrained from taking issue with fascism. On March 3, 1937, in an address at the annual luncheon of the Women's Division of the American Jewish Congress, La Guardia suggested that Hitler's effigy be placed in a chamber of horrors at the World's Fair. In March of the following year he added that the Führer's oppression of Jews "displays all the characteristics and traits of a contemptible coward" against which "the decency of the world revolts." La Guardia's uncompromising stand about the racial policy of Nazi Germany won him a "bravo" from the executive secretary of the American Pro-Falasha Committee as early as 1935. But La Guardia hardly dared to attack Mussolini until Italy entered World War II. His attitude toward *Il Duce*'s antisemitism was no exception to this pattern. In December

1938, La Guardia was among the promoters of a rally at Carnegie Hall in New York City to express "sympathy with the helpless victims of political and religion oppression in the eastern hemisphere." By that time Italian Jews had been expelled from the Fascist Party and the Italian army, excluded from public schools and universities, and barred from employment in public administrations. Yet the very words La Guardia used to summon the meeting allowed him to avoid referring to Fascism and its anti-Jewish policy explicitly. Later on, at Carnegie Hall, in what the *Jewish Chronicle* called "a fighting speech," La Guardia attacked Nazism as a "mental disease," but he never mentioned Italy or Mussolini's antisemitic stand. Similarly, a few weeks earlier, La Guardia had not shown up at a gathering that radical Italian American groups had organized at the Manhattan Opera House to protest against the racial legislation of their mother country.[20]

Another outstanding politician of Italian descent, American Labor Party Congressman Vito Marcantonio did attend the rally at the Manhattan Opera House. Yet, when he took the floor, Marcantonio chose to speak at length about the German situation and made only cursory remarks about what was happening in Italy.[21]

Both La Guardia and Marcantonio had a large number of Italian American constituents, most of whom had long basked in the glory of Italy's alleged achievements under the fascist regime. After suffering from ethnic bigotry and discrimination on the grounds that they belonged to a supposedly inferior people, many Italian Americans ended up admiring *Il Duce* and supporting his dictatorship because they took pride in Mussolini's aggressive policies that had apparently made their ancestral country into a great power on the international scene. In their eyes, fascist expansionism and its defense of the rights of what propaganda improperly called the Italian race were a sort of ethnic redress that enhanced their status in American society. In the face of Mussolini's accomplishments Italian Americans were no longer the neglected children of a backward and despised country, but had become the offspring of a nation that inspired awe worldwide. As even anti-fascists admitted, Mussolini "enabled four million Italians in America to hold up their heads." Significantly, after Italy invaded Ethiopia in a successful attempt to establish an empire in eastern

Africa, in New York City alone Italian Americans contributed over seven hundred thousand dollars, hundreds of thousands of wedding rings, and other gold objects to the government of their ancestral land in order to help Mussolini's colonial venture.[22]

Since profascist feelings were widespread among Italian Americans in New York City, neither La Guardia nor Marcantonio came out against *Il Duce*'s unprovoked attack on Ethiopia. La Guardia even attended the rally for the Italian Red Cross at Madison Square Garden. One can reasonably suggest that their failure to denounce explicitly the fascist anti-Jewish legislation was the result of two concurrent and interrelated factors. La Guardia and Marcantonio were aware that antisemitism was not unpopular among their voters of Italian extraction. They tried as well not to displease their own constituents by antagonizing many Italian Americans' profascist stand. Indeed, in 1939 conventional Jewish wisdom had it that if the mayor had wanted to, "the Police could easily put a stop to the ravings and abuses shouted on the streets of New York – directed against the Jews." One year later the *Jewish Examiner* even contended that La Guardia revealed only a half-hearted commitment to fight antisemitism in New York City because he did not want to lose the antisemitic vote. In 1939, La Guardia did not refrain from attending a mass meeting at which he lashed out at the "German-American Bund" as an anti-American organization. It seems, therefore, that since La Guardia continued to oppose pro-Nazi German Americans, the antisemitic vote to which the *Jewish Examiner* referred must have been the Italian American cohort of this racist electorate. Italian Americans' profascist sentiments created a difficult dilemma for La Guardia and Marcantonio when they were supposed to address the issue of Mussolini's antisemitism. As these two politicians relied greatly on the Italian American support at the polls and, consequently, could not afford to criticize the Italian regime, they chose not to be outspoken against the fascist racial legislation and to confine themselves to condemning Italy's Jewish policy indirectly by attacking its Nazi counterpart.[23]

There is additional evidence that a significant number of Italian Americans yielded to antisemitism. Unlike La Guardia and Marcantonio, other anti-fascists of Italian extraction were quite vocal

in their opposition to Mussolini's racial provisions. The anti-fascists included Luigi Antonini, the general secretary of Local 89 of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) and the chairperson of the American Labor Party in New York State, as well as Girolamo Valenti, then the editor of the socialist-oriented Italian-language newspaper *La Stampa Libera*. Antonini's and Valenti's stand, however, was not representative of the prevailing sentiments in the Italian American communities.[24]

Antonini joined the boycott of the Non-Sectarian Anti-League against Hitler's anti-Jewish policy as early as 1935 and did not retreat in the face of Mussolini's embrace of similar measures. Italian Americans and Jews bulked large in the membership of the ILGWU, and Antonini knew that the spread of antisemitic attitudes would weaken both his own union and the working-class ethnic coalition that backed progressive Democrats such as President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Governor Herbert H. Lehman in New York State through the American Labor Party. In the wake of the passing of the fascist 1938 decrees, Antonini published an appeal for tolerance in the *Jewish People Voice,* a newspaper "dedicated to the defense of the Jewish people against fascism and antisemitism," as did Valenti in the same issue. This Jewish publication titled their contributions "Antonini Denounces Mussolini's Antisemitism " and "Mussolini's Antisemitism Shall Not Divide Us." The definitive tone of the headlines, however, reflected less the contents of the two articles than an editorial wishful thinking. Both Antonini and Valenti were indeed worried that antisemitism would eventually separate Italian Americans from Jews within the labor movement and the Roosevelt coalition and therefore warned their fellow ethnics against the dangerous consequences of such animosities. Antonini's and Valenti's remarks intended less to reflect Italian Americans' sympathy for Jews than to urge them to give up their antisemitic attitude. As Valenti asked himself, "Where will this antisemitic campaign of Mussolini's agents in the United States lead the millions of Italians?" Similarly, Antonini reminded Italian Americans that

> the venom of racial intolerance can be turned just as easily against Italians and Germans as against Jews. Those who want religious and racial freedom for themselves must defend the religious and racial



Rabbi Samuel Schulman (Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

liberties of others. […] Let us not jeopardize our futures and those of our children by importing the evils which have made half of Europe a mad house of hate.[25]

Established in 1936 to deliver the labor vote to the progressive candidates of the Democratic Party, the American Labor Party was the epitome of the Jewish-Italian partnership in politics. Its backbone was the prevailing Jewish and Italian Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America along with the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.[26]

Yet, by the time Valenti and Antonini urged Italian Americans to reject antisemitic attitudes, these sentiments had already begun to shatter the Jewish-Italian alliance to back Democratic liberals. Before Valenti reiterated his appeal on the *Jewish Examiner* in November 1938, that year's midterm elections had witnessed a significant drop of the Italian American vote for Jewish Democratic candidates. For example, support for Governor Lehman declined from 66.9 percent in 1936 to 59.7 percent in 1938 in New York City's Little Italy after what Rabbi Samuel Schulman of Temple of Emanu-El called "a terrible campaign," in which Lehman's Jewish identity became an issue and appeals to cast ballots for "Christian Gentiles" as well as antisemitic whispers mushroomed in immigrant communities. Similarly, the vote for Democratic Jewish Congressman Leon Sacks fell from 67.9 percent in 1936 to 50.6 percent in 1938 in the Italian American community in Philadelphia following vicious appeals against a politician who belonged to an allegedly "inferior race." Sacks's opponents even circulated pictures of his Republican challenger that emphasized the latter's baldness and protruding chin in order to contrast his Mussolini-like features with the Democratic candidate's supposedly Semitic appearance. Furthermore, Sacks faced problems with the Italian American membership of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. This union endorsed Sacks and, therefore, its members were

supposed to cast their ballots for him. Yet a few of its Italian American activists not only refused to vote for Sacks, but even campaigned against him on the grounds that he was a Jew.[27]

Antisemitism also affected the Italian American following for La Guardia, a nominal Republican who was President Roosevelt's best political ally in New York City. La Guardia carried the Italian American community by 62.2 percent in 1933 and by 62.6 percent four years later. But in 1941 he lost it to William O'Dwyer, who received 52.9 percent of the Italian American vote, as opposed to La Guardia's 46.1 percent, in the wake of a systematic exposé of the incumbent mayor's Jewish roots by the pro-fascist weekly *Il Grido della Stirpe*. Once again, however, Italian Americans' antisemitic feelings resulted from competition with Jews in everyday life. La Guardia, for instance, was accused of favoring Jews over Italian Americans in municipal appointments. La Guardia's Jewish blood had received attention in the 1937 mayoral campaign as well. But this issue influenced the Italian American electorate only after the voters' ancestral country had embraced antisemitism.[28]

No quantitative data are available about the extent of the penetration of antisemitism into Little Italies. Yet Italian Americans' bolt from Jewish candidates in 1938 may be somewhat revealing. Of course, single-issue campaigns are not common and those Democratic defectors may have gone over to the Republican Party for other reasons. But the very fact that the GOP propaganda relied in part on antisemitic issues in some Italian American communities in 1938 means that Republican workers expected such arguments to strike a sensitive chord among voters with Italian backgrounds.

After all, antisemitic undercurrents reemerged in American society in the interwar years and were not confined only to the Little Italies or the German American communities. Within this broader context several Nazi-style organizations lured Italian Americans into joining their membership, or at least into developing some partnership, in the late 1930s. Antisemitism was often the common ground for the cooperation between pro-Nazi German Americans and pro-fascist Italian Americans. According to a report of Los Angeles' Jewish Community Research Council, which monitored fascist activities in

southern California, the German-American Bund in California had joined forces with the local chapter of the Italian War Veterans and the state's lodges of the Order Sons of Italy in America. Joseph Ferri, a member of this latter organization, was a frequent speaker at Bund rallies. In particular, Ferri attended an Anti-Communist Convention in early August 1938, a month after the antisemitic turn of the fascist regime had begun. On that occasion, after addressing the gathering as "My Gentile American friends," he stated that he had "read with great satisfaction in the papers during the last few days that the Black Shirts of Italy have been running the sons of Moses out of the schools and out of the high places of Government because the Italian blood must now be purified." Two months later Ferri took part in the celebrations for the German occupation of the Sudetenland and committed himself to declaring "war on our enemies, the Jews."[29]

On the other coast, in New Jersey, Joseph Santi, of the Lictor Federation, and Salvatore Caridi of the Italian War Veterans spearheaded a campaign to merge their associations with the German-American Bund and other right-wing organizations into a single, fascist front. Newspaper reports did not refer to the role of anti-Jewish feelings in this attempted consolidation. Yet these sentiments must have been a unifying factor. Not only did antisemitism largely shape the ideology of the German-American Bund, but the founder of the Lictor Federation, Domenico Trombetta, was also the editor of the previously mentioned antisemitic weekly *Il Grido della Stirpe.* After the enactment of the fascist antisemitic legislation, Trombetta's attacks on Jews became so vicious both in his paper and on the airwaves that the radio station WHOM decided to discontinue his program to prevent the Federal Communication Commission from revoking its own broadcasting license. Remarkably, when WHOM made its decision known, it did not meet with approval but with heavy criticism in Little Italies. This response revealed at least Italian Americans' widespread lack of sympathy with Jews.[30]

Catholicism added to fascist allegiance in fanning the flames of Italian Americans' antisemitism. For instance, Francesco Paolo Castorina held membership in both the German-American Bund and the Christian Front. Castorina was the self-proclaimed leader of the American Fascist Party and considered himself as "the nation's

most promising dictatorial timber for a Fascist America," according to Congressman Dickstein. Other Italian Americans limited their militancy to ultrarightist antisemitic associations. John J. Olivo, for example, was the captain of the Christian Mobilizer Guard in New York City in 1940. Similarly, *Social Justice* – the organ of Father Charles Coughlin, the Catholic priest whose pro-fascist and anti-Jewish views had become blatant by 1936 – began to publish letters signed with Italian-sounding last names on an almost regular basis after the fascist racial turn in July 1938. This correspondence suggests, therefore, that Coughlin's weekly paper enjoyed a significant readership in Little Italies.[31]

However, some Italian Americans did not confine themselves to passive roles in antisemitic movements, but were also involved in anti-Jewish raids. Coeval investigations reported that numerous members of Little Italies not only attended meetings of organizations such as the Christian Mobilizers or the Christian Front, but also attacked Jews or incited people to assault them. Paul Lucenti, a salesperson for *Social Justice,* was arrested a dozen times in New York City on charges that he had insulted passers-by who had a Jewish look, while other Italian Americans pasted "Buy Christian" stickers on the windows of Jewish stores. As Lucenti maintained in an interview in the late 1930s, "You got to create terror to get somewhere. […] You got to terrorize the Jews." Similarly, Joseph Bono, a member of the Christian Front, was convicted of placing antisemitic posters in New York City's subway in 1938. Among these Italian American Catholic hate crusaders was Ralph Ninfo, another affiliate of the Christian Front, who addressed a rally of this organization by stating that "if I had my way, I would hang all Jews in this country." At a different gathering of Christian Fronters, Floyd Carridi similarly proclaimed that "Jews will get what the Jews in Germany got. We have guns, and we plan to use them. We have a platform here to-night made of metal which can be dismantled in ten seconds and used for bludgeons."[32]

Remarkably, all these incidents occurred following the outbreak of Mussolini's anti-Jewish campaign, as if the fascist argument that "Jews do not belong to the Italian race" had further separated Italian Americans from Jews. Indeed, Luigi Scala — the over-scrupulous

antisemitic state leader of the Rhode Island Grand Lodge of the Order Sons of Italy in America — hurried to write Rome in order to inquire whether ethnically conscious Italian Americans should disavow those members of their community who happened to be married to Jews.[33]

Fascism played such a leading role in having Italian Americans take pride in their ethnic identity that for many members of the Little Italies, it was difficult to reject antisemitism after the latter had become a key component of Mussolini's concept of Italianness. On the other hand antisemitic persecutions in Europe made Jews fully aware of their own status as a discriminated minority and further contributed to separate Jewish Americans from Italian Americans. Indeed, one could suggest that the consciousness of antisemitism brought Jews closer to other victims of racial prejudice, like blacks, than to Italian Americans.[34]

Italy's declaration of war on the United States on December 11, 1941, silenced, at least temporarily, Italian America's most vocal antisemites. The Federal Bureau of Investigation arrested Trombetta, and *Il Grido della Stirpe* ceased publication. Furthermore, since Italian Americans' prewar enthusiasm for the fascist regime was notorious, holding opinions that were generally perceived as an outgrowth of the propaganda of enemy countries was clearly politically unsafe for members of the Little Italies.[35]

Yet antisemitism was hard to die among a few Italian Americans. Rumors that Jews were responsible for the conflict between the United States and their ancestral country were commonplace in Italian American communities at wartime. In the fall of 1943, gangs of Italian American students attacked Jews in Chicago's Manley-Marshall school district.[36]

New antisemitic leaders also appeared. Father Arthur W. Terminiello of Mobile, Alabama — the self-styled Father Coughlin of the South and the founder of the Union of Christian Crusaders — began to preach against those "Communistic, atheistic, Zionistic Jews who are trying to undermine our government." His anti-Jewish oratory was so inflammatory that the bishop of his diocese suspended Terminiello and Philadelphia's Catholic bishop refused to grant him permission to make a speech in that city in 1945. The following year

Terminiello joined Gerald L. K. Smith, the head of the antisemitic American First Party, on a two-month speaking tour throughout the United States. On February 7, 1946, an address that Terminiello made provocatively at Chicago's Veteran Hall, in the heavily Jewish neighborhood of Albany Park, resulted in a riot and in his subsequent conviction on charges of disturbing the peace.[37]

Some Jews in the United States hailed Terminiello's 1946 sentence as "a serious set-back" to American fascism, although the U.S. Supreme Court reversed his conviction three years later in a major freedom-of-speech case. By that time, however, Italian Americans and Jews had generally settled most of their ethnic controversies. In 1942, for instance, the Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League to Champion Human Rights fought against discrimination in defense employment on behalf of not only Jews, but also of Italian Americans and blacks by exposing samples of application forms that contained spaces for information about religion, descent, and color. In March 1943, while Italy and the United States were still at war, Pittsburgh's Jewish Community Relations Council reported and welcomed a decline in anti-Italian feelings nationwide. At the beginning of the following year, this Jewish organization no longer monitored the Italian American press for evidence of antisemitic articles and focused on East European newspapers only, as Italian-language periodicals had presumably ceased to be a matter of concern. Indeed, when a gang of seven Italian American robbers killed a Jewish restaurant owner in that city on December 31, 1945, Pittsburgh's Jewish Community Relations Council made a point of playing down the role of group antagonism as a motivation for this tragic event in order not to harm Jewish-Italian relations. As the minutes of this organization put it,

> It is generally agreed that the Jewish community cannot definitely take any stand in this matter and that, even though there may be some undercurrent of antisemitism, by-and-large we do not consider it fundamentally a problem of prejudice but really a problem of delinquency and crime. It was considered unwise to permit the situation to develop into a conflict between Jews and Italians.[38]

Ironically, however, another kind of racial intolerance sometimes became the common ground for the Jewish-Italian reconciliation in the postwar decades. After the policies of Nazism and Fascism had

contributed to strengthen the separate ethnic identities of Jews and Italian Americans in the interwar years, both minorities began to develop a common white consciousness after the collapse of Hitler's and Mussolini's regimes. As antisemitism faded away in Little Italies, ethnic defensiveness against the alleged encroachments of African Americans generally brought together Jews and Italian Americans in their campaigns against residential integration, school desegregation, and affirmative action.[39]

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Notes

[1] Renzo De Felice, *The Jews in Fascist Italy: A History* (New York: Enigma Books, 2001); Susan Zuccotti, *The Italians and the Holocaust: Persecution, Rescue, and Survival* (New York: Basic Books, 1987); Alexander Stille, *Benevolence and Betrayal: Five Italian Jewish Families under Fascism* (New York: Summit Books, 1991); David Bidussa, *Il Mito del Bravo Italiano* (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 1994), 57-81; David Carpi, "Italy," in *The Holocaust Encyclopedia,* edited by Walter Laqueur (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), 334-39; Frederick M. Schweitzer, "Why Was Italy So Impervious to Antisemitism (to 1938)?," in *The Most Ancient of Minorities: The Jews of Italy,* edited by Stanislao G. Pugliese (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2002), 259-73.

[2] Rudolf Glanz, *Jew and Italian: Historic Group Relations and the New Immigration, 1881-1924* (New York: Shulsinger, 1970), 72-73; Patrick J. Gallo, *Old Bread, New Wines: A Portrait of the Italian Americans* (Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1981), 230-31; Morris Schonbach, *Native American Fascism during the 1930s and 1940s: A Study of Its Roots, Its Growth, and Its Decline* (New York: Garland, 1985), 82-83; David A. J. Richards, *Italian American: The Racializing of an Ethnic Identity* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 195, 227.

[3] Enzo Collotti, "Il Razzismo Negato," in Istituto Nazionale per la Storia del Movimento di Liberazione in Italia, *Fascismo e Antifascismo: Rimozioni, Negazioni, Revisioni,* edited by Enzo Collotti (Rome and Bari: Laterza, 2000), 355-75; Valeria Galimi, "La Persecuzione degli Ebrei in Italia (1938-1943): Note Sulla Storiografia Recente," *Contemporanea 5,* no. 3 (July 2002): 587-96.

[4] Italian News Agency, "Mr. Pope's Triumphal Visit to Italy," press release, June 1937, Edward Corsi Papers, box 27, folder "Correspondence of Others," Ernest Stevenson Byrd Library, Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y.; Fulvio Suvich, Italian

ambassador, to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Washington, D.C., June 4, 1937, Foreign Records Seized, Record Group 242, Series T 586, roll 430, National Archives II, College Park, M.D. For Pope, see Philip V. Cannistraro, "Generoso Pope and the Rise of Italian American Politics, 1925-1936," in *Italian Americans: New Perspectives in Italian Immigration and Ethnicity,* edited by Lydio F. Tomasi (Staten Island, N.Y.: Center for Migration Studies, 1985), 264-88. For the antecedents of Mussolini's 1938 anti-Jewish turn, see Michele Sarfatti, *Gli Ebrei nell'Italia Fascista: Vicende, Identità, Persecuzione* (Turin: Einaudi, 2000), 53-120. For instances of the Jews' concerns, see "A Cross-Section of Jewish Life," *B'nai B'rith Magazine* 51, no. 8 (May, 1937): 262-63; *Jewish Examiner*, May 28, June 11, 1937; Harry Schneiderman, *Review of the Year 5697,* in *The American Jewish Year Book 5698,* edited by Harry Schneiderman (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1937), 369-73. The fascist regime was so concerned about Jews' economic backlash that in late July 1938, when Mussolini had already launched his racial policy, Minister of Foreign Affairs Galeazzo Ciano ordered Italian diplomats abroad to downplay fascist antisemitism so as not to exacerbate hostility toward Italy. See Galeazzo Ciano to royal diplomatic and consular representatives, Rome, July 26, 1938, Records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, series Affari Politici, Italia, 1931-1945, box 57, Archivio Storico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, Italy.

[5] "American Jewish Congress," press release (which cites Suvich's statement), June 15, 1937, Records of the World Jewish Congress, box G6, folder 6, Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (hereafter AJA), Cincinnati, Ohio; *Jewish Examiner*, June 18, 1937.

[6] *New York Times,* June 25, 1937; *Il Progresso Italo-Americano,* July 4, 1937.

[7] "The Jews in Italy," extension of remarks of Hon. Samuel Dickstein of New York in the House of Representatives, *Congressional Record*, July 12, 1937, clipping, Samuel Dickstein Papers, box 17, folder 14, AJA; Generoso Pope to Stephen S. Wise, New York, July 7, 1937, Stephen S. Wise Papers, box 83, folder 2, reel 74-55, American Jewish Historical Society, New York, N.Y. For sketchy biographical profiles of Dickstein, see *New York Times,* April 23, 1954, clipping, Nearprint Box, folder "Dickstein, Samuel," AJA; *Jews in American Politics,* edited by L. Sandy Maisel (Lanham, M.D.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), 326.

[8] Stephen S. Wise to Nahum Goldman, New York, July 28, 1938, Stephen S. Wise Papers, box 2, folder 10, AJA.

[9] Dorothy Waring, *American Defender* (New York: Robert Speller, 1935), 62, 67-68, 78, 102; Samuel Dickstein to John W. McCormack, Washington, D.C., October 9, 1936, Dickstein Papers, box 3, folder 7; *Congressional Record*, March 25, 1941, 2567-70 (quote 2569); *ibid.,* June 17, 1941, 5278-80; Dickstein as quoted in *Il Grido della Stirpe,* March 22, 1930; Harold L. Kudan, "Samuel Dickstein, Investigator of Un-American Activities," 1957, unpublished typescript, AJA; Constance B. Schulz, "Samuel Dickstein: Congressional Investigator" (M.A. thesis, University of Cincinnati, 1965); Philip V. Cannistraro, "Introduction," in Gaetano Salvemini, *Italian Fascist Activities in the United States,* edited by Philip V. Cannistraro (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1977), xxx-xxxi; Charles Killinger, *Gaetano Salvemini: A Biography* (Westport, C.T.: Praeger, 2002), 280. For Dickstein's disproportionate attention to Nazi activities and overlooking of

fascist propaganda when he was the chairperson of the House Committee on Immigration, see Girolamo Valenti to Samuel Dickstein, New York, December 27, 1933, Dickstein Papers, box 5, folder 7; U.S. House of Representatives, 73rd Congress, Subcommittee of the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, *Nazi Propaganda Activities by Aliens in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1934), copy in Nearprint Box, folder "Dickstein, Samuel," AJA. For Pope's supposed political influence, see Stefano Luconi, "Generoso Pope and Italian-American Voters in New York City," *Studi Emigrazione 38,* no. 143 (June 2001): 399-422. For Dickstein's relations with Pope, see also Alan A. Block, *Perspectives on Organized Crime: Essays in Opposition* (Boston: Kluwer, 1991), 131-33. For the Fascist League of North America and its demise, see Philip V. Cannistraro, "Per Una Storia dei Fasci Negli Stati Uniti, 1921-1929," *Storia Contemporanea* 26, no. 1 (December 1995): 1061-1144. Significantly enough, Dickstein long relied on Girolamo Valenti for information on Italian Fascist activities in the United States. But he called Valenti an associate of "avowed provocateur" Carlo Tresca and the newspaper he then edited, *La Parola,* a "one-horse paper," after Valenti had exposed Pope's ties to the fascist regime. See Samuel Dickstein to Girolamo Valenti, Washington, D.C., January 12, 1934, Dickstein Papers, box 5, folder 7; *Congressional Record*, March 25, 1941, 5729; *La Parola,* May 24, 1941.

[10] "We Can't Just Get Away, It Seems," *B'nai B'rith Magazine* 50, no. 2 (November 1935): 43; "Italian Jews, Ethiopian Jews," *ibid.,* 50, no. 3 (December, 1935): 74-75; minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee of the American Pro-Falasha Committee, September 15, 1936, Records of the American Pro-Falasha Committee, box 1, folder 8, AJA; Jacob Greenberg, associate superintendent, American Pro-Falasha Committee, to Piero Parini, New York, September 24, 1936, *ibid.; New York Times,* December 15, 1935; *Il Progresso Italo-Americano,* January 31, 1936; John P. Diggins, *Mussolini and Fascism: The View from America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1972), 302, 304-5; Leo V. Kanawada, Jr., *Franklin D. Roosevelt's Diplomacy and American Catholics, Italians, and Jews* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1982), 77-87. For Sirovich, see *Jews in American Politics,* 421. For the real meaning of financial contributions to the Italian Red Cross, see Fiorello B. Ventresco, "Italian Americans and the Ethiopian Crisis," *Italian Americana* 6, no. 1 (Autumn-Winter 1980): 18-19.

[11] Richard N. Juliani, *The Social Organization of Immigration: The Italians in Philadelphia* (New York: Arno Press, 1980), 185-87; Steven Fraser, "*Landslayt* and *Paesani:* Ethnic Conflict and Cooperation in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America," in *"Struggle a Hard Battle": Essays on Working-Class Immigrants,* edited by Dirk Hoerder (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986), 283-88; Edwin Fenton, *Immigrants and Unions: A Case Study: Italians and American Labor, 1870-1920* (New York: Arno Press, 1973), 503-7, 539-43; Henry Tolino as quoted in Salvatore J. LaGumina, *The Immigrants Speak: Italian Americans Tell Their Story* (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1979), 57; Arthur Hertzberg, *The Jews in America: Four Centuries of Uneasy Encounter: A History (*New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 240; Richard Gambino, *Blood of My Blood: The Dilemmas of the Italian Americans* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974), 272; Ida Kallen to Horace M. Kallen, Boston, December 25, 1938, Horace M. Kallen Papers, box 72, folder 2, AJA. For the traditional Democratic allegiance of Boston's Italian

American community, see Gerald H. Gamm, *The Making of New Deal Democrats: Voting Behavior and Realignment in Boston, 1920-1940* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 83-84.

[12] Ronald H. Bayor, *Neighbors in Conflict: The Irish, Germans, Jews, and Italians of New York City, 1929-1941* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978); Mary Testa, "Antisemitism among Italian Americans," *Equality* 1, no. 3 (July 1939): 27; *Il Grido della Stirpe,* April 9, 1938. For the fascist funding of *Il Grido della Stirpe,* see a report of the Federal Bureau of Investigation by Joseph T. Genco, Washington, D.C., December 7, 1942, 865.20211/Trombetta Domenico/7, Department of State, Record Group 59, Decimal Files, microfilm series LM 142, reel 41, National Archives II.

[13] *Italian Echo,* July 14, 1939; Robert A. Woods, "Traffic in Citizenship," in *Americans in Process: A Settlement Study by Residents and Associates of the South End House,* edited by Robert A. Woods (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1902), 159; *Jewish Advocate,* October 28, 1938; John F. Stack, Jr., *International Conflict in an American City: Boston's Irish, Italians, and Jews, 1935-1944* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979).

[14] Tony Bommarito as quoted in John Roy Carlson, *Under Cover: My Four Years in the Nazi Underworld of America* (New York: Dutton, 1943), 321–22.

[15] Otto H. Kahn, *Of Many Things: Being Reflections and Impressions on International Affairs, Domestic Topics and the Arts* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1926), 417-20 (quote 417).

[16] Poll as quoted in Diggins, *Mussolini and Fascism,* 202; James Waltson, "Nationalisms and Internationalism: The Response of Italian Jews to Fascism," *The Italian Jewish Experience,* edited by Thomas P. DiNapoli (Stony Brook, N.Y.: Forum Italicum, 2000), 143-46; Luca Ventura, *Ebrei con il Duce: "La Nostra Bandiera" (1934-1938)* (Turin: Zamorani, 2002); Bernard Postal, "Colored Shirts on Parade," *B'nai B'rith Magazine* 48, no. 7 (April, 1934): 250; F. Fontana, Italian consul to Italian Embassy, Chicago, August 8, 1938, Foreign Records Seized, Record Group 242, microfilm series T 586, reel 430.

[17] *Jewish Examiner*, July 29, August 5, 1938; *Jewish Chronicle,* September 9, 1938; "Mr. Mussolini," *B'nai B'rith Magazine* 53, no. 1 (August-September 1938): 21; Irwine F. Cline, "Urges Fascist Boycott," *National Jewish Monthly* 54, no. 2 (October, 1939): 64; *New York Times,* November 21, 1938; *Il Popolo Italiano,* September 25, 1938.

[18] Marc D. Angel, *La America: The Sephardic Experience in the United States* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1982), 21-22; *Il Progresso Italo-Americano,* September 20, 1920; Meir Michaelis, *Mussolini and the Jews: German-Italian Relations and the Jewish Question in Italy, 1922-1945* (London: Institute of Jewish Affairs, 1978), esp. 57-59; R. J. B. Bosworth, *Mussolini* (London: Arnold, 2002), 270-73, 334; *Il Progresso Italo-Americano,* March 25, 30, April 1, 1933; "Why Do These Firms Continue to Handle German Merchandise?" *The Anti-Nazi Bulletin* 4, no. 7 (October, 1937): 19; "Why Do These Firms Continue to Handle German Merchandise?," *ibid.* 4, no. 8 (November, 1937): 19–20; "Why Do These Firms Continue to Use Nazi Goods?," *ibid.* 5, no. 3 (March,

1938): 7; "These Firms Buy Nazi Goods? Nazi Goods Buy Nazi Guns," *ibid.* 5, no. 5 (May, 1938): 11. Pope bought *Il Progresso Italo-Americano* on September 28, 1928. See *New York Times,* September 30, 1928.

[19] H. Paul Jeffers, *The Napoleon of New York: Mayor Fiorello La Guardia* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2002), 10; G. E. Harriman, executive secretary, Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League, to Samuel Untermyer, New York, June 29, 1935, Samuel Untermyer Papers, box 1, folder 2, AJA; Moshe R. Gottlieb, *American Anti-Nazi Resistance, 1933-1941: An Historical Analysis* (New York: Ktav, 1982), 53-54, 68, 217; Laura Fermi, *Illustrious Immigrants: The Intellectual Migration from Europe, 1930-1941* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 117, 120-23; Ellen Ginzburg Migliorino, "Jewish Emigration from Trieste to the United States after 1938, with Special Reference to New York, Philadelphia, and Wilmington," *Studi Emigrazione* 28, no. 103 (September, 1991): 369-77.

[20] Harry Schneiderman, "Review of the Year 5697," in *The American Jewish Yearbook 5698,* edited by Harry Schneiderman (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1937), 214; Kurt Mertig, chairman, Citizens Protective League, to Samuel Dickstein, New York, March 22, 1937, Dickstein Papers, box 1, folder 5; Alfred M. Cohen, "The President's Page," *B'nai B'rith Magazine* 51, no. 7 (April, 1937): 222; American Jewish Congress, press release, April 8, 1938, Records of the World Jewish Congress, box G6, folder 6; Charles D. Isaacson, executive secretary, American Pro-Falasha Committee, to Fiorello H. La Guardia, New York, November 21, 1935, Records of the American Pro-Falasha Committee, box 1, folder 6; Fiorello H. La Guardia to "Dear Friend," New York, December 3, 1938, box 2, folder 18, Samuel Schulman Papers, AJA; *New York Times,* December 10, 1938; *Jewish Chronicle,* December 16, 1938; "Italians Don't Hate Jews," handout, November, 1938, Leonard Covello Papers, box 100, folder 22, Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies, Philadelphia, Pa. For a chronological outline of the enactment of Italy's antisemitic measures, see Michele Sarfatti, *Mussolini Contro gli Ebrei: Cronaca dell'Elaborazione delle Leggi del 1938* (Turin: Zamorani, 1994).

[21] Gaetano Vecchiotti, Italian consul general, to Giuseppe Cosmelli, officer of the Ministry of the Interior, New York, November 21, 1938, Records of the Ministry of the Interior, Casellario Politico Centrale, box 160, folder 2113, Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome, Italy.

[22] Philip V. Cannistraro, "Fascism and Italian Americans," in *Perspectives in Italian Immigration and Ethnicity,* edited by Silvano M. Tomasi (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1977) 134-35; anonymous anti-fascist woman as quoted in Caroline F. Ware, "Cultural Groups in the United States," in *The Cultural Approach to History,* edited by Caroline F. Ware (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), 63; Nadia Venturini, *Neri e Italiani a Harlem: Gli Anni Trenta e la Guerra d'Etiopia* (Rome: Edizioni Lavoro, 1990), 137-38.

[23] Thomas Kessner, *Fiorello H. La Guardia and the Making of Modern New York* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1989), 404; Gerald Meyer, *Vito Marcantonio: Radical Politician, 1902-1954* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1989), 119, 246; Casimir P. Palmer to Nathan Isaacs, New York, August 26, 1939, Nathan Isaacs Papers, box 2, folder 12, AJA; *New York Times,* March 4, 1939; *Jewish Examiner*, March 29, 1940.

[24] Bénédicte Deschamps, "Italians Don't Hate Jews," unpublished paper presented at the thirteenth annual conference of the Midwest Jewish Studies Association, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, Chicago, October 28-29, 2001. For Antonini, see Philip V. Cannistraro, "Luigi Antonini and the Italian Anti-Fascist Movement in the United States, 1940-1943," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 5, no. 1 (Fall 1985): 21-40; Guido Tintori, "Amministrazione Roosevelt e Labor Etnico: Un Caso Italiano, Luigi Antonini" (Ph.D. diss., University of Milan, 2003). For Valenti, see Elisabetta Vezzosi, "Radical Ethnic Brokers: Immigrant Socialist Leaders in the United States between Ethnic Community and the Larger Society," in *Italian Workers of the World: Labor Migration and the Formation of Multiethnic States,* edited by Donna R. Gabaccia and Fraser M. Ottanelli (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 128-29.

[25] "Notes Re Speakers at Hippodrome Mass Meeting," n.d. [but April 1935], Untermyer Papers, box 1, folder 2; Girolamo Valenti, "Mussolini's Antisemitism Shall Not Divide Us," *Jewish People Voice* 2, no. 1 (October 1938): 1-2, clipping, Dickstein Papers, box 7, folder 13; Luigi Antonini, "Antonini Denounces Mussolini's Antisemitism," *ibid.* 2.

[26] Gerald Meyer, "American Labor Party," in *Encyclopedia of Third Parties in America,* edited by Immanuel Ness and James Ciment, vol. 3 (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2000), 682-90; Matthew Josephson, *Sidney Hillman: Statesman of American Labor* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1952), 400–1, 454–55; David Dubinsky and A. H. Raskin, *David Dubinsky: A Life with Labor* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1977), 262–71.

[27] *Jewish Examiner*, November 11, 1938; Bayor, *Neighbors in Conflict,* 47; Samuel Schulman to Herbert H. Lehman, New York, November 10, 1938, Samuel Schulman Papers, box 2, folder 22, AJA; *Weckruf and Free American,* November 3, 1938, clipping, Dickstein Papers, box 14, folder 2; Morris Fine, *Review of the Year 5699: The United States, in The American Jewish Year Book 5700,* edited by Harry Schneiderman (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1939), 216; *Manual of the City Council of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Dunlap, 1937), 286; *ibid.* (1939), 288; "Spilli e Spilloni," *La Voce Indipendente* 1, no. 9 (November, 1938): 3; *South Phila American Weekly,* November 10, 1938; Leon Sacks to Charles Weinstein, Philadelphia, October 10, 1938, Papers of the Joint Board of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, box 9, folder "Labor's Non-Partisan League, General Correspondence, 1938," Temple University Urban Archives, Paley Library, Philadelphia.

[28] Bayor, *Neighbors in Conflict,* 130, 137, 143-44; *Il Grido della Stirpe,* October 11, 1941; *Equalizer,* March 15, 1937; *National American Bulletin,* September 1, 1937, clipping, Dickstein Papers, box 7, folder 12; *Weckruf and Free American,* November 17, 1938, clipping, *ibid.*, box 14, folder 2. For Jews and La Guardia's appointments, see also James Marshall Papers, box 20, folder 13, AJA.

[29] "Cooperation of the Bund with Other Nationals," 728-29, 732, Records of the Los Angeles Community Research Council, box 1, folder 15, AJA. For the Order Sons of Italy in America, see John Andreozzi, "The Order Sons of Italy in America: Historical Summary," in *Guide to the Records of the Order Sons of Italy in America,* edited by John Andreozzi (St. Paul, Minn.: Immigration History Research Center, 1989) 7-14. For the pro-fascist leaning of the Order Sons of Italy in America, see

Salvemini, *Italian Fascist Activities in the United States,* 91-105; Matteo Pretelli, "Propaganda Fascista negli Stati Uniti: Gli Anni Venti: Un Quadro d'Insieme," in *L'Italia Fascista tra Europa e Stati Uniti d'America,* edited by Michele Abbate (Civita Castellana and Orte: Centro Falisco di Studi Storici, 2002), 113-16.

[30] *New York Times,* October 6, 1938; *New York Herald Tribune,* October 6, 1938; Domenico Trombetta to Herbert Hoover, New York, February 19, 1930, Herbert Hoover Presidential Papers, box 990, folder "Italy, 1930 January-July," Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, Iowa; Department of State, Record Group 59, Decimal Files, 811.43/Lictor Federation/1-7; "The War of Nerves: Hitler's Helper," *Fortune* 22, no. 5 (November, 1940): 108, 110. As further evidence of Trombetta's Bund connections, Bund leader Fritz Kuhn attended the 1939 celebration of the establishment of *Il Grido della Stirpe.* See *Jewish Examiner*, April 14, 1939.

[31] Richard Rollins, *I Find Treason: The Story of an American Anti-Nazi Agent* (London: Harrap, 1941), 113-21, 199-201; Samuel Dickstein to Daniel J. Doherty, National Commander, American Legion, Washington, D.C., November 27, 1937, Dickstein Papers, box 1, folder 2; Theodore Irwin, "Inside the 'Christian Front,'" *Forum* 103, no. 3 (March, 1940): 106; Richard E. Gutstadt, director, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, to Rabbi Morris S. Lazaron, Chicago, January 30, 1936, Morris S. Lazaron Papers, box 37, folder 8, AIS; Gerald Cogliano, "Unfair Competitors," *Social Justice,* July 18, 1938, 21; Dolor Carriere, "Would Endorse Ads," *ibid.*, September 5, 1938, 18; Frank S. L'Annunziata, "A Blockade of Their Own," *ibid.*, November 7, 1938, 18; E. P. Banta, "Christians Are Fooled," *ibid.,* November 14, 1938, 15. For the Christian Front and Father Coughlin, see Donald S. Strong, *Organized Antisemitism in America: The Rise of Group Prejudice during the Decade 1930-40* (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Public Affairs, 1941), 57–70.

[32] Dale Kramer, "The American Fascists," *Harper's Magazine* 181, no. 4 (September, 1940): 380, 384, 386; Paul Lucenti as quoted in Carlson, *Under Cover,* 32; "Curran, Reverend Edward Lodge," typescript, n.d. [but 1941], Records of the Cincinnati Jewish Community Relations Council, box 1, folder 5, AJA; Henry H. Carran, "Jail Hate Inciters," *Equality* 1, no. 7 (November, 1939): 8-9; Theodore Irwing, "Inside the Christian Front," *Forum* 103, no. 3 (March, 1940): 102, 106; Leonard V. Finder, "The Un-Christian Front: Mobilizers of Violence in New York," *National Jewish Monthly* 54, no. 2 (October, 1939): 44; Floyd Carridi as quoted in Rollins, *I Find Treason,* 123.

[33] "Italiani ed Ebrei in America," *La Difesa della Razza,* June 20, 1939, 46; "The Italians of Providence Must Act against Scala," *Il Mondo* 2, no. 12 (December, 1939): 4-5. The statement that "Jews do not belong to the Italian race" was the essence of the "Manifesto of Racial Scientists," a declaration of little-known Italian academicians on the Aryan character of the "Italian race." Its publication in the fascist mouthpiece *Il Giornale d'Italia* on July 14, 1938, marked the starting point of Mussolini's antisemitic campaign. For the genesis and implications of the Manifesto, see Aaron Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy* (New York: Routledge, 2002), esp. 64–78.

[34] Madeline Jane Goodman, "The Evolution of Ethnicity: Fascism and Anti-Fascism in the Italian-American Community, 1914-1945" (Ph.D. diss., Carnegie Mellon University, 1993), 56-66, 148-64; Leonard Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 105-27; Isabel Boiko Price, "Black Response to Antisemitism: Negroes and Jews in New York, 1880 to World War II" (Ph.D. diss., University of New Mexico, 1973), 182-84; Murray Friedman and Carolyn Beck, "An Ambivalent Alliance: Blacks and Jews in Philadelphia, 1940 to 1985," in *Philadelphia Jewish Life,* edited by Murray Friedman (Ardmore, Pa.: Seth Press, 1986), 144-46.

[35] *New York Times,* September 29, 1942; *Una Storia Segreta: The Secret History of Italian American Evacuation and Internment during World War II,* edited by Lawrence DiStasi (Berkeley, Calif.: Heyday Books, 2001).

[36] Carlson, *Under Cover,* 322; *The FBI's RACON: Racial Conditions in the United States during World War II,* edited by Robert A. Hill (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1995), 215; *Sentinel,* April 11, 1946, clipping, Adolph Joachim Sabath Papers, box 7, folder 2, AJA.

[37] "Terminiello barred by the Bishop of Philadelphia," September 1, 1945, typescript note, Solomon Andhil Fineber Papers, box 3, folder 5, AJA; Ellen H. Posner, "Review of the Year 5706: Anti-Jewish Agitation," in *The American Jewish Yearbook 5707,* edited by Harry Schneiderman and Julius B. Maller (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946), 176-8; Sentinel, April 11, 1946, clipping, Adolph Joachim Sabath Papers, box 7, folder 2, AJA.

[38] J. I. Fishbein, "The Significance of the Terminiello Verdict!," *Sentinel,* undated clipping, Sabath Papers, box 7, folder 2; *Terminiello v. City of Chicago,* 337 U.S. 1 (1949); James H. Sheldon, administrative chairman, Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League to Champion Human Rights, to Robert E. Segal, Cincinnati Jewish Community Relations Council, April 29, 1942, Records of the Cincinnati Jewish Community Relations Council, box 24, folder 5; Lillian A. Friedberg, executive director, Pittsburgh Jewish Community Relations Council, to Nathan Katz, chairperson, Pittsburgh Jewish Community Relations Council, Pittsburgh, Pa., March 5, 1943, Minutes of the Pittsburgh Jewish Community Relations Council, reel 1025, AJA; Executive Director's Report, January 5, 1944, *ibid.*; minutes of the meeting of January 12, 1946, *ibid.* After the outbreak of World War II, the Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League to Champion Human Rights continued to operate and focused on antisemitism and related forms of discrimination in the United States. See Richard N. Bluestein, secretary, Cincinnati Jewish Community Relations Council, to Sidney Weil, Cincinnati, May 5, 1945, Records of the Cincinnati Jewish Community Relations Council, box 24, folder 5.

[39] For instance, in the early postwar years, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and *Il Progresso Italo-Americano* joined forces to oppose a proposal by the Education Council of the American Dental Association to introduce a quota system based on race in order to reduce the racial imbalance among dental students. See Richard E. Gutstadt, national director, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith to "Dear Friend," New York, January 27, 1947, Records of the Cincinnati Jewish Community Relations Council, box 46, folder 10. In general, see Rose D. Scherini, *The Italian-American Community of San Francisco: A Descriptive Study* (New York:

Arno Press, 1980), 118; Timothy J. O'Neil, *Bakke & the Politics of Equality: Friends and Foes in the Classroom of Litigation* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1985), 99-101; Jonathan Rieder, *Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn Against Liberalism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985); Stefano Luconi, "Frank L. Rizzo and the Whitening of Italian Americans in Philadelphia," in *Are Italians White? How Race Is Made in America,* edited by Jennifer Guglielmo and Salvatore Salerno (New York: Routledge, 2003), 177-91. For the anti-black backlash as a component of the whitening of American Jews in the postwar decades, see also Karen Brodkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says about Race in America* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1998), 151–55.

The Mercies of a Benign Judge: A Letter from Gershom Seixas to Hannah Adams, 1810[1]

Dan Judson

Hannah Adams is noted for being the first woman in American history to make a living as a writer. Although largely unknown today, Adams was well known in her time for her writings on religious matters.[2] Her first and most important work was an encyclopedia of religions,[3] originally published in 1784, with four succeeding editions, the last of which was published in 1992. Her encyclopedia is noted for its ecumenical spirit. Adams attempted an impartial overview of all religions of the world, focusing primarily on Christian sects, but devoting entries to Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, and other non-Christian religions. Following the success of this book Adams wrote other works on Christianity and a history of New England for young people. She then became captivated by Jewish history and in 1812 published *The History of the Jews from the Destruction of the Temple to the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century.*[4] This two-volume work was the first book published about Jews in America.

Her correspondence with Gershom Seixas[5] was part of the background research for this project. Seixas was the *hazzan* of the Spanish-Portuguese synagogue in New York City, Shearith Israel, at the time of the correspondence. Seixas began serving the congregation in 1784 and continued to serve the synagogue until passing away in 1816. We may presume that Adams turned to Seixas for help with the *History of the Jews* because he was the most widely known Jewish religious authority of the time. Adams's archives include notes on books by Mordecai Manuel Noah but there is no correspondence between the two of them. Adams's archives also includes a dozen letters from the Abbe Gregoire, the bishop of Blois, known for his efforts in the French government to emancipate Jews during the revolutionary period.

The letter below, recently discovered in Adams's archives is Gershom Seixas's response to an initial letter of inquiry from Adams to Seixas about Jewish life in America. Adams's letter is not extant, but it is clear from Seixas's response that the letter consisted of four questions. The questions were most likely: (1) What are the religious rites and ceremonies of the Jewish people, and what are the numbers of Jews worldwide?; (2) How is Judaism observed in America, and what are the numbers of Jews in the various American congregations?; (3) What is the total number of Jews in America?; and (4) Are there any laws barring Jews from holding office in the United States? The part of the letter regarding the number of Jews in America is reproduced in Adams's *History of the Jews*, but the rest of the letter has remained unpublished.

Hannah Adams's *The History of the Jews from the Destruction of the Temple to the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century* is a remarkable book not really for her insights into Jewish history, but for a history culled from a few earlier sources, like the translation of Jacque Basnage's *History of the Jews*. Adams's work is nonetheless remarkable for the contrasting impulses within the book. Adams introduces her topic with great sympathy for the Jewish people. Heinrich Graetz says of Adams in his *History of the Jews:*

> The history of the Jews is remarkable above that of all other nations, for the number and cruelty of the persecutions they have endured. They are venerable for the antiquity of their origin. They are discriminated from the rest of mankind by their wonderful destination, peculiar habits, and religious rites. Since the destruction of Jerusalem, and their universal dispersion, we contemplate the singular phenomenon of a nation subsisting for ages without its civil and religious polity, and thus surviving its political existence.[6]

She consistently writes with great sensitivity and admiration for Jewish survival. Yet Adams is also thoroughly convinced of the need for Jewish conversion to Christianity. Her last chapter in her *History of the Jews* is devoted entirely to Jewish conversion. In her personal life, her commitment to this cause led her to establish in 1816 The Female Society of Boston and The Vicinity for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews. Given the paucity of Jews in Boston, the main goal of the society was to raise funds to be sent to The London Society for

Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews. To promote this goal of fund raising and missionizing, she wrote in 1816, *A Concise Account of The London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews*.[7]

Adams was piqued by the question of Jewish existence. How was it that the Jews had not converted to Christianity, despite scripture's testimony that their conversion was necessary to bring about the messiah's return? She saw her mission to bring Jews into the Christian fold both for their sake and to "fulfill Biblical prophecy and culminate sacred history."[8] In her prologue to *A Concise Account,* Adams writes that she cannot but be peculiarly interested in the Jewish nation, and the goal of writing about Jewish history and the work of Christian missionaries will be to bring the message to America. She wished to "bring this long neglected people to a cordial acknowledgment of the grand tenet, in which all Christians unite, that 'Jesus Christ is the Messiah,' and she [Adams] indulges the hope that the attention awakened to the welfare of the 'lost sheep of the house of Israel' will be extended to America."[9]

Many others soon joined Adams in her interest in Jewish conversion. Her *History of the Jews* in some ways marks the first step in American life toward what would become a significant effort to establish missions for the Jews. Adams's *History* was published in 1812, and four years later three events happened which marked the real beginning of Christian missionary work in America. First, Adams founded a Boston society for promoting conversion. Secondly, J. C. S. Frey landed in America. Frey would become the catalyst for the American Society for the Melioration of the Condition of the Jews, the most well-known organization dedicated to converting Jews.[10] Finally, Elias Boudinot, president of the Continental Congress, published a popular book espousing the theory that Native Americans were the lost tribes of Israel and should be converted to Christianity.[11]

The lost tribe theory added to the increasing missionary zeal toward the Jews, because the ingathering of the lost tribes of Israel, along with the Jews, would mark the final step leading to salvation.[12] The lost tribe theory and missionary efforts were entwined in Boudinot himself, who financially backed the establishment of the American Society for the Melioration of the Condition of the Jews. Interestingly,

in the epilogue of her *History of the Jews,* Adams provides nine proofs for Native Americans being the lost tribes of Israel. She bases her epilogue on the work of James Adair who after spending much of his life living with Indians, wrote the most influential work on the supposed link of Native Americans to Judaism.[13]

Some historians have viewed the mix of Adams's sympathy for the Jews and her conversionary fervor as a reflection of her time. In his study of Adams' life, Thomas Tweed suggests that it is only from a modern perspective that Adams's agenda seems "condescending." At the time of her writing it would have seemed more remarkable that she wrote of the Jewish people "without derisive comments or demeaning labels."[14] Indeed, even the *Encyclopedia Judaica* notes that Adams's *Dictionary of Religions* is "significant for the sympathetic tone of the article on the Jews." However, others have taken her to task for her Christianizing sentiments.

> Hannah Adams, of Boston, struck by the marvelous fate of the Jewish nation, delineated their history from the time of the return from Babylon to recent days. For many reasons she was not qualified to give an intelligible outline of Jewish history, but could only string together a number of rough sketches without connection or sequence. This crude work, nonetheless was good enough for the purposes of the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity Amongst the Jews … It was high time for Jews to take away the historian's pen from the hands of Christians who only trifled with it.[15]

In evaluating Adams's attitude toward the Jews, it should also be noted that one of her most significant sources for *History of the Jews* was the correspondence she had with the Abbe Gregoire. Gregoire, unlike Adams, did not believe in the active conversion of Jews. He believed that God would reveal His plans regarding the Jews, and humanity should accept what it could not understand.[16] Thus in evaluating Adams's conversionary efforts, we see that her approach was not simply the accepted viewpoint of a believing Christian of the time.

It is with this background that we can turn to Seixas's response to Adams. Seixas answered Adams's queries in a straightforward manner. His report on the numbers of Jewish families in major cities correspond to other information from the time. His response regarding the rites and practices of Judaism provides an interesting insight into

what was considered the core beliefs of Jewish tradition. The most intriguing question, though, may be why Seixas responded to Adams at all. Why would the prominent leader of New York's synagogue be helping a woman who has a clear agenda of Jewish conversion? Adams's encyclopedia of religions has, as the main part of its entry on Judaism, an approving description of the activities of the London Jews Society, so her convictions were certainly not secret. Seixas, nonetheless, refers to her as a woman of "eminent literary character." It would seem that either Seixas dismissed her conversionary attitude as insignificant compared to her sympathetic approach to the Jews, or possibly, Seixas was simply unaware of Adams's feelings towards the Jew and only knew of her literary celebrity. It is unclear from his letter which was the case.

As mentioned above, Adams published only the first half of Seixas's letter to her in her book. The second half of the letter, which deals with Jewish rituals, is not used. Instead, she included excerpts from David Levi's book on this subject.[17] Adams does, however, include the last sentence of Seixas's letter: "The United States of America is perhaps the only place where the Jews have not suffered persecution, but rather the reverse, for through the mercies of a benign judge we are encouraged and indulged with every right of citizenship." She does not comment on this sentence in *History*, presumably choosing to include this sentence because it extols the great promise of America. As a distant relative of both Samuel and John Adams, she would appreciate this notion. But the modern reader can only note with irony that Seixas evokes the promise of a religiously tolerant America to one of the very people whose efforts to missionize the Jews could thwart this vision.

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Following is a transcription of the letter

New York 23 July 1810

Madam

To convince you of my readiness to assist you in your researches, I hasten to reply to the Queries, you have propounded, in your courteous letter addressed to me of 6th [month indecipherable] — but I shall take the liberty of replying to the 2nd querie as it appears to be more methodical. (In New York) there are about 50 families of Jews, which, with a number of unmarried men, make about from 70 to 80 subscribing members to the Congregation Shearith Israel, which is incorporated by an Act of the Legislature of this state, empowering all religious societies to hold this property by charter, under the direction of Trustees, chosen annually by the communicants of the Society, according to certain order prescribed in the Act — as may be seen in the Laws of New York.

The Trustees have the management of all the temporalities, as customary in other Societies. They have one Synagogue, established conformably to the customs and forms of prayer, used among the Portugese Jews in Europe. Their public service is altogether in the Hebrew language excepting in particular cases provided for in the Constitution of the Society. I cannot precisely ascertain the time when the first Jews settled here in New York but there were some families in this City when it was owned by the Dutch, and the documents that are among the Archives of the Congregation do not extend further back, than about 140 or 150 years (as the Rev. Mr. Miller[18] is about writing the History of New York and solicited me to give him an account of the 1st establishment of Jews in this country I do not think myself at liberty to be very minute).

Some of the Jews who settled in New York were of Portuguese, others of German extraction besides Hollanders. There are also descendants of those who arrived after New York became an English colony. The Jews had the right of soil under the Dutch government, and the English never attempted to deprive them of it. On the contrary, they granted letters-patent to several Jewish families in the time of Queen Anne who had arrived in London from France, among the Hugonots [*sic*] to settle in North America.[19]

In Philadelphia there may be about 30 families of Jews, they have two Synagogues one for those who observe the Portuguese customs of forms of prayer, and the other for those who adhere to the German

rules, customs, and forms of prayer — neither of them incorporated. There may be about 80 to one hundred men in the whole state of Pennsylvania who all occasionally attend the Synagogues in Phila[delphia].

There is in Charleston, S.C. a large Society incorporated (with their Laws) [and] they have an elegant Synagogue established on the Portuguese customs and they also have different institutions with appropriate funds for benevolent and charitable purposes likewise incorporated.

In Richmond there are about 30 families, they are now building a Synagogue; they are not (as of yet) incorporated, the number of Men, unmarried, is unknown (to me) although there may be near an hundred altogether, scattered throughout the state, who are (or will become) members of the Congregation.

In Savanah, state of Georgia, there are but few families, yet they assemble at times, and commune with each other in public prayers.

3rd Querie — from the preceeding … some calculation of the whole Number may be made of those who adhere to the Jewish principles of religion. There are very many in the United States who are only nominal, and few others who are settled in the New England States that are respectable characters both religious and moral. I recur now to the 1st Query...

The religious rites and ceremonies of the Jews throughout the Captivity, are alike, some few have been explained lately, by a Sanhedrin in Paris, differing in some measure to the general acceptation, but the identical Laws remain as they were, previously, only modified in such manner, as to be easier understand and observed. The law of God, as handed down by Moses, is divided into two parts, one relates solely to be practiced in the holy land which it embodied as a Nation, with Temple, Priests, and Levites for the sacrifices and offerings together with the observance of the Sabbatical year, and the Jubilee release. The other extends to all parts of the world, wherever Jews may find themselves such as abstaining from all prohibited creatures (meats, fishes, fowl and reptiles) and from every species of uncleanness in every sense and shape — either living or dead — as may be found in the Levitical laws. Strictly observing the Decalogue, in celebrating the festivals and set times, according to order — which are the Passover, Feast of weeks, Feast of Booths, the 1st of the seventh month as the commencement of the civil year, keeping holy the 10th day of the month as a solemn fast day, a day of expiation and prayer — to atone for their sins and for

the sins of their fathers — as may be found in the liturgy translated and published by David Levy[20] and others* — acting consistently with the purest principles of humanity and justice to all Men, whether *home-born* or *stranger* (at this day, I do not think it would be improper according to the idiom of our American languages and principles to render the Hebrew terms, *Native* and *Foreigner*).

In the "Jews Letters to Voltaire" reasons are assigned for not ascertaining the number of Jews in existence and I have observed that the Sanhedrin in France, have calculated on an immense number of whom, they are the constituted Representatives — I have likewise lately read an account in Faber's[21] works of some very large body of Jews discovered in the interior parts of India, taken from "the travels of (author's name forgotten) through the interior parts of India" reference being had to those writers, will, no doubt be gratifying to all who desire to acquire this knowledge.

The Dissertation on the Prophecies by D. Levy[22] are ingeniously compiled from various learned writers and his own observations thereon, and render them (at this day) well worth the attention of studious and literary characters. I know of at least one set (3 Vol) in this city, owned by Mr. Aaron Levy[23] — who has some thoughts on getting them published by subscription, and he is not willing to lend them out of the city.

Query 4th and last — which surprises me very much, (the others did not) as the Constitution of the United States as well the Constitution of the State of New York does not disqualify any person from holding an office either of honor or trust on account of his religious principles or tenets, all entitled to equal rights and privileges — the Constitution of Massachusetts State does not allow of equal rights in all cases.

When I first sat down to answer the questions you stated in your letter I thought to have confirmed the whole in half a sheet of paper, but every one thing produces another, and embraced so much that I have been obliged to be this prolix — you will please to observe, that I have generally made use of the 3rd person instead of the 1st and only wrote in the 1st person whenever my opinion was necessary to elucidate some particular occurrence. Should the foregoing prove to be of any advantage to you in your publication, I shall be much gratified to think I could in any wise, contribute towards the accompaniment of a Work coming from the pen of a women so eminently distinguished as a literary character — but my dear Madam there is one thing which I would wish you to notice (if it can be done with propriety) that the

Justice (or righteousness) of Providence is manifested in the dispersion of His People — for they have never been driven from any one country without finding an Asylum in another and this Country — the United States of America is perhaps the only place where the Jews have not suffered persecution, but rather the reverse, for through the mercies of a benign judge we are encouraged and indulged with every right of citizenship.

Madam

Yours Sincerely,

Gershom Seixas

[*side note] the new moons are celebrated, the feasts of Purim (Vide Esther) and Hanuca [*sic*] (Vide) Maccabees, 9th of Av and 4 other days observed as fast days every year.

Notes

[1] The author wishes to acknowledge with gratitude Professor Jonathan Sarna at Brandeis University for his help in this research, Harvard University's Center for Jewish Studies Silver Fellowship program, and the New England Historical Genealogical Society for generous access to Hannah Adams's archives.

[2] See Thomas Tweed, "An American Pioneer in the Study of Religion," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 60(Fall 1992): 437-64; Michael Vella, "Theology, Genre, and Gender: The Precarious Place of Hannah Adams in American Literary History," *Early American Literature*, 28 (1993), 21-41; Gene Gleason, "A Mere Woman," *American Heritage*, 24 (Winter, 1972): 80-84; Anita Lebeson, "Hannah Adams and the Jews," *Historia Judaica* 8 (October, 1946): 113-34.

[3] Hannah Adams, *Alphabetical Compendium of the Various Sects Which Have Appeared from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Present Day* (Boston, Mass.: B. Edes and Sons, 1784). This was republished in 1992 under the title *A Dictionary of All Religions and Religious Denominations, Classics in Religious Studies Series* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992).

[4] Hannah Adams, *The History of the Jews from the Destruction of the Temple to the Nineteenth Century* (Boston, Mass.: John Eliot, 1812).

[5] See Jacob Rader Marcus, "The Handsome Young Priest in the Black Gown; the Personal World of Gershom Seixas," *Hebrew Union College Annual,* 40-41 (1969-1970), 409-67.

[6] Adams, *The History of the Jews,* v-vi.

[7] Hannah Adams, *A Concise Account of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews* (Boston, Mass.: John Eliot, 1816).

[8] Tweed, 451.

[9] Adams, *A Concise Account,* I.

[10] For an account of the history of the ASMCJ, see George Berlin, "Joseph S.C.F Frey, The Jews and Early Nineteenth Century Millenarianism," J*ournal of the Early Republic* I (1981), 27-49; Lee Friedman, *Early American Jews* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1934), 96-112.

[11] Elias Boudinot, *A Star in the West; or a Humble Attempt to Discover the Long Lost Ten Tribes of Israel, Preparatory to Their Return to Their Beloved City,* Jerusalem (Trenton, N.J.: D. Fenton, S. Hutchinson, and J. Dunham, 1816). Boudinot's work is interestingly similar to Adams's *History* in its combination of great sympathy to a much-maligned people, with an argument for their necessary conversion.

[12] Shalom Goldman, *God's Sacred Tongue: Hebrew and the American Imagination* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 89-94.

[13] James Adair, *The History of the American Indians* (London: E. and C. Dilly, 1775).

[14] Tweed, 451.

[15] Heinrich Graetz, *The History of the Jews,* vol. 5 (Philadelphia, Pa.: Jewish Publication Society, 1895), 593.

[16] See Rita Hermon-Belot, "The Abbe Gregoire's Program for the Jews: Social Reform and Spiritual Project," in *The Abbe Gregoire and His World,* edited by Jeremy Popkin and Richard Popkin (Boston, Mass.: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000).

[17] David Levi was an English Jew born in 1742 who published a number of works including translations of prayer books, a Hebrew grammar dictionary, and a refutation of Christian missionizing to the Jews. Levi's book on Jewish ritual, which Adams uses is: *A succinct account, of the rites, and ceremonies, of the Jews, as observed by them, in their different dispersions, throughout the world, at this present time. In which, their religious principles, and tenets, are clearly explained: particularly, their doctrine of the resurrection, predestination, and freewill; and the opinion of Doctor Prideaux concerning those tenets, fully investigated, duly considered, and clearly confuted* (London: J. Parsons, 1783).

[18] Probably the Rev. Samuel Miller. In 1794 Rev. Miller declared his intentions to write a history of New York, but apparently no such work was ever produced.

[19] One of those letters went to Luis Moses Gomez, a Sephardic Jew who settled six hundred acres in the Hudson Valley region in 1714 and whose house presently stands as a museum.

[20] Seixas is probably referring here to Levi's *Machzor k'minhag Polin* (London: 1794).

[21] George Stanley Faber, *A general and connected view of the prophecies: relative to the conversion, restoration, and union and future glory of the houses of Judah and Israel: the progress and final overthrow of the antichristian confederacy in the land of Palestine; and the ultimate general diffusion of Christianity* (Boston, Mass.: Andrews and Cummings, 1809)

[22] David Levi, *Dissertations on the prophecies of the Old Testament: containing all such prophecies as are applicable to the coming of the Messiah, the restoration of the Jews, and the resurrection of the dead, whether so applied by Jews or Christians* (London: J. Bysh, 1817).

[23] Aaron Levy was born in New York, served in the War of 1812, and became a real estate dealer in upstate New York. Seixas would have had much contact with him because he was president of Shearith Israel from 1803 to 1804.

Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 490 pp. Illus.

Around 1700, when members of the first American Jewish congregation began public worship in New York, they were a microscopic presence in world Jewry, but they already had a sense of their special destiny. Naming their synagogue Shearith Israel, "remnant of Israel," they echoed the prophet Micah's teachings that the scattering of fragments of the chosen people was a portent of redemption. Over the centuries, sacred prediction in many ways became secular fact. The devastation of European Jewry in the Holocaust tragically left the America community as nearly the sole Jewish hope, and the ensuing success of the nation of Israel has not eclipsed the crucial role of American Jewry. Yet unusual responsibility may, in and of itself, have stirred proportionate anxiety about failure, and the peculiarities of American culture heightened fears of a Jewish disaster, not now caused by bigotry but tolerance. Economic opportunity, personal freedom, and a Christian majority often willing to absorb outsiders posed unanticipated dangers. Whether American Judaism fulfills or, with equal drama, disappoints the biblical mission of the people of Israel, generations have believed that the American Jewish experience would be different. In his masterful book, Jonathan Sarna chronicles this story, making the enduring tension between historical optimism and pessimism its centerpiece.

Whereas doomsayers identify American Jewish practices such as intermarriage as inevitable corrosives, Sarna pictures decline as part of a regenerative mechanism. What seem fatal flaws, in other words, become part of communal psychology. American Jewish history "is in many ways a response to this haunting fear that Judaism in the New World will wither away" (xiii–xiv). In a historical narrative more wavelike than linear, Sarna shows how committed Jews reached out repeatedly to renew tradition in the face of threat. Young people were often catalysts: for example, the men in their twenties who began the journal the *American Hebrew* (1879), a forerunner of Conservatism, or pioneers of spiritual renewal who formed small *havurot* in the 1960s.

This use of a model of religious revitalization, where change begins at the margins, self-consciously links American Jewish and Christian history, particularly the history of Protestant revivalism. Sarna sees the imprint that radical Protestantism left on American culture and, by transmission, on religious minorities, without forgetting the communities' distinctiveness. His alignment of American Judaism with its Christian counterpart, arguably the study's greatest achievement, makes two marks on the book' s design: its religious focus and eclectic coverage.

Although any history of American Jewry will blend the development of Judaism as a religion with the accomplishments of Jews as a people, Sarna's title, *American Judaism,* identifies his main interest as a system of worship. Much like revivalism, the Judaism of this study consists of patterns of public religious behavior. Coherence is the advantage of this approach; but the initial choice of direction leads to further decisions: emphasis on communal ritual over individual ideas, rabbis instead of lay people, public space versus private, and institutions more than social life. The brilliant offbeat philosopher Moses Elias Levy does not appear, nor does Albert Einstein, Walter Lippmann, or Jennie Grossinger, whose *Art of Jewish Cooking* (1958) must have exerted at least as much influence as did rabbinic thought. Recent American Catholic history, surprisingly uninterested in "churchy" subjects, has perhaps set a standard for revisionism among religious historians, as practitioners like Robert Orsi, Paula Kane, James T. Fisher, and Patrick Allitt search unlikely corners, from ethnic households to converts' psyches, for "American Catholicism." Granted, it was easier to be innovative in their monographs than in a broad history such as this. Yet Sarna opts for restraint when he locates American Judaism in cycles of communal organization.

Within this world of synagogues, charities, and schools, Sarna covers a range of sometimes dissonant developments that show the pluralism of American Judaism. "Renewal," for example, the chapter on events since World War II, reports the new Orthodox presence, Jewish civil rights commitment, Holocaust remembrance, support for Israel, gender politics, and more. It is exciting to see these heterogeneous passions analytically linked. Yet as seasoned

revivalists know, it is easy to be seduced by numbers and fervency and just as hard to predict whose commitment will last. Sarna's ambitious inclusiveness at times produces emphasis on obvious traits. For intellectuals, we learn more about their activities than ideas: that Abraham Joshua Heschel marched for civil rights and Joseph Soloveitchik received secular schooling, but not that Heschel wrote *God in Search of Man* (1955) or that Soloveitchik's main concern was metaphysics, rather than historical transition, in *The Lonely Man of Faith* (1965). Sarna's dialectical model of declension and renewal succeeds mainly by finding evidence of effort. Whether initiatives sustain individual faith and communal well-being is not at the heart of his analysis.

With expressed hope and quieter fear for their future, Shearith Israel's founders resembled their Christian neighbors. The Puritans, too, imagined themselves a remnant of God's people, "a City upon a Hill" heralding redemption, in John Winthrop's words of 1630, unless "our hearts shall turn away so that we will not obey, but shall be seduced and worship … other Gods, our pleasures, and proffits."[1] Jonathan Sarna writes not only with an awareness of this likeness but its irony. Common cultural roots in the Hebrew Bible did not make Jews and Christians equal in America, and even if freedom proved religiously problematic for both, Jews faced the challenge at a disadvantage. Sarna's phrase "American Judaism" signifies the product of this struggle in a special sense: rather than a simple historical outcome, the American idiom of the traditional faith has been deliberately articulated by the Jewish community and repeatedly revised. Probing, analytical, and committed, *American Judaism* is a magnificent scholarly achievement and invaluable common possession.

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Notes

[1] "A Model of Christian Charity," in *God's New Israel: Religious Interpretations of American Destiny,* Conrad Cherry, ed., rev. ed (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 41.

Monty Noam Penkower, *Decision on Palestine Deferred: America, Britain and Wartime Diplomacy 1939-1945* (London: Frank Cass, 2002). xvi + 384 pp.

England's best course in Palestine, remarked Lord Moyne, the top British official in the Middle East in 1944, was to "carry on as we are and stall our Palestine policy for all we are worth." (362) He articulated this view in the midst of the raging Holocaust, when "stalling" on Palestine's future meant denying Jewish refugees a haven from their persecutors.

In *Decision on Palestine Deferred,* Monty Penkower expertly chronicles the process by which "stalling" came to define both British and American policy toward Palestine and Zionism in the 1940s. Some parts of this story have been told before in Penkower's other important books including *The Jews Were Expendable* and *From Catastrophe to Sovereignty.* But as Penkower notes in his preface, the intertwined subjects of the Holocaust and the Palestine conflict have not been fully or adequately explored in previous studies of Allied wartime diplomacy.

Moreover, no one has told the story in Penkower's masterful, comprehensive style. Every information-packed paragraph bristles with references to the constantly interacting forces shaping this vast and complex topic. This is one of Penkower's greatest strengths as a historian, and it is on full display in *Decision on Palestine Deferred.* Utilizing a vast range of archival sources, he offers the reader a fascinating, panoramic view of events, each development explained with reference to the multiplicity of factors influencing its outcome. The result is a literary tour de force, in which the reader is able to gain a full appreciation of the interlocking nature of the Arab-Jewish struggle over Palestine, the Nazi Holocaust, the conflicts within the American Jewish community, and the diplomacy waged by London and Washington during 1939-1945.

The book opens in 1939, not long after the promulgation of the British White Paper severely limiting Jewish immigration to Palestine. These restrictions would loom large in subsequent years. Despite American Jewish anger over this harsh new British policy, the Roosevelt administration declined to intervene. Although privately dismayed by the British move, FDR "refused to air his thoughts

publicly," Penkower notes. He preferred to delegate the matter to the State Department, which regarded the future of Palestine as being of no more concern to the U.S. than Tagoland, the Cameroons, or other mandated territories. (19) In fact, as Penkower observes, the State Department was not merely indifferent, but often unabashedly hostile to Zionism, going so far as to press the American Red Cross, in 1940, to reject the United Palestine Appeal's offer of twenty-five thousand dollars to aid victims of the Italian bombing of Tel Aviv and Haifa. State Department officials feared funds from a Zionist body would anger the Arabs. (60-61)

The U.S. stance in effect freed London's hand to strictly enforce the new immigration limits and to crack down on attempts by refugees to enter Palestine in defiance of the restrictions (known as *aliyah bet*), a phenomenon the Foreign Office believed was "not primarily a refugee movement" but rather "an organized political invasion" advanced by the Gestapo to undermine England's position in the Middle East. (41) Colonial Secretary John Shuckburgh, who was convinced that Jews "hate all gentiles," expressed his hope that in the wake of the Nazi invasion of Poland, "some of the sources of supply [of unauthorized Jewish immigrants] may dry up." (38) Indeed they did.

Penkower describes how the escalating tension between the Zionist movement and the British split the American Zionist leadership. An activist-minded segment, encouraged by visiting Labor Zionist leader David Ben-Gurion, favored pressing Jewish demands, while Stephen Wise, following the lead of World Zionist Organization president Chaim Weizmann, preferred a more cautious approach on the grounds that anything "that might add a featherweight to Britain's burden must be avoided." (59) Tensions between the two camps would intensify in the years to follow, eventually culminating in Ben-Gurion supplanting Weizmann and the activist Abba Hillel Silver replacing Wise at the helm of the American Zionist movement.

The Weizmann-Wise approach was grounded, in part, in their conviction that Prime Minister Winston Churchill was a sincere supporter of Zionist aspirations. The problem, as Penkower makes clear, is that Churchill's words were seldom matched by his deeds. Weizmann often found himself taking solace in the assumption

that "we are in his thoughts." (69) Whatever Churchill's private thoughts, his actions spoke for themselves. A British embassy official in Washington, writing to an American Jewish leader in late 1941, acknowledged that "the Prime Minster never has mentioned the Jews when he speaks of the yoke on Hitler's victims"; that was an accident, he theorized, caused by the fact that "he looked over the map and could think only of specific countries seized by Hitler," and "the Jews, of course, were not on that map and were overlooked." (98) Nothing better epitomizes the spirit of what Penkower calls "the bi-millenial disability of Jewish powerlessness." (97)

The intransigence of Anglo-American policy and the reluctance of many American Jewish leaders to challenge it created a vacuum that dissidents sought to fill. Penkower appropriately weaves in the Bergson group, which in late 1941 began placing full-page advertisements in major U.S. newspapers, calling for the establishment of a Jewish army to fight alongside the Allies against the Nazis (later the ads would focus on the need for allied action to rescue Europe's Jews). Bergson "shattered the prevailing American consensus regarding Jewish affairs" — that is, the consensus that Jewish concerns could be deferred until war's end — and brought militant Zionist demands "via newspaper and radio to the nation's breakfast tables." (106) Some American Zionist leaders expressed interest in trying to bring Bergson under the establishment's umbrella, but party politics intervened: Ben-Gurion insisted on severing all contact with the Bergsonites because some of its leaders had been followers of his archrival, Vladimir Ze'ev Jabotinsky, founder of Revisionist Zionism. (106)

London's rejection of the Jewish army proposal, like its restrictions on Palestine immigration and other positions unfriendly to Jewish interests, was backed up with piles of memoranda warning that a pro-Zionist policy would provoke the Arabs to embrace the Axis. The irony, as Penkower shows, is that there was widespread Arab sympathy for the Nazis anyway. "The White Paper did not, in fact, dissuade the Mufti [of Jerusalem, Haj Amin el-Husseini] and conspiratorial movements in four Arab countries from supporting the Nazi cause" (361). As the German armies marched across North Africa in 1942, Palestinian Arabs were reportedly storing up cattle "for a feast to

welcome the German victors" and marking up Jewish homes in Tel Aviv that they expected to seize. (131) The Office of Strategic Services reported to Washington that Arabs involved in the short-lived pro-Nazi coup in Iraq in 1941 had begun agitating in Syria and Lebanon. "Throughout the Muslim world," Penkower writes, "a popular German song continued to reverberate: *'Bissama Allah oua alard Hitler'* [In Heaven Allah, on earth Hitler]." (126)

The confirmation, in late 1942, that the Nazis had embarked upon the systematic mass murder of Europe's Jews did not soften many hearts among the Allied leadership. Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden remarked in 1943, with regard to the possibility of taking the Jews out of Bulgaria: "If we do that, then the Jews of the world will be wanting us to make similar offers in Poland and Germany. Hitler may well take us up on any such offer and there simply are not enough ships and means of transportation in the world to handle them." (186) The White Paper stayed in force; Palestine remained off-limits to all but a relative handful of Jewish refugees.

Oil, too, was a factor in all of this, Penkower points out. Roosevelt, already reluctant to quarrel with his ally England over the Palestine issue, grew increasingly sensitive to Arab opinion during the early 1940s as the oil issue gained prominence in U.S. strategic thinking. Wartime petroleum needs, estimates of postwar consumption, and fear of Soviet encroachment in the Middle East made Saudi Arabia an ever more influential factor in Washington's considerations. FDR personally assured the Saudi ruler, Ibn Saud, in early 1945 that no allied decision would be made regarding Palestine without consulting both the Arab and Jewish sides.

Speaking to Congress shortly afterwards, Roosevelt remarked, to the dismay of American Jews, that he had learned more about the Palestine problem by talking with Ibn Saud for five minutes than he would have learned from "the exchange of two or three dozen letters." (332) Penkower concludes: "The need for Saudi oil, and worry over Soviet intrusion into the entire region, commanded far more attention in [State Department] circles than Jewry's unique plight under the swastika." (363)

To be sure, the British and the Americans did not always see eye to eye on Palestine. Penkower describes, for example, how, much to London's dismay, a proposed Anglo-American declaration banning public discussion of the Palestine problem for the duration of the war was vetoed by the White House after vigorous lobbying by FDR's Jewish advisers. But "when deferring decision on Palestine," Penkower concludes, "there was a meeting of minds in London and Washington." (363) And so the Palestine issue was deferred, again and again, regardless of the consequences for the Jews trapped in Hitler's Europe.

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Robert Philipson, *The Identity Question: Blacks and Jews in Europe and America* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2000), xxi, 254 pp.

From the Enlightenment radiated the ideals of rationalism and universalism. These were the standards that would erase the superstitions and prejudices that had poisoned human relations, the values that would eliminate the friction that had divided our species and caused it to suffer so dearly. In their struggle against obscurantism and tyranny, the philosophes could not conceive of diversity as a claim to be asserted, as a need to be cultivated and expressed; they tended to see difference as a source of trouble. Rights were universal and inalienable; laws emanated from nature and from nature's God. Then what happens to minorities under the sovereignty of reason? What happens when a historic entity like Jewry invokes the vision of a collective destiny of its own, when its religious traditions and its corporate memories diverge from the agenda of the party of humanity? And what happens when a race is reduced to mere property, degraded and stripped of human status, robbed of its past and its culture, and forced to abide in an alien land that denies the descendants of slaves the most elemental rights, so that a condition of equality with whites can scarcely be imagined? How such paradoxes were addressed even if they could not be resolved is the problem presented in Robert Philipson's learned and thoughtful disquisition. His book is a comparative study of diasporas — Jewish and black — through key autobiographies, by members of the minorities in question. And though the emphasis is on the United States, the ideological dilemma of *The Identity Question* is rooted in the cosmopolitan claims advanced in eighteenth-century France.

Philipson's method is to juxtapose these memoirs — or at least works so classified — to reveal how black and Jewish writers themselves presented their negotiations with the larger society, how they filtered their experiences through the double consciousness of feeling both a part of common humanity and yet apart from it. *The Identity Question* thus begins with *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano,* or *Gustavus Vassa, the African,* published in the year that the French Revolution erupted and as the U. S. Constitution

was being ratified. It is paired with Solomon Maimon's memoir, published in German five years later. Both Equiano and Maimon were exemplars of difference. But what, for example, was their nationality, in an era when the nation-state was emerging to challenge the very cosmopolitanism that the philosophes fancied themselves to embody? Equiano's *Narrative* (which may be fictionalized) has been classified under "African-American literature, Afro-British literature, and African literature," Philipson writes, just as Maimon has been considered "a Polish Jew, a Lithuanian Jew, and even a Russian Jew." (232n)

The mother tongue of one was Ibo, of the other Yiddish; and both writers were driven "to master the languages that would allow them to participate in the Enlightenment West." (41-42) Yet the success of their effort was hardly complete; and Philipson emphasizes the difficulty of these gifted memoirists in conveying the interior life of the Other in a white civilization, in a Christendom making a virtue of toleration yet assuming a superiority to everyone else. For all of their struggle to partake of the dominant society and spirit of western Europe, Equiano and Maimon hinted at a subjectivity that could not be communicated, at grievances and fears to which only they and blacks in captivity and Jews in the ghetto were privy. And even though the Enlightenment made revealed religion suspect, so that Maimon became a skeptic or a deist (who refused, for example, to say the blessing over wine), not even the appeal of reason could stifle the yearnings of the heart. Opposition to slavery emerged most forcefully among the dissenting sects like the Quakers, and Equiano's Protestantism was to be shared by countless slaves who dared to believe that the exodus from Egypt anticipated their own emancipation from bondage.

The failure of the Enlightenment to resolve its own inner tensions, or to accommodate itself satisfactorily to nationalist impulses, inspires the next section of *The Identity Question*, which shifts fully to American culture in the late nineteenth century and thereafter. In an epoch marked by racialist thinking, were Jews a separate race? Were they bound by something deeper than acceptance of the Pittsburgh Platform, something as primordial as the Celts or the Teutons or the Slavs could feel in themselves as well? In an era scarred by antisemitism and racism, how could Jews find relief except by bringing the two

millennia of exile to an end, and how could black Americans hope to achieve the security and dignity of full citizenship except by appealing to the common, normative standards of equal justice under law? These were the anxieties that dogged liberals forced to confront the challenge of Zionism, and the sorts of questions that animated the NAACP in its assault upon the discrimination that collided with the ideals of the Constitution.

As late as midcentury, the legatees of universalism lacked neither literary resources nor moral authority. Philipson pays special attention to Alfred Kazin (1915-1998) and Richard Wright (1908-1960). They were members of "the last generation of American writers who adhered, on a conscious level, to the ideology of ethnic transcendence." (112) *A Walker in the City* (1951) recounts the passion to escape from the confines of the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, to make it all the way to Manhattan, and thus join a wider intellectual community, while looking back with tenderness at the cohesiveness and love attached to the family and neighborhood that ineluctably had to be left behind. *Black Boy* (1945) is a far more harrowing account of a Mississippian suspended between the terrors of a dysfunctional family and the menace posed to his very existence by the malice of white supremacy. In *On Native Grounds* (1942), his first book of literary history, Kazin wished to celebrate as well as diagnose the fiction of non-Jews whose villages and towns he could not have known directly. Wright propelled himself so furiously from the black South that he eventually expatriated himself to Paris and saw little in the subculture from which he had distanced himself to exalt or to explore. Yet their victory over provincialism was only partial. Haunted by the Holocaust, Kazin would invest characteristic passion in the appreciation of the key works of Jewish literature. In 2001 the National Yiddish Book Center named *A Walker in the City* one of the hundred canonical Jewish books. Far from disappearing from black American culture, Wright would be responsible for enlarging it, deepening it, playing an incalculable role in defining it — even if he did not live to see the success of the American political and legal system in eradicating the legacies of slavery and segregation.

Such are some of the positions taken and assessed in *The Identity Question*. It defies easy summation, however, since the author does not advance a thesis that is articulated, developed, and sustained. But as a close reader of particular texts, Philipson does offer convincing interpretations; the local perceptions that punctuate his book endow it with considerable interest. The author wisely makes no attempt to portray the social experiences of blacks and Jews as mirrors of each other, nor does he insist on literary parallels. Without forcing his texts into the same mold, he is adroit in finding points of comparison and certain structural and thematic similarities. This book is an instance of literary scholarship, historically informed, that cannot be enlisted in the political controversies swirling out of the relations between Jews and African Americans. But Philipson's work can be savored for its intelligence, its scrupulousness, and its exactitude.

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Michael E. Staub, *Torn at the Roots: The Crisis of Jewish Liberalism in Postwar America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 386 pp. Illus.

Recent surveys of American Jews' political leanings have suggested that it finally might be time to retire Milton Himmelfarb's often-cited quip, "Jews earn like Episcopalians but vote like Puerto Ricans." A poll of American Jews reported in the *Forward* in January 2003, for example, noted that "American Jews may be poised on the edge of a historic shift to the right in their political views."[1] Two-thirds of Jews still lined up in the Democratic ranks, noted the survey's author Steven M. Cohen, but among younger Jews, Jewish men, and Jews in the highest income brackets, Republican sentiments and loyalties were increasing. The age gap, more than the other demographic factors cited, suggested to observers that more Jews might lean to the Right politically over time. A *Forward* editorialist lamented the development, portraying the turn to the Right as unprecedented: "It's harder for them [younger Jews] to see liberal struggles for minority rights as their own business."[2] The implication, of course, was that their parents' generation, now approaching retirement age or beyond, all had championed liberal causes in one unified voice.

Michael E. Staub attacks this commonly held assumption about Jews as a liberal and unified American ethnic group, even in the immediate post-World War II period, in *Torn at the Roots: The Crisis of Jewish Liberalism in Postwar America*. Staub's convincing reinterpretation of American Jewish liberalism provides historical perspective for some important episodes of ideological conflict within American Jewish communities. He successfully calls into question the conventional wisdom that, even as they enjoyed unprecedented prosperity as compared to other American ethnic groups, nearly all Jews continued to retain strong liberal ties politically. He makes this case very well by shifting our focus of inquiry—where many existing studies of Jews' political tendencies have compared Jews to other American religious or ethnic groups (as does Himmelfarb's quip), Staub highlights "intra-Jewish conflict" in order to reexamine the relationship between religion, ethnicity, and politics in postwar America. By focusing on intragroup relations, Staub is able to assert

that his "is a book about the importance of ideology and the necessity of taking into account splits within ethnic communities rather than assuming that there is any self-evident link between someone's ethnic position and their political views." (18) Focusing on the years from 1945 to 1975, Staub demonstrates that American Jews passionately, continually, and without unity debated issues related to American anti-communism, civil rights, Middle Eastern politics, the Vietnam War, religious observance, feminism, and gay rights.

Staub explores intra-Jewish conflict for this catalogue of controversial topics in successive chapters of *Torn at the Roots*. In the first chapter Staub investigates the relationship between Jews and the civil rights movement, with a specific focus on the relationship between American Jewish liberalism and the consolidation of anti-communism. As Staub explains, "As leftists were increasingly demonized, their ability to speak for, or even consider themselves as belonging to, the Jewish and black communities was called into sharp question." (22) The second chapter continues to question Black-Jewish relations in the United States, with some added components, including debates about prophetic Judaism and anti-racist Zionists. Staub here disputes the common claim that the Six-Day War of 1967 marked a rupture in American Jewry's political leanings. Instead, for Staub, 1967 represents "a boiling over of circumstances that had been in the making for several years." (75) This contribution to American Jewish history is one of Staub's most insightful; he has aptly demonstrated that Jewish liberalism was being challenged and redefined well before the 1967 war.

Staub's third chapter examines anxieties from within the Jewish community that Jewish liberalism would presage the demise of Jewish particularity. The next five chapters are either issue-oriented or case studies that serve to reinforce Staub's argument, which, by this point in the book, has been clearly developed and rearticulated a number of times. He tackles intra-Jewish conflict over the war in Vietnam, radical Zionism, and the sexual revolution. Two case study chapters — one about the Jews for Urban Justice and one about Breira, an organization that supported a two-state solution and eventually experienced a painful backlash when it was labeled as a "PLO front working for Israel's ultimate destruction" (304) — reinforce the book's main

themes. Staub notes that these groups have been written out of almost all existing narratives of American Jewish history, which has helped to perpetuate the myth of unified Jewish liberalism. His recovery work is impressive, in terms both of research and of arguing for the importance of these previously ignored or forgotten episodes in American Jewish history.

One of the most insightful threads running throughout Staub's narrative is his analysis of the way that the Nazi genocide of European Jewry was invoked by those on the Right and the Left for a wide array of political purposes and often was used in ways to support conflicting opinions on a single issue. Staub also challenges previous assumptions, put forward by Peter Novick among others, that the Holocaust was not often discussed in the years immediately following the atrocities associated with WWII. Even before the 1961 trial of Adolf Eichmann and long before the Six-Day War, Staub demonstrates, it became common in debates about a variety of issues concerning American Jewry to refer to the purported "lessons" of the Holocaust. Despite disagreeing with Novick about when the Holocaust began to occupy such a central place in American Jews' collective consciousness, Staub's book does fit well with other ideas central to Novick's The Holocaust in American Life, specifically that the purported "lessons" of the Holocaust are a matter of much debate and that the Holocaust became a "moral reference point" (Novick, 13) on a variety of issues of concern to Jews, including civil rights, Middle Eastern politics, and Jewish continuity.[3] In this regard, Staub also has made an important contribution to the growing historiography on Holocaust memory in the United States.

One of the strengths of this book, the diversity of topics covered in its individual chapters, is perhaps also its weakness. Many of the chapters—especially the case studies—could easily stand alone. The book might have been made more seamless had Staub included either a conclusion or short epilogue to tie these many stories together and reinforce his important argument. Although his study ends in the mid-1970s, perhaps an epilogue about the growing pervasiveness of Jewish conservatism, or even of the important phenomenon of Jewish Reagan Democrats, for example, would have provided an illuminating cap to this fine book.

As it stands, though, Staub's book is an entertaining, well-argued, and important corrective that would prove useful reading for scholars in many fields, including American Jewish history, American ethnic history, and American political history.

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Notes

1. Steven M. Cohen, "Survey Sees Historic Shift to the Right," *Forward* (January 17, 2003).

2. "Moving Right," *Forward* (January 17, 2003).

3. Peter Novick, The Holocaust in American Life (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999).

Ava F. Kahn, ed., *Jewish Voices of the California Gold Rush: A Documentary History, 1849-1880* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002), 549 pp.

This rich documentary history of Jews during the California Gold Rush evokes the excitement of that helter-skelter era while illustrating regional differences between Jewish settlement in the Far West and elsewhere in the United States. Using settlers' and sojourners' own words, historian Ava F. Kahn shows that amid the pluralism and diversity of the Gold Rush, Judaism flourished. So too did new patterns of socialization, for California's mercurial settlement led to life cycle events celebrated in public and to business partnerships sealed across ethnic lines.

The great migration to the American El Dorado, too often neglected in Jewish histories of North America, found immigrants with Polish, Prussian, and German accents fleeing failed revolutions in Europe and mingling with westward-bound American-born Jews. All arrived during the first wave of gold rush fever and of Anglo settlement, helping define the thirty-first state and Jewish institutions within it.

Partly because California lacked the "deep-rooted Protestant hegemony" (41) of the East, Kahn contends that new, regional patterns emerged. Moreover, the great distance from established Jewish religious authorities led to innovations, such as reciting *Kaddish* for esteemed non-Jews. Calling pioneer California's "reputation for religious apathy unfounded," (38) Kahn presents documents that describe the highly visible spires of San Francisco's Temple Emanu-El and the bylaws of multiple Hebrew institutions. She also highlights, through first-person accounts, contentious splits over *shochets,* liturgy, and rabbis — indications of religious rivalry rather than apathy.

Jewish Voices of the California Gold Rush is divided into six segments, each with a summary introduction outlining the purpose and themes of the annotated selections that follow. The first segment, "Looking West," includes travel diaries by pioneers en route to California through the "very dirty" Isthmus of Panama. (132) Another account describes Fanny Brooks, a Jewish bride from Breslau who spent her honeymoon traveling by mule train across the Great Plains.

To survive, she learned to shoot a gun, build a fire with sagebrush and buffalo chips, and bake bread in a cast-iron skillet. A more comfortable journey was experienced by Rabbi Max Lilienthal who traveled by train from Cincinnati to officiate at the 1876 marriage of a California nephew. The rabbi's favorite stop was Salt Lake City, "the land of the Mormons … in which we Jews were at once turned into Gentiles! … Think what you may of Brigham Young and his queer doctrines … he is a mighty organizer." (142–43)

San Francisco is the subject of the book's second section. From the first High Holy Day sermon delivered under a tent-roofed store to matzo advertisements and marriage *ketuboth,* the city illuminates the diversity and the disputes inherent in West Coast Judaism. Among the treats in this segment are selections by and about Rabbi Julius Eckman, the opinionated pioneer who moved to California without being "called," who contentiously served one congregation, then ultimately left his mark by founding Jewish schools and a weekly newspaper, the *Gleaner*.

"Personal Struggles," the book's third part, celebrates life cycle events such as the circumcision of an infant, reported in the *Nevada City Journal* as a "nipping in the bud." (294) At the "elegant" wedding of Carrie Goldwater to P. N. Aronson in 1876, the couple's gifts included "200 cases of silver" and a one hundred dollar donation in their name to the Jewish Orphan Asylum. (302–3) Also in this section is an entry from Rebekah Bettelheim, who later married New York Rabbi Alexander Kohut. Her father was a California rabbi. In her autobiography she concludes that "San Francisco had too many congregations, and [therefore] none of them thrived. This … had a bad spiritual effect." (307)

Beyond San Francisco this documentary history takes a deep foray into "Gold Rush Country," meaning the mining towns and the river supply towns (such as Sacramento and Stockton) where metal-riveted, denim work pants sold by Levi Strauss and his partner tailor, Jacob Davis, were in constant demand. Life was hard in these remote towns, and Kahn documents the sad details of a suicide in Sonora and the burial procession of a man to the cemetery at Kokelumne Hill. There were also celebrations: the double bar mitzvah of Jacob Kohn

and Henry Louis at Placerville in 1867, as well as the circumcision of triplets whose middle names were Lincoln, Andrew Johnson, and John Connes (a California U.S. senator).

Subsequent sections of the book discuss "Group Relations," with outsiders giving opinions of Jewish "slop shops," (385) legislators commenting on Sunday blue laws, and "some of our best citizens" (390) being the subject of views from the wider community. As news of the phenomenal riches in California spread worldwide, emissaries from Jerusalem, then under Turkish rule, flocked to California to raise alms for the Jews of Palestine. These *schnorrers* nurtured a "close relationship between the golden land and the promised land." (462) The *nouveau riche* of California gave generously to the Jews of Morocco, according to excerpts from the *London Jewish Chronicle* and *Hebrew Observer.* They also protested, in larger numbers than elsewhere, the Mortara affair, the 1858 papal abduction of a Jewish boy baptized by a Catholic servant.

Jewish Voices of the California Gold Rush includes a California chronology, a detailed index, and more than fifty illustrations, from a portrait of Adolph Sutro wielding a pickaxe to maps of routes to California.

Assessing the larger picture, Kahn's bibliographical essay demonstrates the wealth of West Coast archival collections that await examination. This book, a treasury of primary source materials, should whet the appetite for further research and more thoughtful inclusion of the Far West in future surveys of American Jewish history.

Hollace Ava Weiner, author of Jewish Stars in Texas: Rabbis and Their Work, *is a graduate student at the University of Texas at Arlington. She is the recipient of a fellowship from the Jewish Women's Archive to research the rise and disintegration of the Fort Worth section of the National Council of Jewish Women.*

Penny Schine Gold, *Making the Bible Modern: Children's Bibles and Jewish Education in Twentieth-Century America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), xv + 269 pp.

Historian David Ruderman recently suggested that Jewish life in America be viewed through the prism of translation. Extrapolating from his study of eighteenth-and nineteenth-century Jewish thought in England, he writes, "The process of translations of Jewish classical texts into the English language not only continued on American soil, it flourished in a way unimaginable to the first compilers of Jewish works in English."[1] Simply put, Jewish culture rendered in the English language emerged as strikingly different from other Jewish cultures. In many ways, Penny Schine Gold's study of children's Bibles in the United States brings rich historical material to Ruderman's proposition. M*aking the Bible Modern: Children's Bibles and Jewish Education in Twentieth-Century America* is a book about acts of cultural translation. Its strength rests on Gold's ability to understand translation as a creative and multidirectional endeavor. She argues that children's Bibles published from 1915 to 1936, mainly through the Reform movement, translated Judaism into American modernity and translated American values into Jewish terms.

The heart of Gold's argument is a close analysis of children's Bibles' retelling of a handful of biblical stories, including Cain's murder of Abel, God's commandment that Abraham uproot himself and move to a new land, the binding of Isaac, and Jacob's stealing of the birthright from Esau. In each of these cases, Gold shows that children's Bibles deleted, revised, and simplified the biblical text according to American norms. In general, the editors were wary of telling stories that drew attention to moral inconsistency, supernaturalism, and sexuality. For example, many children's Bibles resolved the sticky Genesis passage about Isaac's blessings for his sons by explaining that Jacob was more deserving of the blessing than Esau. Mendel Silber, who wrote a two-volume children's Bible in 1916, instructed his young readers: "When the two boys grew up, one could tell just by looking at them what sort of fellow each was. Esau was covered with hair all over and looked rough, just like one who hunts all the time and leads a wild life.

Jacob always looked neat and genteel." (149) Children, then, instead of learning about duplicity or questioning the motive of personal gain, were assured that good people are rewarded with good things. Other biblical passages that could not as easily be finessed into moral consistency were often skipped, and those that focused too much on God and miracle working tended to be rewritten to focus on human heroics. I wonder what Gold would have found had she extended her analysis beyond the 1930s; did the anti-communism and so-called religious revival of 1950s America, for example, encourage a new focus on God in children's Bibles?

Three overlapping concerns drive Gold's inquiry into children's Bibles. First, she is interested in the problem of modernity in Jewish life. Delving into the scholarship about Jewish responses to European Enlightenment and emancipation, Gold concludes that the Bible became the crucial sacred text that Jews brought with them into conversations about modernity. This conclusion, although not original, enables Gold to assert that Jews who were invested in being modern would have shunned an earlier Jewish fixation on the Talmud in favor of the more universal (at least in a Western context) messages of the Bible. She points out the irony in the fact that even with the rise of historical criticism, which called into question single and divine authorship of the Bible, Jews favored the Bible as proof of their modern and universal values. Of course, the fact that the Bible provided a literary common ground between Judaism and Christianity made it an attractive symbol for Jews wishing for acceptance in mainstream European society.

Closely tied to Gold's inquiry into the place of the Bible in Jewish modernity is her concern with the changing role of Jewish education in the modern period. Gold chronicles the ways in which the theory and practice of Jewish education shifted between the pre-modern and modern eras. Whereas Jews who lived in insular communities focused on memorizing sacred materials (particularly rabbinical texts) in their original languages, those Jews who came into greater contact with non-Jews were intent upon drawing parallels between Jewish values and modern ideals and used sacred text more as a vehicle for mainstream correspondence than differentiation. In the United States, the

professionalization of Jewish education grew apace with the expansion of American pedagogical theory and public education. Thinkers like John Dewey, who argued for an experience-based, functional approach to education, influenced Jewish educators to rethink the traditional Talmud-Torah and *heder* style of Jewish education. Not only was the meaning of childhood re-envisioned in twentieth-century America, scientific understandings of how people learned and how moral values were created also underwent transformation. Children's Bibles, then, reflected the desire to expose children to ethical teachings without resorting to authoritarian methods or rote memorization. The experience of reading about the heroes of the Bible and identifying with them, educators hoped, would naturally instill in children a moral sensibility and a love of their tradition.

Finally, and most personally, Gold is concerned with the story of Jewish assimilation in the United States, a story illuminated, she believes, by her inquiry into children's Jewish education. Here, her voice of judgment is audible. Although one could argue that the authors of children's Bibles were spinning modern-day midrash, the genre of biblical commentary codified in the Talmud in the centuries after the destruction of the Second Temple, Gold is not so inclined. She explains that while the "originating impulse" of midrash is "to *explain* the difficulties in the text," the aim of children's Bibles was to efface the difficulties and replace them with more palatable stories. (189) Her disappointment with the content of children's Bibles may drive her toward a restrictive definition of midrash. For Gold, however, mid-century children's Bibles are just one measure of how neglectful American Jews have been of the "deep and complex Jewish way of life," favoring instead simple explanations of the parity between American values and Jewish ones. (206)

A reader may notice that Gold's analysis of actual children's Bibles, while the most fascinating and novel element of the book, is rather short. Her admirable impulse to contextualize — her inquiries into modernity, education, and questions of assimilation — in certain ways occludes her story. For a newcomer to Jewish history, these long context sections may be useful; for a specialist they are less so and also introduce a few questionable generalizations.

Still, there is much to admire in this book. Gold insists that Jews in the United States participated in acts of cultural translation. She ably illustrates one way that Jews translated America — and modernity — into Jewish terms and metaphors. The "Englishing of Jewish culture," to use Ruderman's phrase, was not simply a matter of turning Hebrew words into English ones, it was also, as Gold shows, a process of reflecting anew American culture and values.[2]

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Notes

[1] David Ruderman, "Reflecting on American Jewish History," *American Jewish History* 9, no. 3-4 (2003): 376.

[2] Ibid, 374.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Here is a selected listing of new accessions added to the collection of the American Jewish Archives in 2004.

American Conference of Cantors
Divrei Shir/Words of Song: A Curriculum for the Study of Synagogue Music

A curriculum booklet for the study of synagogue music, published jointly by the American Conference of Cantors and the Union for Reform Judaism. 2003.

Received from Cantor Alane S. Katzew, New York, NY

Bennett, Alan D.
Vision and Will: A History of the National Association of Temple Educators, 1954-2004.

Received from Alan D. Bennett, Cleveland Heights, OH

Blumberg, Janice R.
"Alphabet' Browne in New York: Meddler or Stoned Prophet?"

Essay on Rabbi Edward B. M. Browne (1845-1929), written by Janice R. Blumberg. 2004.

Received from Janice R. Blumberg, Washington, D.C.

Borish, Linda J.
"Girls' Athletic Program in the Gymnasium of the Temple: Sport for Jewish Girls, Gender and Generational Concerns in Early 20th Century American Jewish Culture."

Paper delivered at the American Jewish History Scholars' Conference, Washington, D.C., June, 2004.

Received from Linda J. Borish, Kalamazoo, MI

Central Conference of American Rabbis
Audio recordings of sessions from the 1999 CCAR conference in Pittsburgh, PA, including the opening plenary together with sessions on American Jewish history, gay and lesbian issues, prayer book revisions, and a program of reflections.

Received from Elliot L. Stevens, New York, NY

Cohen, Henry

"Kindler of Souls: The Life and Times of Rabbi Henry Cohen"

Biography of Rabbi Henry Cohen (1863-1952) of Galveston, TX, written by his grandson. 2004.

Received from Henry Cohen, Wynnewood, PA

Cohen, Phil

Journal. n.d.

Yiddish journal kept by Cohen on a nineteenth century trip to Argentina that includes references to the journey, settlement in Argentina, and the difficulties in immigration.

Received from Gary Felsten, Columbus, IN

Finberg, Vera

"The Bondy Family of Doini Mesto and Lipnice, Bohemia."

Family history and genealogy, written by Vera Finberg. 2003.

Received from Vera Finberg, Fairfax, VA

Franzblau, Abraham Norman

"A Quarter-century of Rabbinical Training at the Hebrew Union College: Report of a Survey conducted for the Faculty Committee on Survey," prepared by Rabbi Franzblau. 1933.

Received from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, OH

Free Sons of Israel (Leavenworth, KS)

Membership ledger. 1880-1884.

Membership ledger for the fraternal order, consisting of a questionnaire for prospective candidates.

Received from Marge Brodkin, through Barton P. Cohen, Leawood, KS

Ginsberg, Ruth Bader

Letter to Dr. Gary P. Zola, together with the text of an August 2004 talk given by Justice Ginsberg at Touro Synagogue, Newport, RI, on the three hundred and fiftieth anniversary of American Jewish life.

Received from Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Washington, DC

Grafman, Milton Louis
Personal papers of Rabbi Grafman, including sermons, correspondence, student manuscripts, and materials concerning his work in the civil rights movement while a rabbi in Birmingham, AL, 1952-1971.

Received from Stephen W. Grafman, Potomac, MD

Grotta, Emily
"Changing the Name of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations," a paper on the name change of the UAHC to the Union for Reform Judaism. Also contains background information and material on this decision. March 2004.

Received from Emily Grotta, New York, NY

Gruber, Mayer
Funeral and wedding talks delivered by Rabbi Mayer Gruber as assistant rabbi at Congregation Oheb Shalom (South Orange, NJ), 1970-1972, and as rabbi at Mikdosh El Hagro Hebrew Centre (Evanston, IL), 1976-1980.

Received from Mayer Gruber, Beersheva, Israel

Hark, Thomas
"Moshe Lieb of Russia and His Descendants: Soloman Hark of Philadelphia, PA; Alexander Hark of Philadelphia, PA; Samuel (Sauna Hark) Snyderman of Philadelphia, PA; and Sia Hark of Russia."
Family history and genealogy, written by Thomas Hark. 2004.

Received from Thomas Hark, Charleston, WV

Hebrew Union College
Letter issued and signed by Jacob Ezekiel, secretary of the Board of Governors of Hebrew Union College, soliciting publishers to donate to the College's library a copy of their publications "relating to the History, Science, Religion, Literature, etc., of the Israelites." 1879.

Received from Arnold Kaplan, Allentown, PA

Hendrix, Janel D.
"A History of Temple Beth-El, Pensacola, FL, 1876-1990." 2004.

Received from Harry D. Kahn, Pensacola, FL

Howlitt, J. L.
"The Judaic Experience at the U.S. Naval Academy."

A term paper submitted to the faculty of the Department of History of the U.S. Naval Academy in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a degree with honors. 2003.

Received from Leonard Kaplan, Coral Gables, FL

Jewish Education Center of Cleveland (Cleveland, Ohio)
"The Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland: Centennial Curriculum Master Notebook," February 2004.

Received from Nachama Skolnik Moskowitz, Cleveland, OH

Lane, Albert E.
"Gerson-Slatkin Family Tree 100th USA Anniversary Reunion Book, July 24, 2004."

A family history and genealogy celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of the Cincinnati Gerson-Slatkin families.

Received from Albert E. Lane, Cincinnati, OH

Levitt, Norma U.
Personal papers, including materials documenting the many programs and organizations that Mrs. Levitt participated in through her work with the Women of Reform Judaism, the United Nations, and various international organizations. 1945-2004.

Received from Norma U. Levitt, Great Neck, NY

Levy, Theodore S.
Oral history interview. December 17, 2002.

Audiorecording of interview with Rabbi Theodore S. Levy and his wife, Ina Rae, concerning their sponsorship and involvement in the Burdman-Levy Archival Expedition to Europe to gather archival materials for the American Jewish Archives.

Received from Theodore S. and Ina Rae Levy, Hilton Head, SC

Levy, Uriah P.
Original copy of the published proceedings of the court martial of Uriah P. Levy (1792-1862) titled *Record of Naval Court of Inquiry No. 3 in the Case of Uriah P. Levy, Late a Captain in the U.S. Navy, Washington, DC November, 1857.*

Received from Melvin A. Young, Chattanooga, TN

Mattoon, Illinois
Brief list of burials in the Jewish cemetery at Mattoon, IL, compiled in 1961.

Received from David Locketz, Minnetonka, MN

Mehlman, Bernard H.
Audio recording of a sermon delivered by Rabbi Bernard H. Mehlman with Rabbi Ronne Friedman regarding their trip to the Soviet Union and a meeting with Soviet "refuseniks." March 21, 1986.

Received from Bernard H. Mehlman, Boston, MA

Morris, Jacques Charles
Transcriptions of letters written by Jacques Charles Morris while serving in the U.S. Army and stationed in the Pacific Theater of operations during World War II. February 1944 – July 1945.

Received from Jacques Charles Morris, Louisville, KY

Niebergall, Fred
Papers of Lt. Fred Niebergall, an intelligence officer in the U.S. Army, consisting of correspondence and reports pertaining to the Nuremberg war crimes trials. Includes sketches of persons involved in the trial, drawn by Niebergall. 1945-1948.

Received from Kenny Niebergall, Warsaw, KY

Oakwood Country Club (Leavenworth, KS)
Microfilm copy of records of the club, 1846-1993.

Received from the Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, through Barton P. Cohen, Kansas City, MO

Rothenberg, Jean W.

L'chayim: A History of Dr. Jean W. Rothenberg

Biography of Jean W. Rothenberg, together with background materials such as audio recordings, photographs, interviews, and family genealogy charts. 2004.

Received and produced by Pangea Productions, Ltd., Cincinnati, OH

Sandmel, Samuel

Three lectures given at Temple Emanu-El (Birmingham, AL) by Rabbi Samuel Sandmel (1911-1979), a professor of Bible at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. 1959 and 1972.

Received from Stephen Grafman, Potomac, MD

Saperstein, Harold

The papers of Rabbi Harold Saperstein (1910-2001), including sermons, writings, correspondence, and printed materials pertaining to his career as a congregational rabbi; his work as a Jewish chaplain during World War II; and his active participation in the Reform movement, including his involvement in the World Union for Progressive Judaism. 1930-1998.

Received from David and Marc Saperstein, Washington, DC

Scott, Adrienne Pollock

"An Analysis of Dr. Jane Evans' Professional Contributions to the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods," a rabbinic thesis submitted by Adrienne Scott to Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion; together with a transcript of an oral history interview with Jane Evans, conducted by Scott as part of her research for the thesis. 2002-2003.

Received from Adrienne Pollock Scott, Cincinnati, OH

Sokobin, Alan Mayor

Correspondence and papers pertaining to his career as a rabbi at Congregation Shomer Emunim (Sylvania, Ohio). 2000-2004.

Received from Alan Mayor Sokobin, Sylvania, OH

Temple Israel (Blytheville, Ark.)
Records of the congregation including constitution and bylaws, correspondence, financial reports, membership lists, Sisterhood records, and B'nai B'rith Women minutes and correspondence. 1947-1997.

Received from Temple Israel and Richard Falkoff, Blytheville, AR

Weston, Leo
Talk given by Leo Weston on the history and genealogy of the Westheimer family. 1986.

Received from Claire Grossman, Santa Fe, NM

Wise, Louise Waterman
Letters from Louise Waterman Wise and Stephen S. Wise to Matilda Samuels, regarding the work of the Women's division of the American Jewish Congress. 1942-1945.

Received from Albert Slomovitz, Marietta, GA

Wohl, Samuel
He Really Had Something to Say: The Ideas of Rabbi Samuel Wohl. A Biographical Presentation and World Perspective of Scope and Compassion, written by his sons, Theodore H. Wohl and Amiel Wohl. Together with letters and papers of Rabbi Samuel Wohl, 1927-1976.

Received from Theodore H. Wohl, Cincinnati, OH

Yad Charutzim-Tiferes Israel Congregation (Cincinnati, Ohio)
Minute book for the congregation. 1948-1964.

Received from Paul Nathan, Cincinnati, OH



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