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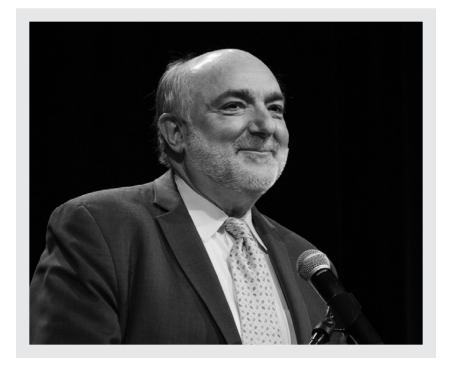
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Rabbi David H. Ellenson, Ph.D.

(1947-2023)

President, HUC-JIR (2001–2013) Interim President (2018–2019) Chancellor Emeritus (2019–2023)



He attracted an enormous response as a teacher...a colleague and a leader because his deep called to the deep of others who were compelled by the possibility of a serious, embodied, committed, demanding, creative, rooted, activist, moral, feminist, modernist, historical, intellectual, soulful, joyful Judaism. For generations of graduates of all our programs, faculty colleagues, staff members—his deep called to our deep.

Rabbi Michael Marmur, Ph.D.

Eulogy for David Ellenson, 10 December 2023, 27 Kislev 5784

To Our Readers . . .

In the fiftieth anniversary issue of the journal published in 1998, Lance J. Sussman wrote an insightful article on the writings of his teacher, Jacob Rader Marcus. Marcus was, above all, a diaspora hegemonist, as Sussman called him, but one who argued that the United States—as the Diaspora's most powerful community—held a unique place in Jewish history because it "offer[ed] the promise of complete political freedom for the Jew." He ends with Marcus's own words from volume 4 of his United States Jewry, 1775-1985: "There can be no question, for the Jew this is the best country, the freest in the world. This he knows full well; he is happy that his lines have fallen in pleasant places." In light of rising antisemitism today in this country and around the world coupled with the horrific events of October 7—the worst catastrophe to befall the Jewish people since the Holocaust—one wonders if Marcus's assessment was too optimistic. In honor of the upcoming semi-quincentennial of the Declaration of Independence, Sussman and his co-author, Paul Finkelman, are revisiting the historic roots of Marcus's assertion. They argue that it was, in fact, "the very presence of a small Jewish community at the Founding and the contributions of Jews to the American Cause [that] helped shape the United States and undermined 'official' antisemitism in the new nation" (7). It was, they add, one of Jewry's greatest contributions to America. Their narrative capably shows that American Jews' path to political and legal equality was by no means clearcut, but that "the Jewish involvement in the Revolution and its aftermath helped create the extraordinary religious liberty found in most of the nation and helped to actualize many of the precepts of the American Enlightenment with regard to religious liberty" (46).

If this period helped sow the seeds of religious liberty, it did no less for the seeds of a "more open cultural landscape." Moving to the

¹ Lance J. Sussman, "Historian of the Jewish People': A Historiographical Reevaluation of the Writings of Jacob R. Marcus," *American Jewish Archives Journal* 50, nos. 1 & 2 (1998): 19.

² Judah M. Cohen, "Dawning Sounds: Jews and Music in the Young Republic," in *By Dawn's Early Light: Jewish Contributions to American Culture from the Nation's Founding to the Civil War*, ed. Adam D. Mendelsohn (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 113.

nineteenth century and focusing on the composer Louis Lewandowski, Judah M. Cohen asks us to take a step back, to reexamine how the story of nineteenth-century American synagogue music has been traditionally told. What he shows is that the narrative of grouping the three major composers together—Lewandowski, Salomon Sulzer, and Samuel Naumbourg—as a "collective shorthand for one chapter of nineteenth-century musical reform"—is both inaccurate and "overly flattened." In fact, whereas American congregations used Sulzer's and Naumbourg's music as early as the 1840s, Lewandowski's was not used until the late 1880s. Cohen restores complexity to the history and, in so doing, provides us with a newfound appreciation for the ways in which Jews in the last decades of the nineteenth century used Lewandowski's music and "how people negotiate sound and Jewish identity in a wider variety of religious settings—dimensions and insights that continue to resonate in the twenty-first century" (73).

Finally, David Mendelsson offers us a rich assessment of HUC-JIR's decision to mandate a year of study in Israel for its rabbinical students beginning in 1970 under the presidency of Nelson Glueck, less than a year before his death in February 1971. Mendelsson argues that though Glueck's push for the students to spend a year on the school's campus in Jerusalem played a huge role in bringing it to fruition, there were other important factors that contributed to the mandate; namely, the larger sociocultural context of the turbulent 1960s and the impact of the Six-Day war on American Jewry generally and, vis-à-vis its relationship to Israel, American Reform Judaism specifically. No doubt, this decision has had a lasting impact on the history of the College-Institute and on the history of the American rabbinate. We are grateful to Mendelsson for bringing this important chapter in our institution's history to life, particularly as we are approaching the sesquicentennial anniversary of Hebrew Union College.

• • • • •

Milestones are valuable markers of progress, opportunities to express gratitude for what has been accomplished, and a chance to look ahead. For seventy-five years (1948–2023), *The American Jewish Archives Journal* has provided its readers with enriching articles, informative documentary

analyses, and helpful reviews of new scholarship in the field as well as important accessions to the archives itself. This is the first issue of the AJAJ since Dr. Gary P. Zola's retirement. In his twenty-five years as editor, he brought to the enterprise his indomitable vision and learned curiosity, which broadened the journal's access and readership and expanded the breadth of scholarship on the American Jewish experience. Upon assuming the editorship in 1998, he quickly set his own mark on the flagship publication of the American Jewish Archives: he renamed the journal, updated the cover design and layout, and established the publication's Academic Advisory & Editorial Board. Following in the footsteps of his teacher and mentor, Jacob Rader Marcus, who insisted the journal be available at no cost to its readers, Zola continued to mail the journal in hard copy to an ever-growing list of readers and libraries that now total more than six thousand. Additionally, for more than fifteen years, all current and past issues of the journal have been made freely available on our website. (Zola was doing open access before it was even a thing!) In 2006, Zola and the journal were given the Ohioana award for editorial excellence. In sum, the journal has been honored for its quality, and we do our best to maintain high standards for our articles and reviews. In the last quarter century, we have published special issues on an array of topics—Dead Sea Scrolls and American Jewry; the American Civil War; World War I; and Cincinnati Jewish history, to name just a few. Commemorative issues were published for the 350th anniversary of American Jewish life as well as the 75th anniversary of the American Jewish Archives. A festschrift-style issue was published in 2009 for the late Naomi Cohen, a pioneering scholar in the field and a longtime friend of the AJA's. It has always been our hope that the journal remains a highly readable, accessible venue for solid scholarship—produced by senior scholars, graduate students, and interested lay people alike—that continues to chart new paths and reevaluate well-trodden byways in the field.

Moses Rischin described Jacob Rader Marcus as the "Cincinnati archivist-historian" who would "benevolently collect, organize, catalogue, calendar, direct, fund, and tell the American Jewish story on a

cornucopian scale singularly his own."³ As Marcus the scholar brought these two fields together—and Zola continued to do so for the last quarter century—I would argue that the journal, too, has always been a wonderful union of the archives and history, a semi-annual reminder of how the archives supports and enriches our understanding of the past. As for the future, artificial intelligence and the complete shift in archives to born-digital assets will irrevocably alter the landscape of archives and the writing of history. The journal and its leadership, as well as its contributors and readers, will need to adjust to this sea change. And we will. But for now, as we move to a new chapter in the history of our journal, it is worth updating and repeating the hope that Dr. Zola expressed himself when he first took the helm of this pioneering publication: The mission that Dr. Marcus outlined seventy-five years ago still endures. Marcus's and Zola's vision will remain our lodestar.⁴

Dana Herman Cincinnati, Ohio.

³ Moses Rischin, "Jacob Rader Marcus: Historian-Archivist of Jewish Middle America," *American Jewish History* 85, no. 2 (1997): 175.

⁴ Gary P. Zola, "To Our Readers," American Jewish Archives Journal 49, nos. 1 & 2 (1997): 7.



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David Salisbury Franks (Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

The American Revolution and the Emergence of Jewish Legal and Political Equality in the New Nation

Paul Finkelman and Lance J. Sussman

The forthcoming semi-quincentennial of the American Revolution provides an opportunity to consider how Jews gained political and religious liberty in the new nation and, at the same time, how the very presence of Jews in the nation helped lead to a national policy of religious liberty that would quickly be adopted by most states within the American system of federalism.¹

The contrast between Old World polities and the new United States is striking. In 1775, when the Revolution began, *every* nation in Europe discriminated against Jews in many ways. All European countries had an official state-supported Christian faith.² Political rights, voting, and elective office, where they existed, were circumscribed by religious tests and sectarian oaths, which universally excluded Jews. Similarly, many

¹ Finkelman presented an early draft of this article at the second annual "Law vs. Antisemitism Conference" at Lewis and Clark Law School in 2023. We thank Candace Jackson Gray, a doctoral student at Morgan State University, for helping us find some sources; Linda Tashbook, a reference librarian at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, for helping us track down some obscure statutes; and the anonymous readers for the American Jewish Archives Journal. We published a very short summary of this article in Jewish Review of Books on 3 July 2023; see https://jewishreviewofbooks.com/american-jewry/14147/when-freedom-began-to-ring/. This was later placed in the Congressional Record by Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania. "Recognizing the Patriotism of Jews During the American Revolution," Congressional Record 169, no. 119 (Extensions of Remarks—12 July 2023): E665–E666. Finally, Professor Finkelman thanks the International Center for Jefferson Studies at Monticello, where he was a Fellow while finishing this article.

² To the extent that the Ottoman Empire was European, that was one place where Islam was the official faith.

educational, professional, and economic opportunities were not available to Jews. In Britain Jews could not be barristers or military officers, attend universities, or engage in various forms of commerce and industry. Jewish immigrants to Great Britain—and after 1801 the United Kingdom—could not naturalize, although non-Jewish immigrants could; and as aliens Jewish immigrants were barred from owning land and other property and engaging in certain economic activities. By contrast, in the United States Jews could naturalize in most of the new states after 1776 and under the U.S. Constitution, starting with the first federal naturalization act of 1790.³ At the end of the Revolutionary era, with the adoption of the Constitution and Bill of Rights, at the national level the United States became the first Western nation to prohibit any religious test for holding a public office, to reject the idea of a national faith, and to allow for freedom of worship and belief on a broad national scale.⁴

The age of the American Revolution was thus a major turning point in world Jewish history and the history of antisemitism, setting the stage for two and a half centuries of Jewish political engagement and cultural adaptation. It was also a remarkable moment in the history of religious liberty, since these policies affected members of other minority faiths as well as deists who had no formal faith at all. But given that at least 95 percent of all free people in the nation were Protestants, it would have been perfectly plausible for the new nation to have had a very different notion of religious liberty that excluded non-Christians or even non-Protestants.

In a relatively short period—about four decades following the end of the Seven Years War in 1763—Jews achieved almost complete political

³ Act of 26 March 1790, 1 Stat. 103. For a full discussion of this, see Gabriel J. Chin and Paul Finkelman, "The 'Free White Persons' Clause of the Naturalization Act of 1790 as Super-Statute," *William and Mary Law Review* 65 (2024).

⁴ U.S. Constitution. Art. VI, Cl. 3 ("no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States"); U.S. Constitution, Amendment I ("Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof"). These clauses were limitations on the national government but did not prevent state governments from having religious tests for officeholding, abridging religious liberty, or maintaining established churches.

and legal equality in the new nation. By 1800 official, de jure, legalized antisemitism had virtually ceased to exist in the United States. A handful of states still maintained established churches, which sent a message to Jews and members of other non-favored faiths that they were "citizens" but perhaps not yet fully accepted as such. However, "the consequences of this establishment" had changed dramatically since the colonial period and the "influences responsible for the change sprang in part from developments in the colonies, in part from more general cultural trends, and in part from a transformation in the position of the Jews themselves."⁵

More significantly, limitations on Jewish (and sometimes Catholic) of-ficeholding in some states continued, although it became increasingly rare. Some states abolished it in new post-Revolutionary constitutions, and some states sometimes ignored their own constitutional mandates. After 1791 no new states ever adopted religious tests for officeholding. What had once been the rule in the British Empire—prohibiting Jews from political participation, officeholding, and many economic activities—was now increasingly rare in the United States, and limited to officeholding in a declining number of states. Everywhere else in the Atlantic world,

⁵ Oscar Handlin and Mary F. Handlin, "The Acquisition of Political and Social Rights by the Jews in the United States," *The American Jewish Year Book* 56 (1955): 51.

⁶ The North Carolina legislature ignored its own constitution when it seated Jacob Henry in 1809. Seth Barrett Tillman, "What Oath (If Any) Did Jacob Henry Take in 1809?: Deconstructing the Historical Myths," *American Journal of Legal History*, 61 (2021): 349–384. See also "Jacob Henry's Address to the North Carolina Legislature, 1809," in *Religion and the State in the American Jewish Experience*, ed. Jonathan D. Sarna and David G. Dalin (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1997), 82–85.

⁷ In 1787, nine state constitutions contained a religious test for officeholding that prohibited Jews from holding office. Two states, Connecticut and Rhode Island, did not have constitutions, and two other states, New York and Virginia, did not have a religious test in their new constitutions. In March 1791, Vermont, the fourteenth state, entered the Union with a religious test. It would be the last new state to have such a clause. By 1821, there were twenty-four states. Rhode Island still did not have a constitution but had removed any political restrictions based on religion through statutes. Of the remaining twenty-three states only five (New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Maryland, and North Carolina) still had religious tests for office that excluded Jews. By 1850, of the thirty-one states in the Union, only North Carolina and New Hampshire still retained religious tests for office holding.

including England, Jews remained under legal and political regimes that denied them various rights, including the franchise, access to citizenship through naturalization, appointed or elected to civil or military office, to certain professions (such as law), to some types of commercial activity, to ownership of real and other kinds of property, to admission to universities, to public worship, and to equal justice under the laws of the places they lived. The one exception was the new United States.

This sea change in Jewish rights did not end social antisemitism, prejudice, or bigotry. While a legal system can regulate behavior and even promote tolerance, laws cannot end private intolerance and bigotry, even when the legal system prohibits discriminatory acts, especially in the economic sphere, on the basis of race or religion. Antisemitism, rooted in various expressions of Christian theology, nationalisms of all kinds, private fears and hatreds, the rantings of demagogues and self-serving political figures, conspiracy theorists, and ignorance, has almost always been immune from law. In the Old World, such anti-Jewish behavior was often encouraged, supported, or even mandated by political leaders, governments, religious leaders and established churches, national and local laws, and courts. But, in the United States it was not. As President George Washington noted in his famous letter to the Newport, Rhode Island Jewish community, in

⁸ On social antisemitism in this period, see William Pencak, Jews & Gentiles in Early America, 1654–1800 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005). Recent work by Britt P. Tevis, "'Jews Not Admitted': Anti-Semitism, Civil Rights, and Public Accommodation Laws," Journal of American History 107, no. 4 (2021): 847, argues that social antisemitism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries violated the Fourteenth Amendment, the Civil Rights Act of 1875, and the emerging notion of the nexus between civil rights law and public accommodations law. While the 1875 act was passed to protect the rights of Blacks, its expansive language certainly should have applied to Jews, as Tevis argues. However, this was short lived, because in 1883 the Supreme Court struck down the 1875 act in The Civil Rights Cases, 109 U.S. 3 (1883). Tevis's article is very useful for our understanding of the post-Reconstruction period, but in the Revolutionary and Early National period there was no connection between civil rights and public accommodations. See also Britt P. Tevis, "Trends in the Study of Antisemitism in United States History," American Jewish History 105, no. 1 (2021): 255. On the Northern response to the 1883 decision striking down the 1875 law, see Paul Finkelman, "The Hidden History of Northern Civil Rights Law and the Villainous Supreme Court, 1875–1915," University of Pittsburgh Law Review 79 (2018): 357-410.

the new nation: "All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support." 9

Washington's letter set the tone for the future civic status of American Jews. In the United States, federal law (and eventually state law as well) would not support open religious discrimination or persecution. ¹⁰ But,

⁹ George Washington to The Hebrew Congregation in Newport Rhode Island, 18 August 1790, available at: https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-06-02-0135. In part Washington was quoting from a letter sent to him by Moses Mendes Seixas, the parnas (president) of the Newport synagogue. Letter from the Hebrew Congregation of Newport to President Washington, 17 August 1790, reprinted in Morris U. Schappes, A Documentary History of Jews in the United States, 1654–1875, 3rd ed. (New York: Schocken, 1971), 78–79. The letter to Washington illustrates one way in which Jews influenced and helped shape the development of religious liberty in the United States. That Washington accepted Seixas's literary and policy suggestions also illustrates how Washington and other American leaders accepted Jews as equals and patriots in the new nation.

¹⁰ There are of course many examples of the nation failing to live up to its stated principles, the most famous include the persecution of members of the Church of Latter-Day Saints of Jesus Christ (Mormons) and the act of Congress to disband that church. The Late Corporation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints et al. v. United States; Romney et al. v. United States, 139 U.S. 1 (1890); Edmunds-Tucker Act, Public Law 4-397, 24 Stat. 635 (3 March 1887). See Edwin B. Firmage and Richard C. Mangrum, Zion in the Courts: A Legal history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1830–1900 (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 1988). The massive state persecutions of Jehovah's Witnesses from the 1930s to the early 1950s also illustrates religious discrimination. The most egregious example of this was Justice Felix Frankfurter's majority opinion in Minersville School District v. Gobitis, 310 U.S. 586 (1940) and his dissent in West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette, 319 U.S. 624, at 646 (1943) (Frankfurter, J., dissenting). A few federal laws, rules, or acts were overtly hostile to Jews. At the beginning of the Civil War federal laws required that military chaplains be Protestant clergymen. This is a rare example of a religious test for a federal office or job. Bertram W. Korn, American Jewry and the Civil War (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1951), 56-97. During the Civil War this would change. Similarly, in December 1862, General Ulysses S. Grant issued an order expelling Jews from his military district, which was quickly countermanded. See Jonathan D. Sarna,

whatever the future held, already in the Revolutionary period, Jews had unprecedented political and legal equality that could not be found anywhere else in the world.

When Grant Expelled the Jews (New York: Nextbook/Schocken, 2012). There are virtually no other examples of explicit federal antisemitism, although there have been several instances where acts by the federal government that do not specifically mention Jews nonetheless caused them harm. For example, the treaty with Switzerland in 1855 collaborated with Swiss discrimination against Jewish Americans. See Paul Finkelman, Millard Fillmore (New York: Times Books, 2011), 95–96; Lance J. Sussman, Isaac Leeser and the Making of American Judaism (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995), 212–213; Morton Borden, Jews, Turks, and Infidels (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 82–96; and Sarna and Dalin, Religion and the State, 126–129.

In the twentieth century Congress would pass immigration legislation that was in part motivated by antisemitism. These laws, which dramatically impacted Jews outside the country, include the 1921 Emergency Quota Act (also called the Immigration Restriction Act of 1921 or the Johnson Quota Act), Ch. 8, 42 Stat. 5 (19 May 1921); and three years later, the Immigration Act of 1924 (also known as the Johnson-Reed Act), Pub. L. 68-139, 43 Stat. 153 (26 May 1924), which set low quotas for immigrants from Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe and what had been the Ottoman Empire. These laws prevented Jews in Europe from easily immigrating to the United States in the 1920s through the 1940s. After World War II, two refugee acts, The Displaced Persons Act of 1948, 80th Cong., 2d Sess. Ch 647, PL 774, 62 Stat. 1009, Ch. 647 (25 June 1948) and the somewhat less restrictive Refugee Relief Act of 1953, 67 Stat. 400 (7 August 1953) also harmed European Jews, many who were survivors of the Shoah, by limiting their ability to leave displaced persons camps and move to the United States. Similarly, the laws limited many non-Jewish refugees from coming to the United States. These laws were not explicitly antisemitic (even though many who voted for them were overtly antisemitic) and, unlike Grant's order or earlier rules on military chaplains, they never mention Jews or members of any other religion. Furthermore, while enormously harmful to European Jews, the laws did not directly limit the rights of Iews in the United States.

Similarly, when Congress passed the Philo-Semitic Jackson-Vanik Amendment, 9 U.S.C. 2432(a), Sec. 402, "Freedom of Emigration in East-West Trade" of the Trade Act of 1974 (Pub. L. 93–618, 88 Stat. 1978), Jews were neither singled out nor mentioned in the legislation, even though the main purpose of the amendment was to force the Soviet Union to allow Jews to freely emigrate to Israel and elsewhere. The best estimates are that this act led to about one million Jews moving to Israel and some 400,000 refugees—including Jews, Catholics, and evangelical Christians—moving to the United States and elsewhere. American Jews widely supported freedom of choice for Soviet immigrants, helping many come to the United States, whereas Israel, which anchored its policies on the Zionist value of "the ingathering of the exiles," wanted all of them to come to Israel.

There is significant scholarship on the social history of Jews and the development of Jewish religious and cultural institutions in Revolutionary America. This literature mostly focuses on the internal history of early American Judaism and Jewish life. These works of social history discuss the creation of Jewish institutions, family life, business relations, and various forms of cultural antisemitism. Some of this literature also notes formal discrimination against Jews at the Founding, through state laws and constitutional provisions that limited Jewish participation in early American politics, as well as nasty antisemitic attacks during the political debates between Federalists and Jeffersonians.¹¹ Much of this literature discusses what Jonathan D. Sarna addressed in his seminal 1981 essay, "The Impact of the American Revolution on American Jews." In a later essay he succinctly summarized his argument: "Judaism in America was challenged and radically transformed" by the Revolution, while "the values of the American Revolution—liberty, freedom, and especially democracy—profoundly affected the Jewish Community."12

Our argument looks at these issues from the opposite direction. We consider how the very presence of a small Jewish community at the Founding and the contributions of Jews to the American Cause¹³ helped shape the United States and undermined "official" antisemitism in the new nation. We consider Jewish participation and activism in

¹¹ The most notable book on this subject is Borden, Jews, Turks, and Infidels. On politics and antisemitism, see Pencak, Jews & Gentiles, 212–246. See also Pamela S. Nadell, America's Jewish Women: A History from Colonial Times to the Present (New York: W.W. Norton, 2019). 12 Jonathan D. Sarna, "The Impact of the American Revolution on American Jews," Modern Judaism: A Journal of Jewish Ideas and Experience 1 (1981): 149–160; Jonathan D. Sarna, "The Democratization of American Judaism," in New Essays in American Jewish History, ed. Pamela S. Nadell, Jonathan D. Sarna, and Lance J. Sussman (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 2010), 95, 96. For a very helpful discussion of cultural changes and challenges to Jews in the mainland colonies on the eve of the Revolution, see Sarna, "The Jews in British America," in The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West, 1450 to 1800, ed. Paolo Bernardini and Norman Fiering (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2001), 519–531.

¹³ This very useful term is from Joseph J. Ellis, *The Cause: The American Revolution and Its Discontents*, 1773–1783 (New York: W.W. Norton, 2022).

the military, politics, law, national service, and civic engagement in this period. While acknowledging Sarna's pioneering work, this article refocuses the title of Sarna's work to consider "The Impact of American Jews on the Revolution and the Creation of the American Nation." This history contrasts sharply with the experience of Jews in England, the other countries of Western Europe and their American colonies, Eastern Europe, and the Ottoman Empire.

We build on the observation of church historian Winthrop S. Hudson that "one of the greatest contributions of Judaism to America" has been "to help other Americans to understand how the United States can be a pluralistic society" and that "other faiths can learn" from the experience of Jews.¹⁴ We argue that this process began in the era of the American Revolution. Similarly, this history fits within Gary Nash's description of the "multistranded tapestry" of what he called "The Unknown American Revolution," which unleashed a "radicalism" that advocated "wholesale change and sharp transformation rooted in a kind of dream of a better future." Nash correctly notes that this "radicalism" was "usually connected to a multifaceted campaign to democratize society." Nash focuses on social issues, including slavery, race, gender, and Native Americans. He briefly notes the push to democratize religion in Virginia in the context of the ruthless and sometimes violent suppression of Baptist preachers and other religious dissenters, but otherwise ignores both religion and the small Jewish population in the nation.¹⁵

We argue that the experience of Jews in America was part of this radical transformation. At the beginning of the war, Jews were disfranchised throughout the Atlantic world and all over Europe. In England they were denied access to voting, jury service, holding public office, becoming lawyers or entering many other professions, serving as officers

¹⁴ Winthrop S. Hudson, *Religion in America* (New York: Charles Scribners' and Sons, 1965), 440–441.

¹⁵ Gary B. Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America* (New York: Viking, 2005) xv–xvii, 146–49. On the suppression of Christian minorities in Virginia in this period, see Thomas E. Buckley, S.J., *Church and State in Revolutionary Virginia*, 1776–1787 (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1977).

in the military, and naturalization. With the exception of naturalization, which was sometimes but not always available, colonial Jews were generally denied these rights in all of the mainland colonies, although there were sometimes exceptions in New York. But by the end of the Revolutionary period, almost all of these restrictions were gone, and Jews could take their place as full citizens in a new nation that, at least for Jews, was, in Lincoln's words, "conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." ¹⁶

Jewish participation in the Revolution led to a major change in citizenship and legal rules for Jews. They could, for the first time, actively participate in the political, legal, civic, military, and economic culture. These changes not only set the stage for American religious liberty for Jews and others but also helped lead other Western nations, such as France and Britain, to grant Jews similar rights—although the process in both countries was piecemeal, halting, and incomplete for many years. For example, starting in 1847 Lionel Rothschild won multiple elections to Parliament but was unable to take his seat until 1859, after the passage of the Jews Relief Act of 1858. Further access for Jews to offices in Britain was achieved in 1871. By the time Parliament passed the 1871 act, Jews in America had served in both houses of Congress, as diplomats and other federal officials, in state legislatures, and as governors, mayors, judges, sheriffs, members of city councils, and other local officials, and as high-ranking military officers, including generals.

Before the Revolution Jews were disfranchised, politically isolated, and vulnerable throughout Europe and the Atlantic world (except in some of the colonies that would become the United States). Even where

¹⁶ Abraham Lincoln, "The Gettysburg Address," 19 November 1863, available at http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm.

¹⁷ An Act to provide for the Relief of Her Majesty's Subjects professing the Jewish Religion, 21 and 22 Vict. Ch. 49 (23 July 1858).

¹⁸ Promissory Oaths Act of 1871, 34 and 35 Vict. Ch. 48 (13 July 1871). However, amendments to this law in 1922, 1973, 1980, and 1986 kept Jewish officials (and other non-Anglican officials) from giving advice to the monarch on matters concerning the Church of England and Church of Scotland. On France, see Esther Benbass, *The Jews of France: A History from Antiquity to the Present* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); and Paula Hyman, *The Jews of Modern France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

they were not threatened by antisemitic violence and were able to individually achieve some economic success—such as in England, the Netherlands, and their American colonies—they were not full citizens (if they were considered citizens at all)¹⁹ and suffered from numerous legal restrictions. European nations and most of their colonies constricted the rights of Jews by statutes, officially sanctioned discrimination, and accepted public and private antisemitism.

The English Background

To understand the importance of Jewish participation in the American Revolution and its impact on American antisemitism, we must briefly look at the status of Jews in the Mother Country—Great Britain —during this period. A quick survey of the rights of Jews in Britain from the early eighteenth century through the mid-nineteenth century—well after the American Revolution—helps us understand how Jewish participation in the Revolution led to a new nation that rejected official antisemitism. (This rejection was not complete, however, as discrimination against Jews lingered in some states and in a few national policies until the second half of the nineteenth century.)²⁰

In the early eighteenth century, Jews in England (Great Britain after 1707) suffered from various forms of discrimination. They were unable to "hold any municipal office, nor could they be 'employed in any office or trust, civil or military." They were equally "barred from taking a degree in the two universities [Cambridge and Oxford] and could not vote nor be elected to parliament." They could not engage in retail trade in London because of a required oath on the New Testament. While some Jews were granted "the freedom of the City of London," only twelve Jews at any one time were allowed to hold licenses in London to be

¹⁹ In England immigrant Jews could purchase royal letters of patents that allowed them to be "denizens." David S. Katz, *The Jews in the History of England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 242.

²⁰ See generally, Todd Endelman, *The Jews of Georgian England, 1714–1830: Tradition and Change in a Liberal Society* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999).

²¹ Katz, Jews in the History of England, 241.

²² Ibid.

"commodity brokers." Jewish immigrants in Great Britain (who were growing in number) were unable to become naturalized citizens and as aliens could not own land and other types of property and were barred from various professions and businesses. A statute of 1271 prohibited Jews from owning land, and its rediscovery and publication in 1738 "may have increased Jewish fears" for their security in Britain. Immigrant Jews engaged in trade to the colonies or foreign countries had to pay special "alien" taxes, and in theory they were not allowed to own any interest in a seagoing vessel. At the time of the Revolution, immigrant Jews in Great Britain still could not become naturalized British citizens.

In the Plantation Act of 1740, Parliament allowed, but did not require, the American colonies to naturalize immigrant Jews. ²⁶ As a land "in need of people," ²⁷ there is no evidence of any general opposition to Jewish naturalization in the mainland colonies, although in 1762 Rhode Island denied naturalization to two Jewish merchants, Aaron Lopez and Isaac Elizer. ²⁸ By the eve of the Revolution, Jews could vote in a few mainland colonies, although not in Britain's Caribbean colonies.

The apparent success of the Plantation Act led Parliament to pass the Jewish Naturalization Act in 1753, commonly called the "Jew Bill," which allowed Jewish immigrants in the metropole to naturalize. Introduced in the House of Lords on 3 April 1753, it sailed through Parliament, passing both Houses on 22 May 1753, and receiving royal assent in July. But in response to an antisemitic backlash, including

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ An Act for Naturalizing such foreign Protestants and others therein mentioned, as are settled or shall settle in any of His Majesty's Colonies in America (13 Geo. 2 Ch.7, 1740). Jews born in the United Kingdom acquired British citizenship by birth.

²⁷ Paul Finkelman, "'A Land that Needs People for its Increase': How the Jews Won the Right to Remain in New Netherland," in Nadell et al., *New Essays*, 19–50.

²⁸ Sarna and Dalin, *Religion and the State*, 51–59; Ellen Smith & Jonathan D. Sarna, *The Jews of Rhode Island 3*–4 (undated). https://www.brandeis.edu/hornstein/sarna/introscommets/Archive/TheJewsofRhodeIsland.pdf

^{29 26} Geo. 2, Ch. 26, 1753 (royal assent, 7 July 1753).

³⁰ Katz, Jews in the History of England, 245–246.

some riots, Parliament repealed it a year later. Historian David S. Katz argues this backlash was a function of party politics, with Tories playing to antisemitic prejudices. He concludes that the hostile reaction to the Jew Bill, after its passage, "was an election gimmick used by the Tories to cast further aspersions on the loyalty of the Whigs."³¹

However, what is significant is not the use of antisemitism in partisan politics, but that it worked for the political success of the Tories. Because no Jews could vote for members of Parliament, including those who were British citizens by birth, the Tories felt free to play what today we would recognize as "the race card." During these debates *The London Magazine*, an otherwise respectable journal, published a satirical piece suggesting that in a hundred years England would be "in the grip of the Jews, building a new Temple, launching a ship called the *Benjamin Salvadore*, and whipping Christians speaking disrespectfully of the Mishnah." ³²

Before 1728 Jews in Britain were not allowed to practice law at all. Under the Indemnity Act of 1728 Jews could be solicitors and hold some other professional positions, such as being notaries, without having to take an oath as "a Christian."³³ But under this law they could not become barristers and represent clients in court because admission "to the degree of barrister-at-law, holders of which alone are entitled to plead in the superior courts and are therefore considered the higher branch of the legal profession, has from time immemorial been vested in the Inns of Court," which were private societies, unregulated by

^{31 27} Geo 2, Ch. 1, 1754; Katz, Jews in the History of England, 248.

³² Katz, *Jews in the History of England*, 248. This nearly three-hundred-year-old biting satire has an eerie resemblance to late-nineteenth-century antisemitic and modern white nationalist "replacement theory," with the Jews replacing English Christians as the rulers of Great Britain.

^{33 &}quot;An Act for indemnifying Persons who have omitted to qualify themselves for Offices or Imployments within the Time limited by Law, and for allowing further Time for that Purpose; and for repealing so much of an Act of Parliament passed in the first Year of his late Majesty King George the First, as requires Persons to qualify themselves for Offices or Imployments within three Months, and for limiting other Times for such Qualifications; as also for the Repeal of so much of an Act passed 30 Car . 2. as relates to the sworn Servants of the King's or Queen's Majesty," 2 Geo. 2, Ch. 31, 1728.

Parliament.³⁴ Furthermore, the Indemnity Act was not a permanent law and had to be reenacted annually.³⁵ This would remain true until 1868, when the Promissory Oaths Act eliminated the need for this law.³⁶ Had Parliament not reenacted the Indemnity Act in any year, for any reason, Jews would have lost the ability to be solicitors, notaries, or practice some other professions until Parliament reenacted the law. This may be why no Jews sought to become solicitors in England until 1770.³⁷ The Indemnity Act both allowed Jews to practice some professions and served to remind them, annually, of their second-class status and the precarious nature of their professional careers.

Thus, until the mid-nineteenth century, the British government in cooperation with the Inns of Court prevented Jews from becoming barristers, what Americans would simply call lawyers. The contrast with the United States is obvious. In the Revolutionary-era Jews and people of Jewish descent with distinctively Jewish names began to practice law in the United States.³⁸ Moses Levy graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1772, began to practice law in Philadelphia in 1778,

³⁴ Henry Straus Quixano Henriques, *Jews and the English Law* (London: Horace Hart, Jacobs, 1908) (reprint ed., Lawbook Exchange, 2019), 203–204.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Promissory Oaths Act of 1868, 31 and 32 Vict. Ch. 72, 1868.

³⁷ Jacob Rader Marcus, *Early American Jewry: The Jews of Pennsylvania and the South,* 1655–1790 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955), 397–398.

³⁸ The definition of a "Jew" is complicated. Under traditional Jewish law only people who have a Jewish mother, or have formally converted to Judaism, are "Jewish." But under English common law, personal status was inherited through the father. This led to the odd result that the child of Jewish man and a non-Jewish woman was "Jewish" under English law (unless the child was formally baptized) but not Jewish under rabbinic law, while the child of a Jewish woman and Christian man was Jewish under Jewish law, but Christian under English law. Thus, in this period the status of some "Jews" is not always clear. But it is clear that the public saw them as Jews and used antisemitic language against them in political discussions. The American colonies, led by Virginia, changed the common law with regard to the children of Africans and their descendants by declaring that the children of Black women would follow the status—slave or free—of the mother. Negro womens children to serve according to the condition of the mother, Act XII December 1662, William Waller Hening, The Statutes at Large; being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia, vol. 2 (New York: R. & W. & G. Bartow, 1823), 170.

and by 1802 held a judicial position as the recorder of Philadelphia and later as a judge on the district court of Philadelphia. Levy and his brother Sampson, also a lawyer, both had a Christian mother and may have been baptized as children, although the preeminent historian of early American Jews, Jacob Rader Marcus, found "no record of his conversion."39 With a Christian mother the Levy brothers were not technically Jewish under rabbinic law, but both lawyers were known as Jews, and faced antisemitic attacks from political and legal opponents. 40 Moses Myers, who was a practicing Jew, was admitted to law practice in South Carolina in 1793. His son graduated from the College of William and Mary and by 1810 was practicing law in Richmond. In New York Sampson Simpson graduated from Columbia College (now Columbia University), read the law under Aaron Burr, and was admitted to practice by 1802, as was Judah Zuntz. Meanwhile, Walter Judah graduated from Columbia in 1795 and attended Columbia's medical school.⁴¹ At this time none of these Jews could have attended any university in England, or been admitted as barristers, and it is not clear if the Levy brothers would have been accepted in either college or the legal profession based solely on their mother's Christian faith, since under English law they were Jewish because their father was Jewish. In 1837 Benjamin Disraeli, who was born of two Jewish parents, was able to enter Parliament only because he had been baptized as an Anglican in 1816, when he was twelve years old, and therefore could take the required oath on the Christian Bible. But Lionel Rothschild, who was an important Jewish leader in England, could not, and would not, take the oath. Disraeli would become Prime Minister in 1868, by which time there were no restrictions for Jews entering Parliament.

³⁹ Jacob Rader Marcus, ed., *United States Jewry, 1776–1985*, vol. 1 (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989), 200, 416. Edwin Wolf and Maxwell Whiteman, *The History of the Jews of Philadelphia from Colonial Times to the Age of Jackson* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1975), 208–209.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Marcus, ed., *United States Jewry*, 1: 197–200; Leo Hershkowitz, "Some Aspects of the New York Jewish Merchant Community, 1654–1820," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 66 (1976): 29.

Joshua Montefiore, the son of a wealthy and important London Jewish family, studied law in England but could not become a barrister. In 1787 he moved to Jamaica, where local authorities prevented him from practicing law, citing both existing English practice and a local Jamaican statute of 1711, which prohibited Jews from holding public office, serving on juries, or practicing law.⁴² Had he moved to the United States in 1787, he could have held public office, voted, and practiced law. Montefiore returned to England, where he published several law books. But in 1811 he relocated to Philadelphia, where he practiced law and became the first Jew to publish a law book in the United States. By this time numerous Jewish Americans had been successfully practicing law,⁴³ but in England it would take until 1833 for the first Jewish barrister to be admitted, when Lincoln's Inn allowed Francis Goldsmid to omit the final words of the oath of abjuration: "upon the true faith of a Christian."

The American Contrast with British Practice

As we have noted, at the time of the Revolution, Jews in the mother country were barred from numerous civic, educational, and professional endeavors, and could not vote, sit on juries, serve in Parliament, be military officers, attend a university, engage in some businesses, become barristers, or practice some other professions. In addition, immigrant Jews could not become naturalized British citizens.

This history contrasts with the United States, where Jews voted under every new state constitution,⁴⁵ could hold office in some states,

⁴² Nathan Dorn, "Joshua Montefiore, First Jewish Author to Publish a Law Book in America," Library of Congress, Law Library, 24 May 2022, https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2022/05/joshua-montefiore-first-jewish-author-to-publish-a-law-book-in-america/#:~:text=% E2%80%9CJoshua%20Montefiore%20of%20St.,December%2C%201950)%2C%20pp. 43 Ibid; Leon Hühner, "Jews in the Legal and Medical Profession in America Prior to 1800," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 22 (1914): 153–154 (hereafter *PAJHS*).

⁴⁴ Henriques, Jews and the English Law, 204.

⁴⁵ Rhode Island did not adopt a constitution at this time, but in 1798 the state enfranchised all freemen of the state, including Jews. The law contained no religious test for officeholding, and the oath of office had no reference to God or religion. "An Act regulating

and after the Revolution could naturalize in most states. Once the U.S. Constitution was in force, naturalization was entirely under the authority of Congress,⁴⁶ and the first Congress passed the Naturalization Act of 1790, which had no religious limitations but significantly only allowed the naturalization of a "free white person."⁴⁷ That no one ever challenged the right of Jews to naturalize suggests that from the beginning of the nation they were considered equal to all other European immigrants, naturalized citizens, and native-born citizens.⁴⁸ This would be true even after World War I, when new immigration laws dramatically curtailed Jewish immigration but never suggested that Jews should not be naturalized.

the Manner of admitting Freemen, and directing the Method of electing Officers, in this State," *The Public Laws of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations* (Providence: Carter and Wilkinson, 1798), 114. See also *Newport Historical Society, Rhode Island Suffrage Timeline* https://newporthistory.org/resource-center/know-your-history/suffrage-and-civicengagement/. Connecticut had no constitution until 1818, but Jews could vote in the state before then, as could Blacks before 1814. Robert P. Forbes, "Grating the Nutmeg: Slavery and Racism in Connecticut from the Colonial Era to the Civil War," *Connecticut History* 52 (2013): 170, 182; and Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 20. The legislature first disenfranchised Blacks in 1814, and this continued in the state's first constitution, in 1818, which provided that "Every white male citizen of the United States, who shall have gained a settlement in this State, attained the age of twenty-one years, and resided in the town in which he may offer himself to be admitted to the privilege of an elector." Connecticut Constitution, 1818, Art. VI, Sec. 2. The constitution also eliminated any religious test for office. Ibid., Art. X, Sec. 1; Ibid., Art. VI, Sec. 4.

^{46 &}quot;The Congress shall have the power ... to establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization," U.S. Constitution, Art. I, Sec. 8, Cl. 4.

⁴⁷ An Act to Establish a Uniform Rule of Naturalization, 1 Stat. 103 (26 March 1790). For a full discussion of this see Chin and Finkelman, "The 'Free White Persons' Clause of the Naturalization Act of 1790."

⁴⁸ Karen Brodkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says about Race in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998), argues that Jews in the United States were not "white." Brodkin, an anthropologist, ignores almost all the history of Jews in the United States before 1900, focuses mostly on the period from 1920 to 1970, and says nothing about naturalization law and other laws that in fact did not "regulate" Jews as a separate race, but considered them "white" from 1790 until the term was removed from the naturalization act. Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, 66 Stat.163, 239, § 311.

Unlike many European nations, which made it difficult or impossible for Jewish immigrants to naturalize well into the twentieth century, the United States offered the opportunity for Jews to become citizens from its earliest days—via state laws immediately after the Revolution and federal laws beginning in 1790 and continuing until today. From the Revolution until today, Jews have taken advantage of American naturalization law to become citizens.

Thus, the American Revolution led to a true revolution in citizenship and legal rules for Jews, leading Jewish Americans to actively participate in political, legal, civic, military, and economic culture. The changes coming out of the Revolution also set the stage for American religious liberty for Jews and other religious minorities.

Pre-Revolutionary Activities and Jewish Political Participation

Starting in the 1760s Jewish merchants signed petitions and were active in protesting British policies. In 1765 ten Jewish merchants in New York City, including Hayman Levy, Jonas Phillips, and Sampson Simson, signed a nonimportation agreement along with nearly two hundred other men in the city. 49 In 1770 six Jews, including Phillips, Levy, and Isaac Seixas, signed another petition urging the continuation of the boycott of British goods. 50 In Philadelphia Jewish merchants, including Michael Gratz, Bernard Gratz, and Matthias Bush, signed nonimportation agreements along with their Christian neighbors. One of Bush's sons, Lewis, would later serve as a captain in the Revolutionary War, dying in combat, while another son, Solomon, would rise to become a lieutenant colonel in the Pennsylvania militia. In Newport, Rhode Island, Isaac Mendes Seixas signed a nonimportation agreement along with other Jewish merchants. Haym Salomon joined the Sons of Liberty before the Revolution. Unlike many Protestant ministers in New York, Rev. Gershom Mendes Seixas—the spiritual leader of Shearith Israel, the first synagogue in what would become the United States—actively supported the patriot cause; he fled when the city fell to the British. He was

⁴⁹ Howard B. Rock, *Haven of Liberty: New York Jews in the New World, 1654–1865* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 72.

⁵⁰ Pencak, Jews & Gentiles, 62.

the son of Newport's Isaac Mendes Seixas, who had signed anti-British documents. ⁵¹ As the Revolution came to an end, ten Philadelphia Jews joined hundreds of their Christian neighbors in petitioning Congress to return to Philadelphia. ⁵² This petition once again underscores the level of comfort Jews had in participating in politics and the open acceptance of such from their Christian neighbors. ⁵³ This Jewish activism dramatically contrasts with the lack of public debate by Jews in England during the controversy of the Jew Bill in 1753. ⁵⁴

These early Revolutionary-era activities by Jews in the colonies and new states illustrate three critical aspects of Jewish life in the emerging

⁵¹ As we have noted above, another son of Isaac Mendes Seixas, Moses Mendes Seixas, would later write to President Washington, setting the stage for Washington's famous letter denouncing religious bigotry and persecution.

⁵² Pencak, Jews & Gentiles, 72. "Philadelphia Citizens to the Continental Congress," July 1783, in Schappes, Documentary History of Jews in the United States, 61–63. Wolf and Whiteman, Jews of Philadelphia, 146.

⁵³ Library of Congress, "Religion and the Founding of the American Republic," https:// www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel03.html. Some Jews were loyalists. Cecil Roth, "Some Jewish Loyalists in the War of American Independence," PAJHS 38 (1948): 81, details some of the better-known Jewish loyalists, as well as some lesser-known ones. The most famous loyalist was David Franks (not to be confused with the American military officer and diplomat, David Salisbury Franks). In 1765, David Franks supported the growing opposition to the Crown, joining some 375 Philadelphia merchants, including at least nine other Jews, in signing a nonimportation agreement. Schappes, Documentary History of Jews in the United States, 38-41. However, during the war he was accused of being a loyalist, which he clearly was, jailed and then exiled to New York City, which was under British control. He went to England with the British army in 1782, when the British evacuated New York. Parliament gave him some compensation for his losses. Jacob Rader Marcus, American Jewry: Documents Eighteenth Century (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press), 289-292. The Hart family of Newport and the Lucena family in Savannah were also loyalists. Wallace Brown, The Good Americans: The Loyalists in the American Revolution (New York: William Morrow, 1969) 245; Maya Jasanoff, Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011), 255-256 notes that Israel Mendes, a Tory from New York City, moved "with his family of eight," to Kingston, Jamaica when the war ended. 54 Katz, Jews in the History of England, 240-283. Katz's thorough discussion of the Jew Bill controversy does not offer any examples of Jews publicly defending their rights. Jews in mid-eighteenth-century Britain seem to have kept quiet, as they remained disfranchised and ineligible for naturalization.

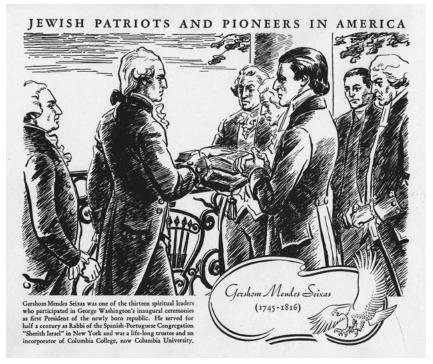


Illustration of Washington's inauguration featuring Gershom Mendes Seixas. (Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

nation. First, they show that Jews were comfortable participating in the political community. Second, they show that Christians were willing to accept Jews as equal partners in civic activities. Third, they show that discrimination against Jews simply did not take hold at the political level. The active participation of Jews in the Revolutionary mix helped secure their rights. Indeed, Jews were far more active in the Revolution than some Protestants, including many Anglicans who remained loyal to the Church of England, and Quakers, who were both pacifists and more likely to be Tories than most other groups. 55 At this time most Jews lived in New York, Philadelphia, Newport, Charleston, and Savannah—where the Revolution was brewing. Many Jews joined the cause early and, as

⁵⁵ Library of Congress, "Religion and the Founding of the American Republic."

such, earned their right to political equality. "Jews were predominately Patriots," 56 but of course, not all Jews joined the Patriot cause; some tried to remain neutral, and others were loyalists. Significantly, we have found no evidence of antisemitic attacks by patriots because some Jews were loyalists.

As the independence movement started and the colonies began to organize politically, Jewish patriotism and opposition to the Crown led to civic gains. When the colonies began to organize politically, Jews were in the mix. In 1774, just one year after he had arrived in the colonies, Francis Salvador, a slaveholding planter, won a seat in South Carolina's Provincial Congress. He was reelected in 1776 and then elected to the newly formed General Assembly, in the new state of South Carolina, thus becoming the first Jew elected to a legislature in both the new United States and the Atlantic world. He served until he was killed in battle that August. Henry Laurens, the patriot leader in South Carolina wrote his son that "Mr. Salvador, a Gentleman whose Death is universally regretted was killed" in a battle against a combined force of Tories and Cherokee.⁵⁷

Jewish Participation in the War

During the Revolution a few Jews served as officers in the patriot armies. Some of them certainly faced antisemitism.⁵⁸ For example, Maj. David

⁵⁶ George Frazer, *God against the Revolution: The Loyalist Clergy's Case against the American Revolution* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2018), 5, 6.

⁵⁷ Henry Laurens to John Laurens, 14 August 1776, *The Papers of Henry Laurens, Volume Eleven: Jan. 5, 1776–Nov. 1, 1777*, ed. David R. Chesnutt and C. James Taylor (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 11: 222, at 230, 230n. Laurens's use of the capitalized term "Gentleman," suggests the lack of even social antisemitism among some of the most elite members of South Carolina society. Barnett A. Elzas, *The Jews of South Carolina, from the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1905), 73. Salvador appears to be the first Jewish fatality in the war.

⁵⁸ This was true during the period after the Revolution as well. Most famously, Uriah P. Levy struggled with antisemitic attacks throughout his career. He vigorously responded and as a result was court-martialed six times and once demoted from the rank of captain, the highest rank in the Navy at that time, although he later gained that rank back. Similarly, he was twice dismissed from the Navy but subsequently reinstated. In 1855 he

Salisbury Franks was arrested three times during the war but was ultimately exonerated by a board of inquiry. It seems likely his faith exacerbated his troubles. By the end of the war, he was a lieutenant colonel in the regular army and was sent to France and Morocco as a diplomat while the war was winding down. He later served as Thomas Jefferson's trusted courier in Europe and the United States and then held a patronage position under President Washington in the first Bank of the United States.⁵⁹

Other Jewish officers in state militias and the Continental Line fared better with their Christian comrades. Mordecai Sheftall, a merchant and the leader of the Jewish community in Savannah, Georgia before the war, rose to the rank of full colonel, which was the third-highest rank in the Army. Solomon Bush rose to the rank of major while serving in combat, and in 1777, after being wounded, the Pennsylvania government appointed him the deputy adjutant-general of the state militia. By the end of the war, he was a lieutenant colonel. His younger brother, Lewis, was a captain when he died in combat. New Yorker Abraham Mendes Seixas served as a captain in the Continental Army. In 1781 Congress commissioned Isaac Franks as an ensign (the equivalent of a second lieutenant) in a Massachusetts regiment. In the 1790s Isaac

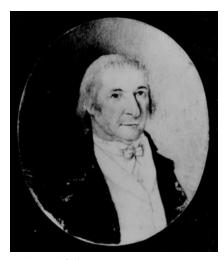
successfully defended his conduct before a court of inquiry and was restored to his former position. Melvin Urofsky, *The Levy Family and Monticello 1834–1923* (Monticello: Thomas Jefferson Foundation, 2001), 45, 51–54. Ira Dye, *Uriah Levy: Reformer of the Antebellum Navy* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006).

⁵⁹ While beyond the scope of this article, the experiences of Lt. Col. Franks during the Revolution and Capt. Levy in the Navy contrast with the French army's persecution of Capt. Alfred Dreyfus, who was the victim of a massive antisemitic conspiracy in late-nineteenth-century France.

⁶⁰ The difficult job of sorting out all the Jewish officers in the Revolutionary armies has never been completely done. The best place to start is Simon Wolf, *The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier and Citizen* (New York: Brentano's, 1895), 44–66; however, Wolf makes some mistakes both through inclusion and omission.

⁶¹ The highest rank in the army was major general (two stars). Below that was brigadier general, and below that, colonel. After his presidency Washington was given the rank of lieutenant general (three stars).

⁶² https://loebjewishportraits.com/biography/colonel-isaac-franks/.



Mordecai Sheftall (Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

Franks would become a lieutenant colonel in the Pennsylvania militia. Mumerous Jews served as officers in the South Carolina militia, and a few were officers in the Continental line in the South. 64

Although few, the role of these Jewish officers was extraordinarily significant. They helped to eliminate formal antisemitism in the new nation by establishing acceptance of Jews having positions of authority in the military chain of command, and thus

having power over Christian enlisted men and lower-ranking officers. The presence of these officers says much about Jewish patriotic commitment, but it also says much about the egalitarian values of their Christian neighbors and comrades in arms. At the level of civic engagement, military leadership, and political activity, there were no formal barriers to Jewish participation. Informal barriers based on individual prejudices surely existed, but at its core the patriot movement was open to equal opportunity for Jews, and Jews took advantage of this to push equality further along. This was a uniquely American phenomenon at the time. Jewish military officers were simply unprecedented in Atlantic culture. As Harvard historian Derek Penslar concluded, in

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Abraham Seixas, a captain in the Charleston militia apparently served as a lieutenant under General Benjamin Lincoln in Georgia. Elzas, *The Jews of South Carolina*, 92–96.

⁶⁵ Antisemitism would be far more important, and dangerous, in the American military in the twentieth century. See, for example, Jospeh W. Bendersky, *The Jewish Threat: Anti-Semitic Politics in the U.S. Army* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

⁶⁶ Because of the substantial Jewish population in colonial Suriname, Jews had some civic responsibilities. Two Jewish men served as captains in the local militia in the mid-eighteenth century, but this unique status seems to reflect a private militia organized by Jewish slave-owners and other settlers in the colony, rather than Dutch policy. Derek J. Penslar, *Jews and*

Western Europe "before the French Revolution—Jews did not want to serve in armies and armies did not want Jews." But in the American Revolution Jews were not only enlisted men but high-ranking officers, which led to a real change in status for the Jewish *citizens* of the new nation. Their service also probably undermined some social antisemitism and alleviated some fears or anxieties of Christians who had never met a Jew before the war, but then served with them as comrades in arms.

The ability to serve as officers is also significant in light of political limitations Jews faced in the first state constitutions. There were Jewish officers in the militias in South Carolina, Georgia, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts, even though, as we discuss below, the early constitutions of those states limited officeholding to Protestants or Christians. These limitations could have been applied to Jewish military officers on the grounds that the military was under the executive branch. But there appears to have been no official discussions in the Continental Congress or the state legislatures of the propriety—or impropriety—of commissioning Jewish officers, and there was no formal opposition to the practice. Thus, from the beginning of the Revolution and throughout the war, a small number of Jewish officers gave orders to Christian soldiers. This stands in marked contrast to the British and all other European armies, where no Jews served as officers.

After the war, Jews continued to serve as military officers. In the 1790s Isaac Franks, the former ensign in Massachusetts, was commissioned as a lieutenant colonel in the Pennsylvania militia. In 1802 the first class at the United States Military Academy (West Point) consisted of two cadets, one of whom—Simon M. Levy—was a practicing Jew

the Military: A History (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 27.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ While Catholics faced greater open hostility than Jews in the mid-nineteenth century, they also faced less legal discrimination in the United States and the Atlantic world. Obviously, for example, some foreign Catholic officers fought for the American cause, most notably Maj. Gen. Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette from France, and two Polish officers, Brig. Gen. Tadeusz Kościuszko and Brig. Gen. Casimir Pulaski.

⁶⁹ There had been Jewish officers in the Ptolemaic and Seleucid empires, in Christendom until the sixth century C.E., and in the Muslim world in the Middle Ages. Penslar, *Jews in the Military*, 22.

born in Philadelphia on the eve of the Revolution.⁷⁰ In 1807 Samuel Noah, a cousin of the New York political leader Mordecai M. Noah, graduated from West Point, while in 1809 Mordecai himself was elected as "a major in the Pennsylvania militia. Forever after, he was known as 'Major Noah.'"71 From the end of the Revolution through the War of 1812, Jews served as New York militia officers at various ranks, including colonel and lieutenant colonel. Haym Salomon, the son of the Revolutionary activist with the same name, served as a captain in a New York regiment; there were also Jewish officers in the regular army as well as in militia units from Pennsylvania, Maryland, South Carolina, and Georgia.⁷² Their enemy, the British army, would not allow Jews to be officers for another decade and a half. After the War of 1812 Uriah Phillips Levy began to rise in the ranks of the Navy, eventually becoming a captain (the highest rank in the Navy before the Civil War) and the commodore of a squadron. These Jewish military officers reflected the way Jewish participation in the Revolution had truly made the United States different than any nations in Western Europe.⁷³ Jews had been expelled from Spain and Portugal, and religious requirements prevented them from becoming officers in Britain or France. Britain's Royal Military College (Sandhurst) was founded in 1801; it is impossible to even imagine a Jew there in its early years, since Jews were not allowed to serve as officers in the British army until 1829.

⁷⁰ https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Gazetteer/Places/America/United_States/Army/USMA/Cullums_Register/Classes/1802.html.

⁷¹ Leon Hühner, "Jews in the War of 1812," *PAJHS* 26 (1918): 173, 180. Jonathan D. Sarna, *Jacksonian Jew: The Two Worlds of Mordecai Noah* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1981), 5.

⁷² Rock, *Haven of Liberty*, 99. Hühner, "Jews in the War," 174–180; Wolf, *The American Jew as Patriot*, 69–72; Marcus, *Early American Jewry*, 2:327 (noting Maj. Mordecai Myers of Georgia writing about the War of 1812).

⁷³ Some sources assert that Alexander Zuntz, who came to New York with a Hessian regiment, was an officer, but as Cecil Roth correctly noted, he was a "commissary, not officer, with the Hessian forces—a purely civilian appointment." Roth, "Some Jewish Loyalists," 83. Illustrating the argument that the United States offered Jews greater protection and liberty than anywhere in Europe, Zuntz remained in New York when the British and Hessians evacuated. He later became the *parnas* at Congregation Shearith Israel in New York.

The first law authorizing employment of military chaplains did not limit who could serve in such a role,⁷⁴ but in a nation that was more than 90 percent Protestant, it is hardly surprising that before 1861 no Jews served in such a role. Indeed, until the Civil War there was never any discussion or demand for military rabbis.⁷⁵

The Emergence of Jewish Political Rights at the National Level

As we noted above, in 1774 Francis Salvador won a seat in South Carolina's Provincial Congress. While some people were probably uncertain about a Jew serving in the new legislature, he was reelected in 1776 in what had become the independent state of South Carolina

74 An Act for raising and adding another regiment to the military establishment of the United States, and for making further provision for the protection of the frontiers, Ch. 28, 1st Congress, Public Law 1–28, 1 Stat. 222, Secs. 5 and 6 (3 March 1791). Chaplains were paid the handsome sum at the time of \$50 a month, which was slightly more than half of what a brigadier general earned.

75 Act to authorize the Employment of Volunteers to aid in enforcing the Law and Protecting Private Property, 12 Stat. 268, Sec. 9 (22 July 1861) authorized the appointment of "a regularly ordained minister of a Christian denomination" as the chaplain in every army regiment. Shortly thereafter, Congress reaffirmed this by passing the Act for the better Organizing of the Military Establishment, 12 Stat. 287, Sec. 7 (3 August 1861). Jewish leaders and organizations petitioned members of Congress and President Lincoln to change the law. Korn, American Jewry, 56. They succeeded in July 1862, as a new law explained that the laws of 1861 "shall hereafter be construed to read as follows: That no person shall be appointed a chaplain in the United States army who is not a regularly ordained minister of some religious denomination, and who does not present testimonials of his present good standing as such minister, with a recommendation for his appointment as an army chaplain from some authorized ecclesiastical body, or not less than five accredited ministers belonging to said religious denomination." An Act to define the Pay and Emoluments of certain Officers of the Army, and for other purposes, 12 Stat. 594, Sec. 8 (17 July 1862). In September 1862 Rabbi Jacob Frankel became the first Jewish chaplain in the U.S. Army. See also Myer S. Isaacs, "A Jewish Army Chaplain," PAJHS 12 (1904): 127.

76 Some Jews in the colonial period had held appointive offices—including one as the sheriff in New York City—but these were not elected positions. However, in the late colonial period, Jews in pre-Revolutionary New York were elected to minor positions as assessor and collector of taxes. Rock, *Haven of Liberty*, 67–68. In 1767, Isaac Moses, a New York City shoemaker, was elected as a constable, which was a minor office. Pencak, *Jews & Gentiles*, 66.

and actively served until he died in combat in August 1776. This makes him the first Jew to be elected to public office in the new United States. As best we can determine, he was also the first Jew to ever be elected to a legislative office in the English-speaking world or the Atlantic world. All of this was during a time when Jews could not even vote in Great Britain. As late as 1858—three-quarters of a century after the American Revolution—English Jews could not serve in Parliament, nor could they hold office or even vote in Britain's other colonies for much of this period. Before 1831 members of the thriving Jewish communities in Barbados and Jamaica could neither vote nor hold office.⁷⁷

In 1787, in one of its last acts before the proposed Constitution was sent to the states, Congress, operating under the Articles of Confederation, passed the Northwest Ordinance, which was the forerunner of all subsequent laws regulating the settlement of western territories and the creation of new states. Most of the Ordinance dealt with land distribution and the creation of territorial governments. It famously banned slavery north of the Ohio River, and debates over slavery in the territories would continue until the Civil War finally settled the question. However, two clauses dealt with religion, setting the stage for religious liberty and equality in the federal territories.

The Ordinance provided for "extending the fundamental principles of civil and religious liberty" in the national territories, guaranteeing that "No person, demeaning himself in a peaceable and orderly manner, shall ever be molested on account of his mode of worship or religious sentiments, in the said territory." Written before the Constitution and

⁷⁷ Laura Arnold Leibman, *Once We Were Slaves: The Extraordinary Journey of a Multiracial Jewish Family* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 51, 96–97, 97n.14. After the French Revolution, which was of course well after the American Revolution, Jews would gain basic legal and political rights in France.

⁷⁸ An Act to Provide for the Government of the Territory Northwest of the river Ohio (13 July 1787), reenacted 7 August 1789, codified as Ch. VIII, 1 Stat. 50.

⁷⁹ Ibid., Art. VI. On the implementation of this clause, see Paul Finkelman, *Slavery and the Founders: Race and Liberty in the Age of Jefferson*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2014), 46–101.

⁸⁰ Ibid., Art. I.

the Bill of Rights were in place, this was the first formal guarantee of free exercise of religion in the Atlantic world at the national level. This is one example of the "radical" transformation of the nation that Gary Nash writes about. At the same time the Ordinance provided that "Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."⁸¹ This set the stage for the possibility of some established church or churches in the area, but after the adoption of the First Amendment in 1791 this could not have happened at the territorial level, and it never happened at the state level. Most importantly, for our purposes, these clauses were not faith specific and clearly protected Jewish religious liberty.

By 1787 nine states had written constitutions that prevented Jews from holding public office, even though few if any Jews lived in some of these states, such as New Hampshire and Delaware. A few state constitutions also prohibited Catholics from holding office. Thus, a statute guaranteeing full religious freedom at the national level was a significant change. In a legislature where no Jews had yet served, and where only a few Catholics had ever served, it would have been perfectly reasonable for the Confederation Congress to establish some kind of nondenominational Protestantism. But the Congress did no such thing. Significantly, starting with the first federal census in 1790 and subsequent state and local censuses—and in stark contrast to European practice—the questionnaires did not ask about religion. While this hampers historical knowledge of the size of the early Jewish population, it likely gave Jewish Americans a sense of security that the government did not care about their religion or keep track of members of their faith. More importantly, unlike in Europe, the government did not count Jews, identify them, or even take note of where they lived. In the context of centuries of often-violent attacks on Jews and Jewish communities in Europe, this is enormously significant. In 1850, the census would count religious buildings—churches and synagogues—but never ask about the faith of individuals or the size of the congregations.

⁸¹ Ibid., Art. III.

American Jews never faced religious discrimination under the federal Constitution of 1787, which prohibited any religious test for officeholding at the federal level. This, too, was unique in the Atlantic world and unheard of anywhere in Europe. Every other European nation had an established church, or at least a preferred faith. But the United States did not. With the ratification of the Constitution, Jews could hold federal offices everywhere in the country, even where they could not hold office under existing state constitutions. Thus, in 1801 President Thomas Jefferson appointed Reuben Etting to be the U.S. marshal in Maryland, even though he would not have been allowed to hold a similar state office under the Maryland Constitution. This underscored the acceptance of Jews by the new Democratic-Republican president, just as Jews such as David S. Franks had been accepted under the previous Federalist administrations.

In 1797 Israel Israel won a seat in the Pennsylvania Senate, although he soon lost it in a special election after the first result was disputed. Israel, the son of a Jewish man and an Anglican woman, had been baptized at the age of two but was always seen as a Jew, and he faced vicious antisemitic attacks from Federalists. In the hotly contested politics of the age, most Jews in Philadelphia were Jeffersonians, including men like Israel and Moses Levy, who were ethnically but not halakhically Jewish. In New York a number of practicing Jews were prominent in the Democratic Society and in Tammany Hall. Starting in 1794 Solomon Simson, the former president of Shearith Israel, won two consecutive terms as the assessor for New York City. After 1801, under Jefferson and Madison, Joel Hart and Mordecai Manuel Noah served as diplomats. Major Noah was later the sheriff of New York City, became the "boss" of Tammany Hall, which controlled the city's Democratic Party, and then served as a judge.

While the Constitution prohibited a religious test for officeholding, the new document did not address voter qualifications in any meaningful way. Instead, the national constitution left the entire issue of voting

⁸² Pencak, Jews & Gentiles, 233-237.

⁸³ Ibid., 75.

⁸⁴ Sarna, Jacksonian Jew, 37, 41, 44-47, 85-86, 143-51.

to the states.⁸⁵ Significantly, this had no deleterious effect on Jews or any other religious group.

Protections of Jewish Rights in State Constitutions

Jews were enfranchised under every state constitution during and after the Revolution. At various times they had been able to vote, or not vote, in the New York colony, which was the most ethnically and religiously heterogeneous New World settlement. Jews voted in New York shortly after the British seized New Netherland from the Dutch. The complex heterogeneity of the colony worked to the advantage of Jews, and for most of the period under British rule Jews "possessed nearly the same political and religious freedom as their Christian neighbors did."86 In 1737 the New York Assembly disenfranchised Jews as a result of the contentious politics surrounding the corrupt governor William Cosby, whose administration also led to the famous seditious libel trial of John Peter Zenger. 87 The proponents of this disenfranchisement successfully argued that because Jews could not vote for members of Parliament in England, they should not be able vote in New York. Thus, the colonial legislature declared: "That it not appearing to this House, that Persons of the Jewish Religion have a Right to be admitted to vote for Parliament Men, in Great Britain, it is the Unanimous Opinion of this House, that they ought not to be admitted to vote for Representatives in this Colony."88 However, after the passage of the Plantation Act in 1740,

⁸⁵ U.S. Constitution, Art. I, Sec 2, Cl. 1: "The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature."

⁸⁶ Rock, *Haven of Liberty*, 68. On the evolution of religious liberty in colonial New York, see Paul Finkelman, "Toleration and Diversity in New Netherland and the Duke's Colony: The Roots of America's First Disestablishment," in *No Establishment of Religion: America's Original Contribution to Religious Liberty*, ed. T. Jeremy Gunn and John Witte, Jr. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 125–157.

⁸⁷ Paul Finkelman, "Zenger's Case: Prototype of a Political Trial," in *American Political Trials*, ed. Michal Belknap (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1994), 21–42.

⁸⁸ Max J. Kohler, "Civil Status of Jews in Colonial New York," *PAJHS* 6 (1897): 81, 98. On the Zenger trial, see the introduction to Paul Finkelman, ed., *A Brief Narrative of the*

Jews voted on the same basis as everyone else in New York.⁸⁹ Jews in pre-Revolutionary New York City were elected to positions as assessor, constable, and tax collector. ⁹⁰ The state's 1777 constitution reaffirmed this, with no religious test for voting or officeholding.

In 1769 Virginia enfranchised all adult White men based on residence and property ownership, but *not* religion. The state's 1776 constitution adopted this policy. Georgia's first constitution similarly enfranchised "All male white inhabitants" on the basis of age, property ownership, and residence, but not religion. North Carolina enfranchised "all Freemen of the Age of twenty-one Years" who met residency and property requirements. Under this clause free Blacks, as well as Jews, were able to vote until a state constitutional amendment disenfranchised Blacks in 1835. Here

Pennsylvania enfranchised all adult males, Black and White, subject to residency and property requirements. Massachusetts was equally expansive, giving the franchise and the right to hold office to "every male inhabitant" subject to residency and property requirements. However, as we note in the next section, a Jew who was an "inhabitant" and could vote could not be "elected into any office" in the state. Other states had similar rules. States differed on whether free Blacks could vote—most

Case and Tryal of John Peter Zenger (Clark, NJ: The Lawbook Exchange, 2000).

⁸⁹ Rock, Haven of Liberty, 67-68.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 66.

⁹¹ Virginia Constitution, 1776, Art. VII; and "An Act for Regulating the Election of Burgesses," (November 1769), Hening, *The Statutes at Large*, 8: 305–308.

⁹² Georgia Constitution, 1777, Art. IX.

⁹³ North Carolina Constitution, 1776, Sec. VII.

^{94 &}quot;No free negro, free mulatto, or free person of mixed blood, descended from negro ancestors to the fourth generation inclusive (though one ancestor of each generation may have been a white person,) shall vote for members of the senate or house of commons." Amendments to the Constitution of 1776, Art. I, Sec. 3, Par. 3 (ratified 1835). For a discussion of this change, see John Hope Franklin, *The Free Negro in North Carolina, 1790–1860* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1943), 109–120.

⁹⁵ Pennsylvania Constitution, 1776, Plan or Frame of Government for the Commonwealth or State of Pennsylvania, Section 6 and Section 9.

⁹⁶ Massachusetts Constitution, 1780, Art. II, Par. 1.

allowing them to vote but some not—or on property requirements for voting.⁹⁷ All the state constitutions allowed adult Jewish men to vote, provided they met the same residential, property, and other requirements that applied to all voters. In 1798 Connecticut and Rhode Island had not yet written constitutions, but both states enfranchised Jews.⁹⁸ New Jersey, uniquely, enfranchised "all inhabitants," subject to property and residence requirements. Thus, Jews, Blacks, and women could vote, although Blacks and women later lost that right through legislative action.⁹⁹

Discriminations Against Jews in State Constitutions

While Jews could vote on the same basis as all other citizens under all the new state constitutions, most of the first state constitutions contained religious tests for officeholding that discriminated against Jews. Of the eleven states that wrote constitutions during the Revolution, ¹⁰⁰ only Virginia and New York did not have a religious test for office holding. Initially, all the other states (as well as the fourteenth state, Vermont) had such tests, which excluded Jews from holding office. ¹⁰¹ Although

⁹⁷ See Paul Finkelman, "The First Civil Rights Movement: Black Rights in the Age of the Revolution and Chief Justice Taney's Originalism in Dred Scott," *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law* 24 (2022): 676, at 676–79, 685, 711–712 and *passim*.

⁹⁸ Theoretically there might have been a few free men of mixed Black and Jewish ancestry who could not have voted in Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia, and Rhode Island in this period. But the disfranchisement would have been based on race, not religion. When some Jews who were of mixed ancestry moved to the new nation, they were accepted as "White." Leibman, *Once We Were Slaves*.

⁹⁹ New Jersey Constitution, 1776, Sec. IV. A Supplement to the act entitled "An act to regulate the election of members of the legislative council and general assembly, sheriffs and coroners in this state," (16 November 1787), *New Jersey Laws, 1807*, 14.

¹⁰⁰ Connecticut did not adopt a constitution until 1818 and Rhode Island did so in 1843. 101 While Catholics faced greater open hostility than Jews in the mid-nineteenth century, they faced fewer legal restrictions in the United States and the Atlantic world. Obviously, for example, many Catholic officers fought for the American cause in the French Army, most notably Maj. Gen. Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette. But there were also other foreign Catholic officers, including Brig. Gens. Casimir Pulaski and Tadeusz Kościuszko. Charles Carroll of Maryland signed the Declaration of Independence, and Daniel Carroll and Thomas Fitzsimons signed the Constitution; all were Catholics. While some early

they were considered voters and citizens, religious tests for officeholding barred Jews from holding some or any state offices and thus denied them political equality. In addition, a few states retained state-established churches or special state benefits for some churches. State establishments and aid to some religions did not deny Jews religious liberty or legal rights, but they made Jews (and members of other non-favored faiths) less than equal. Most of these discriminatory provisions disappeared as states rewrote their constitutions after the U.S. Constitution went into effect. However, some states—such as Massachusetts and New Hampshire—either never rewrote their constitution or did not do so for a very long time. New Hampshire kept its requirement that officeholders be Protestants until after the Civil War. 102 New Jersey's 1776 constitution, which had a Protestant test for officeholding, remained in place until 1844, when the new state constitution simply declared: "There shall be no establishment of one religious sect in preference to another; no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust; and no person shall be denied the enjoyment of any civil right merely on account of his religious principles."103

Delaware's 1776 constitution required every member of the state legislature and "all officers" of the state to take an oath asserting "I ... do profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ His only Son, and in the Holy Ghost, one God, blessed for evermore; and I do acknowledge the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by divine inspiration." This clause would have applied to Jews, Unitarians, and presumably deists, such as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. However, the state's 1792 constitution, adopted after the federal Constitution and First Amendment were in effect, explicitly rejected the earlier requirement that public officials profess a religious belief, providing: "No religious test shall be required as a qualification

state constitutions limited officeholding to Protestants, most of the new states allowed all Christians—including Catholics—but not Jews to hold office.

¹⁰² New Hampshire, Constitution, 1792, Part Second, Secs. XIV, XXIX, XLII.

¹⁰³ New Jersey Constitution, 1844, Art. I, Cl. 4.

¹⁰⁴ Delaware Constitution, 1776, Art. 22.

to any office, or public trust, under this State." ¹⁰⁵ It is hard to imagine a more dramatic turnaround in public policy.

South Carolina's 1778 constitution allowed Jews to vote and form congregations, but it limited service in the legislature or executive branch to men of "the Protestant religion." The constitution further declared that "The Christian Protestant religion shall be deemed, and is hereby constituted and declared to be, the established religion of this State. That all denominations of Christian Protestants in this State, demeaning themselves peaceably and faithfully, shall enjoy equal religious and civil privileges." South Carolina explicitly tolerated other faiths, declaring that "all persons and religious societies who acknowledge that there is one God, and a future state of rewards and punishments, and that, God is publicly to be worshipped, shall be freely tolerated."106 This was clearly directed at the state's important and growing Jewish community because it had no reference to Christianity or the New Testament. It also aided Catholics, but this could easily have been accomplished by simply declaring religious toleration for all "Christians." Indeed, given the great intolerance of Catholics in much of the nation, it seems likely that the importance of Jews in the Revolution and in the growth of Charleston was the motivation for this clause, which also benefited Catholics. South Carolina's 1790 constitution had no religious test for voting or officeholding, although it did limit both to White property owners. 107 The new constitution reaffirmed the state's commitment to "free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference." ¹⁰⁸ For Jews, this was a remarkable change from the state's first constitution which had declared the Protestant faith to be the official religion of the state.

We know the state would never apply its bold language on freedom of worship to the religious beliefs and practices of slaves or free Blacks.

¹⁰⁵ Delaware Constitution, 1792, Art. VIII, Sec. 9.

¹⁰⁶ South Carolina Constitution, 1778, Art. XXXVI.

¹⁰⁷ South Carolina Constitution, 1790, Art. I, Sec. 4, Sec. 6.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., Art. VII, Sec. 1. Sec. 2 of this article further declared that all "civil and religious societies and of corporate bodies, shall remain as if the constitution of this state had not been altered or amended."

This issue may have been the reason for a clause limiting religious liberty: "provided, that the liberty of conscience thereby declared, shall not be so construed as to excuse acts of licentiousness, or justify practices inconsistent with the peace or safety of this state." From the perspective of White South Carolinians, churches attended by free Blacks and slaves, with services led by Black preachers, clearly threatened the "peace or safety" of the state and were thus carefully monitored and regulated until the Civil War demolished slavery. While free Blacks operated a church for a few years in Charlestown, after 1822 any religious gathering of Blacks had to be led by White clergymen and have Whites present in the pews, as had been the case for all but a few years of the state's history. 110

Georgia's Constitution of 1777 required that all members of the legislature "shall be of the Protestent [sic] religion, and of the age of twentyone years, and shall be possessed in their own right of two hundred and fifty acres of land, or some property to the amount of two hundred and fifty pounds."¹¹¹ The document also provided that "All persons whatever shall have the free exercise of their religion; provided it be not repugnant to the peace and safety of the State; and shall not, unless by consent, support any teacher or teachers except those of their own profession."¹¹² The constitution also prohibited any member of the clergy, of any faith,

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., Art. VII, Sec. 1.

¹¹⁰ In 1818 the substantial free Black population in Charleston, led by Morris Brown, a wealthy free Black, established an African Methodist Episcopal Church, but "Charleston authorities harassed the black congregation and finally closed the Church in 1821." Michael P. Johnson and James L. Roark, *Black Masters: A Free Family of Color in the Old South* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1984), 38. After the Vesey conspiracy in 1822, the city council ordered the that the church be demolished, and Brown was forced to leave the state. See also Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York: Pantheon, 1974), 290. In 1849 Episcopalians in Charleston began construction of a church to provide services and religious instruction for free Blacks and slaves in the city. Slaveowners would also attend services, led by a White preacher, and all instruction would be by Whites as well. Robert F. Durden, "The Establishment of Calvary Protestant Episcopal Church for Negroes in Charlestown," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 65, no. 2 (1964): 63.

¹¹¹ Georgia Constitution, 1777, Art. VI.

¹¹² Ibid., Art. LVI.

from serving in the legislature. Like its more populous and prosperous neighbor to the North, Georgia allowed Jews to worship freely while denying them the right to hold an elective office, and provided the same disability for Christian ministers. The constitution provided language that could be used to prevent free Blacks or slaves from worshipping in their own congregations.

Georgia's 1789 constitution continued the prohibition on clergymen serving in the legislature, allowed government officials to "swear (or affirm, as the case may be)" their oath of office, and provided an emphatic right to free exercise of Religion: "All persons shall have the free exercise of religion, without being obliged to contribute to the support of any religious profession but their own," but otherwise the new Constitution had nothing to say about religion.¹¹⁴ Jews could and did hold office in the state after this.

In its 1780 constitution Massachusetts emphatically supported religious freedom: "It is the right as well as the duty of all men in society, publicly, and at stated seasons to worship the Supreme Being" and promised that "no subject shall be hurt, molested, or restrained, in his person, liberty, or estate, for worshipping God in the manner and season most agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience; or for his religious profession or sentiments."¹¹⁵ However, the Massachusetts Constitution also promised public funds for Protestant teachers, guaranteed that "every denomination of Christians" would be "under the protection of the law," required that public officials be "of the Christian religion," and required leaders of the executive branch and all members of the legislature to take an oath asserting they "believe in the Christian religion."¹¹⁶ The constitution guaranteed that Harvard College would support the "Christian religion" and be governed by the "ministers of the Congregational churches"

¹¹³ Ibid., Art. LXII.

¹¹⁴ Georgia Constitution, 1789, Art. I, Sec. 18; Art. I, Sec. 15, and Art. IV, Sec 5.

¹¹⁵ Massachusetts Constitution, 1780, Part the First, Art. II. This followed a clause designed to end slavery, which was Article I of the Commonwealth's Declaration of Rights.
116 Massachusetts Constitution, 1780, Part the First, Art. III.; Ch. II, Sec. I, Art. II; Sec II, Art. I; Ch. IV, Art. I.

from Boston and elsewhere. ¹¹⁷ While granting Jewish citizens complete religious freedom and the right to vote, the Bay State's constitution clearly made them, at best, second-class citizens in a state that favored the Congregational Church, Protestants in general, and Christians.

Massachusetts never wrote a new constitution, but gradually, through amendments, the state disestablished the church, and by the 1830s it provided equality to Jews, other non-Christians, and non-Protestants. Massachusetts ended its religious test for officeholding through a complicated amendment process in 1833. However, full separation of church and state would be not added to the constitution until 1974. 119

Vermont, the fourteenth state, admitted in 1791 before the ratification of the Bill of Rights, guaranteed that "all men have a natural and unalienable right to worship Almighty God, according to the dictates of their own consciences and understanding ... and that no man ought, or of right can be compelled, to attend any religious worship, or erect, or support any place of worship, or maintain any minister, contrary to the dictates of his conscience."120 However, immediately following this provision the constitution declared "nor can any man who professes the protestant [sic] religion, be justly deprived or abridged of any civil right, as a citizen, on account of his religious sentiments, or peculiar mode of religious worship."121 At this time there were few if any Jews in the state, although there may very well have been some Catholics. A subsequent clause required that all legislators or any other "civil officer or magistrate" swear: "I do believe in one God, the creator and governor of the universe, the rewarder of the good, and punisher of the wicked. And I do acknowledge the scriptures of the old and new testament to be given by divine inspiration, and own and profess the protestant religion."122

¹¹⁷ Massachusetts Constitution, 1780, Ch. V, Sec. I, Arts I–III.

¹¹⁸ Borden, Jews, Turks, and Infidels, 30.

¹¹⁹ Massachusetts Constitution, 1780, Amendment CIII (5 November 1974).

¹²⁰ Vermont Constitution, 1786, Ch. 1, Art. III. Written in 1786, before the rest of the United States accepted Vermont's demand to be a state, this became Vermont's first constitution when it was admitted as state in 1791.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Vermont Constitution, 1786, Ch. II, Sec. XII.

In 1793 Vermont adopted a new constitution that had no meaningful religious tests. Officeholders swore to uphold the constitution, with a pro forma ending "so help me God" or "under the pains and penalties of perjury" if the person, such as a Quaker, refused to take an oath. 123 Anyone could now hold office in Vermont without regard to their faith. The constitution strongly guaranteed that "[no] man be justly deprived or abridged of any civil right, as a citizen, on account of his religious sentiments, or peculiar mode of religious worship."124 The closest the constitution came to endorsing a particular faith was a final section of this clause asserting that "every sect or denomination of Christians ought to observe the Sabbath or Lord's day, and keep up some sort of religious worship, which to them shall seem most agreeable to the revealed will of God."125 This last clause seems to be unique in the history of state constitutions. It can be read as an admonition or an enforceable requirement, but it only applied to Christians. This might be the one clause in early state constitutions that could have burdened Christians or their churches but not affected Iews.

Rhode Island did not adopt a constitution until 1843. After the Revolution it operated under its 1663 charter, which established a "Christian" colony but also allowed freedom of worship. This led to a vibrant Jewish community in Newport. But, while free to worship as they wished, Jews appear to have had no political rights. Under the Plantation Act in 1740 some Rhode Island Jews were naturalized, but in 1762 colonial officials infamously denied naturalization to two prominent merchants, Aaron Lopez and Isaac Elizer, who went to Massachusetts and New York, respectively, to naturalize. 126 Jews in the colony were active

¹²³ Vermont Constitution, 1793, Ch. II, Sec. XXIX.

¹²⁴ Vermont Constitution, 1793, Ch. I, Art. III. The actual text of the provision is this: "You _____ do solemnly swear (or affirm) that you will be true to the State of Vermont, and that you will not, directly or indirectly, do any act or thing injurious to the Constitution or Government thereof, as established by Convention. (If an oath,) so help you God, (if an affirmation,) under the pains and penalties of perjury." The person taking the oath or affirmation would substitute "I" for "you" at the ceremony.

¹²⁵ Ibid

¹²⁶ Sarna and Dalin, Religion and the State, 51-59.

in other civic affairs, including donating to help establish what became Brown University, signing nonimportation agreements, and serving in the patriot armies. In the aftermath of the Revolutionary War, there was the famous exchange of letters between President Washington and the Jewish community of Newport in which Washington declared that the Constitution created a government "which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance." 127 This exchange of letters took place in 1790, shortly after Rhode Island became the thirteenth state to ratify the Constitution. The political status of Jews in this period was unclear, but in 1798 Rhode Island caught up with other states, enfranchising Jews on the same basis as other freemen in the state and allowing them to hold public office. Somewhat more unusual, that year the state exempted Jews from its law prohibiting people from working on Sunday. The statute provided that "all the professors of the Sabbatarian Faith, or Jewish religion, throughout this state ... shall be permitted to labour in their respective professions or vocations on the first day of the week; and that they shall have liberty quietly and peaceably to pass and repass on foot or horseback about their ordinary business."128 This Sunday closing law appears to be the only statute in American history that exempted Jews (as well as other unnamed Sabbatarians) from a law that harmed them because of the requirements of their faith.

Pennsylvania's first constitution, adopted in 1776, has a complex history. The original document required that all members of the state legislature take a Christian test oath: "I do believe in one God, the creator and governor of the universe, the rewarder of the good and the punisher of the wicked. And I do acknowledge the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by Divine inspiration." Benjamin

¹²⁷ George Washington to The Hebrew Congregation in Newport Rhode Island, 18 August 1790, available at https://founders.archives.gov/?q=Volume%3AWashington-05-06&s=1511311112&r=136.

¹²⁸ An Act regulating the Manner of admitting Freemen, and directing the Method of electing Officers, in this State; and An Act prohibiting Sports and Labour on the First Day of the Week. *The Public Laws of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations* (Providence: Carter and Wilkinson, 1798), 114 and 577. We are indebted to Linda Tashbook, law librarian at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, for finding these laws.

Franklin opposed any religious tests for officeholding, and in part to placate him, immediately following this provision, the constitution asserted "no further or other religious test shall ever hereafter be required of any civil officer or magistrate in this State." This of course meant that Jews could not serve in the state's unicameral legislature or be civil officers unless they proclaimed that both their Bible and the Christian Bible were the result of "Divine inspiration." Plausibly a Jew could "acknowledge" the Divine inspiration of the New Testament without actually believing in it; however, Jews in the Keystone State never considered this as a possible option. They fully understood the discriminatory language for what it was. Unsurprisingly, Pennsylvania's Jews protested this clause.

In 1781 the U.S. Congress authorized the publication of a compilation of all existing state constitutions. A committee from Philadelphia's Congregation Mikveh Israel studied and annotated this 226-page book, noting where Jews faced discrimination. ¹³⁰ Their annotations were often unsophisticated, and the Mikveh Israel committee missed some forms of discrimination. But the project might be seen as a very early example of civil rights activism, and a precursor of both the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the NAACP's Legal Defense and Education Fund. In late 1783 a group of Philadelphia Jewish leaders, including Gershom Seixas (who had not yet returned to his congregation in New York after fleeing the British occupation of that city), Bernard Gratz, and Haym Salomon sent a detailed petition to the Pennsylvania Council of Censors—an odd creation of the state's 1776 constitution, which met every seventh year to review existing laws and constitutional provisions—asking for a change in the state constitution. ¹³¹ The petition to

¹²⁹ Pennsylvania Constitution, 1776, Sec. 10. Wolf and Whiteman, *Jews of Philadelphia*, 82, noting Franklin's opposition.

¹³⁰ The Constitutions of the Several Independent States of America, The Declaration of Independence ... Published by Order of Congress. (Philadelphia: Francis Bailey, 1781). The Rosenbach Museum & Library in Philadelphia owns this annotated copy of the book, and it is currently on loan to the Museum of the American Revolution. We thank both institutions for giving us access to it. There is no scholarly agreement on who served on the committee or wrote the comments in the book.

^{131 &}quot;Petition for Equal Rights, Dec. 23, 1783," in Schappes, *Documentary History of Jews in the United States*, 63.

the council reflects the comfort of Jews in post-Revolutionary America to actively participate in politics. Such participation was unheard of in Europe.

In addition to petitioning the Council of Censors, the Mikveh Israel committee sent copies of the petition to three Philadelphia newspapers, all of which published it. Eleazar Oswald, the very radical editor of the *Independent Gazetteer and Freedom's Journal*, sided with the Jewish petitioners, editorializing that it was "an absurdity, too glaring and inconsistent to find a single advocate, to say a man, or a society, is Free, without possessing and exercising a right to elect and to be elected." Others, all identifying themselves as Christians, also endorsed the petition.¹³²

The council never even acknowledged receipt of the petition. However, its publication in local newspapers and public support for it may have contributed to changes a few years later, when Pennsylvania adopted a new constitution in 1790 that eliminated the Christian test for office holding.

In the intervening period between the petition and Pennsylvania's 1790 constitution, the Federal Convention met in Philadelphia in 1787 and wrote what became the United States Constitution when it was ratified in 1788. On 7 September 1787, just ten days before the convention would finish its work, Jonas Phillips, as a representative of Congregation Mikveh Israel, wrote to George Washington, asking that the convention protect the political rights of Jews. ¹³³ Phillips, an early supporter of American liberty, was the ideal person to write to the former commander-in-chief. In 1776 he moved to Philadelphia after the British occupied New York City. In 1778, at age forty-two, he enlisted in the Pennsylvania militia. The letter he wrote had no effect, because

¹³² Freeman's Journal of The North-American Intelligencer (Philadelphia), 21 January 1784; Independent Gazetteer, or the Chronicle of Freedom, 17 January 1784; and Pennsylvania Packet, 17 January 1784. Wolf and Whiteman, Jews of Philadelphia, 148–149.

¹³³ Jonas Phillips to the president and members of the convention, 7 September 1787, reprinted in Max Farrand, *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787*, vol. 3 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 78–79. Phillips was the grandfather of the Jewish naval captain, Uriah Phillips Levy. His great-great grandson, Franklin Israel Moses Jr., would be a Republican governor of South Carolina during Reconstruction.

by this time the convention had already agreed to prohibit religious tests for officeholding. However, the willingness of Philadelphia Jews to petition the Constitutional Convention to protect Jewish rights further shows that Jews felt comfortable in the political world of Revolutionary America. The petition to the Council of Censors, the publications in local papers, and the letter to Washington underscore the collective behavior of Jews to assert their rights to equality.

There is no "smoking gun" for the actual impact of Jewish protests against the Pennsylvania constitution of 1776, but it seems likely they had an effect. In 1790 the state's new constitution provided:

That all men have a natural and indefeasible right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own consciences; that no man can of right be compelled to attend, erect, or support any place of worship, or to maintain any ministry, against his consent; that no human authority can, in any case whatever, control or interfere with the rights of conscience; and that no preference shall ever be given, by law, to any religious establishments or modes of worship.

Instead of a Christian test for officeholding, the new constitution declared: "No person, who acknowledges the being of a God and a future state of rewards and punishments, shall, on account of his religious sentiments, be disqualified to hold any office or place of trust or profit under this commonwealth." This could possibly have prevented deists or atheists such as Benjamin Franklin, Benjamin Rush, and Thomas Paine from holding office, but it allowed Jews to hold office. In 1828 Zalegman Phillips, a prominent Philadelphia lawyer, sought, but did not win, a nomination to Congress as a Jacksonian Democrat. He had support within the Democratic Party, but another candidate had already been chosen. However, in 1844 Pennsylvanian Lewis Charles Levin became the first Jew elected to Congress. 136

¹³⁴ Pennsylvania Constitution, 1790, Art. IX, Secs. 3 and 4.

¹³⁵ Wolf and Whiteman, Jews of Philadelphia, 302.

¹³⁶ Ironically, Levin was a nativist opposed to Catholic immigration and a founder of the American Party, which was a precursor of the Know-Nothing Party of the 1850s.

Discrimination Against Jews in State Constitutions Beyond the Revolutionary Period

While new constitutions eliminated religious tests for officeholding, religious preferences, and established churches, not all states rewrote their constitutions in this period. Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, and New Hampshire maintained their discriminatory constitutions well into the nineteenth century.

Maryland continued its ban on Jewish officeholding until 1826, when the state passed a law, commonly known as the Jew Bill, which allowed Jews to hold office. Shortly thereafter two Jews, Solomon Etting and Jacob I. Cohen, were elected to the Baltimore City Council. In 1843 Rhode Island finally adopted a constitution, which ended religious tests for officeholding.¹³⁷

New Jersey's first constitution, written in 1776, had provided full freedom of worship; prohibited use of taxes for the support of any churches, religions, or ministers; and emphatically "asserted there shall be no establishment of any one religious sect in this Province, in preference to another." However, it limited officeholding to "persons, professing a belief in the faith of any Protestant sect." This restriction continued until a new constitution, written in 1844, declared: "There shall be no establishment of one religious sect in preference to another; no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust; and no person shall be denied the enjoyment of any civil right merely on account of his religious principles." 140

North Carolina and New Hampshire continued to maintain a Christian test for officeholding until after the Civil War. These two outlier states illustrate the complexities of federalism. While the rest of the nation had long abandoned constitutionalized antisemitism and religious tests for officeholding, these two states continued it.

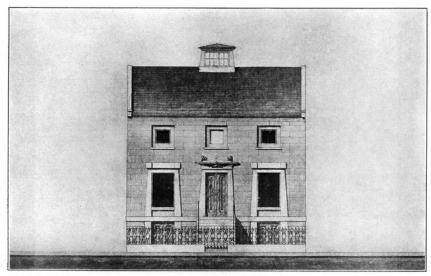
North Carolina finally ended its anti-Jewish policy in 1868, after the defeat of the Confederacy and the establishment of a pro-Union

¹³⁷ Rhode Island Constitution, 1843.

¹³⁸ New Jersey Constitution, 1776, Arts. XVIII and XIX.

¹³⁹ Ibid., Art. XIX.

¹⁴⁰ New Jersey Constitution, 1844, Art. I, Cl. 4.



CHERRY STREET SYNAGOGUE IN 1825

The second building of Mikveh Israel, 1825. (Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

government that supported civil rights and Black freedom. The constitution's preamble noted that the people of the state were "grateful to Almighty God, the sovereign ruler of nations, for the preservation of the American Union and the existence of our civil, political, and religious liberties, and acknowledging our dependence upon Him for the continuance of those blessings to us and our posterity, do, for the more certain security thereof and for the better government of this State, ordain and establish this constitution." The constitution provided that "All men have a natural and unalienable right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own consciences, and no human authority should, in any case whatever, control or interfere with the right of conscience." It also contained a few clauses supporting the private creation of religious institutions. After nearly a century, North Carolina abandoned its religious tests for officeholding. However, the constitution "disqualified for office: first, all persons who shall deny the

¹⁴¹ North Carolina Constitution, 1868, Preamble.

¹⁴² North Carolina Constitution, 1868, Art. I, Sec. 26.

being of Almighty God."¹⁴³ With the 1868 constitution, Jews could now hold office in North Carolina—but atheists could not.¹⁴⁴

144 Eric Eisner, "Hebrews in Favor of the South': Jews, Race, and the North Carolina State Convention of 1861–1862," *Southern Jewish History* 24 (2021): 1, 2, asserts, incorrectly we argue, that North Carolina allowed Jews to hold office through an amendment to the constitution passed by an 1861 state convention that met after secession. The convention passed this resolution: "No person who shall deny the being of God or the divine authority of both the Old and New Testaments, or who shall hold religious opinions incompatible with the freedom or safety of the State, shall be capable of holding any office or place of trust or profit in the civil department of this State." An Ordinance to Amend the Second Section of the Fourth Article of the Amendments to the Constitution, No. 13, Act of 6 December 1861, Ordinances and Resolutions Passed by the State Convention of North Carolina. Second Session in November and December, 1861 (Raleigh: John W. Syme, 1862). https://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/ncconven/ncconven.html. Eisner vigorously argues that because "Jews denied the New Testament but accepted the Old Testament; therefore, by virtue of not denying both, Jews could be eligible for office under the new wording." Eisner, 1, 2.

We are unpersuaded by this analysis. First, this "amendment" to the constitution may never in fact have been part of the constitution because the proposal was neither approved by the legislature nor sent to the voters for ratification. It was a resolution, not a constitutional amendment. Eisner concedes that many people argued this at the time. Eisner, 19–22. Furthermore, under *Texas v. White*, 74 U.S. 700 (1868), any Confederate changes to the North Carolina Constitution were clearly illegal and void. Thus, whatever people may have believed in 1861, the alleged government in North Carolina was illegal, and nothing it pretended to pass was legal.

Even if we ignore these constitutional issues—at both the state and the federal level—Eisner's argument strikes us as inconsistent with any legitimate analysis of the clause. While poorly drafted, it seems to require that officeholders accept "both" the New Testament as well as the Old. It is, in the end, a Christian test for officeholding.

Eisner points out some Jews did hold minor local public offices in Confederate North Carolina during the war but also notes, as we do earlier in this article, North Carolina's inconsistent implementation of its early bans on Jewish officeholding, as in the case of Jacob Henry. That North Carolina, in the midst of war, relaxed its antisemitism, perhaps to gain unity within the state, does not mean it had actually made Jews equal with Christians. In the aftermath of the Civil War, leading Jewish activists and newspapers agreed that this clause never provided equality for Jews. Thus, Eisner writes: "in 1866, the *Occident*, the *Jewish Messenger* (New York), and the *Israelite* all reported that the new wording had done nothing to alter Jewish disabilities." Eisner, 3–4. He notes that shortly after the amendment was written some Jewish leaders argued it emancipated Jews, but in the context of the beginning of the Civil War, this may have reflected a desire to help protect coreligionists from their

¹⁴³ Ibid., Art. VI, Sec. 5.

In 1877 New Hampshire became the last state to allow Jews to hold office, although as Morton Borden has noted, the state's constitution retained a reference to Christianity until 1968. ¹⁴⁵ Two years after that change, in 1970, Warren Rudman would become New Hampshire's first Jewish attorney general, and a decade later the state's first Jewish U.S. Senator.

Conclusion

The history presented here illustrates the complexity of the intersection of antisemitism and law in the United States. As we have argued, the Revolution created a new and unique political regime for Jews. Their active participation in the Revolutionary era—from the first protests against English polices, to the military conflict, to the creation of a vibrant democratic republic—led to previously unheard-of political and legal opportunities for Jews. In the century from the end of the Seven Years War to the end of the American Civil War, Jews were extraordinarily active in politics and society, holding positions in Congress, the military, and public life that were truly unprecedented. At the same time, in a few places, such as North Carolina and New Hampshire, they still faced constitutionally sanctioned bigotry; and in many other places in the nation, social and sometimes extralegal bigotry remained.

Christian neighbors. His main evidence for his claim that in 1861 leading Jews praised the change comes from two suspect sources, the notoriously anti-abolitionist Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, an outspoken Copperhead Democrat during the Civil War who sympathized with the South, and from Isaac Leeser, whose biographer asserts that he "probably was more sympathetic toward the South than the North," and that most of the subscribers to his paper were Southern. Sussman, *Isaac Leeser*, 219. Thus, the cheerful evaluations of Wise and Leeser of what was happening in North Carolina at the beginning of the war must be viewed with some skepticism.

The alleged Confederate state constitutional change, which still referenced the New Testament and still created a religious test for officeholding, illustrates the willingness of a few states to hold onto a Christian preference within their government, even as they somehow thought they were "tolerating" Jewish officeholding. Other than this article, scholars of this issue, including Borden, *Jews, Turks, and Infidels*, 46; Leonard Rogoff, *Down Home: Jewish Life in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 71; and Anton Hieke, *Jewish Identity in the Reconstruction South: Ambivalence and Adaptation* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 177–178, do not see this Confederate ordinance as changing anything. 145 Borden, *Jews, Turks, and Infidels*, 36.

On the whole, however, the Jewish involvement in the Revolution and its aftermath helped create the extraordinary religious liberty found in most of the nation and helped to actualize many of the precepts of the American Enlightenment with regard to religious liberty. This liberty, as is well known, was never fully defended or enforced. Outbursts of bigotry—sometimes against Jews but also against Catholics, Mormons, Buddhists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslims, and others—litter American history and offer shameful examples of policy-making and law from Congress, the Supreme Court, the White House, state legislatures, governors, and local political bodies. The rights of Jews at the state level have often been threatened by whole categories of legislation, such as Sunday closing laws, readings from the King James Bible and recitation of the Lord's Prayer in public schools, and courts that have sometimes been unwilling to accept that observant Jews cannot do many things—such as serve on a jury, vote in an election, or testify in court—on Saturdays. It is important to note, however, that these laws were rarely directed at Jews per se. They more often reflected majoritarian culture and a general insensitivity to minority faiths. In the late nineteenth century Sunday closing laws were also tied to the struggles of working people to obtain a six-day work week and were a convenient vehicle for labor activists to gain support from a wide spectrum of Christian churches and leaders. On the flip side, before the Revolution, even in the New York colony where Jews could sometimes vote, they never served on juries. 146

Formal legal equality, which emerged during and shortly after the Revolution and shaped American liberty, did not, however, translate into social equality. American history is replete with ugly examples of religious bigotry, sometimes supported by opportunistic or bigoted political leaders. This bigotry also extended to the marketplace, in the form of restrictive covenants in housing, conscious discrimination by real estate brokers and developers, and hotels and restaurants that discouraged or flat-out rejected Jewish patronage. Private organizations, such as country clubs, which often function more like public entities, were able to hide behind their "private" status to discriminate. Colleges and universities could and did do the same. 147

¹⁴⁶ Hershkowitz, "Some Aspects," 13.

¹⁴⁷ Tevis, "'Jews Not Admitted," argues that such behavior violated the 14th Amendment

At times this bigotry led to legal and political persecution and as well as vigilantism against Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslims, and Jews—most famously in the outrageously unfair trial of Leo Frank and his subsequent lynching in 1915 and in the rise of white nationalist terrorism and violence against Jews and attacks on synagogues since 2017. But the formal rules that have protected religious liberty since the Revolution matter, and they matter a great deal. They provide the tools and the arguments for religious liberty. In this sense the Revolutionary experience is a key moment in the development of American liberty. It is bolstered by the argument set out clearly in George Washington's 1790 letter to the Jewish community of Newport, Rhode Island, asserting that "the Government of the United States . . . gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance." Washington's letter addressed both the challenges of social discrimination and legalized antisemitism. The letter and this history still matter.

Paul Finkelman is the Robert F. Boden Visiting Professor of Law at Marquette Law School. He has previously held chairs at Duke, Louisiana State University, Albany, and the University of Tulsa law schools and was the Fulbright Chair in Human Rights and Social Justice at the University of Ottawa. He served as the lead expert witness in the lawsuit that forced the removal of the two-and-half ton Ten Commandments Monument that Chief Justice Roy Moore placed in the Rotunda of the Alabama Supreme Court Building. He received his doctorate from the University of Chicago and was later a fellow in law and humanities at Harvard Law School. His most recent major book is Supreme Injustice: Slavery in the Nation's Highest Court.

Lance J. Sussman, Ph.D. is Rabbi Emeritus of Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel (Elkins Park, PA) and the immediate past chair of the Board of Governors of Gratz College, where he also is a professor of Jewish history. He has previously taught at, among other places, Princeton, Hunter College, and Binghamton University. Sussman's new book, Portrait of an American Rabbi: In His Own Words, is a collection of his sermons and other select writings from 2001 to 2022.

and the Civil Rights Act of 1875, but of course the Supreme Court had struck that act down in 1883.



Louis Lewandowski (Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

Louis Lewandowski in America: A Case Study in Adaptation and Synagogue Music History

Judah M. Cohen

While researching my book *Jewish Religious Music in Nineteenth Century* America, I discovered what in hindsight should have been obvious: that the compositions of Louis Lewandowski (Berlin, 1821-1894) came to the United States decades later than those of Salomon Sulzer (Vienna, 1804–1890) and Samuel Naumbourg (Paris, 1817–1880). The different American timeline of Lewandowski's music made intuitive sense. Even in Europe, as Geoffrey Goldberg shows, Sulzer's music predominated in Berlin before Lewandowski began building his own synagogue compositional career there; and Lewandowski's first round of publications appeared more than twenty years after the published debuts of Sulzer and Naumbourg.1 Yet my scholarly training and my work with cantorial students at the turn of the twenty-first century had conditioned me to see these three composers as a collective shorthand for one chapter of nineteenth-century musical reform, coexisting in their efforts at Jewish liturgical modernization across Europe. This narrative held so strongly in the popular scholarly/lay imagination that one distinguished reviewer of my book criticized it for minimizing Lewandowski, "whose extensive influence on synagogue music in Western and central Europe in the latter half of the 19th century should have affected liturgical music in the US."2

¹ Geoffrey Goldberg, "Neglected Sources for the Historical Study of Synagogue Music: The Prefaces to Louis Lewandowski's *Kol Rinnah u'Tefillah* and *Todah W'Simrah*—Annotated Translations," *Musica Judaica* 11, no. 1 (1989–1990): 28–57, esp. 33–36.

² Lawrence Loeb, review of *Jewish Religious Music in Nineteenth Century America*. Choice Reviews 57 no. 4 (1 December 2019): 436.

In this essay I offer some reflections on how historians and Jewish communal professionals from around the start of the twentieth century began to treat the disparate careers of nineteenth-century Central European synagogue composers (such as Sulzer, Naumbourg, Lewandowski, Hirsch Weintraub, Moritz Deutsch, and others) as a gravitational center for a grand, unified project of European Jewish musical reform. The resulting European "progress" narrative they created brought a convenient order and hierarchy to a heterogeneous range of musical activities, establishing a prescriptive, unitary "Jewish" genre designation that American congregations, composers, scholars, and practitioners could use to promote the continuities of Jewish communal life. The points of connection that grounded this effort, however, diverted attention from both the diversity of musical infrastructures that each composer navigated in his time and the contrasting institutional views of Jewish tradition and practice that supported each composer's music.³ Instead, the "Jewish music" field that emerged empowered Jewish communal institutions to promote "usable" topics relevant to twentiethcentury debates over contemporary Jewish identity issues: including musical style, the centrality of synagogue life, and the duality of sacred and "secular" musical careers. Such worthy discourses over time have gained high polish in publications such as Benjamin Wolf's analysis of Lewandowski's varied compositional career and his complex negotiation between synagogue and concert hall.⁴ But in the process, various other fundamental discussions have been lost: among them, the dynamic relationship between liturgy and musical usage, the varied ways people experience music in a synagogue, thorny questions of power and competition in determining musical practice, shifting views of what the Jewish collective even represents, and, most significantly, the central role that musical adaptation—including the assumption that "the notes" of a composition represent the core character of a composer's work regardless

³ Goldberg, 32. See, for example, Ross Hoffman, "Antecedents of Jewish Music," *The Sentinel* (Chicago) 10 no. 5 (2 May 1913): 7, 22.

⁴ Benjamin Wolf, "Music as Mirror: Reflections of Biography and Identity in the Music of Louis Lewandowski." In Luca Sala, ed. *Jewishness, Jewish Identity and Music Culture in 19th-Century Europe* (Bologna: Ut Orpheus, 2020), 251–294.

of how they are rendered—has quietly played in ensuring coherent narratives of Jewish musical history.

(Re)turning to contemporary synagogue records, manuscripts, and periodicals allows for a different, more nuanced story about Lewandowski's reception in the United States and, in turn, about the dissemination, use, and experience of synagogue music in the late nineteenth century. I offer through these sources a different perspective that aims to restore complexity to an overly "flattened" story: American congregations began to use Sulzer's and Naumbourg's music in the 1840s and 1850s but did not use Lewandowski's synagogue music until the mid- to late 1880s and even then, they initially limited Lewandowski's music to large-scale public celebrations. The Sulzer/Naumbourg/Lewandowski paradigm common in Jewish musical education settings, meanwhile, came about as American institutional networks sought to standardize Jewish practice. By using and adapting European synagogue music over time, scholars and practitioners of "Jewish music" merged their differing European careers into a linear narrative of musical reform that addressed practical needs, connected with waves of theological-aesthetic change, and transformed through successive layers of intellectual debate into a communally acceptable historical origin story for American liberal synagogue music.⁵

Historical Background: Adapting Sulzer and Naumbourg to Moderate American Reform

Sulzer's and Naumbourg's compositions entered the sonic landscape of American synagogues through several connected pathways starting in the 1840s. Their works were available in print and thus transportable; they had champions in figures such as Isaac Mayer Wise, who viewed music as an important way to create a knowledgeable American Jewish populace and uniform American synagogue ritual; and they had musical acolytes and family members who worked in and toured around the United States. By working with scores, moreover, leaders in America had the additional advantage of abstracting "the music" from its European

⁵ For more on Lewandowski, see Jascha Nemtsov and Hermann Simon, *Louis Lewandowski: Love Makes the Melody Immortal!* Jewish Miniatures 114A (Berlin: Hentrich & Hentrich/Centrum Judaicum, 2011).

synagogue practices, allowing them the freedom to adapt compositions to the amateur choral settings that better fit American congregations' community-building efforts.⁶

Isaac Mayer Wise's championing of this music offers a meaningful illustration of this process. Wise had met Sulzer in Vienna; he brought the first (1838) volume of *Schir Zion* with him when he immigrated to the United States in 1846; and (it appears) Wise also had access to Naumbourg's scores. He promoted choral singing in his writings as a progressive part of American life that allowed different generations to participate in a mutually reinforcing liturgical experience. To prepare for the premiere of his *Minhag America* prayer book at Cincinnati's Lodge Street Synagogue on 4 August 1854, Wise used his violin to rehearse five selections by Sulzer and two by Naumbourg with a thirty-two-person choir of young people. Such an intentional repurposing of the European composers' works allowed the music to become a symbol of moderate Reform that also connected with community choral singing movements representing middle-class achievement of the time.

Just as Wise brought Sulzer's and Naumbourg's compositions in line with his own communal ambitions, students and relatives of the composers presented other means of spreading their music and reputations. Several of Sulzer's trainees immigrated to the United States, including Leon Sternberger (1849), Samuel Welsch (1865), Morris Goldstein (1866), and Alois Kaiser (1867); they took influential positions in prominent American synagogues, building on their teacher's work to create organ-based services, while adding their own stylistically related compositions. Samuel Naumbourg's cousin Louis Naumburg, meanwhile, instituted new choral and musical programs at synagogues

⁶ M. Philipson (possibly Ludwig Philippson), "The Consistorial Temple of Paris," *The Asmonean* (29 Sept 1854): 188–189. Philipson's article recounted spatial and sonic differences between choirs in Vienna and Paris: An unaccompanied choir of men and boys surrounded the cantor on the pulpit in the former, while in the latter a mixed-gender ensemble occupied a choir loft at the opposite end of the sanctuary and had organ accompaniment through the first part of the service.

⁷ Judah M. Cohen, *Jewish Religious Music*, Chapter 1; H.O.H., "The Choir," *The Israelite* (11 August 1854): 38.

in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh between 1850 and 1870; and at least two of Sulzer's daughters toured through the United States as prominent opera singers. As a group, these figures reflected a Jewish liturgical music movement that channeled the aesthetic and philosophical aspects of their European models into the needs and resources of the American congregation. Often interacting with Wise in national religious organizations, the men especially forged connections with prominent rabbinic co-officiants and expanded the role, reputation, and power of the cantor in America as the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) and the Central Conference of American Rabbis gained prominence.

Lewandowski and His Slowly Expanding Berlin Circles

Lewandowski, in contrast, gained fame for developing a city-wide Jewish choral program in Berlin, especially by the 1850s; but his ongoing poor health, lack of cantorial status, and differing publication timeline severely limited his reach. His European fame only appeared to extend significantly beyond Berlin in 1879, when a new initiative to professionalize the Prussian cantorate sought Lewandowski's imprimatur. Lewandowski added a letter of support to the first issue of Bromberg Cantor Abraham Blaustein's cantorial-interest newspaper *Der jüdische Kantor* in June 1879; and when Blaustein and other area cantors gathered for a meeting to create a professional organization, eventually called the *Israelitischen deutschen Cantorenverein*, they elected Lewandowski as the group's honorary president.⁹

This relationship, which acknowledged Lewandowski's compositional prowess, set up a complex parallel between Berlin's cantorial infrastructure and its counterpart in Vienna, represented by the *Osterreichisch-ungarisch Cantorenverein*, which engaged retired cantor Salomon Sulzer as its honorary figurehead. While adoring writers in the latter's journal *Osterreichisch-ungarisch Cantoren-Zeitung* (herein *OUCZ*) described Sulzer as their pope ("Papa") and an inspiration to the musical legacy that cantors hoped to build, Lewandowski's appeal to the Berlin-area

⁸ Cohen, Jewish Religious Music, 37-40.

⁹ Der jüdische Kantor I, no. 1 (15 June, 1879): 2; Der jüdische Kantor I, no. 23 (4 December 1879): 1.

cantors came largely as a pragmatic musical leader whose official position and administrative experience could give direction to a heterogeneous group of practitioners. When the Berlin cantors met in Posen on 30 November 1879, for example, they fiercely debated whether to establish a widows' and orphans' fund. Lewandowski sent a letter to the gathering supporting their collective efforts, "although I am not a cantor" ("wenn Ich auch kein Kantor"); he pointed to his success in establishing "a health-support organization for Berlin musicians" in 1865; and he offered "to use my influence and relationships from here for the good cause, but only on the condition of unanimity, and indestructible unity." While his music likely qualified him for recognition among cantors, it appeared to be less important than Lewandowski's political power to help them organize and elevate their status.

In large part because of these differences, and despite publishing a substantial portion of his synagogue work in the 1860s, Lewandowski had almost no presence in American Jewish life before the 1880s. His compositions are absent from major American collections of synagogue music, including those of G.M. Cohen (1864's *The Sacred Harp of Judah* and 1878's *The Orpheus*) and the four-volume musical compilation *Zimrath Yah* (1871–1886). G.S. Ensel, in his signal 1880 book *Ancient Liturgical Music*, mentions Sulzer, Naumbourg, Abraham Baer, and Salomone Rossi as major synagogue music composers—but not Lewandowski. ¹² Only Cincinnati's German-language

¹⁰ Previous accounts have interpreted the term "Papa" through a lens of affection toward an elder, somewhat akin to references around Joseph "Papa" Haydn (1732–1809). Yet references to Sulzer as "Papa" appear also to balance affectionate and reverential (as in the Latin for "Pope"), especially in encomia that tie Sulzer's musical achievements to those of King David and the Greek hero Nestor. See, for example, L. Stern, "Wer is der Cantoren-Papa," *OUCZ* (8 August 1884): 3.

¹¹ Der jüdische Kantor I, no. 23 (4 December 1879): 1. ("Ich bin bereit, meinen Einfluss und meine Beziehungen von hier aus für die gute Sache einzusetzen, aber nur unter der Bedingung der Einigkeit und der unzerstörbaren Einheit.")

¹² G.M. Cohen, *The Sacred Harp of Judah* (Cleveland: Brainard, 1864); G.M. Cohen, *The Orpheus* (Cleveland: G.M. Cohen, 1878); Samuel Welsch, Alois Kaiser, et al., eds., *Zimrath Yah*, 4 vv. (Baltimore, 1871–1886); G.S. Ensel, *Ancient Liturgical Music* (Paducah, 1880), 182, 192–196.

periodical *Die Deborah* appeared to follow Lewandowski somewhat regularly. References to Lewandowski in English-language American Jewish press, moreover, appeared only in brief notes lacking meaningful detail: his 1866 Berlin appointment as "a royal director of music," the positive German reception of his 1871 compendium *Kol Rinnah u'Tefillah* (misspelling the work as "*Kol Zenah u'Tefilah*"), and his election as honorary president of the Berlin Society for Jewish Cantors in 1880. Interestingly, Lewandowski's best-known work in America before the 1880s appears to have been a secular part song setting of Rudolf Löwenstein's poem "A Chafer's [June Bug's] Wedding/Ein Käfer-Hochzeit," which appeared occasionally in the repertoire of amateur singing societies (including men's choirs/*Männerchöre*) but had no connection with synagogue music. 15

Even when Lewandowski's name began to appear in American discussions of significant synagogue composers in the 1880s, his fame remained overseas as a choral director. While *Kol Rinnah u'Tefillah*, republished in 1882, continued to inspire cantors throughout Europe, little evidence exists of a similar impact in the United States. In December 1882, for example, New York's Henry Street Congregation Shaaray Zedeck touted the quality of its newly created, all-male, eight-voice choir by claiming that "[t]hese choristers have had experience abroad, two having been taught by the well-known Lewandowski of Berlin"; but the repertoire appeared to remain unchanged. A May 1883 editorial in *Die Deborah* celebrated Lewandowski on his sixtieth birthday, calling him a genius and placing him alongside Sulzer, Naumbourg,

¹³ See, for example, *Die Deborah* articles mentioning Lewandowski on 19 February 1864, 135; 10 August 1866, 23; and 9 November 1866, 70.

¹⁴ The Israelite, 18 May 1866, 365; The Israelite, 29 September 1871, 7; The American Israelite, 9 January 1880, 3; The American Hebrew, 5 November 1880, 140.

¹⁵ Louis Lewandowski, "Ein Käfer-Hochzeit" (Berlin, 1880). See Louis Lewandowski, "A Chafer's Wedding," *Novello's Part-Song Book, Second Series* 17, no. 482 (London: Novello, [1884?]).

^{16 &}quot;Jewish Music," *The American Israelite* (18 November 1881): 166 (reprinted from *The Jewish Herald*); *The American Israelite* (29 September 1882): 110.

¹⁷ Idelsohn, Jewish Music, 281-282.

¹⁸ The Jewish Messenger (8 December 1882): 2.

and Weintraub in stature, but then admitted his minimal presence in American synagogue music:

Lewandowski's works are less well known in America, because most of our cantors come from the Sulzer school and because one [already] finds sufficient material for all synagogue purposes in general church music, and in the various oratorios and symphonies of the most recognized masters. These works, and *Simrath Jah* [Zimrath Yah] can be found in every bookshop. Lewandowski's music is only available for order, which is costly and time-consuming. This does not, incidentally, damage Mr. Lewandowski's fame.¹⁹

The obscurity of Lewandowski's music in America began to change in 1884, when New York importer Max Kobre began to sell "celebrated Jewish music director" Lewandowski's works from his Lower East Side store.20 Yet aside from a few high-profile performances at large-scale communal events, Lewandowski's synagogue music made slow inroads. In 1887, a double quartet sang his Psalm 150 to inaugurate Boston Congregation Ohabai Sholom's new building, in a program that included works by Joseph Haydn, Richard Wagner, French composer/ organist Édouard Batiste, New York composer/organist Dudley Buck, and San Francisco composer/organist Gustav Scott.²¹ The following May, a service at the Jewish Ministers' Association annual meeting in Washington, DC, featured both Psalm 150 and Lewandowski's Psalm 122: 7-9 ("Y'hi Shalom"), in addition to works by composers Gustav Scott and Giuseppe Verdi.²² These exceptional moments in the record reinforce a narrow view of Lewandowski's music rather than regular synagogue usage.

The key to Lewandowski's adoption, as with Sulzer decades earlier, lay in knowledgeable individuals' adaptation of his music to American synagogue liturgies and practices. On that front, the first major incursion

¹⁹ Die Deborah (4 May 1883): 348. (Author's translation.)

²⁰ Jewish Messenger (10 October 1884): 6. The advertisement continued until 16 January 1885.

^{21 &}quot;The Presentation Poem," The American Israelite (16 September 1887): 9.

²² The American Israelite (1 June 1888): 8.

of Lewandowski's music into American synagogue repertoire appears to date to between 1888 and 1895 in Baltimore, when two Lewandowski advocates took positions as choral directors in that city's synagogues. One, Rev. David Salinger, led the musical program at the Eden Street Synagogue from at least June 1888. By 1890, a correspondent to the Philadelphia-based *Jewish Exponent* noted Salinger's reputation as Lewandowski's American champion, writing that Salinger "has made a specialty of adapting Lewandowski's music to the needs of conservative congregations, and his efforts seem to be appreciated and to find emulators." ²³

In May 1889, meanwhile, choral director David Melamet (1861–1932) arrived in Baltimore from Berlin (via New York) to lead the city's Germania Mannerchor. Melamet, who trained in Berlin's Royal Conservatory of Music from 1881–86, built his European career as a traveling choir director, eventually leading two of Berlin's premiere vocal ensembles. Like Salinger, moreover, he brought experience with Lewandowski's synagogue music to Baltimore's Jewish population; a July 1890 *Jewish Exponent* article noted that he "was also the representative of the great composer of Jewish melodies, L. Levandowski [sic], in leading the choir at the great new Gemeinde Synagogue at Berlin," and he served a similar role as choir director at the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation. 25

Lewandowski's music received frequent mention in newspaper accounts of both synagogues' events for the next several years, accompanying a period of rapid development and liberalization that included the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation's move to a new building on Madison Street in 1891.²⁶ His two champions, however, were relatively short-

²³ Ibid.; "Baltimore City News," *The Jewish Exponent* (11 April 1890): 6; "Baltimore City News," *The Jewish Exponent* (22 April 1891): 6 (Passover services).

^{24 &}quot;Musical Director of Germania Maennerchor," *Baltimore Sun* (28 May 1889): 4; "Prof. David Melamet," *The Jewish Exponent* (4 July 1890): 8.

^{25 &}quot;Prof. David Melamet."

²⁶ See, for example, *Baltimore Sun* (7 July 1888): 2 (advertisement for Rev. D. Salinger, dating to 21 June 1888); "Baltimore City News: Rosh HaShanah Services," *The Jewish Exponent* (27 September 1889); [Lewandowski in Eden Street Synagogue,] *The American Israelite* (10 October 1889): 7; "The Jewish New Year," *Baltimore Sun* (26 September 1889): 4; "Baltimore City News," *The Jewish Exponent* (12 June 1891): 6 (Confirmation services).

lived: Salinger resigned from the Eden Street congregation in 1894 to pursue medical training in Vienna, and Melamet, embroiled in a love triangle with the wife of one of his music colleagues, resigned from the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation in March 1895.²⁷ By that time, however, Lewandowski's compositions had become a part of both congregations' High Holiday services, with local newspapers routinely including him in its listings of synagogue musical service programs.

From Baltimore to the rest of the country, the momentum toward recognizing Lewandowski in America had begun, helped rhetorically by an effort to consolidate the spectrum of American synagogue music practices into a linear historical tradition of "Jewish music." At the start of 1891, European celebrations marking Lewandowski's fiftieth "jubilee" year in Berlin received coverage in New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and other American cities. ²⁸ In June of the same year, Philadelphia's Jewish Exponent published an article about Baltimore titled "Cantors Not of the Past," which celebrated cantor/composer/ Sulzer acolyte Alois Kaiser's twenty-fifth year at Baltimore's Oheb Shalom, and compared him to Lewandowski, "the great Berlin composer of synagogue music."29 Yet national institutions such as Hebrew Union College and the UAHC still looked to Sulzer's music as the dominant model, thanks in part to Isaac Mayer Wise's energetic advocacy; Wise recognized the same Kaiser anniversary by pointedly stating "it was Sulzer who made the modern reforms in the house of worship possible," and excluding Lewandowski from a list of liturgical music innovators in

^{27 &}quot;A Present to the Reverend David Salinger," *Baltimore Sun* (27 August 1894): 8; "Prof. Melamet's Resignation Accepted," *Baltimore Sun* (23 March 1895): 10. Melamet resigned as director of the Germania Männerchor at the same time; see Carl Laegeler, comp., Festschrift, *Goldenen Jubilaum*, 10. Oktober 1906, Der Germania Männerchor von Baltimore, MD (Baltimore: n.p., [1906]), 46. He nonetheless remained a prime figure in the city's musical life, leading major musical organizations, writing several celebrated musical works, improving the city's reputation in the nation's *Männerchor* scene, and conducting for the Baltimore Opera until his death in 1932.

²⁸ The Jewish Messenger (7 November 1890): 4; The Jewish Voice (St. Louis) (9 January 1891): 5, 8; ibid (23 January 1891): 8; "Lewandowski's Fiftieth Anniversary," The Jewish Exponent (29 May 1891): 5.

^{29 &}quot;Cantors Not of the Past," Jewish Exponent (26 June 1891): 4.

the same article.³⁰ Lewandowski's inroads, by contrast, appeared to come through networks of musical leaders seeking to establish their own professional bona fides. When New York cantor William Sparger published an "attempt at a bibliography" on "Literature on the Music of the Jews" in *The American Hebrew* in late 1892, he included Lewandowski's music compendia, thus placing the Berlin composer more firmly in American Jewish music discussion.³¹ In this way, Lewandowski became a symbol of the field of Jewish music itself as its creators sought to elevate concepts of tradition over heterogeneity.

Jewish musical authorities subsequently brought Lewandowski's compositions more frequently in American Jewish music publications, often in significantly modified forms. Kaiser and Sparger's landmark 1893 volume A Collection of the Principal Melodies of the Synagogue from the Earliest Times to the Present, sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women for the Chicago World's Fair, presented Lewandowski as an art music composer. Although they devoted most of the book to arrangements of "Traditional Melodies" with no authorial attribution, Kaiser and Sparger added three adaptations of Lewandowski's work in a "Modern Compositions" section at the end of the book, all drawn from Todah W'Simrah and set to new English lyrics. The first two appeared in a subsection titled "On Traditional Themes," implying artistic engagement with Jewish musical tradition: "Protect and Shield Us," a short solo with organ accompaniment, adapted from Lewandowski's "V'hagen ba'adeinu" (Part II, #85); and a brief solo with choral response, titled "Here In Thy House," as a condensed and edited version of Lewandowski's "Yah Shimcha" (Part II, #229, preceding the Yom Kippur Neilah service). The compilers also featured an adaptation of Lewandowski's mainstay Psalm 150 in the "Original Compositions" subsection.³² These choices prominently identified Lewandowski among

³⁰ Isaac Mayer Wise Editorial, The American Israelite (4 June 1891): 4.

³¹ Cyrus Adler, "Important Literature on Jewish Music," *The American Hebrew* (2 September 1892): 571; William Sparger, "Literature on the Music of the Jews: An Attempt at a Bibliography," *The American Hebrew* (23 December 1892): 265–266.

³² Alois Kaiser and William Sparger, eds., A Collection of the Principal Melodies of the Synagogue from the Earliest Times to the Present (Chicago: Rubovitz, 1893), 132–133, 142,

a small group of composers who had successfully translated Jewish musical tradition into contemporary art music forms. The following year, Detroit's Louis Grossman and F.L. York included easy arrangements of Lewandowski's music (alongside Sulzer's) to promote congregational singing in their nationally recognized publication *Responses, Psalms and Hymns for Worship in Jewish Congregations and Schools.*³³ These two collections set up parallel American strategies for showcasing Lewandowski's synagogue music that would extend beyond the composer's final years: first as a symbol of Jewish musical refinement, and second as a vehicle for communal participation.

Lewandowski's death, on 3 February 1894, received significant coverage in the American press, enhancing the composer's reputation further as a vessel of Jewish musical authenticity. In late March 1894, Baltimore Rev. Jacob Marmor contributed a memorial article on the composer to Philadelphia's *The Jewish Exponent*. Marmor's dedication decisively elevated Lewandowski into the top echelon of synagogue musicians, describing his music as a "cosmopolitan" counterpart to Sulzer's Palestrinalike compositions and Naumbourg's "melodies of irresistible charm." In Marmor's eyes, Lewandowski became an avid collector of liturgical melodies: transcribing them from renowned Cantor Moritz Deutsch and other *hazzanim* who came through town, and transforming them into grand but appropriately artistic works.

In this manner he got together a considerable collection of old songs, which he balanced over in his mind, arranged, and rearranged them. These and his original compositions received a thorough trial in the

^{186–191.} Lewandowski's publication notes that "Yah Shimcha" was "composed using an ancient Jewish melody/motif."

³³ Louis Grossman and Francis L. York, *Responses, Psalms and Hymns for Worship in Jewish Congregations and Schools* (Detroit: John F. Eby, 1894), 23, 27, 30–32. Lewandowski's music appeared in the book's model services III and V, and in the "Additional Responses" section. The practice of including Lewandowski-derived congregational choral responses can also be seen in the second and third editions of the *Union Hymnal* (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1914 and 1932).

³⁴ Rev. Jacob Marmor, "Lewandowski—His Influence on Jewish Music," *The Jewish Exponent* (30 March 1894): 1.

five congregations of which he was the musical leader. Then, after a final readjustment, he published his work, "Todah Vesimroh," in two volumes.... But his merit consists mainly in his greater work in which he displayed a fine taste and rare abilities in handling his subject. Some traditional melodies he left as he found them, to be rendered by the cantor or the organ; by the choir in unison, or with harmony; with the accompaniment of the organ or without. Some were modified by lengthening the time of each sound, others were so interspersed with secular strains that the former cannot be detected without diligent research. Most of his compositions are therefore tainted in a more or less degree with the rich colors of the Jewish music, which he so earnestly studied and in so masterly a manner assimilated in his works. One, hearing his Friday evening services well rendered, feels himself transported to that marvelous land lying toward the dawn of day, where the brilliancy of precious gems vies with the exquisite perfumes of mysterious plants for supremacy, and which spell does not pass ere the last chord dies away.³⁵

Lewandowski's methods of musical adaptation thus became a paradigm for Jewish musical sophistication during a gilded age of urban growth and religious grandeur, simultaneously presenting ambivalence with contemporary practices and an aspiration to European sophistication. Advocates of his work saw him posthumously as an inspiration for high-level choral singing, whose work could unite large ensembles through artistic skill and intrinsic Jewishness, while replacing local practices with a deeper and more satisfying "traditional" sound. Emil Hirsh, editor of the progressive New York paper *The Reform Advocate*, credited Lewandowski with fostering an approach to synagogue music reform that emphasized a sense of Jewish authenticity; that relied on Jewish choir directors and trained, all-male choirs; and that exhibited a "genius" for traditional sound that could supersede the operatic (read: inauthentic) stylings of America's (implied: non-Jewish) mixed quartets. Quoted here at length, it situated Lewandowski at the center of a "state of the field" for Jewish liturgical music:

³⁵ Ibid.

Prof. L. Lewandowski's field lay in another plane. In the Talmudic tract, Berakhoth, we are told that David's couch was guarded by a harp, waking under God's touch to inspired song. Such instrument was also Lewandowski's divine possession. It was he who reformed the liturgical appointments of the German synagogue. Jewish music and melody are forever indebted to his genius. He succeeded in emancipating the Synagogue from the monotony of the Protestant choral and the insipid imitation of Opera and Oratorio. May be that there is no originality in even the oldest traditional airs, familiar to the old worshipers. "Kol Nidre," perhaps, is a Venetian "Gassenhauer" [street tune]. But withal there runs through the traditional Jewish song, naturalized or autochthonous, a certain something which we do not find in the travesties of [the opera La] Traviata, adapted to Hebrew words, or in the wearisome appeals "to be saved," set to music by our Methodist organists and transformed into an "Adhon 'Olam." The seventy and more years of Lewandowski's life have, indeed, not been barren of golden grain. He takes his place in the niches of our grateful memory by the side of Sulzer. Our Jewish American congregations might, indeed, learn from him how to organize their choirs and what the music of the service shall be. A visit to the large Synagogue at Berlin will at once reveal the vast difference between his method and ours. There the autocracy of a non-Jewish choirmaster is not tolerated. A choir of over ninety male voices (boys largely) gives forth Jewish responses in Jewish strains, equally far removed from the nasal dreariness and drawl of Protestant hymns and the frivolity of opera bouffe, metamorphosed into a "Yigdal" or a K'dushah. In his compositions, Lewandowski will live. His master hand will touch to life the keys, though he doth slumber with the dust!

Is it impossible to profit by the lesson and the example of the Berlin Synagogue? Can we not have *Jewish* music in our services? As long as the prevailing plan be fetichized [*sic*], the outlook for a change in this direction will continue most inauspicious. Four hired singers, and an organist, out of all sympathy with Jewish thought and feeling, will naturally persist in deluging us with appeals to save us poor sinners, even though the words be altered and Jehovah be sung where the original presupposes Saviour. We shall have *ad nauseam Shina's* without the expression

of the Jewish fervor, and *Yimlokhi's* shorn of every element of gladness. The insipid sweetness of American Protestantism will color the tone and movement. At best we shall succeed in making a "joyful noise" before the "Lord." The way to change this is to introduce Lewandowski and Sulzer. But these presuppose a trained chorus and not an undisciplined Solo Quartet. With just a little greater interest in this part of our services, manifested by our Boards and members, we might have such a chorus at no greater expense than the Soloists now entail. Prof. Tomlins in this city has demonstrated what may be accomplished with children's voices. Why not imitate this, instead of foolishly emulating concert halls, and always failing? Here is a promising field for a much needed reform. Who will be the leader?³⁶

Such tributes gave Lewandowski's music a distinct character in contemporary debates over the nature of synagogue sound. Yet Sulzer's status as the establishment's model for Jewish congregational singing remained. Kaiser, tasked with assembling the UAHC's first hymnal, reinforced this perspective in an 1896 letter to his European colleagues, partly published in the Österreichisch-ungarisch Cantoren-Zeitung:

Creating the appropriate music [for the prospective hymnal] was no less difficult [than finding the right texts]. The boring Protestant hymn will never find a home in the synagogue, Catholic songs will never touch the heart of the Jewish worshiper. Hymn music for Jewish worship must be fresh, free, and joyful. According to old master Sulzer of blessed memory, the religious song, sung with enthusiasm, must find its way into the synagogue. A lively, easy to grasp, simply concentrated melody, kept within a narrow range of the vocal range, is absolutely necessary if congregational singing is to be secured a permanent place in our worship service.³⁷

The *Union Hymnal* reflected this philosophy: when it saw publication in 1897, only two Lewandowski compositions appeared in the

^{36 &}quot;H.," The Reform Advocate 7, no. 2 (3 March 1894): 1-2.

³⁷ Alois Kaiser, "Ein Gesangbuch für den Gemeinde-Gesang," *OUCZ* 16, no. 7 (1 March 1896): 3. Author's translation via Google Translate.

main (congregational) part—the Hebrew-language hymns "Yigdal" and "Ein Keloheinu"; yet Kaiser provided eleven additional selections—ten from the composer's 1879 publication 18 Liturgical Psalms plus Psalm 150—in a final "Anthems" section featuring more elaborate, themebased works intended for more experienced singers. A British article published after Lewandowski's death reflected a similar taxonomy of musical usage, noting that "a very few [of the composer's works] only are known in England as our choirs have not reached the high standard of those for which the eminent composer wrote. Through the 1890s, that view of Lewandowski's works as desirable but often unattainably sophisticated appeared to apply to much of the United States as well. 39

The decades-long phase-shift for Lewandowski toward American compatibility, only partially achieved by the late 1890s, highlights the regional differences between choral infrastructures, cantorial identities, and musical practices, while emphasizing the significant role that individuals played in making Lewandowski's music a part of congregational worship. Sulzer's and Naumbourg's music served as building blocks for American synagogue life—compatible with ensembles small and large, amateur and professional, and usually mixed gender. Lewandowski's music initially seemed to invoke the large-scale, trained ensembles of men and boys that echoed urban European practices. Some American congregations admired Berlin-trained choristers and the choral school model and occasionally benefitted from emigres with such experience. However, America's musical infrastructure dictated a fundamentally different approach to choral singing that emphasized the amateur and/ or small-scale ensembles. European Jewish authorities tended to credit Lewandowski with awakening the voice of the congregation—and to some extent taming the cantor's ego; but for American Jewish congregations, Lewandowski's reputation for complexity and grandeur limited his music's usage, and often required adaptation or simplification. Synagogues and singing societies could feature his works in large-scale

³⁸ Louis L. Lewandowski, 18 liturgische Psalmen (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, [1879]); the "Yigdal" and "Ein Keloheinu" tunes appear to have been adopted from Isaac S. Moses's 1894 Sabbath School Hymnal (Chicago: Bloch, 1894).

^{39 &}quot;Prof. Louis L. Lewandowski," The Reform Advocate (3 March 1894): 12.

celebrations such as building dedications and commemorative dinners, and they continued to do so well into the twentieth century; but regularly reproducing pieces such as his Psalm 150 likely seemed unworkable for less august occasions or less-prepared amateur groups.

To the Twentieth Century and Beyond: Lewandowski's Parallel Choral and Congregational Lives

In the years after the composer's death, questions of how to treat Lewandowski's legacy in America continued to tip between grandeur and populism, depending on the context: whether through showcase performances for large choirs or adaptations for congregational singing. Both, however, hinged on perceptions that the composer's work lent a sense of authenticity to synagogue ritual and legitimacy to the idea of a linear, heritable Jewish music tradition. Some saw Berlin's practices as an antidote to church-style music, while others viewed Lewandowski's work as supplemental to synagogue music practices already in place.⁴⁰

One of the first significant changes in Lewandowski's legacy came at the hands of prominent liberal Rabbi Isaac S. Moses, then serving Chicago's Kehilat An'shei Ma'arav (KAM) congregation. Moses, who helped edit the 1895 *Union Prayer Book*, also recognized music's significance for congregations wishing to adopt the new text. Consequently, and in parallel with Kaiser's editing of the *Union Hymnal*, he produced an 1893 Hanukkah service and an 1897 adaptation of Mobile, Alabama, composer Sigmund Schlesinger's music, both connecting to the *Union Prayer Book*'s texts; and in 1900, he extended this practice to Lewandowski's *Kol Rinnah u'Tefillah*, adapting selections into "a Song Service ... for the evening and morning of the Sabbath ... for one and

⁴⁰ In 1895, Berlin Rabbi Gustav Karpeles's 1891 sermon celebrating Lewandowski's fiftieth year in the pulpit was published in English as part of a widely circulated volume of essays (Karpeles, "Music of the Synagogue," in *Jewish Literature and Other Essays* [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1895], 370–379). By that point, however, Karpeles's romantic history of Jewish music as a spiritual tradition, and his general view of Lewandowski as a force in reviving its authenticity and power, had been superseded by more elaborate musicological studies and activities.

two voices, and congregational choir."⁴¹ This latter publication represents one of the first full American treatments of Lewandowski's music for congregational engagement.⁴²

Lewandowski's place in history changed as well, as synagogue music authorities shifted from a competitive Sulzer/Lewandowski narrative to a sequential/complementary one. This change allowed adapters to bring his work both into emerging congregational singing movements—including children's services—and into large-scale choral synagogues. British (and later Australian) Rabbi Francis L. Cohen's entry on music for the Jewish Encyclopedia published in 1906 addressed both of these layers: It described Lewandowski as the greatest of "the workers who have carried on in German lands the labor inaugurated by Sulzer," adding, "This master did perhaps more than any other of the past generation to bring the modern renascence of synagogal music home to the ordinary congregant." At the same time, Cohen ended his article by recognizing Lewandowski as an inspiration for American synagogue choral practice, even when it took a form drastically different from European practice:

In many of the synagogues of the United States there is no choir in the European sense, its place being taken by a single or a double mixed quartet of selected singers, in which, strangely enough, Gentiles are permitted to be the majority of those appointed to lead Jewish worship. Yet even here the tendency is now evident to combine the fullest modern artistic resources with the essentially traditional material consecrated by ancient custom of which Lewandowski was the foremost exponent.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Isaac S. Moses, ed., Temple Music, Book III: a song service in accordance with the Union prayer book, for the evening and morning of the Sabbath, arranged from Lewandowski's "Kol rinnah ut'fillah," for one and two voices, and congregational choir (Chicago: Isaac S. Moses, 1900). See also Isaac S. Moses, Hanukah Festival: A Song Service for the Feast of Lights (Chicago: American Hebrew Publishing House, 1893), and Isaac S. Moses, ed., Temple Music Book II: One complete evening and morning service for the Sabbath-day in accordance with the ritual of the Union Prayer Book (Chicago: Isaac S. Moses, 1897) (setting Sigmund Schlesinger).

⁴² See Goldberg, "Neglected Sources," 36, 42.

⁴³ Francis L. Cohen, "Music," in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 9 (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1906), 133.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 135.

Such views became a foundation upon which Jewish "tradition" could combine liturgical instruction with a sense of musical conservatism in the United States. Henry Gideon's 1909 compilation Jewish Hymnal for Religious Schools provided a meaningful instance of this process, offering the work of nineteenth-century composers as paradigms of synagogue liturgy. Writing with the voices of children in mind, Gideon penned in his foreword: "The Hebrew hymns of this collection are the work of master-composers of Jewish music, no fewer than five of whom are here represented."45 Those five composers—Lewandowski, Sulzer, Naumbourg, Kaiser, and Edward Stark—held an even greater presence in an expanded 1917 edition that reinforced the nineteenth century as the basis of a collective, now largely undifferentiated, canon. 46 The 1914 edition of the Union Hymnal included only two Lewandowski-attributed tunes (in three selections) plus settings of "Yigdal" and "Ein Keloheinu" in its main body, and it omitted him entirely from the sermon anthems section; but two of the children's services toward the back of the volume featured his own (adapted) tunes.⁴⁷ In 1915, Max Halpern, cantor of Adath Jeshurun synagogue in Roxbury, Massachusetts, extracted about a dozen Lewandowski melodies and adapted them into singable selections (both melodic and choral) along with a similar number of Sulzer tunes and over a hundred of his own melodies in an effort to attract young people to the sanctuary and encourage congregational singing. He placed the two composers on the same plane with the nonchalant comment: "Many of the melodies are adopted from the works of Sulzer

⁴⁵ Henry L. Gideon, "Editorial Foreword," *Jewish Hymnal for Religious Schools* (New York: Bloch, 1909), vi.

⁴⁶ Henry L. Gideon and Louis Weinstein, eds., *The New Jewish Hymnal for Religious Schools and Junior Congregations* (New York: Bloch, 1917). While Lewandowski had only two attributed pieces in 1909 (#78, "Sh'ma Yisroel" and #79 "Mi Chomocho"), he had five arranged/adapted pieces in the 1917 edition ("Tov L'hodos II," 93–95; "Kodosh III," 109; "Vay'hi Binsoa," 113; "Sh'ma Yisroel," 114; and "Kohanecho," 117).

⁴⁷ Central Conference of American Rabbis, *Union Hymnal for Jewish Worship* (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1914), hymns #15, 99, 137, 244, 246; and Children's Service II (277–281, for Sabbath). Lewandowski also featured prominently in Children's Service VII (298–308), for the three festivals.

and Lewandowski, etc."⁴⁸ Such a shifting use of Lewandowski's work to youth-focused settings exemplified a broader American effort to frame the nineteenth century as an artistic and spiritual high point, promoting its historical significance to young people as an inducement to Jewish liturgical participation.

Abraham Idelsohn, meanwhile, affirmed Lewandowski's status as the third major figure of "moderate reform"—after Sulzer and Naumbourg—in his foundational 1929 book *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development*. Fashioning a narrative that also highlighted Meier Cohn and Hirsch Weintraub, Idelsohn crafted a "developmental" view of Jewish music that emphasized each figure's inheritance and enhancement of "tradition." As with the previously mentioned materials, though in much greater detail, Idelsohn's pedagogically centered chronicle minimized the varied musical and infrastructural practices between the three figureheads' synagogue roles, adapting them into a chain-like chronology that both specialized and lay audiences—Jewish and non-Jewish alike—could follow. 50

The succeeding decades further canonized Lewandowski's legacy as a symbol of Jewish music. In the 1930s and 1940s, a series of Lewandowski adaptations for amateur liturgical and concert presentation appeared. On the synagogue side, the third edition of the *Union Hymnal*, edited by A.W. Binder, concentrated both Lewandowski and Sulzer pieces into a "Musical Services" section published in a separate,

⁴⁸ Max Halpern, "Foreword," in Halpern, ed., Z'miroth Ut'filoth Yisroel: A Synagogue Hymnal (Boston: The Boston Music Company, 1915), v.

⁴⁹ Abraham Z. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development* (New York: Dover, 1992), 246–295 (Lewandowski section 269–284). Quote from 284. More recently, see Eliyahu Schleifer's claim that "Among the musicians who revolutionized and modernized synagogue music during the nineteenth century, three stand out as the most influential ones: Salomon Sulzer (1804–1891) in Vienna, Samuel Naumbourg (1817–1880) in Paris, and Louis Lewandowski (1821–1894) in Berlin." In *Samuel Naumbourg: The Cantor of the French Jewish Emancipation*. Jewish Miniatures, vol. 136A (Berlin: Hentrich & Hentrich, 2012), 7.

⁵⁰ Goldberg, "Neglected Sources," 28–57; Nemtsov and Simon, *Louis Lewandowski*, Jewish Miniatures, vol. 114A (Berlin: Hentrich & Hentrich/Centrum Judaicum, 2011).

later volume.⁵¹ Binder also created simplified arrangements of Psalm 150 and Kol Nidre, likely for congregations that lacked the resources for professional singers and musicians.⁵² Berlin's choral legacy, meanwhile, developed another strong connection to the United States with the 1937 forced migration of composer/conductor Janot S. Roskin (1884–1946). A major force for Jewish folk and synagogue music in Berlin, Roskin brought his Hatikvah Music Publishing Company to Boston and then to Indianapolis while cultivating an American career in synagogue and community choral music; his considerable output included at least six Lewandowski arrangements, which became part of the choral literature in both synagogue and interfaith settings.⁵³

On another level, Lewandowski's music became a core part of cantorial training. Gershon Ephros incorporated fifty of Lewandowski's compositions into his six-volume, pedagogically focused *Cantorial Anthology* (1929–1969).⁵⁴ In the early 1950s, shortly after he helped found the Hebrew Union College School of Sacred Music, musicologist/composer Eric Werner included Lewandowski's major collections *Kol Rinnah u'Tefillah* and *Todah W'Simrah* as volumes nine through twelve of his thirty-five-volume *Out of Print Classics* series. At the same

⁵¹ Abraham Wolf Binder, ed., *Union Hymnal: Songs and Prayers for Jewish Worship* (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1932). It appears that the "Musical Services" section was not published until circa 1942. Sulzer's music predominated in the children's services at the end of the hymnal.

⁵² Louis Lewandowski, "Kol Nidre," arr. Abraham Wolf Binder (New York: Bloch, 1930); Louis Lewandowski, "Hallelujah, Psalm 150," arr. Abraham Wolf Binder (New York: Bloch, 1941). See also Louis Lewandowski, "According to Thy Name [Ki K'Shimcha]," ed. Max T. Krone (Chicago: Neil A. Kjos, 1937).

⁵³ See, for example, "Patriotism Stirring Theme of Big Inter-Faith Service," *Indianapolis Times* (20 November 1943): 5; "Plan Special Music Sunday," *Indianapolis Times* (22 May 1943): 7; "Composer Dies," *Indianapolis Times* (6 August 1946): 10. See also Sophie Fetthauer's biography and mediography of Roskin: https://www.lexm.uni-hamburg.de/object/lexm_lexmperson_00001085.

⁵⁴ Gershon Ephros, *The Cantorial Anthology of Traditional and Modern Synagogue Music*, 6 vv. (New York: Bloch, 1929–1969). See Marsha Bryan Edelman, "An Index to Gershon Ephros' Cantorial Anthology," *Musica Judaica* 2, no. 2 (1978–1979), 16–17. Only four other composers had more entries: Ephros himself, Abraham Baer, Moses Fromberg, and Salomon Sulzer (in addition to "Traditional").

time, Werner excluded the American works that had supported the arrival of Lewandowski's music into the United States. Both Ephros's and Werner's efforts recast Jewish liturgical music history as a predominantly European endeavor that flourished in the nineteenth-century and emphasized large-scale works, elaborate choirs, and high-level vocal skill. For cantorial students, Lewandowski's oeuvre could fulfill both a Eurocentric Jewish music history and a contemporary American reality, with the composer fully integrated into a canon largely undifferentiated from his not-quite contemporaries Sulzer and Naumbourg.

Lewandowski's music also integrated into liberal Jewish pedagogical materials for amateur singing. Werner's 1960 youth-oriented *Union Songster*, for example, included nine of Lewandowski's melodies (compared to eleven for Sulzer and two for Naumbourg), mostly with new English lyrics, and with special emphasis on Lewandowski's tunes for "Se'u Shearim," the Sabbath blessings, and Lecha Dodi.⁵⁵

The range of pathways Lewandowski's music has followed into American Jewish life comes into particular focus when exploring one setting of Psalm 92:12–15, now known familiarly as "Tzadik Katamar," through its various arrangements and usages. Lewandowski started this journey by publishing a two-voice arrangement of the full Psalm 92 in *Kol Rinnah u'Tefillah*⁵⁶ and a full organ/choral version in *Todah W'Simrah*.⁵⁷ The choir of New York's Park Avenue Synagogue performed it in the middle of the twentieth century, perhaps reviving it to a postwar American audience. By the 1970s the melody on its own had become a familiar congregational tune, popularized through *Zamru Lo*, the 1974 publication by the Cantors Assembly; congregants could personalize the tune in services by harmonizing the cadences. Broad usage opened the opportunity for Jewish professionals

⁵⁵ Eric Werner, ed., *Union Songster: Songs and Prayers for Jewish Youth* (New York: Central Conference for American Rabbis, 1960), nos. 12, 13, 112, 121, 166, 305, 313A, 314A, 325.

⁵⁶ Louis Lewandowski, Kol Rinnah u'Tefillah, C-major (no. 13, 1871): 13.

⁵⁷ Louis Lewandowski, Todah W'Simrah, G-major (no. 21, 1876): 21.

⁵⁸ See Putterman Music Archives, SHF 714:5–6, Jewish Theological Seminary; "Tzadik Katomor," in Moshe Nathanson, comp. and ed., *Zamru Lo*, vol. 1 (New York: Cantors Assembly, 1974), 52.

to educate lay populations in Lewandowski's music, leading high-level Jewish community choirs such as the Zamir Chorale of Boston to include versions of the tune in their repertoires, in arrangements that hewed close to the four-part "original."59 These two formats of "Tzadik Katamar"—the former promoting community through a "common" melody, and the latter offering authenticity and a connection to European "tradition"—addressed complementary qualities of Jewish musical practice. And the intertwined path of this tune continued: in fall 1993, a member of Yale University's recently formed Jewish a cappella singing group Magevet created an original arrangement of "Tzadik Katamar" for soprano, alto, tenor and bass based solely on knowledge of the melody.⁶⁰ By 2000, singer/songwriter/liturgist Debbie Friedman had brought the melody into the songleading repertoire, presenting it with a flexible tempo and guitar accompaniment at the Hava Nashira songleading conclave and encouraging others to augment that melody with dynamic and spontaneous harmonies in a communal prayer setting.⁶¹ Added in lead sheet format with a unique chord progression to the Reform movement's Complete Shireinu (2001)⁶² and Complete Jewish Songbook (2002),⁶³ the piece also appeared in the Union for Reform Judaism's Saturday morning worship services during its 2007 Biennial Conference, the only selection by a nineteenth-century composer. 64 And the work

^{59 &}quot;Tzadik Katomor," in Nathanson, *Zamru Lo*; Joshua Jacobson, arr. from Lewandowski, "Tov Lehodos: For SATB and Organ" (New York: Braude, 2000).

⁶⁰ Eric Halpern, "Tzaddik KaTamar," arrangement for SATB a cappella (from Lewandowski) (New Haven: Soaking Towel Productions, 1995); see also the recording of the arrangement on Magevet's album *Mem's the Word* (New Haven: Disc Makers, 1995), audio cassette.

⁶¹ Personal observation, Hava Nashira Conference, Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute, Oconomowoc, WI, June 2000.

⁶² Joel Eglash, ed., *The Complete Shireinu: The Definitive Collections of Jewish Songs* (New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 2001), 371, song #246B.

⁶³ Joel Eglash, ed., *The Complete Jewish Songbook* (New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 2002), 337, song #246B.

⁶⁴ Louis Lewandowski, "Tzadik KaTamar," *Music for Shabbat Worship from the 69th URJ Biennial* (New York: Union for Reform Judaism/Transcontinental Music Publications, 2007), 21.

continued to feature in programs associated with Jewish choral music, especially around Lewandowski's two hundredth birthday, on 14 March 2021.⁶⁵ These numerous intersecting uses of Lewandowski's music (actually a fragment of the original composition) show its selectively deep integration into both the act of public prayer and the reinforcement of Jewish musical heritage.

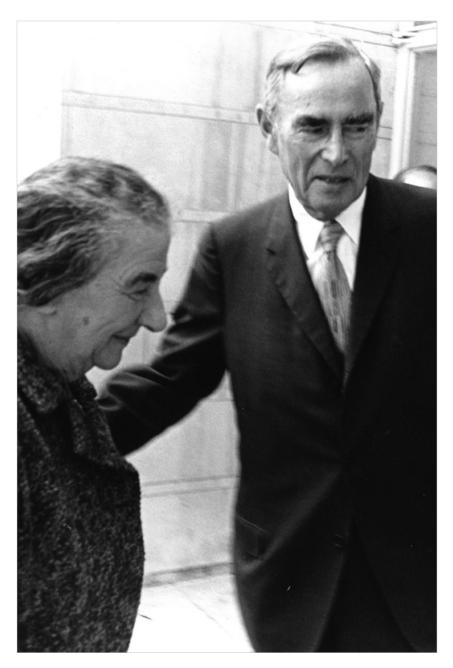
Through this short excursus, I have sought to reintroduce complexity to the dissemination and reception of Lewandowski's music in the United States, including more than a century of dynamic and intersecting adaptation in sheet music, performance modes, social connections, and historiography. Putting this kind of spotlight on Lewandowski reinscribes a distantly perceived historical figure known mainly through his music with his own aesthetic views, philosophy, leadership approach, and personal musical networks. His varied inclusion and adaptation in America—temporally, geographically, demographically, and practically—reveals not only the complex pathways and preconditions that affected musical movement at the time, but also the variety of ways that people experience and mediate synagogue music as it crosses oceans, ideologies, and congregational boundaries. Indeed, further research could offer increasingly nuanced understandings of Sulzer and Naumbourg, or any of the synagogue composers whose work we now consolidate into a composite, usable narrative of nineteenth-century synagogue music reform.

This account also helps us to recognize that scholars'/practitioners' efforts to establish an accepted (and idealized) historical narrative of "Jewish music" from the late nineteenth century complemented a wide array of creative musical adaptation around Judaism and synagogue

⁶⁵ See celebrations by New York's Stephen S. Wise Free Synagogue (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OcyUdC8XIUo), which featured cantor Daniel Singer and cantorial intern Joel Flaxman; and the Zamir Chorale of Boston, which interspersed its live-streamed celebration with pre-recorded video performances (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTCAiQfgEro). Both highlighted "Tzaddik Katamar": the former as a congregational melody and the latter as part of the larger Psalm 92 setting. It is also important to note Berlin's Lewandowski Festival (see https://louis-lewandowski-festival.de/?lang=en), which has featured explorations of Jewish/synagogue—themed music since at least 2011.

practice. We can acknowledge that linear narratives of Jewish music history sought to reinforce communal efforts at heritage education and canon formation. Yet it is just as important to recognize that these narratives comprise only part of the vibrant Jewish musical scene that Americans experienced. Indeed, a closer look at the actual ways that Jewish populations used Lewandowski's music reveals unexpected dimensions and new insights on how people negotiate sound and Jewish identity in a wider variety of religious settings—dimensions and insights that continue to resonate in the twenty-first century.

Judah M. Cohen is the Lou and Sybil Mervis Professor of Jewish Culture, professor of musicology and associate dean for faculty affairs, research and creative activity at the Jacobs School of Music, and associate vice provost for faculty and academic affairs at Indiana University Bloomington. He has authored The Making of a Reform Jewish Cantor: Musical Authority, Cultural Investment (2009); Sounding Jewish Tradition: The Music of Central Synagogue (2011); and Jewish Religious Music in Nineteenth Century America (2019). His current projects explore World War II-era narratives in musical theater, nineteenth-century American synagogue music, and American Jewish singer/songwriter/liturgist Debbie Friedman.



Israeli Prime Minister, Golda Meir, with Nelson Glueck, President of HUC-JIR, in Jerusalem, 1970. (Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

HUC-JIR's Decision to Mandate a Year of Study in Israel for Rabbinical Students

DAVID MENDELSSON

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) was the first U.S. rabbinical seminary to mandate that its students spend a year of their studies in Israel. The decision to institute the year in Israel program (henceforth, YII) was a landmark in the Reform movement's relationship with Zionism and Israel. In 1885, Reform leaders had adopted the Pittsburgh Platform, which rejected both the aspiration to return to Zion and the idea that Jews collectively were anything more than a religious community. True, the 1937 Columbus Platform softened Reform's position on Zionism, resolving to support the development of a Jewish homeland in Palestine that would serve as a center of Jewish culture and spiritual life. But many Reform rabbis and the Reform movement's rabbinical seminary, Hebrew Union College (HUC), remained ambivalent about Jewish statehood. After the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel, the Reform movement's commitment to Zionism increased, and some Reform institutions embraced the new state. However, it was the social and cultural upheavals of the 1960s in America, and the dramatic events of the Six-Day War, that led to the decision to mandate a year of study in Israel for incoming HUC-JIR rabbinical students. This decision would make Israel a significant presence in the Reform movement for decades to come. Many YII participants went on to hold rabbinical and educational positions across North America and played a pivotal role in the Reform movement's deeper engagement with Israel. In less than a century, the movement evolved from opposing a Jewish state to affirming its centrality in Jewish life, a shift that reflected cultural trends in the American Jewish

community as a whole. This article explores the decision to mandate the YII, and the execution of that decision, against this background of social-cultural and historical change.

As we will see, the turbulent 1960s had a profound impact on liberal Judaism in general and the Reform movement in particular. HUC1 was called on by the Reform movement's Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) to make significant curriculum changes in response to the new social-cultural ethos. We will also consider the impact of the Six-Day War on the CCAR and HUC-JIR. The College's agenda at this time was determined largely by its commanding president, Nelson Glueck, an archaeologist who had come to be an avid supporter of Israel after the 1948 War of Independence. His experiences in Israel in the aftermath of the Six-Day War, and awareness that many in the CCAR had also become more favorably inclined toward Israel, led him to promote the YII mandate and work toward its adoption. He was able to implement this plan despite the lukewarm attitude of much of HUC-JIR's faculty. This article examines the logistical and curricular considerations that influenced the structure of the YII program; the composition of its inaugural class; its members' experiences during the program; and its impact on students' rabbinical studies and careers.²

To date, there has been little research on the YII mandate, which has been noted chiefly in the context of histories of HUC-JIR and

¹ Now known as HUC-JIR. In 1950, HUC amalgamated with the Jewish Institute of Religion, a liberal, nondenominational rabbinical seminary founded in 1922 in New York by Stephen S. Wise. Pro-Zionist and committed to social activism, it also sought Jewish intellectual and spiritual rejuvenation and strived to serve America's growing population of Eastern European Jewish immigrants.

² The paper is based on archival materials; interviews, conducted from 2020 to 2022, of some of the inaugural YII's administrators and attendees; and secondary sources. I am grateful to the staff at the American Jewish Archives, particularly Dana Herman and a former research assistant, Julianna Witt, for their assistance. I conducted most of the nonarchival interviews; a few were conducted by Yair Walton. Unless otherwise stated, archival references are to materials in the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati (hereafter, AJA). Other abbreviations used include: BoG (Board of Governors, HUC-JIR); CCAR (Central Conference of American Rabbis); UAHC (Union of American Hebrew Congregations); HUC-JIR Library, Jerusalem.

biographies of Glueck.³ This article seeks to fill that gap, focusing on the factors that led to the mandate, and on how it reflected a key shift in the Reform movement's relationship with Zionism—a shift from universalism to particularism.

Impact of the 1960s Ethos on Reform Judaism in the United States

The 1960s are frequently described as turbulent, in contrast to the previous decade of seeming stability and security. The decade saw both turmoil and constructive social and political change: the civil rights movement, assassinations of American leaders, opposition to the war in Vietnam, the struggle for women's equality, the Black Power movement, and the counterculture. Mainstream Christian denominations, as well as other religious groups, struggled to find suitable responses. Church attendance fell dramatically, and synagogues fared no better.⁴ Given the high percentage of Jews who went to university, relative to the population as a whole,⁵ and the correlation between university education and a decline in religious commitment,⁶ synagogue attendance and religious life declined significantly. Indeed, university education, which encouraged critical thought and was generally neutral on matters of religion, led to liberalization of attitudes to sexual mores, divorce, the status of women, censorship of literature, and so on.⁷ The non-

³ Michael A. Meyer, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion: A Centennial History 1875–1975 (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1976, rev. 1992); Jonathan Brown and Laurence Kutler, Nelson Glueck: Biblical Archaeologist and President of Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2005).

⁴ Wade Clark Roof and William McKinney, *American Mainline Religion: Its Changing Shape and Future* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1987), ch. 1; Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), 69–72.

^{5 &}quot;By the end of the decade [1960s] three quarters of American Jews of college age were attending universities ... the non-Jewish American population had ... attendance of 34 per cent," Samuel C. Heilman, *Portrait of American Jews: The Last Half of the Twentieth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995), 80.

⁶ David Caplovitz and Fred Sherrow, *The Religious Drop-Outs: Apostasy among College Graduates* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1977).

⁷ George Gallup, Jr. Religion in America (Princeton: Princeton Religion Research Center, 1982).

Orthodox streams were particularly hard hit. Parameters that measured their robustness—such as the number of new synagogues, synagogue membership rates, religious school enrollment, and synagogue mergers due to decline in affiliation—attested to a crisis in organized religious life. Bewish Federations, with their focus on Israel, philanthropy, and advocacy at home and abroad, fared much better.

Whereas the Conservative and Reform movements were somewhat stymied by this decline in, and alienation from, synagogal Judaismparticularly among younger generations—three new institutional developments emerged within American Jewish life in response to the crisis. One was the Chavurah movement, which saw synagogue-based Judaism as spiritless, formalistic, materialistic, top-down, clergy-dependent. Invoking the 1960's ideals of informality, egalitarianism, intimacy, community, and group decision-making, the Chavurah movement experimented with innovations such as meditation, chanting, sitting in a circle, informal dress, an] "sometimes illegal substances." The first Chavurah was founded in Somerville, Massachusetts, in 1968. Initially an alternative seminary, it quickly became an experimental community without an official rabbinical leader. Shortly thereafter, a New York Chavurah was established, followed by communities in Washington, DC, Philadelphia. "Havurah-style worship spread through Jewish communities across the land."11

A second response was engagement with Jewish spirituality and mysticism. This response was exemplified by Rabbi Zalman Schachter (later, Schachter-Shalomi), one of the founders of the Somerville Chavurah, and considered the founder of the Jewish Renewal movement, and

⁸ Jack Wertheimer, A People Divided: Judaism in Contemporary America (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 48–51.

⁹ Jonathan S. Woocher, *Sacred Survival: The Civil Religion of American Jews* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), vii, 162–163.

¹⁰ Eli Lederhendler, American Jewry: A New History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 281. On the early Havurah movement, see Riv-Ellen Prell, Prayer and Community: The Havurah in American Judaism (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989).

¹¹ Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism*, *A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 321; Wertheimer, *A People*, 67–72.

by Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, a.k.a. "the Singing Rabbi." Both were European-born and, as teens, had fled the Nazis; both were drawn to Chabad (Lubavitch) Hasidism and served as outreach emissaries early in their careers, but broke with Chabad and forged new paths to Jewish spirituality.

The scion of an eminent rabbinical family, Carlebach had a traditional yeshivah education (Telshe, in Lithuania [1938], Mesivta Torah Vodaas in Brooklyn [1939–1943], Beth Medrash Govoha in Lakewood, N.J. [1943–1949]). Ordained in 1954, he soon began studying guitar, taking courses in philosophy and psychology at Columbia University and the New School for Social Research, and recording liturgical verses set to music. Carlebach's engagement with hasidic and kabbalistic traditions, and his musical values of spirituality, intimacy, and ecstasy were in line with ideals of the 1960s; his concerts and services departed from the formally structured norms of Orthodox synagogue life. He challenged strictures prohibiting men from hearing women sing, encouraged mixed-gender dancing, and embraced the ethos of counterculture circles. 12 Carlebach's music had an enormous religious influence on Jewish teens and young adults, many of whom embraced rituals they had never practiced or had abandoned, and some of whom became devoutly Orthodox.¹³

Schachter likewise had a yeshivah background, but after working in outreach, he pursued academic studies in pastoral counseling and prayer, earning a Doctor of Hebrew Letters (DHL) degree from HUC-JIR. Schachter's interest in religion was not just academic, and he strove to break new ground in the practice of Judaism. He was drawn to environmentalism and ideas from Asian and Native American religions, and he integrated them into his work. Schachter founded the *B'nai Or* (Sons of Light) Religious Fellowship, which later adopted the gender-neutral name *P'nai Or* (Faces of Light) and ultimately evolved into ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal. Schachter was also a prolific writer and

¹² Posthumously, Carlebach was accused of sexual harassment by several women; see Sarna, *American Judaism*, 348.

¹³ Sarna, American Judaism, 346; Heilman, Portrait, 90; Natan Ophir (Offenbacher), Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach: Life, Mission, and Legacy (Jerusalem: Urim, 2014).

teacher. To underscore the primacy of peace in his outlook, Schachter added "Shalomi" to his own name. Schachter-Shalomi's eclectic, ecumenical, and progressive reworkings of traditional practices appealed to many who had been alienated from conventional prayer services and synagogue life. ¹⁴

The third institutional response was the expansion of the Reconstructionist movement, which, up to this point, had been centered on the movement's founder, Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, and a group of committed followers. After the opening of a rabbinical seminary in 1968, the number of Reconstructionist communities grew, as congregations were established around the country. Reconstructionism's share of overall U.S. synagogue membership was minimal, but from 1968, its then-radical approach to defining membership in the Jewish people—namely, accepting patrilineal descent, provided the parents reared their child as a Jew—and its acceptance of women as rabbinical students, made it a trailblazer in the broader Jewish community. This challenged the Reform movement, which had perceived itself as the beacon of change within American Jewry.

In addition to organized Judaism's responses to the changed zeitgeist, another, broader response was involvement in social activism. ¹⁶ Many of the young Jews who were distancing themselves from synagogues and Jewish observance had been exposed to the counterculture and peace movements on college campuses. Their commitment to social justice was not rooted in Jewish texts or works of Jewish philosophy, but in the writings of thinkers such as Karl Marx, Herbert Marcuse, and Rosa Luxemburg. ¹⁷ Jewish students played a disproportionate role in the New Left groups that sprang up on American campuses. ¹⁸ Committed to

¹⁴ See Sarna, American Judaism, 349-350.

¹⁵ Wertheimer, A People Divided, 160-169.

¹⁶ Stanley Rothman and S. Robert Lichter, *Roots of Radicalism: Jews, Christians and the New Left* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 80.

¹⁷ Nathan Glazer, *American Judaism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2nd rev. ed., 1988), 169.

¹⁸ Mordecai Chertoff, ed., *The New Left and the Jews* (New York: Pitman, 1971), 121–124, 153.

ending the war in Vietnam, democratizing university structures, and supporting Third World causes, many felt alienated from Israel and Zionism.¹⁹

HUC-JIR in the mid-1960s: An Overview

These changes within American Jewry created a sense of deep professional and communal crisis among Reform rabbis.²⁰ In October 1967, Rabbi Levi Olan, incoming president of the CCAR, set up a Committee on Rabbinic Training, choosing Rabbi David Polish, subsequently a president of the CCAR himself, as its head. Six months later, the CCAR unanimously accepted the committee's report, which made two key recommendations: (1) It called for "a scientific and far-reaching study of the entire conditioning out of which the Rabbinate functions," and (2) it recommended that rabbinical students spend their third year of studies at the HUC-JIR campus in Jerusalem.²¹

HUC-JIR and the CCAR did not enjoy the best of relationships, despite their shared goal of serving Reform Jewry. For example, during the early years of Glueck's presidency, he sought to maintain the Cincinnati campus's dominance by undermining the New York campus's role in training rabbis. Without consulting the CCAR, he mandated that all New York rabbinical students had to transfer to Cincinnati after their second year, a decision that triggered heated protests and was ultimately overturned. During a meeting of a joint CCAR and HUC-JIR committee, Polish acknowledged that "differences and tensions over College policy have emerged from time to time." Historian Michael Meyer's history of HUC-JIR was more forthright. "The President's [i.e., Glueck's] relations with the alumni of the school had never been very good.... When he did make appearances [at CCAR conventions], he would

¹⁹ Ibid., 127, 159; Glazer, American Judaism, 169.

²⁰ David Polish, preliminary draft for CCAR Committee on Rabbinic Training, 1968, MS-34, box 25, folder 1, AJA.

²¹ Report of CCAR Committee on Rabbinic Training, March 1968, MS-34, box 25, folder 1, AJA.

²² Statement by Polish to members of Joint Committee of BoG and Faculty and CCAR Committee on Rabbinic Training, 26 December 1968, MS-34, box 25, folder 1, AJA.

keep aloof ... often choosing the privacy of his hotel room rather than mingling." Meyer asserts that the CCAR saw Glueck as "autocratic." ²³

The question of training future Reform rabbis was a legitimate CCAR concern, and its members had, in various publications, criticized HUC-JIR's outdated curriculum. In September 1967, for instance, Edgar Siskin wrote that many HUC-JIR courses had "little bearing on the contemporary rabbinate. They are in the main academic pursuits which may stimulate the mind and lift the spirit, but which do not touch the marrow of rabbinic life. From the perspective of the rabbi's workaday world, they remain largely in the rarefied reaches of some remote ivory tower." Two senior members of the CCAR, Bernard Bamberger and Leon Feuer, joined the fray, claiming that "many rabbis feel inadequately prepared," "frustrated," and "uncertain about the goals and values they should strive for." At meetings with CCAR members, Bamberger and Feuer encountered complacency on the part of the HUC-JIR faculty and administration, who adduced accreditation by authorized agencies as confirmation of the curriculum's academic adequacy. ²⁵

Such critique provoked a defensive response from Glueck. He saw HUC-JIR as an autonomous institution and was unreceptive to the CCAR's efforts to intervene in what he deemed his domain, not theirs. ²⁶ Polish, CCAR's then-president-elect, called for cooperation between the institutions, citing "the mounting crisis of Jewish existence." As he put it, "Suddenly Judaism as a religion is becoming irrelevant to many and the verdict of irrelevance and alienation is being pronounced from within our very own institutions. The one place where this can most effectively be arrested is our College-Institute." ²⁷

²³ Meyer, Centennial History, 233; see also Brown and Kutler, Nelson Glueck, 134.

²⁴ Edgar E. Siskin, "Rabbinate and Curriculum," CCAR Journal (October 1967): 2.

²⁵ Bernard Bamberger and Leon Feuer, "The Conference and the College," *CCAR Journal* 2 (September 1968): 2–6.

²⁶ Meyer, Centennial History, 235.

²⁷ Memorandum for joint meeting of BoG and CCAR Committee on Rabbinic Training, 24 February 1969, MS-34, box 25, folder 1, AJA. The text had also been circulated internally to the members of the CCAR Committee on 26 December 1968, MS-34, box 25, folder 1, AJA.

In its deliberations, the Committee on Rabbinic Training noted the work being done by Protestant and Catholic seminaries to respond to the parallel crises in their communities. In addition, committee members felt that the College-Institute needed to reexamine its curriculum in the face of competition from the recently established Reconstructionist Rabbinical School and the Boston Chavurah, which were adopting innovative rabbinical training strategies.²⁸ The CCAR estimated that the proposed study of the role of the future rabbinate, which might have important implications for both institutions, would cost between \$50,000 and \$100,000.²⁹

At this time, HUC-JIR was planning a major building project on its New York campus, as well as expansion of its activities in Southern California.³⁰ In October 1968, to induce HUC-JIR to act collaboratively, the CCAR Executive Board took the unusual step of calling on HUC-JIR to defer its building projects until a joint committee (HUC-JIR and CCAR) met to determine priorities. As HUC-JIR's deficit was escalating, and a major source of its income—approximately half the dues of Reform movement synagogues—was controlled by the CCAR, Glueck had little choice but to cooperate.³¹ However, he spoke in two voices: one to the leadership of the CCAR, and another to the chair of HUC-JIR's Board of Governors, to whom he wrote that the proposed CCAR study on the role of the rabbi was "a waste of time and money."³² Indeed, the CCAR found it difficult to raise funds for research on the rabbi's role in the evolving American sociocultural context.³³

²⁸ CCAR Proposal to HUC-JIR, distributed to Cincinnati faculty by Kenneth Roseman, dean of Cincinnati campus, 22 November 1968, MS-20, box J13, folder 7, AJA. See also Report of CCAR Committee on Rabbinic Training, February 1969, MS-34, box 25, folder 7, AJA.

²⁹ Letter, Daniel Jeremy Silver to Polish, November 13, 1968, MS-34, box 25, folder 1, AJA.

³⁰ Memorandum, April 1968, R. Scheuer to Executive Committee of BoG, MS-34, box 25, folder 1, AJA.

³¹ Meyer, *Centennial History*, 236. See also letter, Olan to L. Silberman, 12 November 1968, MS-34, box 25, folder 1, AJA, where Olan states that Glueck "enthusiastically supported the idea of a study."

³² Letter, Glueck to S. Kopald Jr, 31 July 1969, MS-20, box K6-2, folder 1, AJA.

³³ See correspondence between CCAR President Gittelsohn and Olan, 16 December 1969, MS-181, box 5, folder 2, AJA.

The Reform movement was hardly alone in facing this crisis; the Conservative movement had similar problems.³⁴ To its credit, the Reform movement invested considerable energy and resources in trying to address these issues. Through comprehensive research and extensive deliberations at retreats and conferences, the CCAR sought to identify the factors responsible for the lessened status of its rabbis, the weakening of synagogue life, and the alienation of adults and youth. The proposed study was carried out, and a report of its findings was published in 1972.³⁵ Various changes to HUC-JIR's rabbinical training were recommended, including that it strengthen its professional—as opposed to academic—focus; integrate popular features into its prayer services; diversify its faculty; and hire as instructors alumni who had proven track records in congregational work. The report also called for continuing education of alumni and changes in recruitment policies.

Not surprisingly, Glueck saw these proposals as a threat to HUC-JIR's autonomy. Although most of the faculty sought to deflect the CCAR's critique, arguing that HUC-JIR was, under the circumstances, doing an admirable job, voices from within the seminary expressed concern about its lack of success in teaching Hebrew. Incoming students were not required to have even basic knowledge of Hebrew, and most had poor skills in both classical and modern Hebrew. To address this problem, in 1954 the College had established an intensive eight-week summer program for entering students—the Towanda program, held in Towanda, Pennsylvania. HUC-JIR faculty visited and lectured at the site, and at the end of the summer a "Readiness Exam" was held. Those who failed it were dropped from enrollment. This mechanism for filtering out those

³⁴ Wertheimer, A People Divided, 34-36.

³⁵ The report's principal author was Theodore Lenn; see Theodore Lenn et al., *Rabbi and Synagogue in Reform Judaism* (New York: CCAR, 1972). A contemporaneous study undertaken by the Union of Reform Congregations (UAHC) reached similar conclusions; see Leonard Fein et al., *Reform is a Verb: Notes on Reform and Reforming Jews* (New York: UAHC, 1972).

³⁶ Michael A. Meyer, "Institutions of Higher Learning: Hebrew Union College," *Ariel: A Quarterly Review of Arts and Letters in Israel* 35 (1974).

³⁷ Brown and Kutler, Nelson Glueck, 167.

who would likely have difficulty with Hebrew course materials was highly stressful for students; the program soon gained a bad reputation. Rabbi James L. Apple, who attended Towanda in the summer of 1960, summarized the experience as "nine weeks of torture."³⁸

In 1961, upon completion of a new dormitory on the Cincinnati campus, the Towanda program moved there, retaining both its name and its reputation. The introduction of expensive language laboratories did little to improve the situation.³⁹ A survey conducted by two participants in the summer of 1968 revealed that an atmosphere of frustration prevailed, with considerable tension between students and faculty. 40 There were numerous complaints about the studies, especially the three-hour test at the end of each week, which, students claimed, conveyed the message that grades were more important than learning. The intellectual environment was described as "cold, sterile, and unnecessarily unpleasant." There was much dissatisfaction with the choice of teachers, which students felt was based on academic standing and not pedagogical skill. Overall, the survey found the Towanda experience "a negative and perhaps an actively detrimental introduction to rabbinic studies."41 Indeed, when Glueck rallied support for the YII program, he frequently invoked the claim that Towanda had been traumatic: "This [first year of rabbinical school] is the year when they need training in Hebrew the most. There is a really traumatic effect upon most of our students entering Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion because of the fact that they are in their twenties and for the most part know not a word of Hebrew. The learning of Hebrew ... is greatly facilitated naturally in Israel."42

Although the criticisms raised in the student survey of the Towanda program reflected broader complaints about university teaching in

³⁸ James L. Apple, What Kind of Job Is this for a Nice Jewish Boy? (Xlibris, 2005), 29.

³⁹ Meyer, Centennial History, 222.

⁴⁰ Towanda 1968-A Student Evaluation, MS-34, box 25, folder 1, AJA.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Letter, Glueck to Petschek, 3 November 1969, MS-20, box A1a 172, folder 2, AJA. Similar comments are made in a letter from Glueck to Rabbi R. Kahn of Temple Emanuel of Houston, 20 January 1970, MS-20, box A1a 172, folder 2, AJA.

America, the program had been subject to criticism since its inception, and Dr. Werner Weinberg, HUC-JIR's leading Hebrew expert, had long bemoaned its meager achievements. He had also been, he asserted, the lone faculty voice proposing a year-long program in Israel. In a memorandum from early 1967, Weinberg admonished the College for not encouraging students to spend their third year in Israel, or arranging studies and lodging for them, despite having a suitable campus in Jerusalem. 43 Students who undertook to study in Israel, often in order to improve their Hebrew, had to fend for themselves—contacting institutions such as the Greenberg Institute, kibbutz programs, the Hebrew University, and Ulpan Etzion, on their own. Weinberg outlined the evolution of HUC-JIR student study in Jerusalem and a possible curriculum for an official year-long program. In the memorandum, Weinberg recommended setting up a Hebrew ulpan—i.e., an immersive, intensive Hebrew course—to meet the specific needs of HUC-JIR rabbinic students; this was achieved in 1968. He also recommended that students supplement their studies by taking Hebrew University courses. And he raised questions that would dominate much of the discussion around the YII program, such as whether it should precede or replace the first year, and whether it should be "tolerated, encouraged or perhaps ... required."44

Weinberg returned to these matters in a second memorandum, this time addressed to the members of the HUC-JIR Academic Council.⁴⁵ In this memo, which assumed that students would attend during their third year, Weinberg suggested that the program's focus be modern Hebrew language and literature. He recommended that it start with an ulpan, from the beginning of July until after the High Holidays, and that students take courses at HUC-JIR's Biblical and Archaeological School (BAS) on the Jerusalem campus, along with appropriate field trips.

Weinberg's critique of HUC-JIR's Hebrew language training was corroborated by the independent findings of Charles Liebman, a leading

⁴³ Memorandum, Weinberg to Provost, 17 February 1967, MS-668, box 21, folder 1, AJA.

⁴⁵ Memorandum, Weinberg to Academic Council, 18 April 1967, MS-668, box 21, folder 1, AJA.

sociologist of American Jewry. In a study of rabbinical training in the United States, he confirmed not only that students entering HUC-JIR had poor Hebrew language skills, but also that their studies did little to improve those skills: "The largest, most tedious obstacle is mastery of the Hebrew language, an obstacle which many students never overcome. Although the students generally know biblical Hebrew and most of them can sight-read passages from the Bible by the time of ordination, they are far from having facility in rabbinical Hebrew or, for that matter, in modern Hebrew."

Among the stateside faculty, Weinberg—who proved to be prescient but had little influence at the College—had been the lone voice calling for Hebrew skills to be imparted in Jerusalem. The rest of the faculty maintained that the Hebrew needed for studying biblical and rabbinic texts could be acquired in Cincinnati. To overcome faculty opposition to the idea of a year of study in Israel, it would take someone of higher standing than Weinberg to promote it. Glueck, who had become a steadfast advocate of the idea, was that person.

It was Nelson Glueck—rabbi, archaeologist, and HUC-JIR president from 1947–1971—who engineered the decision to mandate a year of studies in Israel. Glueck was born in Cincinnati to parents of Lithuanian descent. After receiving rabbinical ordination at HUC in 1923, he earned a doctorate at the University of Jena in Germany in 1926. Glueck traveled to Palestine, where he worked with and was influenced by the renowned biblical archaeologist William Albright. He returned to the United States in 1928, joining the faculty of HUC. Glueck spent much of his time, particularly summers, in Palestine, where he was director of the American School of Oriental Research in eastern Jerusalem at various periods (1932–1933, 1936–1940, 1942–1947). Glueck led several archaeological surveys and excavations, and authored numerous works, both scholarly and popular; he also did mapping/logistics work for the American OSS (Office of Strategic Services). He became a close friend of Judah Magnes, the first chancellor and president of the Hebrew

⁴⁶ Charles S. Liebman, "The Training of American Rabbis," *American Jewish Yearbook* 69 (1968): 59.

University. Magnes, too, had been ordained at HUC (1900), and was a central figure in the Brit Shalom organization, which advocated a binational solution to the incipient Israeli-Palestinian conflict.⁴⁷

In 1946, the College was seeking a new president to succeed Julian Morgenstern, who had served from 1921–1947, and Glueck was their choice. His credentials were impressive; being a Cincinnati native endeared him to the Board of Governors, most of whom hailed from that city; and his charm and "imposing appearance" made him an outstanding candidate. The board was also satisfied with Glueck's position on Zionism, which was in line with the then-prevailing non-Zionist view. Before the establishment of the State of Israel, and during its War of Independence, Glueck had spoken out against partition and in support of continuing the British Mandate or its replacement with some form of trusteeship. Glueck was appointed HUC President in 1947.

Shortly after the war, however, Glueck's opinions changed considerably, and he adopted a passionately Zionist stance. ⁴⁹ It has been claimed that a combination of factors led to his becoming a "mystical political Zionist." These included the 1948 war; Glueck's disappointment at the American School of Oriental Research's having distanced him due to his Judaism; and the Hebrew University's shabby treatment of his friend Magnes. ⁵⁰

The shift in Glueck's views became apparent around 1952, when he first raised the idea of establishing a campus for HUC-JIR in Jerusalem. His plans included a "library, chapel and a small lecture hall" to function as the College's headquarters for students and faculty in Israel.⁵¹ But he also envisaged a Department of Archaeology that would advance his professional pursuits and create a base for cooperation with American universities; it would parallel the American School of Oriental Research.

⁴⁷ Brown and Kutler, Nelson Glueck, 115.

⁴⁸ Meyer, Centennial History, 177.

⁴⁹ Brown and Kutler, Nelson Glueck, 95.

⁵⁰ Brooke Sherrard, "American Biblical Archaeology and Jewish Nationalism: Rabbi Nelson Glueck, the American Schools of Oriental Research and the Israeli State," *Holy Land Studies* 11 (2012): 151–174.

⁵¹ Meyer, Centennial History, 208.



Jerusalem campus of HUC-JIR, ca. 1970s. (Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

It would also, he hoped, provide a base for American and European "Holy Land" archaeologists, luring them back to Israel from Jordan.

During his summer sojourns in Israel, Glueck—for whom work at sites east of the Jordan River was no longer feasible—undertook a major survey of the Negev desert. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) supplied military escorts, and Glueck selected the soldiers based on their interest in archaeology. In 1955, following the Baghdad Pact—a defense treaty signed between the United States, the United Kingdom, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Pakistan—the Americans and the British discussed a new peace initiative. Dubbed "Operation Alpha," it was premised on Israel's making major concessions to Jordan and Egypt in the Negev. Glueck responded that "to give back any of the Negev would be to cut off a piece of land God had promised to the Jews" and "peace in the

⁵² Brown and Kutler, Nelson Glueck, 146.

⁵³ Anita Shapira, Israel: A History (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2012), 278.

Middle East cannot be bought at the expense of Israel's birthright to the Land."⁵⁴ Such comments were not in keeping with the Reform movement's position, but they—along with Glueck's archaeological research, which Israelis viewed as helping corroborate the Jewish people's historic claim to the land—won him many friends among Israel's political and academic elite. Glueck was hardly alone in mobilizing archaeology in support of the Zionist program, but his international acclaim made his work particularly valuable.⁵⁵

Within the College there was little opposition to Glueck's pursuit of his professional interests; the Board of Governors rarely challenged his projects. His esteem reached a new high in 1963, when he appeared on the front cover of *Time* Magazine, wearing Bedouin headgear against a desert background. The faculty, like the Board, did not challenge Glueck's Jerusalem School of Archaeology. Had he tried to transfer curricular responsibilities from the stateside campuses to Jerusalem, it is likely that the faculty would have objected, but they did not perceive the project as competing with their interests.

Glueck was not deterred by the knowledge that a "chapel" at HUC-JIR in Jerusalem would draw fire from Israel's ultra-Orthodox communities, which feared that a Reform toehold would facilitate a competing form of Jewish religious identity. Despite the various obstacles, the Jerusalem campus was established. With the assistance of political contacts, Glueck had secured a tract of land on King David Street, close to the border between West and East Jerusalem, between Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The HUC Biblical and Archaeological

⁵⁴ Sherrard, "American Biblical Archaeology," 165. See also Nelson Glueck, *Rivers in the Desert: A History of the Negev* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1959).

⁵⁵ See Amos Elon, "Politics and Archaeology," in *The Archaeology of Israel, Constructing the Past, Interpreting the Future*, ed. Neil Asher Silberman and David Small (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 34–47. On the role of archaeology in the construction of the Israeli collective identity, see Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

⁵⁶ Meyer, Centennial History, 209-210.

⁵⁷ C. Ariel Stone, "Ayn Zo Aggadah: A History of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Jerusalem, 1954–1993," rabbinic thesis (HUC-JIR, 1990).

School officially opened in 1963.⁵⁸ That year, when a new consortium of U.S. universities permitted students to attend the program, the first archaeological summer school session was held.⁵⁹

From mid-1965 onward, Glueck repeatedly spoke to HUC-JIR's Board of Governors about the idea of a year of study in Israel. In June 1965 he declared: "It has always been my hope that somehow or other one entire class of our Rabbinic students would spend an entire year in Israel, and particularly in Jerusalem under the careful supervision of one or more members of our faculty." The following year he reiterated this commitment: "One of the main purposes of our Jerusalem School, but not the sole one, is to serve as headquarters for our HUC-JIR students studying in Israel, with the hope frequently expressed in my Board reports that the day would come when it would help translate into reality my dream that every class of our Rabbinic candidates would spend one year, preferably the third year, studying in Israel."

Impact of the Six-Day War and American Jewry's Heightened Sense of Ethnic Identity

HUC-JIR's decision to mandate that its rabbinical students spend the first year of their studies in Israel, while influenced by the Six-Day War, should, I contend, be seen as ensuing primarily from the heightened sense of ethnic identity that emerged, against the backdrop of sociocultural shifts, within American Jewry in the 1960s.

In the spring of 1967, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser closed the Straits of Tiran to shipping bound for the Israeli port of Eilat. This was not the first time that the Egyptian president had closed the

⁵⁸ In a report to the BoG, which marked the occasion by meeting for the first time outside of the United States, in Jerusalem, Glueck hinted that the academic activities on the Jerusalem campus might well be expanded: "Our academic program will be limited for the present, to biblical and archaeological research." President's Report, 29 March 1963, MS-72, box A4, folder 1, AJA.

⁵⁹ Brown and Kutler, Nelson Glueck, ch. 13.

⁶⁰ President's Report to BoG (Cincinnati), 3 June 1965, p. 9, MS-20, box B1b-5, folder 1, AJA.

⁶¹ President's Report to BoG (Cincinnati), 3 November 1966, p. 12, MS-20, box B1b-5, folder 2, AJA.

international waterway. In October 1956 such a closure had led to war and Israeli military occupation of the Sinai desert. Months later, following an ultimatum from the Soviet Union and the United States, Israel withdrew from the territory, securing an understanding that a repeat of Egypt's action would be a *casus belli*, and Israel would use military force to reopen the straits. On 5 June 1967, after weeks of international diplomacy, the war began. Egypt announced that its army would "drive the Jews into the sea." Israel feared that the Jewish state faced an existential threat. Mass graves were dug in Ramat Gan. 62

American Jewry mobilized for Israel: Jews flocked to synagogues to offer prayers of support and engaged in intensive fundraising efforts.⁶³ Within a short time, the United Jewish Appeal's annual targets were reached and surpassed.⁶⁴ American Jews volunteered to replace Israeli workers who had been called up for military service. 65 The war triggered immense interest in "making aliyah," i.e., immigration to Israel. And these developments were, for the most part, sustained for several years. Jews who had been only peripherally involved in Jewish life now rallied to Israel's cause. While some of the identification with Israel's fate did wane—the number of immigrants from the United States trailed off by 1972, and some post-1967 immigrants returned to America⁶⁶—Israel was now at the center of the American Jewish agenda. Moreover, as Jews in the Soviet Union internalized the events of June 1967, many appealed to world Jewry to help pressure the Kremlin to permit them to emigrate to Israel. To that end, American Jewry spearheaded a "Let My People Go" campaign.67

⁶² Michael B. Oren, Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁶³ Wertheimer, A People Divided, 30–31; Melvin I. Urofsky, We Are One!: American Jewry and Israel (New York: Anchor Press, 1978), 345–368.

⁶⁴ Joshua Michael Zeitz, "'If I Am Not for Myself...': The American Jewish Establishment in the Aftermath of the Six Day War," *American Jewish History* 88, no. 2 (2000): 253–286. 65 Urofsky, *We Are One*, 352–353; Zeitz, "If I Am Not," 260.

⁶⁶ Haim Avni and Jeffrey Mandl, "The Six-Day War and Communal Dynamics in the Diaspora; An Annotated Bibliography," in *The Six-Day War and World Jewry*, ed. Eli Lederhendler (Bethesda: University Press of Maryland, 2000).

⁶⁷ Pauline Peretz, Let My People Go: The Transnational Politics of Soviet Jewish Emigration

This dramatic shift in the agenda of American Jewry—its mobilization on behalf of Israel and Soviet Jewry—must be understood within the broader context of the domestic American scene. During the 1960s, especially the second half of that decade, ethnic diversity and ethnic pride—spearheaded by the Black Power/Black Pride movement—gained increasing acceptance. 68 Among Jews this trend was expressed in solidarity with Israel and global Jewry. To be sure, a strong ethnic identity—the sense of shared origins, affinity with fellow Jews, and demographic concentration in particular neighborhoods—had been a feature of Jewish life before the social changes of the 1960s. But mainstream Jewry, committed to American values and culture, and to social integration, tended to downplay its ethnic and religious identity.⁶⁹ Younger and more progressive Jews, who saw their Jewish identity as peripheral, had, since the early 1960s, generally supported the civil rights movement. 70 Beginning in the mid-1960s, however, various socio-cultural developments led to greater identification with Jewish ethnicity.

In the wake of the growing Black Power movement and the social unrest ensuing from the summer riots of 1968, some Jews expressed concern that the civil rights struggle was causing animosity to be directed toward them. It must be remembered that quite a few Jews had small shops, and lived in neighborhoods impacted by the riots. Tensions also emerged over parent-teacher relations in inner city New York, when Black parents wanted more control of the curriculum, and teachers, many of whom were Jewish, resisted.⁷¹ "The Black Panther," a leading newspaper of the Black Power movement, published articles attacking Israel and expressing support for the PLO. Israel was increasingly

during the Cold War, trans. Ethan Rundell (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction, 2015).

⁶⁸ John R. Greene, *America in the Sixties* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2010), ch. 6.

⁶⁹ Heilman, *Portrait*, 49–52. Will Herberg's seminal *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955, rev. ed. 1960) developed the thesis that ethnic identities were sublimated into religious identities in 1950s America, but reemerged in the late 1960s.

⁷⁰ Heilman, Portrait, 75-77.

⁷¹ Jonathan Kaufman, Broken Alliance: The Turbulent Times between Blacks and Jews in America (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988), 121–156.

identified by the New Left and various "progressive" movements as an "arm of imperialism."⁷²

American Jews were disappointed that groups and communities they had perceived as allies had become antagonistic toward them. There was a sense that the Jews had been abandoned by former allies during and after the Six-Day War, and in particular, by the Protestant and Catholic churches and various Christian organizations that had remained silent during Israel's perceived existential crisis.⁷³ It is ironic that when American Jewry, after having successfully presented itself to the mainstream religions as a parallel religious group, asserted strong ethnic, national ties to the Jewish State, its leaders were taken aback by the churches' disinclination to recognize those ties. Some Jews engaged in restorative efforts, but many others internalized the assertiveness of the various ethnic pride movements and applied it to their own self-identity.⁷⁴

Furthermore, during the 1960s, Jewish ethnic identity had been stirred by the growing awareness of the Holocaust, in large part through books such as the works of Eli Wiesel and scholarly studies such as Raul Hilberg's *Destruction of the European Jews.*⁷⁵ The capture of Adolf Eichmann and his trial in Jerusalem, followed by publication of Hannah Arendt's provocative *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (1963), contributed to this heightened Holocaust awareness.⁷⁶ And Arthur D. Morse's 1967 *While Six Million*

⁷² Glazer, American Judaism, 173; Tal Elmaliach, ed., Jewish Radicals: Zionism Confronts The New Left, 1967–1973 (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, forthcoming); Peretz, Let My People Go, 138.

⁷³ See, e.g., remarks delivered at the 1967 CCAR Conference in Los Angeles by Balfour Brickner, published as "A Time for Candor in Interreligious Relationships," *CCAR Yearbook* (1968): 117. Samuel Sandmel, professor at HUC Cincinnati, expressed "dismay" at the lack of support from Christian organizations with which he had cooperated on interfaith work; see Urofsky, *We Are One*, 364.

⁷⁴ Glazer, American Judaism, 174. On the impact of the Black Power movement on the Jewish community, see Marc Dollinger, Black Power, Jewish Politics: Reinventing the Alliance in the 1960s (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2018).

⁷⁵ Elie Wiesel, *Night* (New York: Avon, 1960); Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1961).

⁷⁶ Hannah Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil (New York: Viking, 1963).

Died: A Chronicle of American Apathy drew attention to the disturbing fact that the Roosevelt administration had obstructed efforts to save Jews.⁷⁷

Also influential in deepening American Jews' ethnic identification were the best-selling historical novel *Exodus* by Leon Uris, published in 1958 and followed in 1960 by a film of the same name, and the 1964 stage musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, an adaption of Sholom Aleichem's "Tevye the Dairyman," which was made into a tremendously successful film in 1971. Glamorizing the founding of Israel, *Exodus* had an enormously uplifting impact on American Jews' self-perception, while *Fiddler* romanticized the shtetl experience of the parents and grandparents of many American Jews.

The combined effect of these disparate developments—ethnic consciousness and assertiveness, the waning of previous alliances, Holocaust awareness, pride in Israel's military capability, and romanticization of the shtetl—led to a growing sense within American Jewry of identification with the Jewish people and with Israel. Israel, Soviet Jewry, and the future of American Jewry now dominated the community's agenda. "Federation Judaism" that fostered "sacred survival" had, it has been argued, become the "civil religion" of American Jewry.⁷⁸

In the aftermath of the Six-Day War, American Jewry's sense of connectedness to Israel—a sentiment now shared by the HUC-JIR Board of Governors, the CCAR, and the wider Reform movement—gave Glueck confidence that the YII program could be implemented. In 1967, days after the conclusion of the Six-Day War, Glueck arrived in Israel for a lengthy visit. He kept a diary, later published as *Dateline: Jerusalem*, in which he recorded the thrill of being in Israel at such a dramatic time. He described his impressions of the country enthusiastically, occasionally in quasi-messianic terms, repeatedly using the word "miraculous" to explain Israel's military victory.⁷⁹ Ezra Spicehandler, director of Jewish studies at the HUC-JIR campus in Jerusalem, accompanied Glueck on many

⁷⁷ Arthur D. Morse, While Six Million Died: A Chronicle of American Apathy (New York: Hart Publishing Co., 1967).

⁷⁸ Woocher, Sacred Survival, vii.

⁷⁹ Nelson Glueck, *Dateline: Jerusalem; a Diary* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1968), 8, 21, 32.

excursions during those months. He recalls how Glueck "walked the streets of the Old City, which he had known so well as a young scholar, intoxicated not with victory but with a certainty of prophetic fulfillment. When he touched the soil, he underwent a spiritual transformation which invested geography and pottery with mystical import." At a gathering at the residence of Israel's President, Zalman Shazar, Glueck enthusiastically explained that the borders of Israel now matched those of the biblical period of Solomon. Glueck expressed support for Israel's decision to annex East Jerusalem and seconded the call for the United States and other countries to move their embassies to Jerusalem.

Glueck's diary reveals that he shared the fears of many American Jews regarding the jeopardy in which the Six-Day War had placed Israel and the Jewish people. "There is no question but that if the Egyptian and Arab forces had prevailed, there would have been a most fearful slaughter of the two and a half million Israelis in the country. This had been announced over the Arab radio stations repeatedly." The war had shown, he declared, that:

Gone is the day when Jews will be lulled or frightened into accepting with a sort of fatalistic belief that "it can't possibly be true" the publicized demonic attempts of Nazis or Russians or Arabs to expunge their kind from off the face of the earth, while the rest of the civilized world sits by mouthing pitiful and pitiless platitudes of prayers for peace or saying nothing at all. Never again will Jews stand supinely by and permit themselves and their brothers to be tricked or frightened into being slaughtered like weak and senseless sheep.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Ezra Spicehandler, "An Appreciation [of Nelson Glueck]," *Jerusalem Post*, 14 February 1971, HUC/205, HUC library, Jerusalem.

⁸¹ Glueck, Dateline, 17.

⁸² Ibid., 87. Glueck's comments reflect the mood that gripped Israel in the aftermath of the war. Although to contemporary ears they might sound like West Bank settlers' messianic rhetoric, this language was also used by many in the Labor-led government. See Gershom Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of Settlements, 1967–1977* (New York: Times Books, 2006).

⁸³ Glueck, Dateline, 119.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 122. Entries such as these expressed views on Jewish-Arab relations very different

The many day trips Glueck took into the territories captured by Israel, often to sites he had surveyed prior to Israel's independence, and the many interactions he had with the Israeli political and academic elite, spurred him to further his project of a YII program for HUC-JIR's rabbinical students. He wanted students to share his experiences. Israeli leaders such as President Zalman Shazar, Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, Foreign Minister Abba Eban, and future Prime Minister Golda Meir granted Glueck special privileges, grateful that his archaeological writings linked biblical accounts of the land to contemporary findings, thereby legitimizing, in their eyes, the return of Israel to its ancient homeland. In 1968, Glueck rewrote his popular book *The River Jordan*, originally published in 1946. According to Brooke Sherrard, the new edition bore little resemblance to its first appearance: "The alterations Glueck made shifted it from a celebration of diversity and coexistence to a defense of political Zionism."

Dateline: Jerusalem, Glueck's diary, abounds with references to HUC-JIR's Biblical and Archaeological School and its summer school, which offered students lectures, tours, and excavations at Tel Gezer. Shortly after returning to the United States in September 1967, Glueck took practical steps to implement the YII program. His awareness of American Jewry's, and the Reform movement's, changed attitude to Israel impelled him to move forward on making the YII a reality.

As we saw, in October 1967, shortly after the Six-Day War, the CCAR's Committee on Rabbinic Training came out with a report recommending that rabbinical students spend an academic year in Israel; the report was approved by the CCAR Executive Board in March 1968. In commissioning the report, the CCAR's motivation had been to

from those Glueck held during his sojourns in Mandatory Palestine in the 1930s and 1940s. 85 "They [the students] have gone to the Negev, and will, I am sure, return starry-eyed." Glueck diary entry, 14 October 1970, 13, HU/34, Dedication, HUC library, Jerusalem. 86 Prime Minister Levi Eshkol arranged for Glueck to take a helicopter flight over Jerusalem, the Judean Desert, and the Sinai Peninsula. Spicehandler recalls how Glueck sat on the helicopter floor "like an enthusiastic schoolboy, tracing our flight on maps which he had spread around him" (Spicehandler, "An Appreciation").

⁸⁷ Sherrard, "American Biblical Archaeology," 166.

mitigate American Jewry's declining religious identity and affiliation. The anticipated causal link between achieving this goal and sending students to study in Israel was not explained in the report. It is, however, clear that the Six-Day War took the Reform movement by storm. As an example, consider the agenda of the CCAR Executive Board meeting in November 1967, which included the following items: establishment by the UAHC of a Committee on Israel, discussion of an annual seminar in Israel for CCAR members, a CCAR-UAHC conference on expanding Reform's presence in Israel, and youth programs in Israel. There was also a call for HUC-JIR to adopt the Sephardic pronunciation of Hebrew prevalent in Israel, ⁸⁸ and, most symbolically, there was discussion about holding the first-ever CCAR conference in Israel. ⁸⁹

The CCAR's first conference in Israel, in March 1970, further underscored its embrace of this new Israel-centric agenda. It added Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel Independence Day) to the Reform calendar as an official holiday, expressed commitment to the unity of Jerusalem, pledged to initiate youth and student trips to Israel, and entered into negotiations with the kibbutz movement to establish a Reform kibbutz. 90 And when the time came to raise funds for the YII, members of the CCAR, both personally and as leaders of their congregations, pledged funds for the program. Given the ascendency of the ethnic pride ethos, the Israel connection could, it was hoped, counter the decline in synagogue-centered Judaism in America. 91

Student interest in studying in Israel for an academic year also increased dramatically after the Six-Day War. Between 1962 and 1967, the number of HUC-JIR students studying in Jerusalem at their own

⁸⁸ In December 1967 the chapel on the Cincinnati campus began a gradual transition to Sephardic pronunciation; see Meyer, *Centennial History*, 228.

⁸⁹ Minutes, meeting of CCAR Executive Board, 7–8 November 1967, MS-34, box 54, folder 13, AJA.

⁹⁰ Polish, cited in report to BoG, 3 June 1971, MS-20, box B1b 9, folder 1, AJA.

⁹¹ Leonard Fein, "Failing God: American Jews and the Six Day War," in *The Impact of the Six-Day War: A Twenty-Year Assessment*, ed. Stephen J. Roth (London: Macmillan, 1988), 274–275; Marshall Sklare, "Lakeville and Israel: The Six-Day War and Its Aftermath," in *American Jews: A Reader*, ed. Marshall Sklare (New York: Behrman House, 1983), 413–439.

initiative was between seven and twelve annually, but following the Six-Day War the number rose to twenty-four, and during the 1968–1969 academic year increased to thirty-five or thirty-seven. ⁹² Students were voting with their feet, as this was a voluntary year for which HUC-JIR did not even transfer credit for courses taken at the Hebrew University. Moreover, study in Israel, while effective at improving Hebrew language skills and facilitating textual study, delayed ordination by a year. ⁹³

Evidence of student motivation to study in Israel following the Six-Day War also emerges from records of a May 1969 faculty–student liaison committee meeting. Three student recommendations, later shared with the Committee on Rabbinic Training, concerned Israel-related matters. One called for the replacement of the Towanda program with a five-month ulpan–"preferably in Israel." Students recommended that it emphasize acquisition of "fluent ... Hebrew so that courses could be conducted in Hebrew." This would, they claimed, eliminate "frustration on the part of so many students during their first 2 or 3 years of study." Another recommendation called for a year of study in Israel, to be made "compulsory with credit ... immediately." Anticipating faculty objections, the students rejected the claim that the expense would be prohibitive. They also argued that the YII should not add a year to their rabbinic training, as that would deter students from applying.⁹⁴

Seymour Gitin, who interviewed the rabbinical program's applicants in the winter of 1969–1970, recalls that they were very excited about the possibility that their first-year studies would take place in Jerusalem. According to Gitin, several faculty members pleaded with him not to share this information with Glueck, to avoid stoking his enthusiasm about the YII.

⁹² Minutes, meeting of Board of Trustees of the UAHC, 18–19 May 1969, MS-20, box K6 2, folder 1, AJA. In July 1968, the Hebrew University's program for overseas students had an enrollment of more than nine hundred; see *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, 31 July 1968. The university's School for Overseas Students was launched in 1971.

⁹³ Interview, Seymour Gitin, Jerusalem, 28 November 2021. Gitin studied at the Hebrew University in 1959–1960, despite HUC-JIR Cincinnati's attempts to discourage him and other classmates from doing so. This added a year to their studies, as they received no credit for courses taken there.

⁹⁴ Untitled Memorandum, Student Liaison Committees in New York and Cincinnati to the Committee on Rabbinic Training, MS-34, box 25, folder 7, AJA.

There seem to be multiple reasons why students, in contrast to faculty, were enthusiastic about the program. Several had studied in Israel as undergraduates. And many of the students had participated in Reform movement Israel programming, such as the youth pilgrimages to Israel, the Eisendrath International Exchange (EIE) semester in Israel, and the Israel component of summer camp activities. They had also read about Israel in the UAHC's current events magazine for teenagers, *Keeping Posted*. Given the Reform movement's historic ambivalence toward Zionism, these educational tools had a significant impact on young Reform Jews.⁹⁵ They had also been influenced by the broader Jewish community's embrace of Israel and by the 1960s ethos of ethnic pride.

Overcoming Hurdles: Instituting the YII Program

Energized by his sojourn in Israel and American Jewry's heightened engagement with Israel, in February 1968 Glueck committed to holding a summer ulpan in Jerusalem for third-year rabbinical students who were in Israel voluntarily. He arranged for these students to receive a modest stipend, about \$450, from an Israeli governmental agency to help defray their expenses. Glueck's focus now shifted from ideological rhetoric to the logistical and financial challenges of implementing the program. The time has now come for further intensification of the academic program at our Jerusalem School.... I have spent a considerable amount of time in the last couple of years going over in detail all of the possible aspects of a possible recommendation that one complete year of the five years of our rabbinic training program be spent in Jerusalem and that attendance be compulsory for all the members of whatever class it is finally decided by faculty and administration is best for the program."

Glueck worked closely with Ezra Spicehandler, who was director of Jewish studies at the Jerusalem campus and shortly to become its

⁹⁵ Emily Alice Katz, "Pen Pals, Pilgrims, and Pioneers: Reform Youth and Israel, 1948–1967," *American Jewish History* 95 (2009): 249–276.

⁹⁶ Mercaz Letfutsot (Center for the Diaspora), later renamed Minhal Hastudentim (Student Authority). The first YII students received the same amount in 1970. See Letter from Gitin (director of admissions) to Entering Students, 12 March 1970, MS-20, box K6 2, folder 1, AJA. 97 Minutes, BoG meeting (New York), 8 February 1968, MS-20, box B1b 6, folder 5, AJA.

dean, a role he fulfilled until 1980. Spicehandler was ordained at the Cincinnati campus in 1945, and taught first at the Cincinnati, and later at the New York campus of the College-Institute. He was well connected in Israel due to his involvement with the Labor Zionist movement and his military service, during which he fought in Israel's War of Independence. Directly and through Spicehandler, Glueck negotiated with Louis Pincus, chair and treasurer of the Jewish Agency. Glueck's project was received sympathetically despite being opposed by Orthodox organizations—both Israeli and American—on the one hand, and representatives of the Conservative movement, on the other. An initial request that the Agency allocate \$100,000 over three years met with a more generous promise of \$69,000 annually for three years.

When Glueck discussed the project with the Board of Governors in February 1968, it upheld the tradition of focusing on the College's solvency, not its educational programs. "Lay members generally considered it their primary function to be concerned with the financial situation of the school and its relationship to the outside world. They regarded educational policy as the domain of the president."99 At the time, HUC-JIR was under severe financial pressure due to its growing student body and faculty, the California campus's new School of Education and Jewish Studies, and plans for expanding the New York campus. Under the circumstances, Glueck found it impossible to recommend instituting a mandatory year in Israel beginning in the summer of 1969. 100 Instead, he proposed a more modest measure: moving the Towanda program to Israel.¹⁰¹ His plan was that incoming students would spend their first eight to nine weeks acquiring Hebrew skills at the HUC-JIR campus in Jerusalem. With Spicehandler's help, he calculated that the cost of this program would be \$40,000, which could be covered by raising the tuition and securing support from the Jewish Agency. But given the limited accommodations available on the Jerusalem campus, and the

⁹⁸ Letter, Spicehandler to Glueck, 18 May 1969, HUC/88, HUC library, Jerusalem.

⁹⁹ Meyer, Centennial History, 216.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

¹⁰¹ Minutes, BoG meeting (New York), 8 February 1968, MS-20, box B1b 6, folder 5, AJA.

large incoming class, Glueck was forced to consider holding the ulpan in Netanya or Givatayim. In view of this problem, and the already-strained HUC-JIR budget, Glueck dropped his plans for the summer ulpan. "In all of the two decades of my presidency of the College, we have never been as burdened with financial problems as we are now." ¹⁰²

Glueck was subsequently convinced by the argument that it was far better for students to spend a year in Israel than two months. ¹⁰³ Aside from the pedagogic advantages, such as experiencing the spectrum of Jewish life in Israel and living according to the Hebrew calendar, the financial logic was also persuasive. Once the initial cost of the airfare had been covered, the ground expenses, particularly those pertaining to the teaching staff, were approximately one-third of what they would be in the United States. The idea of a stand-alone summer ulpan was dropped, and Glueck returned to his original plan for a full year in Israel. He was encouraged by the CCAR Executive Board's confidence that fundraising could be undertaken for this purpose. ¹⁰⁴

In mid-April 1969, Glueck updated the Cincinnati faculty on the progress of a building project on the Jerusalem campus, and his plans for the YII program. He reiterated his opposition to making the program compulsory "at this time." ¹⁰⁵ Yet shortly thereafter he changed his mind again, writing to Spicehandler of his resolve that from the summer of 1970, it would be "compulsory for all [rabbinical] students ... to go to Jerusalem for a year, commencing in the summer ... [and] their passing that year in Jerusalem will be the prerequisite for entrance into the Hebrew Union College in America." ¹⁰⁶ Glueck's indecisiveness attests to concern that the financial situation could thwart an overly ambitious plan. Nevertheless, two weeks later he reaffirmed the decision to proceed, informing the faculty in Cincinnati that the project would

¹⁰² Letter, Glueck to Spicehandler, 10 December 1968, MS-20, box K6 2, folder 1, AJA.

¹⁰³ Minutes, BoG meeting (Cincinnati), 7 June 1968, MS-20, box B1b 6, folder 5, AJA.

¹⁰⁴ Memorandum, Polish to CCAR Executive Board, subsequently sent to BoG, MS-20, box J1-3, folder 7, AJA.

¹⁰⁵ Minutes, Faculty meeting (Cincinnati), 15 April 1969, MS-20, box J1-3, folder 7, AJA.

¹⁰⁶ Letter, Glueck to Spicehandler, 6 May 1969, HUC/88, HUC library, Jerusalem.

be presented to the Board of Governors later that year.¹⁰⁷ Spicehandler returned to the Jewish Agency to confirm that the promised financial support for students would materialize, and that, apart from the requirement that they be issued a certificate of immigration (*teudat oleh*), students would not have to meet additional conditions. The *teudat oleh* was just a procedural matter and did not, the Jewish Agency assured Spicehandler, commit the holder to moving to Israel permanently.¹⁰⁸

Glueck now prepared for the Board of Governors meeting at which the matter would be formally decided. It was a momentous occasion for him, as evident from a letter he wrote to Mr. S. Kopald Jr., chair of the Board of Governors,

I regard this step of compelling all our first-year students to spend the first year in Israel, as perhaps the most important single step I have undertaken at the Hebrew Union College during my period of administration.... It is absolutely necessary in the spirit and thrust of modern Jewish developments of our own time. It is definitely not enough to say we have been producing rabbis for 93 years without their having spent a year in Israel. That period is over if I know or sense anything about the meaning of modern Jewish life.

...We have been in the vanguard of developments in modern Judaism.... We must remain in that vanguard.... The increased knowledge of Hebrew is infinitely important but even more important to my way of thinking is the sense of unity with Israel, with the totality of Israel, and with the spiritual rooting that I am convinced can be enhanced only by contact with its sacred soil.¹⁰⁹

Anticipating the Board's fiscal concerns, Glueck prepared a memo on the cost of the YII. While he emphasized the need to raise funds in conversations with potential donors, in communicating with the Board

¹⁰⁷ Minutes, Faculty meeting (Cincinnati), 15 April 1969; 20 May 1969, MS-20, box J1-3, folder, 7, AJA.

¹⁰⁸ Letter, Spicehandler to Glueck, 18 May 1969, reporting on meeting with D. Zimand, Jewish Agency official, HUC/88, HUC library, Jerusalem.

¹⁰⁹ Letter, Glueck to Kopald, 31 July 1969, MS-20, box K6-2, folder 1, AJA.

of Governors, he downplayed the financial challenge. 110 At the meeting, Board members expressed concern not only about the program's costs, but also its implications for recruitment and admissions.¹¹¹ There was trepidation lest the YII lengthen the existing five-year course of rabbinical training. Board members, who ordinarily did not involve themselves in educational matters, feared that this would adversely affect enrollment, since both the Reconstructionist movement and the Somerville Chavurah had opened seminaries, and their five-year ordination programs were seen as competing with HUC-JIR's. Glueck assured the Board that he would do everything in his power to maintain the five-year course of studies. Another issue raised was whether it would be better if students went to Jerusalem for their third year of study. Glueck gave two arguments as to why an entry-year program was preferable. One was that rabbinical studies required knowledge of Hebrew, and beginning in Israel would better prepare students for the remaining four years, and make learning Hebrew a more positive experience. A second argument was that many students were married by their third year, making a thirdyear YII program prohibitively expensive.

Glueck reiterated that the YII's rationale was not only to facilitate Hebrew skills, but more importantly, to engender "close involvement" of HUC-JIR and the Reform movement with "the ideas and ideals of Israel; its religion, people, land, and promise." Glueck invoked the themes of the Jews' historical destiny and "new reality." 112

Duly convinced, the Board passed the resolution unanimously,¹¹³ making HUC-JIR the first rabbinical seminary in America to mandate a year of study in Israel for its rabbinical students. It was a landmark decision in the Reform movement's relationship with Zionism and Israel, which had shifted from opposing a Jewish state to affirming Israel's centrality in the training of Reform rabbis. Henceforth, no candidate

¹¹⁰ Memorandum to BoG from Office of President Glueck, 10 October 1969, MS-20, box A1a-172, folder 2, AJA.

¹¹¹ Minutes, BoG meeting (Cincinnati), 23 October 1969, MS-20, box B1b, folder 1, AJA.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

for the Reform rabbinate could be ordained without a first year of study in Israel, though exemptions were granted if warranted by special circumstances.

Many faculty members were unenthusiastic about the YII, but their objections were not recorded in the minutes of various HUC-JIR forums. Perhaps, as former HUC-JIR Dean Kenneth Roseman recalls, they were "frightened of the president" and unwilling to challenge his authority, preferring to speak of their opposition behind closed doors. 114 According to HUC-JIR historian Michael A. Meyer, such behavior reflected the fact that "the faculty seldom asserted itself against the president." 115 Glueck, Meyer recalled, was an "authoritarian" and could influence faculty appointments and withdraw privileges. 116 Gitin recalls that Glueck ran faculty meetings with "an iron fist." 117

The records show that the faculty, while not opposing the YII per se, expressed concern that it would not improve the students' Hebrew skills significantly. Jakob Petuchowski, a senior faculty member, rejected the claim that studying modern Hebrew would help students with biblical and rabbinic texts. He argued that contemporary Hebrew used a "decreasing amount" of classical Hebrew grammar and was "approaching the pattern of modern European languages." It was not, he claimed, "the language of the Bible." He maintained that Israelis themselves found rabbinic texts difficult to understand. Most faculty members were adamant that students learn classical Hebrew, not modern Hebrew, language many were unable to speak themselves. They doubted, despite assurances to the contrary, that the Israeli ulpan teachers could teach the skills required. They therefore preferred that the YII students go

¹¹⁴ Interview, Kenneth Roseman, 2 March 2020.

¹¹⁵ Meyer, Centennial History, 218.

¹¹⁶ Email with Dr. Meyer, 15 March 2022.

¹¹⁷ Seymour Gitin, *The Road Taken: An Archaeologist's Journey to the Land of the Bible* (University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, 2021), 42.

¹¹⁸ Jacob J. Petuchowski, Zion Reconsidered (New York: Twayne, 1966), 128.

¹¹⁹ Minutes, Faculty meeting (Cincinnati), 31 March 1970, MS-20, box J1-3, folder 7, AJA.

¹²⁰ Letter, Roseman to Gottschalk, Steinberg, and Spicehandler, 27 October 1969, L 1 28, MS-20, A1a-172, folder 2, AJA.

to Israel in their third year of studies, after having gained knowledge of classical Hebrew and commenced study of the biblical and rabbinic literature stateside. The sojourn in Israel would, on this view, enable students to take courses at the Hebrew University alongside their studies at HUC-JIR Jerusalem. Spicehandler was aware of these faculty concerns. To address them, he proposed that during the YII, students study modern Hebrew four hours a day in the fall semester, and in the spring semester, study two hours a day of modern Hebrew and two hours a day of classical Hebrew.¹²¹

In the fall of 1969, Glueck called a meeting of the HUC-JIR deans to settle the argument over whether the Israel program would be the first or third year of rabbinical studies. 122 In attendance were Roseman from the Cincinnati campus, Paul Steinberg from New York, and Alfred Gottschalk from Los Angeles. Together with Seymour Gitin, head of admissions and recruitment, they thrashed out the issue. Gitin recalls that Gottschalk and Steinberg were concerned about not having an incoming class on campus, so they supported holding the YII in the third year. Gottschalk, whose L.A. campus was still in its infancy, felt particularly threatened: he suspected that Glueck might be maneuvering to close the L.A. campus so as to strengthen Cincinnati as HUC-JIR's primary campus. Roseman and Gitin concurred with Glueck's argument that a first year in Israel would provide incoming students with a solid basis for their rabbinical studies. As noted above, Gitin had conducted admissions interviews, and many candidates were enthusiastic about their first year of studies being in Israel.¹²³ Glueck's stance prevailed.

Cognizant of the faculty's concerns, Glueck and Roseman implored Spicehandler to ensure that the Hebrew program in Jerusalem would succeed.¹²⁴ They complained that the academic calendar Spicehandler proposed had too many vacation days. Spicehandler maintained that

¹²¹ Letter, Spicehandler to Roseman, cc'd to Glueck, 15 October 1969, MS-20, box A1a-

^{172,} folder 2, AJA.

¹²² I found no archival record of the meeting; this account was provided by Gitin, email correspondence with the author, 26 December 2021.

¹²³ Gitin, email correspondence with the author, 26 December 2021.

¹²⁴ Letter, Glueck to Spicehandler, 9 February 1970, MS-20, box K6-2, folder 1, AJA.

students would use this time to become acquainted with the land and its people, but Glueck ordered that the free time be reduced. Roseman wrote to Michael Klein, Spicehandler's assistant, of the need to foster a studious atmosphere: I hope you will understand that it is partly your responsibility to see that the extra-curricular activities are sandwiched in where they will do least damage to the formal instructional program. He ended his letter with a demand that wouldn't be well received today: There must be pressure, pressure, pressure on them [i.e., the students] from the moment they arrive in Jerusalem. The faculty in the United States are considerably anxious concerning the product of the year; if anything less than success is the outcome, there will be a faculty revolt. Spicehandler dutifully obliged, and the winter and Passover breaks were shortened.

The debate about whether the program should be designed for first-or third-year students was not simply about how best to facilitate the students' rabbinical studies. It also reflected a profound ideological question, namely, the purpose of Hebrew studies. Most of the Cincinnati faculty saw Hebrew as a tool for studying Judaism's sacred texts, whereas those who advocated studying spoken Hebrew in Israel were also interested in facilitating deeper bonds between Jews in Israel, America, and the rest of the Diaspora. Not only was Hebrew spoken by Israel's rapidly growing population, but increasing numbers of Diaspora Jews—including those in Australia, Mexico, and Central and South America—were learning modern Hebrew. The debate demonstrated that although HUC-JIR and the Reform movement had dropped their historic opposition to political Zionism, their Zionist ethos, as represented by a commitment to Hebrew, was not yet deeply rooted.

Aside from Hebrew, the faculty agreed that while in Israel, students should learn Reform Judaism's history, thought, and liturgy. Most incoming students had very limited knowledge of these subjects. Given their expected interaction with Israeli society, they would be tantamount to ambassadors for the Reform movement and as such, had to be able

¹²⁵ Letter, Glueck to Spicehandler, 25 March 1970, MS-20, A1a-172, folder 2, AJA.

¹²⁶ Letter, Roseman to Klein, 14 April 1970, MS-20, box K6-2, folder 1, AJA.

¹²⁷ Revised academic calendar, 18 May 1970, MS-20, A1a-172, folder 1, AJA.



Nelson Glueck and Ezra Spicehandler welcoming Gold Meir to Jerusalem campus, 1970. (Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

to explain and defend Reform Judaism. As the HUC-JIR leadership realized, the YII would not only enable students to learn from living in Israel, it would enable Israelis to learn from the students.

In his curriculum proposal, Spicehandler recommended a weekly lecture on Israeli society, culture, and politics. He also budgeted for field trips that would acquaint the students with different regions of the country, as well as a tour of the Sinai desert, then under Israel's control.¹²⁸ These field trips, led by Michael Klein, an expert tour guide, had a profound impact on the students.

Spicehandler, too, would have preferred that students study in Jerusalem during their third year, but his reasons differed from those of his stateside counterparts. In light of his experience with third-year students who had come to study in Jerusalem voluntarily, he felt that third-year students, being more mature and resilient, would be easier to work with. Spicehandler anticipated that it would be challenging to

¹²⁸ Letter, Spicehandler to Glueck, 15 July 1969, HUC/88, HUC library, Jerusalem.

oversee first-year students, many of whom had never been away from home for an extended period, and who would be thrown into an unfamiliar culture and more spartan living conditions than they were used to. Moreover, they would be products of the notorious American campus scene. Spicehandler pleaded with the administration and faculty stateside to take this into consideration, and at the very least, provide for an on-call psychiatrist. 130

Following approval of the YII decision by the Board of Governors, and buoyed by the enthusiasm of HUC-JIR alumni and the CCAR, a fundraising campaign was launched. 131 In a letter to alumni, Glueck outlined the program and its cost, expressing the hope that about \$250,000 could be raised to meet the shortfall between the anticipated expenditure and monies available from the Jewish Agency and grant-in-aid funds. He appealed to the potential donors' social conscience: "You would not want me to accept only the affluent students and change our policy that no worthwhile student be prevented from studying for the rabbinate for lack of financial means."132 Similarly, the outgoing president of the CCAR, Roland Gittelsohn, and the head of the HUC-JIR Alumni Association, Leon Kronish, wrote a joint letter asking their members to donate. Referencing the applause that had greeted Glueck's announcement of the YII program at a recent CCAR conference, they remonstrated, "the only applause that really counts is our making available sufficient scholarship subsidies for those entering rabbinic students who will require them.... We owe it to Dr. Glueck, our Alma Mater and to the future of the rabbinate to help as generously as possible." 133 The appeals were successful: according to a late February 1970 update, the

¹²⁹ Letter, Spicehandler to Glueck, 26 May 1969, HUC/88, HUC library, Jerusalem.

¹³⁰ Letter, Spicehandler to Roseman, cc'ed to Glueck, 15 October 1969, MS-20, box K6-2, folder 1, AJA. Spicehandler's concern was well founded, as reflected in the student survey conducted at the end of the academic year, discussed below.

¹³¹ President's Report to BoG, 5 February 1970, MS-20, box B1b-8, folder 1, AJA.

¹³² Glueck, draft letter to Jacob Marcus, 25 November 1969, MS-160, box 1, folder 11, AIA.

¹³³ Fundraising letter, Gittelsohn and Kronish, 12 May 1970, MS-20, box A1a-157, folder 8, AJA.

College had raised some \$25,923; five weeks later the sum had reached \$60,269. 134 Glueck died in February 1971, and in October of that year Chaim Friend of the HUC-JIR Office of Development reported to the incoming president, Alfred Gottschalk, that almost \$234,000 had been raised for the program. 135 Before his death, Glueck received many letters congratulating him on establishing the YII, and just a few expressing reservations. 136 Glueck had also reached out to wealthy Cincinnati-area donors to Israeli causes, inviting them to a brunch where he described the program. Invoking the support he had received from Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir and Avraham Harman, Hebrew University president, he argued that upon returning from the YII, each student would "serve as a forceful and passionate advocate of our common cause." 137 Glueck had succeeded in raising the hoped-for sum of \$250,000.

In the spring of 1969, anticipating that the Board of Governors would approve the program, Glueck and Spicehandler conducted negotiations with Harman to secure dormitory facilities for the incoming class. Harman, who had earlier served as an Israeli diplomat, was cooperative. Following these negotiations, he informed the director of the American Friends of Hebrew University of the arrangement that had been reached. In return for an \$800 registration fee payable to the American Friends, students would receive dormitory space, a discounted flight, library privileges, use of the University's recreational facilities, including the pool, and access to the University's health plan. Harman was willing to extend the arrangement to HUC-JIR faculty on sabbatical

^{134 &}quot;Summary of Funds Available for First YII Program," March 31, 1970, MS-20, box A1a172-1, folder 3, AJA.

¹³⁵ Letter, Chaim Friend to Gottschalk, 13 October 1971, MS-20, box A1a172, folder 5, AJA.

¹³⁶ See, e.g., letter of 19 January 1970, from Rabbi M. Cohen of Temple Emanu-El of San Diego, MS-20, box A1a-172, folder 1, AJA. Cohen describes the program as "the greatest step forward by the College-Institute in decades."

¹³⁷ Letters, Glueck to potential funders "who are not necessarily Reform but are key supporters of Israel," 2 March 1970, MS-20, box A1a157, folder 3; and MS-20, box A1a157, folder 1, AJA.

¹³⁸ Letter, Harman to Harold Manson (director, American Friends of HUJI, New York), 17 April 1969, HUC/88, HUC library, Jerusalem.

in Israel as well.¹³⁹ He also suggested to Spicehandler that the HUC-JIR students participate in the University's summer ulpan, but that idea was rejected.¹⁴⁰ Discussions ensued regarding space for HUC-JIR students at the new dorms on Mount Scopus, but ultimately, Hebrew University dorm space was found near the Rehavia district, much closer to the HUC-JIR campus.¹⁴¹

The Inaugural YII: Challenges and Successes

Of the 1970–1971 incoming class of seventy-seven students, sixty-six would participate in the first YII program. No women were in that class, though HUC-JIR had accepted its first woman rabbinical student, Sally Priesand, in 1967. Thirteen of the incoming class were married. All had undergraduate degrees, a requirement for acceptance into the rabbinical program; most had graduated that year. Almost all of the students were born in North America, attended public school, and received supplementary Jewish education. A significant number had attended NFTY and UAHC camps. Those who hailed from the New York area and Canada tended to have a more intensive Jewish background, and not all were from Reform homes. A few had been to Israel before, but for most it was their first time in Israel, and for many, their first trip overseas.

The 1970-1971 incoming class was one of the largest ever. 145 A

¹³⁹ Letter dated 14 July 1969, summarizing meeting between Glueck, Spicehandler, and Harman, HUC/88, HUC library, Jerusalem.

¹⁴⁰ Letter, Spicehandler to Glueck, 18 April 1969, HUC/88, HUC library, Jerusalem.

¹⁴¹ Dorm space could only be found for single students; married students had to find their own rental accommodations.

¹⁴² See list, "Entering First Year in Israel," 1970–1971, giving students' names, hometown, undergraduate university, major and minor studies, and marital status. A separate page lists eleven students who remained in the United States "for personal reasons," MS-20, box K6-2, folder 1, AJA.

¹⁴³ According to Liebman, 67 percent of HUC students at the Cincinnati and New York campuses received their Jewish education at Sunday schools; see Liebman, "Training of American Rabbis," 16.

¹⁴⁴ Samuel E. Karff, *Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion at One Hundred Years* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1976), 225.

¹⁴⁵ The entering class would have been larger, but financial and logistical constraints

contributing—and arguably critical—factor in this increased enrollment was the fear of being drafted for military service to Vietnam. The clause of the Military Selective Service Act under which students attending a master's program qualified for deferment from the draft was eliminated in 1967, but there remained the 4-D category (minister of religion or divinity student), which gave deferment to those attending a theological seminary. According to Gitin, between 1968 and 1970, approximately 1,800 students expressed interest in the rabbinical school program, of whom 600 were interviewed; Gitin was certain that this unusually high interest had everything to do with the draft. He recalled several requests from the FBI to view the files of rabbinical school applicants, which he politely but firmly rebuffed as against the law. 146 Roseman, who sat on multiple admissions panels, recalled that "many applicants at this time were not accepted because it was clear that their major motivation was not to serve the Jewish people, but rather, avoid the draft." ¹⁴⁷ Among the class in Israel there was much talk about who had joined the program to circumvent the draft. One participant claimed that as many as half the class had that "ulterior motive.... I was one of them. I honestly don't feel ashamed to share that reality, nor do I feel particularly proud of it."148 But several of his classmates considered this estimate exaggerated. 149

HUC-JIR took the position, at least publicly, that it did not view such behavior sympathetically. In a 1969 statement to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Glueck asserted: "There is no feeling among the faculties ... that our students have come to escape the draft." ¹⁵⁰ And

compelled Glueck, in the spring of 1970, to tell his admissions department to stop accepting students. President's Report to BoG, 4 June 1970, MS-20, box B1b-8, folder 1, AJA. 146 Gitin, *The Road Taken*, 43; email, 26 December 2021.

¹⁴⁷ Interview, 5 March 2020.

¹⁴⁸ Rabbi Josh Goldstein, "The Class of 1975," *Jewish Journal of Ocean County NJ*, April 2018. https://issuu.com/the-jewish-journal/docs/april_edition_2018_epub (accessed 3 October 2023).

¹⁴⁹ Steven Garten (interview, 6 April 2020) stated that "between fifteen and eighteen participants were in the program as a way of circumventing the draft." Jack Luxemburg (interview, 23 April 2020) recalls that "in total there were some ten students who joined the program as a way of circumventing the draft."

¹⁵⁰ Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 12 June 1969. On the attitude of HUC-JIR's administration,

to the Board of Governors, Glueck denied that students were flocking to the school to avoid the draft, arguing that the YII program partially accounted for the increase.¹⁵¹ Twenty students did not continue their studies upon returning home, but it is difficult to infer the scope of draft evasion from this fact, as the reasons for their not advancing to the rabbinical program's second year varied or could not be identified. Some failed the Readiness Examination, some were removed from the program due to problematic behavior, some stayed in Israel and became *olim* (immigrants), and some decided to pursue other careers.¹⁵² We lack data on the dropout ratio in the preceding and following years.

This was a period, not only of draft evasion, but also of general student unrest. Given that the first-year students were recent college graduates, the impact of their campus experiences—which, it will be recalled, had worried Spicehandler—merits consideration. HUC-JIR's administration and faculty were mindful of this issue, seeking to avoid confrontations. Most members of the entering class had studied at large public universities, including the University of California, SUNY, and the University of Wisconsin. 153 Several had belonged to student organizations that called for radical change, participating in demonstrations, sit-ins, and other protests. In interviews of YII participants, one spoke of involvement in the Free Speech Movement at UC Berkeley, which challenged the administration's policy that there was to be no political debate on campus. Others spoke of involvement in Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), which called for participatory democracy, challenging the use of the in loco parentis clause that universities manipulated as a means of quelling protest. 154 Less radical activists sought

president, faculty, and students to the war in Vietnam, see Brown and Kutler, *Nelson Glueck*, 195–200.

¹⁵¹ President's Report to BoG, 4 June 1970, MS-20, box B1b-8, folder 1, AJA.

¹⁵² Letter, Kopald to Uri Herscher, 31 March 1972, cc'd to Gottschalk, MS-20, box A1a-172, folder 5, AJA. Lawrence Englander (interview, 2 April 2020) also mentioned that twenty students did not continue.

^{153 &}quot;Entering First Year-in-Israel 1970-71," MS-20, box K6-2, folder 1, AJA.

¹⁵⁴ Daniel Clawson, who left the rabbinical program and became a sociologist, "attended SDS meetings at Washington University though he did not join the organization." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dan_Clawson (accessed 14 August 2021); interview, Rabbi Alan

greater involvement in campus policies and activities. Even those YII students who had not been activists had witnessed violent demonstrations and conflict. For many, the Kent State massacre was a defining moment. Moreover, exposure to the counterculture—the hippie ethos and critique of middle-class values and pursuits, with its relaxed sexual mores, attitude to mood-altering drugs, fashions, and music—had profoundly influenced the entering YII students. Many interviewees spoke of the impact of the counterculture on their university experience in the United States and, in turn, on their YII experience.

During the winter and spring of 1970, HUC-JIR sent out multiple letters and pamphlets to the incoming class. An initial letter described the program's goals as articulated by Glueck. As the departure day drew closer, the correspondence took on a more practical tone. Students were informed of the expected cost of their year in Israel. Single students should expect an outlay of \$3,500, which would cover tuition, medical care, round trip flights, shipping, maintenance ("room, board, laundry, entertainment, tobacco, and barber"). Married students without children could expect to manage on \$5,500; an additional \$1,000 was suggested for each child.¹⁵⁶

Incoming students also received "Your Year in Israel," a short document with information on such matters as what to bring to Israel; Israeli policies on importing electrical goods, vaccinations, bank accounts; and medications worth bringing to Israel—"for example your favorite headache tablets." It warned students, vis-à-vis daily life, that Israel was unlike the United States, and it would be essential for them to cultivate the patience needed to navigate Israeli bureaucracy. 158

Katz, 23 April 2020.

¹⁵⁵ On HUC-JIR's response to the Kent State killings, see President's Report to BoG, 4 June 1970, MS-20, box B1b-8, folder 1, AJA.

¹⁵⁶ Guide for Pre-Rabbinic Students (HUC-JIR Department of Admissions, 1970).

¹⁵⁷ Newsletters, 1968-1971, MS-20, box K1-6, folder 1, AJA.

¹⁵⁸ Some students found it challenging to adjust; see John Spitzer, "The First Rabbinic Year in Israel: A Study in Socialization and Professionalization," master's thesis, HUC-JIR Cincinnati, 1973. The thesis examines the 1972–1973 cohort of YII students. Chapter three, on adjustment to living in Israel, describes frustration at the inability to communicate well with locals, and difficulty adjusting to the local currency. HUC-JIR is perceived as insensitive to the students' needs.

At the end of August, a short orientation seminar was held in New York, after which the students flew to Israel. Registration at the Jerusalem campus took place at the beginning of September, followed by a second orientation and a walking tour of the Old City. After a trip to the Galilee, Hebrew studies began on 12 September 1970. Classes were divided into eight levels, since some students "barely knew the Hebrew alphabet" and others were able to take university courses in Hebrew.¹⁵⁹

The atmosphere in Israel at this time was euphoric, as it had been since the Six-Day War. Relief over Israel's military victory and excitement about the possibility of touring sites that were previously off limits brought a wave of tourists. Granted, there was instability in countries bordering Israel: civil war in Jordan between forces loyal to King Hussein and Palestinian militants who sought to overthrow the regime led to Syrian tank support of the Palestinians, and Israeli air force intervention, at the request of the United States, to deter the Syrians. ¹⁶⁰ A protracted "War of Attrition" was also going on at the Suez Canal during this period. But the Israeli public, and the YII students, were only marginally affected by these events. Similarly, internal developments such as the start of massive immigration from the Soviet Union and the emergence of the Black Panther movement protesting discrimination against Mizrachi Jews seemed, for the most part, to make little impression on the YII students. ¹⁶¹

To familiarize the students with Israeli politics and society, the College arranged for speakers to address the class either on campus or at other venues. For example, a Jewish Agency weekend gathering (*shabbaton*) provided the opportunity for students to encounter the controversial but prophetic philosophy professor Yeshayahu Leibowitz and the IDF colonel who would become a historian and peace activist, Mordechai Bar-On. ¹⁶² One memorable such meeting took place when

¹⁵⁹ Spicehandler, report on YII, late October 1970, distributed by Glueck to faculty on 5 November 1970.

¹⁶⁰ See Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881–2001* (New York: Vintage, 2001), 373–375.

¹⁶¹ See, e.g., Sami Shalom Chetrit, *Intra-Jewish Conflict in Israel: White Jews, Black Jews* (London: Routledge, 2010).

¹⁶² Report, Spicehandler, 1970–1971 academic year, MS-20, box K4-1, folder 12, AJA.

Prime Minister Golda Meir attended a building dedication on campus and received an honorary doctorate. In her acceptance speech, she praised HUC-JIR and its president for initiating the YII program: "I am just daring enough to presume to say in the name of the whole government that we are happy you are here." This was a guarded reference to the expected displeasure of the National Religious Party, whose Knesset members supported Meir's coalition government but were incensed at her accepting an honorary degree from the Reform institution. Several interviewees recalled meeting the prime minister, but their memories focused on the anecdotal. One recalled "her skill at affixing the mezuzah with one hand while holding a cigarette in the other"; another noted that her Hebrew had a strong American accent. ¹⁶⁴

The first YII was characterized by tension between the administration and the students. As noted, the fraught mood on American campuses in the late 1960s had affected the students deeply, and their experiences accompanied them to the Jerusalem campus. Spicehandler's apprehensiveness about shepherding a large class that had experienced the counterculture proved well-founded: the comportment and attitudes of the YII students differed considerably from those of students Spicehandler had taught at HUC-JIR's Cincinnati and New York campuses in the 1950s. In an interview with Stanley Chyet of the Cincinnati campus, Spicehandler acknowledged the significant generational gap between himself and the students. Rejecting "the current trend of shared governance," he nostalgically recalled previous times: "There used to be rules. There was a professor, there was a student, and the professor was right.... I think the contemporary student no longer knows that, nor does the professor, and this is a source of a great deal of uneasiness and criticism on both sides." ¹⁶⁵

Friction arose over the administration's attitude to the student body and vice versa. Students complained that they were treated condescendingly and paternalistically, and that the administration was unfriendly.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 15 October 1970.

¹⁶⁴ Interview, Lawrence Englander, 2 April 2020; interview, Steven Garten, 6 April 2020.

¹⁶⁵ Interview, 8 June 1971, SC-11842, AJA.

¹⁶⁶ Student survey conducted at the end of 1970–1971 academic year, MS-20, box K6-2, folder 1, AJA.

Spicehandler was convinced that several students had come to Jerusalem thirsty for confrontation, viewing the administration as "inconsiderate, impossible, old fogeys." ¹⁶⁷ He tried to accommodate some of the student complaints, for example, by creating a student liaison committee and by making adjustments to the curriculum in the spring semester. ¹⁶⁸ The tension affected students to varying degrees: for some it was a central and very frustrating aspect of the YII experience; for others, it was merely unpleasant. ¹⁶⁹

Some of the tension between the administration and students can be explained by the YII's newness: it was rather hastily put together; it was the first year of a major curricular innovation; and policy coordination and communication took place across four campuses, though Cincinnati was the head office, so to speak. Also pertinent is the fact that the Jerusalem campus, which had been a base for around thirty advanced students who came to Israel voluntarily and created individualized courses of study, was now delivering a compulsory program for sixty-six students just starting their rabbinical training, in addition to continuing to serve as a base for advanced students. But a major cause of the discontent seems to have been the end-of-year Readiness Exam, which determined whether students would remain in the rabbinical program.

The Readiness Exam had always generated tension at the end of the Towanda course. Responsibility for the exam now came under the aegis of the Jerusalem campus. As it approached, student unrest increased. The students drew up a petition calling for the exam to be canceled and replaced by an assessment of the student's performance during the academic year. They attempted to win support from the ulpan teachers, and their petition claimed that the director of Hebrew studies accepted their preference for assessment rather than a final exam. More than half of the class signed the petition, which was presented to the newly inducted president of HUC-JIR, Alfred Gottschalk, who had recently visited the

¹⁶⁷ Interview, 8 June 1971, SC-11842, AJA.

¹⁶⁸ Report, Spicehandler, MS-20. box K4-1, folder 12, AJA. Joe Klein, a member of the student liaison committee, recalled tension over the curriculum (email, 13 April 2020).

¹⁶⁹ Student survey, MS-20, box K6-2, folder 1, AJA.

Jerusalem campus and had seen first-hand that many students were disgruntled. The Fearing he had received a bad first impression, the students asserted in the petition that the year had been an overall success. The Gottschalk and Roseman, together with Spicehandler, agreed that it would be up to Jerusalem to determine the exam's fate. Spicehandler considered the exam valuable: "It gets the students to review what they have learned and puts a degree of fear into them that leads them to work harder." The students, on the other hand, implored Gottschalk to annul the Readiness Exam, claiming it created "undue pressure and anxiety, like the Sword of Damocles." To the students' chagrin, the exam went ahead as planned.

At the end of the year, the students conducted a class survey; the response rate was 60 percent.¹⁷⁵ While results were somewhat lackluster regarding text-based Judaic studies as opposed to studies relating to Israel—the pervasive sentiment was that "things that can only be done in Israel should be done in Israel"¹⁷⁶—56 percent of the students ranked their ulpan experience as "excellent," and an additional 36 percent said it was "good." The lower-level classes generated a greater degree of student satisfaction than the higher-level classes. Although Glueck had died shortly after the beginning of the second semester, the students' approbation of the Hebrew program would doubtless have pleased him. Almost all the students interviewed spoke of the strides they had made in

¹⁷⁰ Letter from Gottschalk (appointed president following Glueck's death in February 1971) to Roseman, 30 March 1971, MS-20, box K6-2, folder 1, AJA. Jeffrey Elson (interview [Y. Walton], 9 February 2021) recalled that when Gottschalk met with the students in Jerusalem, "He got an earful. He was very unhappy about what he heard."

¹⁷¹ Petition, MS-20, box K6-2, folder 1, AJA.

¹⁷² Interview, 8 June 1971, SC-11842, AJA.

¹⁷³ Student survey, MS-20, box K6-2, folder 1, AJA.

¹⁷⁴ Spicehandler, Michael A. Meyer, and Herbert Brichto—who was on the HUC-JIR (Cincinnati) faculty and a visiting professor in Jerusalem 1970–1971—made the decision in consultation with the faculty; see letter from Gottschalk to Roseman, 30 March 1971, MS-20, box K6-2, folder 1, AJA.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Student survey, MS-20, box K6-2, folder 1, AJA.

learning Hebrew.¹⁷⁷ One claimed that his Hebrew took "a quantum leap," and that when he compared his progress with that of the eleven students who, for personal reasons, had not been in Israel that year, the difference was considerable.¹⁷⁸ HUC-JIR's development department seized upon the enthusiasm, quoting student tributes to further YII fundraising.¹⁷⁹ Stateside faculty had to acknowledge the achievements in this area.¹⁸⁰

Student Life Outside the Classroom

Although there was a chapel at the College campus in Jerusalem, attendance was not mandatory. The chapel had originally been envisaged as a place to introduce Israelis to the Reform way of prayer, and services were in Hebrew. After 1967, however, those attending the services were increasingly likely to be English-speakers, and in particular, tourists. Some students attended services at the chapel, but others preferred to encounter different prayer experiences. Several developed connections with the prayer traditions of the religious university students in their dorms. For others, Jerusalem provided a broad array of ethnic and religious diversity, and they took advantage of the varied prayer experiences. Though visits to Reform synagogues and communities in Tel-Aviv, Haifa, and Upper Nazareth had been organized for YII students, those I interviewed did not recall these experiences. Some students and faculty claimed that the YII had religious impact on participants, deepening their engagement with traditional practices—something that, at the time, was alien to classical Reform Judaism in America. 181

¹⁷⁷ Interview (Yair Walton), Martin Beifield, 9 February 2021.

¹⁷⁸ Interview, Lawrence Englander, 2 April 2020.

^{179 &}quot;I think it was infinitely easier to learn Hebrew in Israel. It was an educational experience which far surpassed opportunities in the US"; "I am convinced of the importance of a knowledge of Hebrew as a living language"; "It has been an outstanding success!" HUC/125, HUC library, Jerusalem.

¹⁸⁰ In 1976, a questionnaire asked faculty to assess the achievements of the YII. The summary of the New York and Cincinnati faculty responses concluded that "Hebrew achievement is higher than before the Jerusalem program was instituted. Many commented on the lack of trauma which now accompanies the confrontation of a Hebrew text," MS-663, box 22, folder 22, AJA.

¹⁸¹ Interview, Roseman, 5 March 2020.

While the stateside faculty did not view getting to know the land of Israel—its geography, flora and fauna, and history—as a goal of the YII program, HUC-JIR Jerusalem organized a series of field trips (*tiyulim*) for the students. Most saw these excursions—particularly the trek to the Sinai desert—as the highlight of the year. Led by Michael Klein, who had extensive knowledge of the terrain and wildlife, the tours made a profound impression on the students. The outings created significant moments for the class to crystallize, to come together as a cohesive cohort of future rabbis. 183

About one-third of the class did volunteer work. Several students helped prepare twelfth graders at the Ben Shemen youth village for their matriculation exam in English. An HUC-JIR student band gave free performances for students at the Hebrew University; it was spotted and signed up to perform every few weeks at army bases in the Jordan Valley, entertaining the troops. These gigs were an opportunity for the rabbinical students to engage with their Israeli peers directly. 185

In their free time, many students frequented Rosie's, a restaurant (actually named *Misedet HaGalil*) in the Mamilla quarter near the campus. ¹⁸⁶ It was owned by a family from Egypt whose matriarch, Rosie, became something of a substitute parent for several members of the class. Students attended the circumcision of Rosie's grandson at the restaurant, and many interviewees recalled going to Rosie's at the end of the year to bid the proprietors a bittersweet goodbye. Although nobody could have anticipated this, the students felt a special bond with the eatery; almost all of them fondly recalled the warmth with which they had been received there. Interestingly, few mentioned the food.

¹⁸² All my interviewees mentioned Klein's leading the *tiyulim* as a pivotal element of the YII. On campus, too, many saw him as the one to turn to when challenges arose. See, e.g., Joe Klein [no relation to Michael Klein], email, 13 April 2020.

¹⁸³ Orit Ben-David, "*Tiyul* (Hike) as an Act of Consecration of Space," in Eyal Ben-Ari and Yoram Bilu, eds., *Grasping Land: Space and Place in Contemporary Israeli Discourse and Experience* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997).

¹⁸⁴ Interview, Lawrence Englander, 2 April 2020.

¹⁸⁵ Interview, Jack Luxemburg, 23 April 2020; interview, Eli Herscher 21 and 29 April 2020.

¹⁸⁶ Email, Peter Haas, 3 April 2020.

Nearly all interviewees spoke of YII as a crucial experience in terms of networking and bonding with colleagues. The shared moments inside and often outside the classroom created supportive connections that endured as they went on to rabbinical careers. This outcome was not a stated goal of the program, but the impact of being together on a small campus in a new and challenging environment, with all its highs and lows, was, as several interviewees put it, "transformative." 188

Although some participants did not continue their studies at HUC-JIR beyond the first year, the available information shows that thirty-seven students from the first YII class went on to be ordained by HUC-JIR, most in 1975.189 Several later joined the Reconstructionist movement, and a few, the Conservative, but the majority remained within the Reform fold. As Reform rabbis, most were active in interfaith and social justice activities associated with the Reform outlook on "improving the world" (tikkun olam). But many were avid advocates for Zionist and Israeli causes. One was a founding member of ARZA (Association of Reform Zionists in America), the Reform Zionist faction within the World Zionist Organization, and several held leadership roles.¹⁹⁰ In keeping with the Reform movement's dovish stance on Israel, a fair number participated in groups such as Breira, Peace Now, Meretz-USA, J-Street, and the Labor Zionist Alliance. Some of the rabbis worked in academia and, faced with anti-Israel activism on campuses, became active in defending Israel. Peter Haas, for example, served as president of Scholars for Peace in the Middle East. And of course, many of the rabbis led congregational trips to Israel.¹⁹¹

Several graduates of the first YII program also became involved in activities pertaining to Hebrew literature. One wrote an article on Israeli

¹⁸⁷ For example, Lawrence Englander (interview, 2 April 2020) and Martin Beifield (interview [Yair Walton], 9 February 2021) both mentioned this.

¹⁸⁸ Interview, Steven Garten, 6 April 2020. Bradley Bleefeld (interview, 3 May 2020) called it his honeymoon year: "I was in Jerusalem, I'm in heaven, I fulfilled the dream of countless generations."

¹⁸⁹ I am grateful to Josh Herman for assistance in gathering this information.

¹⁹⁰ Jack Luxemburg was a founding member of ARZA, in which Joshua Goldstein and Paul Golomb were active. Lawrence Englander chaired Arzenu, the political voice of Reform, Progressive, and Liberal Religious Zionists within the World Zionist Organization; Luxemberg was an Arzenu vice-chair.

¹⁹¹ Interview, Steve Garten, 6 April 2020.

writer S.Y. Agnon,¹⁹² another worked with Spicehandler on an anthology of Israeli writing.¹⁹³

Conclusion

The impact on the Reform rabbinate that Glueck had sought, in mandating a year of study in Israel for incoming rabbinical students—the deepening of spiritual, religious, cultural, and political ties with the people and land of Israel—was largely achieved. Glueck's successor, Gottschalk, pledged to continue the mandatory year:

I am convinced that the year was an irreplaceable experience for the students and of inestimable value in their development as candidates for the rabbinate. It has instilled in them a love for Judaism, the Jewish people, and Israel. It has inspired them with zeal for the Hebrew language and literature. The year in Israel project has proved worthy of continuation.¹⁹⁴

The decision to make the YII mandatory ensured that future classes of rabbinical students would also forge these deepened connections, and in so doing, not only impart concrete content to the shift in the Reform movement's attitude to Israel, but also strengthen its sense of Jewish peoplehood. ¹⁹⁵ By 1973 the YII policy was extended to include education students, and later, in 1986, cantorial students.

Mandating the YII for rabbinical students—less than a century after the U.S. Reform movement founded its rabbinical seminary—was a milestone in the Reform movement's relationship with Zionism and Israel. ¹⁹⁶ This move, as we have seen, was undertaken in the context of

¹⁹² Laurence L. Edwards, "S.Y. Agnon, 'The Great Synagogue'; Translation and Commentary," *CCAR Journal* 63, no. 1 (2016): 123–130.

¹⁹³ Ezra Spicehandler and Curtis Arnson, eds., *New Writing in Israel* (New York: Schocken, 1976). 194 Gottschalk, letter to colleagues [CCAR members], 14 May 1971, MS L-1 28 1, AJA. Gottschalk expressed similar sentiments in his President's Report to BoG, 3 June 1971, p. 18, MS-20, box B1b, folder 91, AJA.

¹⁹⁵ According to interviewee Eric Wisnia, "It changed the Reform movement forever." Interview (Yair Walton), 23 April 2020. The positive impact was also noted by interviewees Bradley Bleefeld (3 May 2020) and Neal Borovitz (9 February 2021).

¹⁹⁶ Polish called the decision to mandate the YII program "the most significant development" in relations between the rabbinate and HUC-JIR. See David Polish, "The Changing and the Constant in the Reform Rabbinate," *American Jewish Archives* 35 (1983): 285–286.

the turbulent 1960s, when mainstream religious affiliation was rapidly declining, and a heightened ethnic awareness emerged in American society. The civil rights movement, the feminist movement, the counterculture, and the war in Vietnam, all influenced American Jewry. The focus of the Jewish community's self-understanding shifted from religious identity to publicly expressed ethnic solidarity. This process was reinforced by emerging awareness of the Holocaust, and of the plight of Soviet Jewry. The events surrounding the outbreak of the Six-Day War, and the disappointing recognition that Israel was being abandoned by former allies in the United States and around the world, drove home this sense of Jewish peoplehood, of a shared Jewish identity. Reform Jewry's agenda shifted from religious services, interfaith work, and social justice activity to support for Israel, the struggle on behalf of Soviet Jewry, and a commitment to "sacred survival."

The CCAR was acutely aware of these developments, and responded to them by investigating the U.S. Reform rabbinate's evolving role, and the training of its rabbis. These studies called for urgent reform of rabbinical training, emphasizing that future rabbis had to acquire pastoral and executive leadership skills, rather than just the text-based and literary skills that had been the hallmark of HUC-JIR's rabbinical curriculum. A key recommendation was that rabbinical students should henceforth spend a year of their studies in Jerusalem. This proposal, though not grounded in research, reflected the CCAR's appreciation of Israel's newfound centrality to the agenda of American Jewry and within Reform circles.

Glueck's attachment to Israel had evolved through his writings on biblical archaeology, archaeological surveys, directorship of the American School of Oriental Research, and, after 1948, his expeditions in the Negev desert, undertaken with logistical assistance from the Israel Defense Forces. All of these had connected him to Israel's political and academic elites—connections that proved helpful when he set out to open an HUC-JIR campus in Jerusalem in 1963. It was, however, the impact of the Six-Day War on the Board of Governors, the CCAR, and the American Jewish community, that generated the institutional support within U.S. Reform Jewry that enabled Glueck to pursue the YII project. In Israel, he found allies in government, at Hebrew University, and at the Jewish Agency. These alliances, along with the efforts of Jewish studies director Spicehandler, facilitated inauguration of the program in 1970–1971.

Glueck's status and forceful persona were such that the faculty gave way to his plan to implement the YII program. However, some Cincinnati-based HUC-JIR faculty members, many nearing retirement, retained the indifference to the Jewish state that had characterized previous generations of Reform thinkers. They do not appear to have been significantly affected by either the changes in American society or the events of the Six-Day War. They rejected the CCAR's recommendations that major curricular reform be introduced, insisting that their efforts to train the next generation of rabbis were adequate. Some also continued to argue that the YII should take place in the third year of rabbinical studies, after students had acquired a grounding in biblical and rabbinic Hebrew. They maintained that there was a decisive difference between biblical and rabbinic Hebrew and contemporary Hebrew, and claimed that the ulpan method was suitable only for teaching the latter. These faculty members did not see the ability to engage with Israelis and Diaspora Jews in a shared language as an objective of rabbinical training. They also disregarded long-standing complaints about the existing Hebrew instruction program at HUC-JIR, the Towanda program, which left most students struggling with the textual studies that followed. As a compromise, Glueck and Spicehandler agreed that classical Hebrew be taught for two hours daily in the spring term. They also decided to curtail student vacation time that would have been used to tour Israel.

The difference of opinion regarding the goals of learning Hebrew was thus telling, reflecting different visions of the rabbinate, the relation between rabbis and the Jewish state, and, given that rabbis are role models, between Jews and the Jewish state. Glueck and Spicehandler viewed textual study and engaging with the Hebrew cultural revival in Israel and the Diaspora as complementary goals of Hebrew language acquisition. The first YII program achieved the goal of imparting Hebrew language skills and giving students confidence that they would be able to engage with sacred texts. Sooner or later, most of the faculty acknowledged this. But Glueck and Spicehandler conceived the YII's objectives as extending beyond learning Hebrew. The YII was also envisioned as a means of forging bonds between students and the land, people, and culture of Israel, as enabling the Reform movement's future rabbis to assist congregants and others to develop meaningful connections with Israel. As this paper has shown, this goal was also achieved. Most students returned to North

America eager to sustain these bonds, both personally and professionally. On this issue, Glueck and Spicehandler were more in touch with the wider community and student body than much of the faculty was.

For almost half a century, Reform Judaism saw Israel as a central element in the forging of Jewish identity, and the Jewish state was a beacon for emerging Reform leaders. The YII program continued to strengthen ties with Israel. More recently, however, shifting sociocultural currents in American society and the Reform movement, and the external and internal challenges that Israel faces, have engendered a more complex experience for YII participants. Some, albeit a minority, have become alienated from the Jewish state.¹⁹⁷

The profound commitment to inclusivity and diversity embraced by the Reform movement since the turn of the twenty-first century has established new, more fluid understandings of Jewish identity. This development contrasts markedly with the persistence in Israeli society of well-demarcated ethnic groupings, and the growth of the right-wing, nationalist, and fervently religious sectors. The latter phenomena have contributed to a critical attitude on the part of many HUC-JIR students toward these aspects of Israeli society. This has been compounded by Israel's ongoing occupation of the West Bank, and to a lesser extent, its military operations against Hamas, which raise both security and ethical dilemmas. Many students wrestle with these dilemmas, and some distance themselves vocally from Israeli government policies. Generally, however, this does not undermine their empathy for Israel's people.

David Mendelsson is a Senior Lecturer in Israel Studies and Modern Jewish History at the Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion in Jerusalem. He was director of the HUC-JIR Year-in-Israel program from 2012 to 2020. Mendelsson also teaches at the Hebrew University's Rothberg International School. He is the author of The History of Jewish Education in England 1944–1988: Between Integration and Separation.

¹⁹⁷ See Michal Muszkat-Barkan and Lisa D. Grant, "Like a Distant Cousin: Bi-Cultural Negotiation as Key Perspective in Understanding the Evolving Relationship of Future Reform Rabbis with Israel and the Jewish People," *Journal of Jewish Education* 81 (2015): 35–63; "Gates of Tears: Rabbinical and Cantorial Students stand for solidarity with the Palestinians," *Forward*, 13 May 2021; Marc Tracy, "Inside the Unravelling of American Zionism," *New York Times*, 2 November 2021.

The Fanatical Dr.
Kaufmann Kohler: A
Reform Rabbi Writes about
the "Purging" of Three
Hebrew Union College
Professors for Being Zionists

A Translation from the 1907 Yiddish Newspaper *Der Shtern*

Dan Judson and Lillian Leavitt

The following translation is an editorial from a short-lived Yiddish, Zionist newspaper, *Der Shtern* (*The Star*), published between 1906 and 1907 in Philadelphia. *Der Shtern* was a mix of news and editorials covering events of importance for the Zionist movement. The author of the editorial, Rabbi Max Raisin, was unusual as a Zionist writer. A recently ordained Reform rabbi, Raisin had attended Hebrew Union College (HUC) with his brother, Jacob, where the pair formed a unique duo in that they were Zionists, Hebraists, and learned in Jewish texts at a time when most HUC students were none of those things.¹

The subject of the editorial was HUC President Kaufmann Kohler's forcing out of three professors in 1907 for being Zionists. This episode is well known in the historiography of Reform Zionism.² And

¹ Michael A. Meyer, "Two Anomalous Reform Rabbis: The Brothers Jacob and Max Raisin," *The American Jewish Archives Journal* 68 (2016): 1–33.

² See for example: Herbert Parzen, "The Purge of the Dissidents: Hebrew Union College and Zionism, 1903–1907," *Jewish Social Studies* 37 (Summer-Autumn, 1975): 291–322; Naomi Cohen, "The Reaction of Reform Judaism to Zionism," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 40 (1951): 361–394; Michael A. Meyer, "A Centennial History of Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion," in *Hebrew Union College–Jewish*

while Raisin's editorial does not provide new facts, it does provide a fascinating window into the Zionist movement and the College at this moment in history. Raisin forcefully argues for the compatibility of Reform Judaism and Zionism, citing a number of leading Reform rabbis who were Zionists as proof that the two were not irreconcilable. The bulk of the editorial, though, is devoted to Raisin's evisceration of Kohler's presidency. Raisin repeatedly accuses Kohler of being a fanatic who is trapped in old ways of thinking and will destroy HUC through his small-mindedness. He praises Kohler's predecessor Isaac Mayer Wise, despite Wise himself being anti-Zionist. According to Raisin, Wise's commitment to *lehrfreiheit*, academic freedom, was a model of leadership in modern times, while Kohler "lives in a previous era, and he does not have the slightest inkling of what moving forward means."

While the editorial argues that the professors were forced out solely for being Zionists, the historical record suggests there were other factors involved in the professors' resignations. Ego, salary, and career advancement all seemed to have played a part. The professors—Henry Malter, Max Margolis, and Max Schloessinger—were apparently not unified in their actions, nor were the circumstances of their resignations entirely similar. Malter's resignation letter does not even mention Zionism; he was upset with his salary, and he seemingly expected the board to reject his resignation and offer a pay increase.3 Margolis, who had served as an assistant professor at HUC before leaving to become a professor of Semitic languages and eventually head of the Semitics Department at the University of California, was also upset about money. Even before his resignation, Margolis had applied to other positions, had disagreed repeatedly with Kohler over his strict control of the faculty, and—as some evidence suggests—had sought the presidency of HUC for himself.⁴ Rabbi David Philipson, a member of the HUC board at the time, explicitly refuted the idea that Zionism was the cause of the professors' being pushed out:

Institute of Religion at One Hundred Years, ed. Samuel Karff (Cincinnati, 1976), 61-67.

³ Meyer, "Centennial History," 65; Cohen, 375.

⁴ Meyer, "Centennial History," 66.

Because of Dr. Kohler's well-known and constant opposition to the Zionist movement, and because of the avowed sympathy with these professors with that movement, it was made to appear by the professor's party that they were forced out owing to their Zionism. But this was not the case. The issue was really loyalty to the President of the institution, particularly on the part of one of the professors [Margolis]. There was a purposeful undermining of the presidential authority. Either president or professor had to go.⁵

Despite the historical evidence suggesting other factors were involved, the response to the events at the time was exclusively on the professors' Zionism. *The Reform Advocate*, for example, editorialized that although academic freedom was important, "Harmony is more imperative than academic freedom"; and because Zionism was not in harmony with the principles of Reform Judaism, it was correct that Kohler forced out the professors because of their Zionist beliefs.⁶

The three professors had all expressed Zionist sympathies at a time when the board of the College, with Kohler's support, officially took an anti-Zionist stance, affirming that "America is our Zion." Anti-Zionism was a significant part of Kohler's general commitment to creating a more ideologically pure seminary than existed under Wise. He also banned the wearing of traditional religious garb in the seminary chapel, and he changed the curriculum, eliminating the study of modern Hebrew and prioritizing subjects he believed informed the rational spirit of Reform Judaism.⁸

The clash between Kohler and the professors reached its zenith over a sermon that Margolis gave in the HUC chapel. Margolis never explicitly promoted Zionism, but he made his sympathies clear. In a sermon about Moses, he preached about the prophetic promise of Israel's return to The Land: "In the diaspora, the Jewish soul is capable only of submersion.

⁵ David Philipson, "History of the Hebrew Union College, 1875–1925" in *Hebrew Union College Jubilee Volume* (Cincinnati, 1925), 44.

^{6 &}quot;A Convenient Fig-Leaf," The Reform Advocate (6 April 1907).

⁷ Cohen, 375.

⁸ Meyer, "Centennial History," 56-58.

It may assimilate to the ideals of the environment, but it is too weak to assimilate them to itself. True and wholesome assimilation can only take place where the Jewish soul is free, and the Jewish soul can only be free in its own soil.... There will be a return. [Israel] shall be restored to their patrimony." A public scene occurred after the sermon. Kohler claimed that Margolis was teaching ideas subversive to Reform Jewish principles and directly challenging his authority. Margolis claimed that Kohler was infringing on his academic freedom. The dispute was brought to the board and eventually led to Margolis's resignation. ¹⁰

Raisin watched all of this play out from a distance. He had graduated from the College before Kohler took over. He had unsuccessful stints at congregations in California, Philadelphia, and Louisiana before settling for eight years at a congregation in Meridian, Mississippi. While he initially struggled with his congregational work, he achieved some degree of success as a Hebrew writer. His first book, published in 1905, was a biography in Hebrew of Mordecai Manuel Noah, a proto-Zionist leader of American Jewry who attempted to set up a safe haven for Jews near Buffalo, New York, in 1825.11 Raisin's book was published in Warsaw and had appeared in the influential Hebrew journal Ha-Shiloah. Raisin's choice for a subject was no accident. The story of Noah's unsuccessful "kibbutz" was not well known and by bringing attention to it, Raisin was consciously creating a history of Zionist idealogues in an American context.¹² Raisin's commitment to Zionism and Hebraism sets the context for his attack on Kohler, who he believed to be an enemy to Jewish national and cultural aspirations.

Rabbi Dan Judson, PhD, is the provost of Hebrew College and the author of Pennies for Heaven: The History of American Synagogues and Money. Lillian Leavitt is a teacher and translator of Yiddish language and literature.

⁹ Max Margolis, "The Message of Moses," *The Maccabaean* 12 (February, 1907): 45.

¹⁰ Cohen, 379-380.

¹¹ On Mordecai Manuel Noah, see Jonathan D. Sarna, *Jacksonian Jew: The Two Worlds of Mordecai Noah* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1981).

¹² Meyer, "Two Anomalous Reform Rabbis," 11.

Der Shtern

Aug, 11, 1907 Max Raisin

Zionism and The Cincinnati Rabbinical Seminary

There is an old Roman saying: "Whomever the Gods choose to destroy, they first drive insane." This folk saying might be apt for Dr. Kaufmann Kohler and his supporters who now oversee the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, the seminary that trains Reform Rabbis in America. Dr. Kaufmann Kohler has been so belligerent against the Zionist movement that he has handled recent events at the College in a crazy manner. Only someone insane would remove three of the best and most productive professors at the College because they are Zionists. Of course, we can only pity a person who is so muddled in his thinking. It is however a great pity that because of his fanaticism, the Seminary itself is at the point of being destroyed. Even with all its faults, the institution has been a boon to American Judaism since its inception 23 years ago. The seminary has created the best English language sermonizers and community leaders. It has also given us several of the most important and effective workers for Zionism in America. This institution will, however, certainly be destroyed if Dr. Kohler remains its leader.

In what way has the President of HUC most recently exhibited his bizarre behavior? His intemperate response to three Zionist professors at the College was extraordinary. He publicly took issue with them not as an individual, rather, acting explicitly as the President of Hebrew Union College and self-declared head of Reform Judaism in America. Kohler insists that Reform Judaism cannot be Zionist, and those who work devotedly for the Reform movement cannot in principle have any relationship with the Zionist movement. He claims that the platform of Reform Judaism is anti-Zionist. The founders of the movement permanently removed the phrase, "May our eyes behold your return to Zion with mercy," from its siddur. Our Cincinnati Seminary asks angrily, "How can a contemporary civilized Jew wearing a frock with a top hat, who can elegantly waltz and do the two-step in a real American way

suddenly think of becoming an Asiatic [i.e. a Zionist] and move to a corner of the world among wild Arabs? How can an American Jew simultaneously be an American patriot and a passionate Zionist?" This of course is silly. We who understand the essential tenets of Reform Judaism know that a Reform Jew can in fact be a good Zionist and need not convert to Orthodoxy. We have seen some of the best Reform Rabbis become the most devoted Zionists; for example, the late Dr. Gottheil, the Rabbi of Temple Emanuel, and Rev. Dr. Jastrow, the never-forgotten Rabbi of Philadelphia, were both renowned Zionist leaders. We also find well-known Reform Jews among contemporary Zionist leaders such as Prof. Gottheil, Dr. Max Heller, Dr. Stephen Wise, Dr. Magnes, as well as the three professors of Hebrew Union College whom Dr. Kohler in his Jesuitical tactics¹¹ forced to resign. We also know that it is not at all necessary for a professor of the Cincinnati Seminary to swear by the holy ark that he is not a Zionist.

Up until four years ago when Dr. Kohler was selected as President, the practice of the College had been to be neither for nor against Zionism. Zionists and anti-Zionists lived under one roof in peace and tranquility. Those were truly "messianic times" at Hebrew Union College. People respected each other, professors as well as students, it was a time when the words of Isaiah were fulfilled, "They shall neither hurt nor destroy." Dr. Wise, the founder and long-time president of the College, although a fiery anti-Zionist, nonetheless understood that intellectual freedom was the most important condition for the development of an academic institution. As long as Professors and students devoted themselves to their academic duties, he never interfered with their beliefs. Dr. Wise was so widely honored, that even his enemies respected him. He was, above all, a man of truth and justice. He did not believe in the Jesuit rule: "The ends justify the means." He was convinced that Judaism—both Orthodox and Reform—can only be successful through the power of truth in the everyday life of Jews. Did not our sages say this hundreds of years ago, "Truth is the seal of G-d."

¹ The word "Jesuitical" normally refers to someone being overly legalistic. But here Raisin uses the word to mean something closer to authoritarian. Given the Jesuits' historical role in the persecution of Jews, Raisin is probably using the term to derogatorily hint at Kohler having the role of Inquisitor.

Unhappily for the College, Dr. Wise's successor is quite a different sort of person. Dr. Kohler is very much the opposite of Dr. Wise in tact and manners. Wise was liberal; Kohler a fanatic. Wise understood what the times demanded, what progress meant, while Kohler lives in a past era, and does not have the slightest inkling of what moving forward means. Wise was completely Americanized. His life and work were essentially about Americanizing Jews and Judaism. Kohler today, at age 65 or older, is the same yeshiva boy he was when he came to this country from Posen 40 years ago not knowing a word of English.

Kohler has not Americanized and will apparently die as a "Herzogtimer,"22 although he has been in this country for decades. His ideas are old-fashioned and impractical. His logic "smells of the garlic" from his earlier yeshiva days. He is a student of the first Reform Rabbis in Germany whose theology and liberalism were based on the "mission" principle. The mission of the Jews, the older Reform Rabbis explained, was to spread God's ideals among all the nation. This was the reason Jews were spread over the whole world. "God makes righteousness for Israel to spread to all the nations," one of the Talmudic sages declared. Jews are not a nation, rather a religious society, a community of religious people. In Germany they were German, in France, they were French, etc. The fact that Jews were oppressed, beaten and persecuted at every step needed to be endured because [through this suffering] humanity in fact "progresses." The Jews should be content with the blows they receive because this is their mission. They were to be the goat for Azazel [a scape goat] for the elevation and nobility of humanity.

From the early 19th century these German Reform Rabbis construed these beliefs as law from Sinai. We cannot fault them for their stubborn fanaticism. The times were different. Jews in Germany were newly emancipated from their dark and isolated ghettos. Their eyes were still blinded by the so-called light of freedom. They were still hoping that

² הערצאנטהימער (Herzogtimer) comes from the German word for "duke" (herzog) and refers to the rulers of the German states before German unification. The implication is seemingly that Kohler, like the dukes, has no vision for greater purposes.

they would ultimately be recognized as people and that the rights they had been granted on paper would be carried out in their daily life. We can understand why Jews were so enthusiastic to join battles for the freedom of Germany and Hungary in the revolutions of 1848. This is the same reason that young Jews in Russia are sacrificing themselves for freedom now. The mistaken beliefs are the same. We, however, have the right to demand that a man like Dr. Kohler have the insight to see these mistakes of the past because he has seen the Jewish struggle in Bismark's Germany, the Dreyfuss affair in France, and the terrible murders and pogroms in Russia and Romania. We have a right to demand that a college President exercise at least a little logic and fair-mindedness when he makes decisions about a movement as important as Zionism. We can expect that a man of his learning and his standing as the head of a rabbinical seminary recognize, even when he is against the movement, that Zionism is a high ideal that strives to improve the bitter condition of our unfortunate brethren. Zionists continue to plan and act, while for their opponents, attacks and curses suffice. They do nothing at all to alleviate the horrible conditions of their fellow Jews.

But Kohler is as rigid as mummies that ancient Egyptian magicians embalmed and laid on pyramid shelves. He doesn't see the truth, nor does he feel the necessity to seek the truth. As I have noted, he still lives in the past. We can therefore understand the current controversy in Cincinnati; and why such learned people as Dr. Margolis, Dr. Malter, and Dr. Schloessinger were forced to resign. If Kohler were not such a rigid fanatic, these terrible mistakes would not have come to pass. If he truly understood what his office demanded, he would never have raised the question of whether Zionism and Reform Judaism are compatible. What can we expect from a man who as his first act as College President forbade students from learning Ahad Ha-Am's "At the Crossroads," and declared all of the "New Hebrew" literature a waste of time? One cannot truly expect anything different from such a man. We can only pity him as well as the institution under his supervision. As the Romans said: "Whomever the gods seek to destroy, they first drive insane."

Book Reviews

David Barak-Gorodetsky, *Judah Magnes: The Prophetic Politics* of a Religious Binationalist, trans. Merav Datan (Lincoln: Jewish Publication Society, University of Nebraska Press, 2021), 328 pp.

Judah Magnes (1877–1948), American Reform rabbi and institutional innovator, pacifist, socialist, Zionist binationalist, and central influence within the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, has been the subject of multiple biographies. Shortly after his death, his close friend Norman Bentwich wrote a sympathetic popular study, more narrative than interpretation and with more focus on Magnes the activist than Magnes the thinker. Its intimate portrayal remains valuable even today. Half a century later, a thoroughly documented, more critical biography appeared. Its author, Daniel B. Kotzin, portrayed Magnes as "an American Jewish nonconformist," stressing his roots in the United States more than his activities in Palestine. For Kotzin, it was American democratic ideals, in particular American progressivism, that shaped Magnes's personality and determined the nature of his Zionism.

Why, then, the need for another biography when the facts of the life are well known and various aspects of the personality and thought have been explored? David Barak-Gorodetsky, himself a Reform rabbi and an ordinee of the Jerusalem campus of HUC-JIR, has found a new focus, an element of the life that was mentioned by his predecessors but not explored in depth: Magnes the religious personality, the rabbi, whose thought and action, according to the author, were motivated in large measure by his lifelong religious quest and commitment.

Like the earlier biographers, on whom the author draws and whom he fully acknowledges in his notes, Barak-Gorodetsky recognizes that Magnes's life was, in many respects, a series of failures—whether in New York, where the unified kehillah he led quickly dissolved and his pacifism was challenged by World War I, or in Palestine, where the binationalist solution that he favored was never broadly popular and was

overtaken by the establishment of a Jewish state. After helping to found the Hebrew University, developing its program in Jewish studies, and becoming its chancellor, he was summarily "kicked upstairs" to the role of president, an "exterior" function limited mostly to raising funds for the institution. His life has been described as Sisyphean or even Quixotic. As a rare American who sought a leadership role in Palestine, he remained the outsider (comparable in that regard to Henrietta Szold), an impression only strengthened by the consistent formality of his dress and his disinclination for moral compromise. Even the Central European liberals, with whom he sought to create bonds, saw him as not quite one of their own. Though he was able to form a friendship with thinkers such as Martin Buber, his own intellectual background, rooted in American intellectuals like Ralph Waldo Emerson, was different from the early binationalist circle of Brit Shalom and the similarly inclined Ihud, which he later founded himself.

Yet despite all the failures that he experienced, Magnes was undeterred. Why should that have been the case? Barak-Gorodetsky argues convincingly that it was because of his religious faith. Although Magnes did not identify as a Reform Jew on account of the movement's failure to appreciate Zionism and although he chose to worship in more traditional settings, he was a Reform Jew in two significant respects. One was with regard to Reform's sense of mission to spread a universal ethical monotheism that rejected chauvinism from whatever source and regarded individuals as more significantly human beings than members of a national entity. The other was the conception of Judaism as a prophetic faith. What that meant was adoption of the prophetic imperative, which is unvielding in its call for justice. For Magnes, its call initially meant socialism, though he could never accept the Marxist version held by some Zionists. Among the Hebrew prophets, as Barak-Gorodetsky notes, Magnes was especially drawn to Jeremiah, not only on account of his call for social justice, but also because this Hebrew prophet, certain of the truth of his message, was not deterred by the failure of his contemporaries to pay it heed. Fellow Zionists, to his regret, had rejected the moral message of Jeremiah in favor of Joshua's call to conquest. Unlike most of his Zionist colleagues, Magnes lived initially in the Arab section of Jerusalem and met with prominent local Arabs.

Barak-Gorodetsky defines Magnes's Zionism as "political theology." I should have preferred "religious politics." But either way, it correctly emphasizes the relationship that Magnes believed should exist between the two realms. Reform Judaism of his day had rejected Zionism as "political" and hence outside the proper sphere of religion, and most Zionists had stressed the secularity of their movement. For Magnes, they needed to be brought together. And yet both components remained problematic. Jewish nationalism had insufficient regard for non-Jews, specifically the Palestinian Arabs who desired a share in what they regarded to be their land. The Jewish religion, on the other hand, was unthinkable without the collectivity offered by Zionism. Magnes's religion required a firm belief in God, but his own belief was far from firm. He believed in "God above everything," but his God could not be found, especially after the Holocaust. He remained a doubter embarked on an interminable religious "quest." It is in the analysis of his subject's religious struggles, presented with extensive citations from diaries and notebooks, that Barak-Gorodetsky stands out most clearly from his predecessors and makes his most important contribution.

Although his biography is based on a dissertation and still retains some dissertation elements and occasional repetitions, it is, on the whole, well-formulated and easily readable. It pays unprecedented attention to the intellectual influences on Magnes. Beyond the universally recognized profound effect of Ahad Ha'Am's cultural Zionism, it recognizes the pragmatism of Will James and the Christian theology of Karl Barth. It is not, however, a fully rounded biography. One would have liked to know more about Magnes's personal life, his family, and leisure time activities. But as an intellectual biography—and, I would stress, fundamentally a religious biography—the work has an important place in both American and Israeli Jewish history. Read today, it conveys a tragic irony, for one cannot help but note that the close tie of religion to politics that Magnes so hoped for is in today's Israel realized in a manner scarcely resembling that for which Magnes argued and hoped. Religion has come not to balance a particularist nationalism, as Magnes wished that it would, but rather to strengthen it.

Michael A. Meyer is Adolph S. Ochs Professor of Jewish History emeritus at the Cincinnati campus of Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion. His most recent book is Rabbi Leo Baeck: Living a Religious Imperative in Troubled Times. His current project is a biography of Rabbi Alexander Schindler.

David G. Dalin, *Jews and American Public Life: Essays on American Jewish History and Politics* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2022), xxiv + 294 pp.

The most prominent feature of the literary output of David G. Dalin, a retired professor of American history at Ave Maria University in Florida, has been its diversity of subjects. He has written and co-edited books on the history of the Jews of Hartford, Connecticut; Pope Pius XII's response to the Holocaust; Pope John Paul II and the Jewish people; Amin al-Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and Hitler's leading supporter in the Middle East during World War II; the American conservative theologian Will Herberg; America's presidents and its Jews; American Jews and the issue of the separation of state and church; and religion, state, and the American Jewish experience. His fifteen minutes of fame came in 2017 with the publication of *Jewish Justices of the Supreme Court, from Brandeis to Kagan: Their Lives and Legacies*, his most important book and a finalist for a National Jewish Book Award.

The sixteen essays Dalin chose to include in this volume are engrossing and exhibit his wide-ranging curiosity, his ability to write for both scholarly and general audiences, and his fluid writing style. Topics include the Founding Fathers and America's Jews; the presidential appointments of Jews to federal offices; Woodrow Wilson's selection of Louis D. Brandeis to be the first Jewish Supreme Court justice; the numerous contributions of the bibliophile Mayer Sulzberger to Jewish organizational life both locally in Philadelphia and nationally; Louis Marshall and the Republican Party; the legacy of business magnate and philanthropist Julius Rosenwald; Cyrus Adler's attitude toward the Zionist movement and his efforts to rescue Jewish refugee scholars during the 1930s; America's Jews and the church-state issue;

Jews and the controversy over civil liberties accorded to Nazis; Jewish Republicans and the politics of San Francisco (Dalin's home city); the evolution of Will Herberg from Marxism to Judaism; and the Jewish historiography of Hannah Arendt. Dalin is a passionate baseball fan, and his books ends with brief pieces on two Jewish baseball superstars, Hank Greenberg and Sandy Koufax, the only Jewish players elected to Baseball's Hall of Fame.

Dalin's major emphasis, reflected in the volume's title, has been on the role of Jews in the public square, whether that be in the United States Congress, the Republican Party of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, various presidential cabinets, San Francisco's city hall, the Supreme Court, or on the pitching mound of Dodger Stadium. The political prominence of Jews increased during the twentieth century and by its end, he says, "Jews were politically at home in the United States" (p. xx). Dalin is currently at work on a book-length study of the involvement of Jews in national Republican politics, which will deepen our understanding of the political history of American Jewry. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the leaders of American Jewry from the Civil War to the beginning of the twentieth century were Republicans, and their story is worth telling.

This focus on politics, dead white males, and the assumption that American Jewish history is best viewed from the top down rather than from the bottom up marks Dalin as an outlier among contemporary academic American Jewish historians. The major trend of recent American Jewish historiography has focused on the history of ordinary American Jews at home, work, and school and in the synagogue and the voting booth. By contrast, the major focus of Dalin's essays is on notable male Jewish leaders and the major American Jewish institutions they led, including the Jewish Theological Seminary, the American Jewish Committee, and the Jewish Publication Society. Left unexplored are topics that have interested social historians, such as economic and geographic mobility, living conditions, birth and marriage rates, and gender relationships; and words such as "radicals," "socialists," "labor unions," "strikes," "Left," "feminism," "tenements," and "demography" are not listed in the book's index.

Dalin has written for right-of-center publications such as

Commentary and The Weekly Standard and is a critic of liberal pieties. These include the sharp separation of religion and state and the absolutist view of free speech, which he discusses in the essays "How High the Wall: American Jews and the Church-State Debate" and "Jews, Nazis, and Civil Liberties." In the former he is sympathetic to Naomi W. Cohen, Murray Friedman, Will Herberg, Abraham Joshua Heschel, Milton Himmelfarb, Immanuel Jakobovitz, Irving Kristol, Jakob J. Petuchowski, Seymour Siegel, and Michael Wyschogrod—all of whom were critical of the strict separationist view of church-state relations. They believed Judaism and Jews would benefit from lowering the high wall separating religion and the public square, and that a "moral and political culture uninformed by religious beliefs and institutions undermined the position of Jews and the health of a democratic society" (186). Dalin, who was ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary, agrees with those American Jews who think "religion has a legitimate place in American public life." And while not yet a majority, their arguments "command greater intellectual force and weight than ever before" (201).

"Jews, Nazis, and Civil Liberties" discusses two 1977 events: the demand by American Nazis to march in uniform in Skokie, Illinois, a city with a large Jewish population, including many Holocaust survivors, and the opening of the pro-Nazi Rudolph Hess bookstore in San Francisco. Civil liberty purists defended the Nazis in both instances. Jews had been staunch defenders of civil liberties, but these two events caused some to question the dogma of unfettered speech then being espoused by the American Civil Liberties Union. Dalin believes they were right to be disillusioned by "the growing politicization, radical liberalism, and indifference to Jewish concerns" exhibited by the ACLU and other such organizations (206). These words were written in 1980, and this indifference has not receded.

Edward S. Shapiro is professor emeritus of history at Seton Hall University and the author of A Time for Healing: American Jewry Since World War II, Crown Heights: Blacks, Jews, and the 1991 Brooklyn Riot, and A Unique People in a Unique Land: Essays on American Jewish History.

Alan T. Levenson, Maurice Samuel: Life and Letters of a Secular Jewish Contrarian (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2022), 240 pp.

Romanian-born and English-educated Maurice Samuel (1895–1972) arrived in the United States in 1914 and, after serving in the American army, soon became a sought-after translator of Yiddish and Hebrew literature, a Zionist activist in the manner of Ahad Ha'am, a novelist, a lecturer, and a consummate Jewish cultural critic. Samuel was a major Jewish public intellectual in the 1950s and 1960s, transmitting the cultural heritage of European (especially East European) Jewry to the American public in twenty-six books and scores of articles, but one whose name and intellectual legacy have been largely forgotten. Biblical scholar Alan T. Levenson, inspired by Samuel's Certain People of the Book (1955), an aggadic-like analysis of figures in the Hebrew Bible, seeks to rectify that neglect. Writing in his introduction that were he "forced to give an elevator speech, I would say: the story of this Jewish nationalist who also championed the Jewish Diaspora, who was at home and yet not fully at home in three countries, who traveled the country convincing American Jews that they had inherited a great tradition, that they were badly needed to support those rebuilding the ancestral homeland, who told people that Yiddish—that once-despised language—contained literary riches equal to those in Norton's Anthology of English Literature, is a life worth relating." (15) This tone is echoed in several asides to the perils of academic "credentialism" (10, 88) that Levenson believes has added to Samuel's elision from contemporary collective memory. But the author protests too much: Most historical figures are forgotten. And, without a doubt, Samuel's life and contribution to Jewish culture are noteworthy.

Levenson relates Samuel's life in five chapters ("The Making and Unmaking of a British Jewish Gentleman," "The Fifty-Year Career of a Zionist Publicist," "Moish Samuel: Forgotten Yiddishist," "Polemics and Apologetics," and "The Fiction of Jewish Essentialism Exposed: Samuel and the Hebrew Bible"), highlighting Samuel's deep belief in an essential binary between Jews and gentiles (both Christians and polytheists). Samuel interpreted European antisemitism as a form of neopaganism

that venerated violence and domination. He wrote about this noxious phenomenon in *The Great Hatred* (1940); *The Web of Lucifer: A Novel of Borgia Fury* (1947); *The Gentleman and the Jew* (1950); *The Professor and the Fossil: Some Observations on Arnold Toynbee's Study of History* (1956); *The Second Crucifixion* (1960), and *Blood Accusation: The Strange History of the Beiliss Case* (1966). Yet Samuel did not forgive the Church's or the Christian populace's persecution of the Jews nor the antisemitism of intellectual elites such as Arnold J. Toynbee, whose twelve-volume *A Study of History* (1934–1951) considered rabbinic Judaism bigoted and insular, a betrayal of Judaism's only creative spirit, the prophetic tradition.

Samuel's binary opposition between Jewish and gentile culture (reminiscent of the views of Milton Himmelfarb, another great American-Jewish public intellectual, a figure curiously absent from this book) only attenuated at the end of his life and in great part due to Samuel's two-decades-long conversation on the Bible with Mark van Doren, Columbia University's Brahim man of letters. Their conversations took place over the radio waves in the Jewish Theological Seminary's highly popular broadcast, The Eternal Light, which reached millions of listeners. The language, the narratives, and the meanings in the Hebrew Bible had captivated Samuel from a young age; he had already written in 1918 to Marie Syrkin, arguably the great love of his life, about the Bible's power, which also inspired his reverence for the Jewish pioneers he met in Mandatory Palestine in the 1920s. When Samuel penned Certain People of the Book, he acknowledged the Bible's influence on gentile writers Thomas Mann and James Joyce. His dialogues with the Protestant Van Doren also spurred him to walk back his claims that the Bible was an especially Jewish inheritance, hopeful that Americans in general would be inspired by its moral truths.

Because the terms "popularizer" and "translator" are often considered to be epithets, Levenson wisely characterizes Samuel as a cultural transmitter, but his audience was still circumscribed. The book's argument

¹ Levenson defers to Carole Kessner's biography of Syrkin regarding their relationship. See Carole S. Kessner, *Marie Syrkin: Values beyond the Self* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2008).

illustrates that Samuel's capacious mind and erudition found its most fertile ground mostly among other secular-oriented Jewish public intellectuals, such as Syrkin, Cynthia Ozick, Irving Howe, Arthur Hertzberg, Henry Hurwitz, and Abraham Sachar. Samuel was too highbrow for most American Jews and, not positioned in a university, too much of a generalist to be considered an intellectual of stature—a fact that Levenson rues.

Levenson does not explore two terms in his book's subtitle, "secular" and "contrarian," perhaps assuming that they explain why Samuel is little known today. But I would suggest that Samuel's European-influenced "us versus them" mentality, even when moderated, did not jibe with the integrationist thrust of most postwar American Jews. Likewise, his commitment to Jewish languages faced the linguistic assimilationist pressures of his adopted country; who besides specialists knows the names of other American Hebraists? As Levenson notes, Samuel also had bad timing with the publication of two of his major books, Blood Accusation: The Strange History of the Beiliss Case (1966) and In Praise of Yiddish (1971), which could not compete with the success of Bernard Malamud's The Fixer (1966) and Leo Rosten's The Joys of Yiddish (1968). Finally, the fertile nexus between secular Jewish and American culture unraveled toward the end of Samuel's life. The "new Jews" of the late 1960s embraced religious definitions in their self-fashioning, drawing not only on Jewish tradition but also on a general cultural interest in eastern religions. The more secular-oriented Jewish intellectuals entered the academy. Both groups were notably contrarian, but Samuel's moment was over.

What did live on, however, was the influence of his earlier engagement with Yiddish culture: *The World of Sholem Aleichem* (1943), the first English-language work to bring the genius of the Russian-Jewish Yiddish writer to an American public and the source of Broadway's *Fiddler on the Roof*. A work of popular ethnography, in Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's acute appraisal, the book nonetheless set the stage for the ongoing American Jewish, American, and international engagement with Eastern European Jewish life and the Yiddish language, however romanticized, "inauthentic," or "lowbrow." In the score card of cultural influence, Samuel hit a home run.

Nancy Sinkoff is a professor of Jewish studies and history and the Academic Director of the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life at Rutgers University-New Brunswick. Her most recent publications are Polish Jewish Culture Beyond the Capital: Centering the Periphery, eds. Halina Goldberg and Nancy Sinkoff, with Natalia Aleksiun, and From Left to Right: Lucy S. Dawidowicz, the New York Intellectuals, and the Politics of Jewish History, which won the National Jewish Book Award for biography in 2020 and the Natan Notable Book Award for fall 2020.

Stanley Ringler, *The Arc of Our History: A Social and Political Narrative of Family and Nations* (Jerusalem: Gefen, 2022), 602 pp.

Rabbi Stanley Ringler, an innovator in Hillel and in advocacy for Labor politics in Israel, offers a mammoth compendium of family history, personal memoir, and overview of Israeli political and social history. While the book's length makes it somewhat unwieldy, this volume offers valuable personal reminiscences and historical information. It is a reasonably priced, readable partisan reference work. But the lack of an index severely undermines its usefulness. The only "search" options available to the reader are the Amazon.com listing and the page numbers offered here in parentheses.

While printing and other errors are to be expected in a six-hundred-page book, the poor editing here is endemic. This volume is riddled with grammatical and typographical errors, missing punctuation marks, and non-sentences that lead nowhere. At least one section heading is incomprehensible: "Israeli Strategy Criticized Failed?" (445). Ringler deploys "sic" vindictively when he quotes his critics, and he confuses the titles of Jewish periodicals. He repeatedly spells "allies" as "allays" (543, 546, 547). In addition, some of his points lack clarity. For example, the author declares that he draws upon "personal experience" that "also includes the experiences of members of my extended family and that of many other people in different times and different places," promising that "a number of the events and facts presented are not generally known. As such, they challenge commonly held views and raise probing questions." But it is unclear to which events and facts he refers.

The book commences with a CliffsNotes-type sketch of Jewish history in Europe, beginning in the thirteenth century and proceeding to the wars and social trends that affected the author's grandparents through World War I and leading up to World War II. He then follows his grandparents to America and, in the process, presents a bird's eye view of garment industry and tailoring (111,117ff.) and a quick portrait of Jewish life in the Catskills (108). The first several chapters would make an excellent textbook on Jewish history in modern times leading to the establishment of the State of Israel. The personal accounts are engaging, especially of an uncle's application of his World War II experiences to the family seder (98–99).

Particularly in Holocaust history, Ringler is good at providing timelines (one on restrictions on Jews in the Nazi era, 69ff.) and concise delineations of the SS (89) and other Nazi auxiliaries. He reminds us that the Nazis murdered American and other Jewish prisoners of war.

In his personal reminiscences the author recalls the good public education he received in Florida, which he regarded as marred by discrimination that raised his consciousness of bias; this, he writes, prodded him to become an advocate of integration and civil rights (120) and to expand his activism in protest against the Vietnam War, for which he offers a pithy and informative chronology (129ff.).

In a touching account of his father's death, Ringler relates how he found comfort and purpose in a temple youth group, embracing Reform Judaism both spiritually and politically. He gives short shrift to his years at the University of Cincinnati and Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion; he does share that he composed the liturgy for his ordination (158) but offers no selections. His college years also involved his having helped to form the first and only anti-Vietnam War organization in his conservative college town. There is also an account of his having preached against the Vietnam War as a student rabbi, which caused a controversy that he attributes to the temple president's business dealings with the U.S. military and to a board member's being a national leader of the American Legion. Clearly, Ringler made no "arc of history" attempts to understand more fully the perspectives and motivations of his antagonists.

Married just days after Six Day War, Ringler and his bride, Marlene,

spent some time in Israel and then returned to Florida, where he served as University of Miami Hillel director and she began a career in public school and synagogue teaching. This part of the story is historically significant in many ways. It traces Ringler's successful lobbying for an accredited Jewish studies program and extension of the Hillel program to other campuses. It also details his involvement in Breira, a controversial organization for dialogue with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), which brought him into conflict with the Jewish Defense League and with academicians and Jewish leaders.

Also of historical value is Ringler's account of his next job, in Washington, DC, as national director of community affairs and development at Hillel. In this role he pioneered programs that partnered with professional heads of other Jewish organizations, including AIPAC, American Jewish Committee, Jewish Agency for Israel, and UJA. Among his many impressive achievements detailed here are four-week seminars for students interested in various subjects: political culture, Israeli ideologies, Jewish thought and practice, Holocaust, Arab-Jewish relations, etc.; as well as the first national Hillel leadership program in Israel for Jewish academicians and the National Jewish Student Conference on Public Policy, which led to a National Student Secretariat. Ringler encouraged Hillel to become involved with the struggle for Soviet Jewry, a movement for which he provides historical context and (suspenseful) personal perspective. Throughout the book, Ringler is self-congratulatory of his liberal agenda, which includes preaching against the election of Richard Nixon while a Hillel rabbi and criticizing Ronald Reagan's social and economic policies. (He does not raise the question as to whether Reagan's policies contributed to the fall of the Soviet Union.)

In the third and longest narrative of the book, about his making *aliyah* with his family to advance the work of the Labor Party, he cannot refrain from lauding his own efforts as "prescient" and "enlightened" (197, 199) and supported by the truly "enlightened" (247). "I go to Zion," he announced, "because I wish to make a moral protest against Jewish life in America and against aspects of Israeli Jewish life" (255). While there is precedent for the genre of memoirs of leading Zionist American rabbis (such as Israel Goldstein) who settled in Israel, the small number of such volumes does not yet allow us to speculate as to

whether and to what point they remain "American Jewish" or "Israeli" literature, either in perspective, program, or politics.

In his opening pages Ringler declares that his work was to "educate political leaders about the differences between a Revisionist's view of Israel policies as opposed to Labor's" (5). One looks in vain for self-reflection. Does he regret any errors in the rhetoric or decisions or strategies of the left? Does he see any differences between American liberalism of the 1960s and the Israeli left?

Ringler has a talent for providing good background narrative, which extends to his depiction of the founding of the State of Israel and the development of its government and culture. He blames the League of Nations for the conflict "between the Jewish and Palestinian inhabitants of Palestine" (49). Does he mean "the Jewish and Arab inhabitants of Palestine"? He doesn't mention that the mufti and many in Palestinian Arab society supported the Nazis, a significant geopolitical factor in the region during World War II and since. One must consider other memoirs, such as Italian-American journalist Frank Gervasi's *To Whom Palestine?* (1946), an eyewitness account of how Zionism benefited local Arabs even as they embraced Nazism.

The strength of Ringler's chapters on Israel is definitely his helpful listing and analysis of all political parties as they developed and interacted (or collided) with one another (especially on page 549). Indeed, in 1981 Ringler penned "A Guide to Israel's Political Parties," which was praised by AIPAC (253), an organization with which he had clashed, and which he lambastes along with other adversaries. Taking his cue from Yitzhak Rabin, Ringler accuses AIPAC of undermining the Oslo Accords (309ff.).

Ringler does a good job at outlining why the Orthodox parties transferred their allegiance from the left to the right (262). Likewise, he explains well the politicization of the "Who is a Jew" issue (303) and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's caving in to ultra-Orthodox parties (554–555). He is good at presenting the history of often unfair UN reports on Israel's military strategies but nevertheless urges Israel's participation in international inquiries.

Ringler was presented with unique vantage points from which to observe Israeli society and administrations, particularly when he worked

simultaneously for the Labor Zionist Movement and for Hashomer Hatzair and Kibbutz Artzi, "two ideologically defined movements" that—and here one wishes for more detail—"were fierce competitors when it came to matters of political principle and funding" (260). In 1986 he organized Friends of Labor Israel (FLI) and prepared a publication, "Labor Political Briefs" (273, 289-290). Among Ringler's most notable political undertakings was to communicate to Russian immigrants that the Israeli Labor Party was not an ideological counterpart to the communist regime from which they had fled (348, 366, 368). Here we learn that Ringler emphasized the importance of the Russian Jews to Israeli politics and policies, and he decries the ill-conceived, failed effort to push them into housing projects in the territories (304). Other projects with which he was directly involved receive far less attention, however. One of these is Givat Haviva, where "tremendous efforts were made to redefine attitudes and to encourage respect for and appreciation of the other." How? Sometimes he uses expressions like "political background noise" (280) without defining them.

The chapters on Israel are year-by-year and blow-by-blow, with much helpful information and many lesser-known names that should be recalled, for good or for ill. The main thesis of these chapters is that most of the failures to achieve peace with the Palestinians were the result of a dysfunctional Israeli government, particularly when Netanyahu was in power. Ringler's most salient and continuous accusation against Netanyahu is that he undermined all peace efforts because he demanded that Arafat and Abbas affirm Israel as the "nation-state of the Jewish People" (516), "an example of his creating conditions which are superfluous but nonetheless intended to complicate the Jewish-Arab relationship" (484, 518). Ringler cites Arafat's affirmation in a 1993 letter to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of "the right of the State of Israel to exist in peace and security," adding "that all the outstanding issues relating to permanent status issues will be resolved through negotiations." But could "permanent status issues" include reconsideration of even a "secure" State of Israel? After all, Ringler cites the Palestinians as later declaring that the "issue of the Jewishness of the state has nothing to do with the matter" (494). Ringler complains that any demand by Netanyahu that the Palestinians affirm Israel as the "nation state

of the Jewish People" might be interpreted, "according to Arab suspicions, as compromising the rights of the 21% Palestinian minority in Israel" (484). He also suggests that this demand was Netanyahu's way of sidestepping the settlement issue, though at one point Netanyahu agreed to extending a freeze on settlements in return for "the unequivocal statement that the Palestinians recognize Israel as a Jewish state" (493). Couldn't the Palestinians have added clauses to such a statement addressing their own concerns?

To Ringler, an "Israel as Jewish nation-state" affirmation is a "none issue" (518), to cite his typo. Yet he reveals that it was important to Abbas *not* to make such a statement, despite Netanyahu's expressed concern that "Palestinian nationalism is in fact a Pan-Arabist ploy to displace the Jewish state." Did Ringler ever attempt to interview Netanyahu about this concern that was known, and yet rebuffed, by his Palestinian interlocutors? The author fails to document that not recognizing Israel as the Jewish state has been an absolute, sacrosanct Palestinian doctrine, and that there has been a long debate in Israeli society as to whether any peace negotiations can endure even the "moderate" stance of Salam Fayyad: that "Palestinians will never acknowledge Israel's Jewish identity." I

Ringler's most serious charge against Netanyahu is that in order to wage war in Gaza, his administration concealed information that Hamas had immediately delivered to Israeli authorities about the Palestinian abductors and murderers of Israeli children. But Ringler offers no first-hand testimony to back up this claim (523). Similarly, on the basis of a single source, he accuses Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of mongering America's war with Iraq by withholding intelligence that Saddam Hussein "no longer" had weapons of mass destruction (419).

Yet Ringler gives Arab leaders the benefit of a doubt, pointing to Anwar Sadat's "wake up" call to Israel both by waging war and offering peace (187–188). He commends King Hussein for supporting peace

¹ See the compendium of quotations in "Beyond Images Israel Education and Advocacy Bulletin," 26 June 2011.

talks even when beset by terminal cancer (359). His assessments of Arab leaders and of American presidents will have to be considered in the light of wide-ranging and perceptive studies of U.S. and Middle Eastern policy makers, such as that of Michael S. Doran, who observed: "Sadat played along with the 'comprehensive settlement' game so long as he needed the Americans to pressure Israel to return the Sinai to Egypt, but once he got that, he displayed little interest in the Palestinian issue."² Indeed, a study is needed of how Arab leaders used the Palestinian issue solely for concessions from, or assaults upon, Israel.

Among Ringler's strongest points in his scrutiny of where the Israeli government missed opportunities to negotiate peace is when he makes the case that Netanyahu held up the Hebron and Wye River agreements while advancing his settlement program (360-361). He rightly condemns Netanyahu's dismissive election promise that no Palestinian state would be created (547); his imprudent boast that he would intentionally define areas in the territories as designated "military zones" to justify their being expropriated for new settlements (371); and his numerous insensitive and impolitic remarks on foreign and domestic matters. Ringler blames the conservative Likud Party for the collapse of all attempted peace agreements, especially the Oslo plan (318, 349), even though he notes that Hamas stepped up killing in order to sabotage it (326). He believes that Israel hardened its policies because it allowed itself to be spooked by Hezbollah and Hamas. But he grants that while Arafat prevented PLO terrorism for at least seven years, he did "falter grievously in his commitment to restrain and repress terror activities by Hamas and the equally lethal Islamic Jihad" (327).

Relying on the work of prominent U.S. Mideast peace negotiators Dennis Ross and Aaron David Miller, Ringler lists the failures of Labor Prime Minister Ehud Barak to win the trust of the Palestinians (387, 397–398, 400), mainly due to his abrasive and erratic behavior. But Ringler concedes that Abbas and still-active Arafat had the power to prevent violence if they had wanted to (394, 421). By 2002 Arafat was

² Michael S. Doran, "The Dream Palace of the Americans: Why Ceding Land Will Not Bring Peace," *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2019): 26–27.

"directly" implicated in smuggling weapons from Iraq for terror attacks (425), having chosen "to partner with the militants both within the PA [Palestinian Authority] and among those in the Islamic Jihadist movements" (412). Ringler observes: "Arafat was careful not to make any compromise that would affect his image as the leader and guardian of the Palestinian and Arab national rights and symbols" to the extent of proclaiming that the Temple had been in Nabulus, not Jerusalem (396-397)—a tenet of Palestinian "blood and soil" nationalism as brilliantly delineated by David Brooks.3 And then there was Arafat's—and later, Abbas's-tendency, reported by MEMRI and other outlets and cited in many synagogue sermons of the 1980s and 1990s, to say one thing in English and the opposite in Arabic. Does Ringler not notice that he makes the case that virtually all of the missed opportunities he imputes to Israel were concurrently rejected anyway by the Palestinians? He recounts that in 2008 Prime Minister Olmert was ready to withdraw from settlements (441) and offered Abbas extremely generous conditions (453-454), but that Abbas refused to sign a map "as a means of acknowledging his formal acceptance" (455).

Ringler censures Ariel Sharon for unilaterally disengaging in 2005 from Gaza, which became a base for Hamas terrorist attacks. He wonders "in retrospect" whether it would "have been possible going forward to engage with the Palestinians in negotiations regarding the process of disengagement and the question of cross border relations" (433). But he relates that after Israel relinquished Sinai in a negotiated agreement with Sadat, it became a haven for terrorists attacking both Israel and Egypt (499).

In chronicling Israel's "failures," Ringler relies upon others' books and articles. But he is reticent about his own experiences. He records only superficially his decision to resign from the Labor Party because of his differences with Barak (400). He mentions sending a memorandum to Barak not to make the mistakes of his predecessors regarding the peace process (372) but does not indicate whether he received or pursued a response. Is Ringler's praise of U.S. presidents or secretaries of state

³ David Brooks, "The Death of Compromise," The Weekly Standard (2-9 July 2001).

based on his own American partisanship, or on a Labor Party or Israeli citizen purview? He praises Secretary of State John Kerry's "way forward" (511) but notes that Kerry made a secret pledge to each side that would have offended the other side (514).

It remains now for Ringler's account to be compared to those of other American rabbis involved in Zionist projects (one thinks of Stephen S. Wise's *Challenging Years* and Arthur Hertzberg's *Being Jewish in America*), whether they settled in Israel or not. It would also be good to compare this work with memoirs of those who participated in various peace talks. Perhaps the time has come for artificial intelligence (AI) to sort out the common and contradictory points, and maybe even to offer some synthesis toward resolving what seem to be intractable problems in the Middle East.

Elliot Gertel is rabbi emeritus of Congregation Rodfei Zedek in Chicago.

Nomi M. Stolzenberg and David N. Myers, American Shtetl: The Making of Kiryas Joel, A Hasidic Village in Upstate New York (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022), 496pp.

Growing up in the Commonwealth of Virginia, no figure was more central in my boyhood than Thomas Jefferson. The iconic position Jefferson occupied in my psyche was only reinforced years later by his picture on my diploma from the University of Virginia. I was reminded again and again throughout my education that Jefferson chose not to engrave mention of his positions as president and vice-president of the United States, as secretary of state, as the American ambassador to France, or as governor of Virginia on his gravestone. Instead, he asked that the three achievements be listed of which he was most proud: (1) author of the Declaration of Independence, (2) founder of the University of Virginia, and (3) author of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom.¹

¹ Needless to say, his writings on race were never referenced and his ownership of slaves and the roles they played in constructing Monticello and the University of Virginia as well as in his private life were seldom mentioned.

The Statute for Religious Freedom not only guaranteed religious freedom to all citizens of the Commonwealth; it called for religious disestablishment—a wall of separation between religion and state. This principle advanced by Jefferson became the foundation for the Establishment Clause in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." For millions of Americans and for most of the American Jewish community throughout American history, this commitment has served as an inviolable touchstone of American democracy. It has been the foundation for the construction of a "neutral public sphere" that has allowed Jews and persons of all religious faiths to flourish.

As I read American Shtetl: The Making of Kiryas Joel, a Hasidic Village in Upstate New York, co-authored by Nomi Stolzenberg, professor of law at the University of Southern California, and her husband David Myers, professor of history at the University of California, Los Angeles, Jefferson and this "traditional" understanding of how he championed the principle of separation of religion and state immediately came to mind. However, the view that the American Constitution demands a "wall of separation" between religion and state has been challenged in recent decades in many quarters—nowhere more powerfully than in the Supreme Court. The court's recent interpretations of the First Amendment have demonstrated this prominently; the court has understood the notions of "religious freedom" and "freedom of speech" in ways that grant legal protections to what otherwise might be regarded as discriminatory practices by conservative religious groups. This vector found powerful legal expression in Burwell v Hobby Lobby in 2014, when the court ruled Hobby Lobby could deny contraceptive health coverage benefits for its employees due to the religious objections of its owners. Similarly, in the 2023 decision in 303 Creative LLC v Elensis, the court held that Colorado website designer Lorie Smith had a First Amendment right to refuse to design wedding websites for same-sex couples despite state laws that barred discrimination based on sexual orientation.

In looking at how the religiously segregated village of Kiryas Joel in Orange County, New York, has come to gain legal recognition by the state as an incorporated entity, *American Shtetl* addresses these developments directly and discusses clearly and at great length the legal and legislative evolutions that led to these outcomes. While Stolzenberg and Myers focus their study on Kiryas Joel, they place their book in the larger context of modern European Jewish and Hasidic history as well as the more comprehensive changes that have marked the American political landscape over the last four decades, as religious conservatives have become ever more predominant in the public square. Indeed, the book's historical attention to the European origins of the Satmar, in concert with its focus on American legal decisions and legislative enactments, brilliantly highlight the distinctive American character of Kiryas Joel.

This emphasis on the uniquely American nature of this American Jewish shtetl undoubtedly helps account for why the book has garnered such widespread attention—far more than academic books receive generally. Articles and reviews about American Shtetl have appeared not only in academic journals but The New York Review of Books, The New Yorker, and countless other more popular intellectual journals. Various newspapers, too, have run feature essays on it. The book received the 2023 National Jewish Book Council Award in American Jewish Studies precisely because its focus—that is, on this ethnically-religiously homogeneous village of 35,000 Yiddish-speaking Satmar Hasidim that promotes Jewish segregation and rejects contemporary notions of gender equality—provides a comprehensive historical and legal account of the complications, understandings, divisions, and disagreements concerning whether Jefferson's "wall of separation" remains an "inviolable touchstone" of American democracy. Indeed, ever-growing sectors of the American and Jewish worlds contest this notion. As such, the importance of American Shtetl extends far beyond a single town and the Jewish community; rather, Stolzenberg and Myers relate the tale of this village as it illuminates the contemporary controversy surrounding the relationship between religion and state in America in all its fullness.

To be sure, Stolzenberg and Myers are not the first to deal with this issue in relation to Kiryas Joel. Michael Bamberger, son of my HUC-JIR mentor Fritz Bamberger and a prominent New York attorney, devoted specific attention to Kiryas Joel in his book Reckless Legislation.² Displaying a traditional liberal American Jewish commitment to a "wall of separation" between religion and state, Bamberger criticized the New York State Assembly for what he saw as ignoring its constitutional obligation to the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. By voting overwhelmingly to create a public school district for the segregated religious-cultural population of Satmar Hasidim, Bamberger charged that New York State officials—the governor and the legislature—had betrayed their legal duty to protect against such religious encroachment in the public square and had done so for venal political gain; that is, they capitulated to the Satmar's formidable religious bloc vote. In so doing, New York State, like other states that surrendered in the 1980s and 1990s to Christian fundamentalists who also desired more permeable boundaries between church and state, failed to sustain the founding principle of religion-state separation upon which the United States had been erected.

As liberal Jews themselves, Stolzenberg and Myers may well agree in many ways with Bamberger. However, in their hands a comprehensive and supple account of what transpired in Kiryas Joel over the past forty years speaks to the larger reality of changes in the political-religious land-scape of contemporary America. Indeed, their argument in *American Shtetl* indicates that the very contours of American society, with its commitments to private property and an ever-evolving sense of what constitutes religious freedom, allowed for and even promoted the creation of segregated legal religious enclaves such as Kiryas Joel, which are both quintessentially American and arguably unique. Certainly no other self-contained diasporic Jewish community in the modern West has been able to attain similar legal autonomy. The authors indicate in granular yet engaging detail how the Satmar Hasidim achieved this, demonstrating in the process how the liberal principles of American law can paradoxically be employed for illiberal ends.

At the outset of their book, Stolzenberg and Myers provide a

² Michael A. Bamberger, *Reckless Legislation: How Legislators Ignore the Constitution* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1999).

comprehensive historical account of Satmar Hasidism that centers around Rabbi Joel Teitelbaum (1887-1979), who established his own Hasidic sect in the Hungarian-Rumanian town of Satu Mar, where approximately 10,000 Satmar Hasidim lived alongside 15,000 non-Jews. Teitelbaum was by any standard a religious zealot and a fierce anti-Zionist who survived the Holocaust and arrived, after a short stay in Israel, in Brooklyn in 1946. Absolutely opposed to any accommodations on the part of his flock to the blandishments of the modern secular world, Teitelbaum succeeded in creating a Hasidic community in Brooklyn that soon grew exponentially. Completely committed to establishing a Satmar communal enclave, the exponential growth of Satmar on American shores—Satmar has grown to number 150,000 today, thus making it the largest Hasidic group in the world-meant that the confines of Brooklyn could not contain the burgeoning population. Hence, Teitelbaum and his lieutenants turned to Orange County in New York to purchase property that ultimately could serve the "antiassimilationist" aims of their mushrooming community by creating a village separated from the surrounding world. Indeed, Stolzenberg and Myers emphasize that American political and legal conditions paradoxically allowed the creation of a wholly Satmar village; by contrast, in Hungary the Satmar had to live in a city where, as mentioned above, non-Jews outnumbered Jews. Circumstances in the United States allowed the Satmar to realize their separatist aspirations in Kiryas Joel and allowed the Satmar Hasidic way of life to enjoy a cultural-religious and demographic monopoly to an extent unknown in Europe. To accomplish this, the Satmar Hasidim, like other Hasidic and non-Jewish religious denominations, needed "political muscle."

To be sure, the involvement of Orthodox political groups in secular political life is not unique to America. In Germany, Hungary, and elsewhere, Orthodox Jews and sects frequently turned to secular political powers to advance their own aims and programs. Orthodox paragons such as Rabbis Samson Raphael Hirsch and Esriel Hildesheimer in Germany argued for Orthodox separatism from the general Jewish community. These Orthodox spokesmen did so by putting forth arguments in the Reichstag about religious conscience and liberty that could advance their causes and protect their interests while simultaneously

refusing to apply these doctrines when called upon to do so for liberal denominations within the Jewish community. In the case of Satmar, Stolzenberg and Myers point out that Teitelbaum was no different and that he "was always willing to meet public officials and display loyalty to them" to promote the Satmar community and its concerns. Indeed, they highlight a picture showing Teitelbaum greeting King Carol II of Romania in 1936 to advance Satmar interests even as he preached Satmar separation from less observant Jews and gentiles. Yet, such segregation in Europe was never absolute.

Ironically, America was different. Stolzenberg and Myers detail how the American environment allowed the Satmar to establish a separatist legal village to an extent that might have at first seemed unimaginable. They show how Satmar leaders at the behest of their rebbe purchased land in Monroe in Orange County beginning in the 1970s. These purchases were private, and the buyers hid their intentions to build a separatist community. Furthermore, when they purchased property, they simply violated communal zoning regulations and built homes that would accommodate their large families.

Stolzenberg and Myers indicate how this raised the hackles of many natives—Jews and non-Jews alike—in Monroe, and conflict between the Satmar and these forces quickly emerged. Stolzenberg and Myers then expand their analysis; rather than limiting their topic to Kiryas Joel, they place the conflict within the larger perspective of American history and contemporary religious-cultural-ethnic trends. They point out how American history has long looked positively upon religious groups, from the Puritans during the colonial period to the Mormons in the nineteenth century; they also look at more contemporary villages, such as Rajneeshpuram in Oregon,³ to place Kiryas Joel in the comparative context of the United States. In addition, the authors insightfully emphasize that this was a time of change in America. During the 1980s under President Reagan, a view of multiculturalism that promoted

³ Between 1980 and 1987, the followers of Indian mystic Rajneesh, attempted to create a legally recognized city in Waco County, Oregon, named Rajneeshpuram. This town, ultimately recognized as a legal entity by the Oregon Supreme Court, did not endure as Kiryas Joel has.

particularistic group identity and values—as opposed to a doctrine of integration that brought individuals of diverse racial and cultural backgrounds together in common spaces—was increasingly seen as a method to achieve genuine equality. Evangelical Christians and many Catholics were prominent among those who advanced this notion, and the Satmar, as Stolzenberg and Myers argue, benefitted from this trend, even as they advanced it.

The Satmar were able to advance to this greater success by employing the tools of private property, the secular court system of the United States, legislative lobbying, bloc voting, and the above-mentioned multicultural trends in modern-day America. The authors detail how the Satmar mastered these tools as they established Kiryas Joel in 1977 as a self-contained legal polity within New York State. Chief among their methods was they engaged secular courts—against the teachings of traditional Jewish law—in their internecine rivalries as well as in their struggles with the outside world. This enabled them to create a culturally-religiously segregated public school system in ways that could be the envy of any subgroup that wished to navigate between self-isolating communal aspirations and the American polity. American Shtetl discusses the countless cases adjudicated on behalf of Satmar and Kiryas Joel in clear and exact detail; this book reads almost like an instruction manual for fundamentalistic religious groups who would seek to emulate the "success" of the Satmar by using the power of American law to segregate from American culture. Stolzenberg and Myers indicate how American liberal politics and society provided the economic and legal tools to promote group values and boundaries.

When I was in graduate school during the 1970s, the tale Max Weber told was regnant among social scientists. Due to the dominance of formal rationality in the West, life became demystified and progressively intellectualized. As Weber wrote, this process meant "that there are no mysterious, incalculable forces that come into play, but rather, that one can, in principle, master all things by calculation. This means that the world is disenchanted." In grasping the significance of *American Shtetl*, it is instructive to remember that not too long ago it was thought that "religious fundamentalisms" of every stripe, including Orthodox Judaism, were inexorably fated to decline in this "disenchanted" setting.

The assumption was that pressures exerted by rationalization and secularization would confine adherents of traditional religion to the fringes of society. The modern world was headed in one direction—the abandonment of traditional religion. As the late Peter Berger pointed out in his 1968 presidential address to the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, the attempt to maintain group solidarity for such enclaves would surely falter as they faced enormous challenges of "social engineering" where the ubiquitous temptations of the larger world were seemingly unavoidable. After all, how could impermeable barriers be erected that would withstand encroachments by the blandishments and values of the larger world?

That question is answered soundly by the narrative produced by Stolzenberg and Myers, which demonstrates that religious segregationists can use the American legal system and its values to create legally recognized towns that promote private communal norms and fundamentalistic religious assumptions. In Kiryas Joel—and elsewhere—traditional religion flourishes. Readers should be grateful to the authors for this cautionary tale.

David Ellenson, z"l, served as chancellor emeritus of Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion and professor emeritus of Near Eastern and Judaic studies at Brandeis University.

Note from David N. Myers and Nomi M. Stolzenberg:

There is no greater honor and privilege than to have our book reviewed by David Ellenson z"l. David was a scholar of vast intellectual horizons, who easily moved, as we see here, between Thomas Jefferson and Max Weber, Samson Raphael Hirsch and Joel Teitelbaum. It is that stunning range, together with his incomparable synthetic capacity, that granted him such unique purchase on the topic of Kiryas Joel, New York. It is especially poignant that David, our beloved friend and scholarly mate, wrote a review of our book as one of the last pieces he would author. His passing leaves a vast hole in the field of Jewish studies and in our lives.

Lance J. Sussman, *Portrait of an American Rabbi: In His Own Words* (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris, 2023), 592 pp.

The role of a pulpit rabbi requires skillful multitasking. The demands are liturgical, pastoral, communal, managerial, and pedagogical. Famously, the word "rabbi" is even synonymous with teacher. One exemplar is Lance J. Sussman, who recently retired after serving Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel (KI) in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, for a little more than two decades. He was also certified to play another role: historian. He earned a doctorate from HUC-JIR in 1987, having studied with Jacob Rader Marcus and Jonathan D. Sarna; and eight years later Sussman published a biography, Isaac Leeser and the Making of American Judaism. Fittingly, Isaac Leeser was also a Philadelphian (although not an ordained rabbi), who served antebellum Congregation Mikveh Israel. Leeser was the first Jewish "minister" to embody the struggle that has engaged Sussman (and virtually every other American rabbi)—how to reconcile the claims of a distinctive faith with the freedom that the openness of society invites. Sussman has tended to put that dilemma in historic terms. He has taught American Jewish history at Princeton, Temple, Rutgers, and elsewhere. Through his writing and lecturing, he has shown a flair for what Nietzsche called "the sixth sense," the sense of history.

Sussman makes this point himself in his introduction (xvi), and his readers will benefit from the historical consciousness that is deployed in this book. *Portrait* consists largely, but not entirely, of sermons that he delivered at KI during the first two decades of our traumatic century-to-date. Other communications are included in this book, too. It is packed with good sense and even with wisdom, genially and elegantly presented—and frequently with a light touch. Sussman establishes a historical contrast, for instance, between the fiery Puritanism of Jonathan Edwards's "sinners in the hands of an angry God" and contemporary rabbis who "talk about anger management." He contrasts the nation's evangelical preachers (too numerous to name) who sin and then beg and plead and scream for forgiveness (often granted) with rabbis, "who make mistakes and lose their contracts" (133).

What was it like to listen to Sussman's sermons? They are crisp, cogent, vivid, and lucid. He sought to stir his congregants' capacity for

thoughtfulness; less characteristically, he wanted to stir up their passions. His service at KI was bracketed by two frightening and perhaps ineluctable challenges, however. The first was the external threat of Islamicist terrorism on 11 September 2001. The other was the internal menace of mob rule nearly two decades later, on 6 January 2021. This *Portrait* is therefore something of a record of one rabbi-historian's response to major events that have shaped American Jewish life in between those shocks. This hefty volume can therefore be considered a sort of homiletic counterpart to the lapidary aims of the *American Jewish Year Book*. Sussman has opted for breadth—rather than picking a few of his greatest hits, and rather than directing his readers to some thematic tics and idiosyncratic obsessions. By explicating Reform beliefs, by conveying the imperatives of social justice, and by illuminating an abiding concern for Israel, this *Portrait* can be read as an index of the evolution of American Judaism.

The author often draws upon his own experience to chart those changes. Born in 1954, he grew up in Baltimore, where the architecture of the Oheb Shalom of his boyhood was modeled on the Tempio Maggiore, Florence's Great Synagogue. When Oheb Shalom made the inevitable move to the suburbs, Walter Gropius designed the new building. (Beth Sholom Synagogue, which Frank Lloyd Wright designed, is down the road from KI in Elkins Park.) When Sussman was young, Jewish religious life projected majesty and confidence. He recalls the ushers of the 1960s wearing boutonnieres as they escorted worshippers to their pews, where they recited from the Union Prayer Book. He calls its prose "Elizabethan" (197); I think "Miltonic" probably comes closer. When the rabbis, wearing robes and pill-box hats, marched into the sanctuary, everyone else rose from their seats in deference. This was the sort of decorum to which two or three generations of Reform Jews had aspired, a stateliness that New Yorker humorist S.J. Perelman would have dismissed as "too much couth."

Yet in addressing KI's penitents on Kol Nidre in 2010, Sussman could not help reckoning with the price that Reform was continuing to pay for its commitment to modern rationality. He acknowledged that a spiritual dimension was missing; he found a fervor for holiness too little in evidence. That kind of parched "secularism" he regarded as "the most corrosive element in Jewish life today" (202). No wonder, Sussman

added, that Reform was losing adherents, that it was "rapidly shrinking" and showing signs of serious historical decline (198). Without renouncing the relevance of science and rationality, codified in the Pittsburgh Platform (1885), he wanted his preaching to deepen and revitalize an appreciation of piety, applied to dynamic American conditions.

Sussman never wanted to be anything other than a rabbi, to make Judaism both appealing and demanding. He was ordained at HUC-JIR in Cincinnati in 1980 and landed thereafter in several congregations that enabled —or forced—him to see "life in all of its dimensions, complexities and variations" (55). Not every aspect of this calling did he find rewarding, however. As the rabbi of Temple Beth Shalom in Middletown, Ohio, for example, Sussman was expected to serve as the Jewish chaplain of a nearby prison. The inmates he encountered there didn't strike him as the hapless victims of frame-ups. "I was scared when I went 'in," Sussman admitted, "drenched in sweat when I came out, and nervous I would be contacted to go back in" to fulfill his pastoral duties (312). But somehow he survived; and a little more than two decades after ordination, he found himself at KI, the congregation that, in the nineteenth century, had been the base for Rabbi David Einhorn, the pioneering liturgist and theologian who was also an ardent abolitionist. "To this congregation's eternal credit, he was not stifled by his officers or trustees," Sussman notes (75). A century later, another of KI's spiritual leaders, Rabbi Bertram W. Korn, focused on Jewry during the Civil War and the early Jewish community of New Orleans in his own pioneering works of scholarship. Sussman himself has generalized that Jewish history "is a mix of consensus and conflict." He has come to believe that the Jewish collective experience, "ancient and contemporary, is broadly the story of consensus internally riddled with conflict," a divisiveness that he has called saddening (410).

But surely the value of unity can be overstated. A century ago, Reform explicitly repudiated the notion of peoplehood and championed a religious self-definition of Jewishness. Also a century ago, Lessing Rosenwald, a member of KI, made himself into a key figure in the mischievously anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism. Such a stance, though once commonplace, cannot be regarded in retrospect with pride. The Israeli flag currently flies on the *bimah*, without stifling serious differences over

what Sussman called the "interdependence" of American Jewry with Israel (52). In his Rosh Hashanah sermon in 2017, Sussman advocated a more forthright "fight for pluralism, democracy, and justice inside of Israel" (413); and he opposed the "aggressive nationalism and religious zealotry" that he associated with the West Bank settlements. Such dissidence, such criticism, is a sign of health. At least on the plane of ideas and policy, consensus can signify stagnation; and clashes of opinion can be invigorating.

In any case, pulpit rabbis are usually obliged to live with discontent and tension. Take 2008. Most of KI's congregants were delighted with the electoral victory of Barack Obama, Sussman reported. But the first Tuesday of that November also generated enough disquiet at KI for its rabbi to take notice. Because about two-thirds of American Jewish voters cast their ballots for the Democratic ticket, the proportion of such voters in a Northern, suburban Reform shul like KI was presumably even higher. "On the other hand," he declared, "my politically conservative members, typical of the American Right wing, were greatly alarmed; and the polarization of American politics, already deep and dangerous, became even more profound." Occupying a pulpit at that moment proved "perilous" and became "more problematic as the years went by," he lamented (108). Alas, Portrait does not explain why the conservative congregants were so "alarmed." Under the stewardship of a Republican president, the economy had just tanked; and his embattled successor in the White House was expected to reverse that collapse. What was it, then, that right-wing congregants feared? How could they have made the politics of KI so problematic? Sussman does not say. His book is, after all, a public record, not a private diary.

The general tone of this volume is nevertheless upbeat. It makes the case for resilience. Take Bamberg, the Bavarian town where Sussman's mother was born. Before 1933, about a thousand Jews lived there; they worshipped in a Moorish-style synagogue. The history of that Jewish community spanned a millennium. But when Sussman visited Bamberg, not a single Jew from a family that stemmed from the pre-Nazi period remained there. The wipeout was complete. And yet, beginning in 1989, the fall of communism enabled Jews from the East to move into German cities and towns, and Sussman discovered that the population of Bamberg has sprung back to its previous size. Though the shadows

of destruction could not be dispelled, the ruin that the Third Reich had inflicted was denied the final say.

This *Portrait* also includes an essay on the power of the visual arts—a subject of little concern to Sussman's predecessors. He found in the history of painting clues to early convictions about the compatibility of modernity with post-emancipatory Judaism. For example, the German painter Moritz Daniel Oppenheim (1800–1882) boasted that he was "the painter of Rothschilds and the Rothschild of painters" (210–211); and the popularity of his *Scenes from Traditional Jewish Life* may have been unmatched in assimilated German Jewish homes. Incorporating images (and not only ideas) and the arts (and not only texts) gives the author of this *Portrait* license to weave old and new in the fabric of Jewish life.

Sussman serves on the academic advisory and editorial board of this journal. That status does not, however, affect my judgment—my high estimation—of the pertinence of this volume. Play-by-play, with authority but without pretense, *Portrait of an American Rabbi* deftly traces the fate of Reform Judaism in the twenty-first century.

Stephen J. Whitfield is emeritus professor of American studies at Brandeis University. He is the author of ten books, including most recently Learning on the Left: Political Profiles of Brandeis University (2020).

David Weinfeld, An American Friendship: Horace Kallen, Alain Locke, and the Development of Cultural Pluralism (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2022), 248 pp.

David Weinfeld's carefully researched work traces the development of the early- to mid-twentieth-century social theory of cultural pluralism. He does so by taking a novel approach to studying the legacy of two of its key architects, Jewish American philosopher Horace Kallen and African American philosopher Alain Locke. Starting with the premise that cultural pluralism presented a radical alternative to the popular segregationist views of the time by encouraging inter-ethnic friendship, Weinfeld unpacks how Locke and Kallen's specific inter-ethnic friendship shaped their worldviews.

Friendship, commonly understood to occupy a personal and private realm of experience, can also be understood to exist as a public bond with implications for the civic realm of experience. Modern theorists seeking to recover the political significance of friendship in modernity often turn to Aristotle, who Weinfeld invokes. Civic, or political, friendships are influenced by, and can in turn themselves influence, the halfhidden processes of collective life that shapes society. Kallen and Locke, Weinfeld seems to suggest, looked to elite culture as the guiding force in that social process. Further, both likely rooted their social assumptions in Tocqueville's "l'état social," a view of the social order as emerging from democracy and which introduces equality into social relations. What primarily concerns Weinfeld is the political significance of their friendship. Weinfeld makes the case that situating cultural pluralism at the heart of democratic life necessitates the creation of social bonds that are not transactional, but based on friendship. As such, Weinfeld's work may be considered a contribution to the growing body of scholarship concerned with how civic or political friendships sustain democratic life and serve as an antidote to a modern society otherwise composed of indifferent strangers.

Weinfeld's purpose in writing the book is to make the case that an examination of the friendship between Kallen and Locke opens possibilities for navigating today's fractured social bonds, revisiting the basis for Black-Jewish relationships, and resolving issues of identity and community. He traces the genesis, development, and significance of Locke and Kallen's friendship. He first reviews Kallen's and Locke's childhoods, how they grappled with antisemitism and racism, their complicated relationships with the Jewish and Black communities, and how they eventually crossed paths at Harvard. He then tells us how their friendship began to blossom during their time at Oxford, and he explores the idea that a friendship that appreciates difference has political ramifications. Locke's formulation of cultural pluralism was deeply influenced by his interactions with Kallen, Weinfeld argues, as well as by those whom Kallen introduced to him.

For Weinfeld, the fact that Kallen and Locke were not close friends is not a reason to discount the significance of their friendship. Weinfeld writes that what is important is the intellectual exchanges that they

shared. Thus, he observes, "Locke and Kallen articulated strikingly similar ideas at nearly the same time. Both argued for a common social fabric to go along with cultural diversity, and both believed that cultural diversity strengthened that social fabric. The differences in their thought were minor or semantic, the commonalities crucial and comprehensive" (133). Locke's formulation of cultural pluralism was guided by his own personal history, which included his encounters with racism and his friendship with Kallen. Weinfeld then explores the significance of their shared secularity, which also informed their view of pluralism. Finally, he takes up the subject of their rekindled friendship after 1935 and juxtaposes the respect that Kallen and Locke shared for each other with their latent racist and antisemitic views. Their mutual respect, he suggests, helped them to overcome their internalized prejudices. Thus, for Weinfeld, the importance of contemplating the significance of friendship as a fundamental premise of cultural pluralism lies in its potential to build bridges and overcome bigotry by affirming the value of difference.

An American Friendship emerged from a doctoral dissertation. Weinfeld has done a great deal of archival research, and he brings to light much rich material for the first time. He revels in presenting details and asides that he came across in researching his book, which, while entertaining, sometimes causes the argument to lose focus. He tends to engage in a good deal of speculation, too, which detracts from the work. At one point, he wonders whether Kallen and Locke may have shared a sexual attraction, but he then abruptly drops the matter and the reader is left wondering why it seemed important to him to speculate about this. Weinfeld also makes certain dubious claims; for example, he suggests that Kallen picked up an entirely affected English accent at Oxford that he somehow managed to sustain for his entire life. Kallen's accent appears, however, to have been that of the cultivated early-twentiethcentury New England, or Boston Brahmin, variety. Weinfeld's understanding of Kallen's relationship with science and, in particular, race science lacks nuance. It would have been more compelling had Weinfeld explored the contrast between Locke's repudiation of salience of race as a Black man and Kallen's insistence on it as a white Jew during their formative periods. Race carried very different connotations to these men, and it impacted their sense of identity in very different ways.

Nevertheless, these shortcomings do not significantly detract from his argument. Weinfeld's book will be of particular interest to scholars in the field of cultural pluralism, American Jewish history, and African American history.

Rabbi Matthew Kaufman, PhD, serves as rabbi of Congregation Kehillat Israel in Lansing, MI. His first monograph, Horace Kallen Confronts America: Jewish Identity, Science, and Secularism, was published by Syracuse University Press in 2019.

- Select Acquisitions 2022 -

Asa, Haim

Accrual to papers of Rabbi Asa (1931–2014), including correspondence, sermons, awards, news clippings, and additional collected material, 1960–2019.

Received from Elaine Asa, Fullerton, CA

Bay Area Jewish Healing Center (San Francisco, CA)

Organizational records, including correspondence, minutes, programming material, publicity, newsletters, and news clippings, 1991–2022.

Received from Eric Weiss, Bay Area Jewish Healing Center, San Francisco, CA

B'nai B'rith Des Moines Lodge No. 330 (Des Moines, IA)

Photograph albums and documents pertaining to Robert Lappen's involvement with the Des Moines Lodge of B'nai B'rith.

Received from David Lappen, Santa Monica, CA

Braude, Anne Siegel and Paul

Collection of family papers, including correspondence, diplomas, birth records, family history, and 1954 oral history interview with Morris Siegel, 1910–1954.

Received from Sara Balderston, Columbus, OH

Congregation Adath Israel (Hopkinsville, KY)

Ledger book containing minutes and financial records, together with news clippings about the congregation, 1924–1933.

Received from Sharon Glickman, Skokie, IL

Congregation B'nai Jacob (East Liverpool, OH)

Minute book and correspondence between Rabbi Gerald Raiskin and Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, 1910.

Received from Judith Raiskin, Pittsburgh, PA

Feinstein, Morley

Papers of Rabbi Feinstein (1954–2021), including correspondence, writings, sermons, and additional records of his rabbinic career at Wilshire Boulevard Temple, 1977–2014.

Received from Wilshire Boulevard Temple, Los Angeles, CA

Finkelstein, Louis

Collection of letters of Rabbi Finkelstein (1895–1991) to Herbert Yoskowitz, including a copy of his article "Rabbinic Reflections on Retirement," 1970–1978.

Received from Herbert Yoskowitz, West Bloomfield, MI

Friends of Kutz

Records of the alumni organization of URJ Kutz Camp (Warwick, NY), including correspondence, minutes, rosters and mailing lists, newsletters, and additional records, 1985–1989.

Received from Don Cashman, Albany, NY

Goldman, Robert P.

Accrual to professional papers of Mr. Goldman, relating to the revision of Ohio's Commercial Codes, together with other records, 1950–1960.

Received from the University of Cincinnati, Robert S. Marx Law Library, Cincinnati, OH

Goldstein, Harvey and Bertha Lipson

Papers of Cantor Harvey Goldstein and pianist Bertha Lipson Goldstein, including biographical material, correspondence, curriculum and educational materials, music services, and manuscripts, 1950–1969.

Received from Janice Jones, Santa Rosa, CA

Grollman, Earl

Papers of Rabbi Grollman (1925–2021), including correspondence, sermons, writings, recorded speeches, and awards, 1943–2008.

Received from Sharon H. Grollman, Cambridge, MA

Grossman, Grace Cohen

Papers including correspondence, research, writing, and files pertaining to Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Soviet Jewry, and the Skirball Cultural Center, 1960–2012.

Received from Grace Cohen Grossman, Glen Burnie, MD

Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas (U.S. Virgin Islands)

Congregational records, including correspondence, membership files, Sisterhood records, photos, news clippings, educational and programming material, and rabbis' writings, 1947–2015.

Received from Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas, St. Thomas, VI

Ingber, Jerome and Judith Brin

Papers of Jerome Ingber and Judith Brin Ingber pertaining to their involvement in Wexner Heritage Foundation programs, including application material, Foundation correspondence, program material from Foundation retreats, and correspondence of Rabbi Herbert Friedman, 1986–1996.

Received from Judith Brin Ingber, Minneapolis, MN

Katchko-Gray, Deborah

Papers of Cantor Katchko-Gray, including correspondence, clippings, and interview transcript, 1994–2012.

Received from Deborah Katchko-Gray, Ridgefield, CT

Knobel, Peter

Papers of Rabbi Knobel including correspondence, sermons, writings, and clippings, 1957–2016.

Received from Jeremy Knobel, Wilmette, IL

Loewy, Robert H.

Collection of sermons and eulogies by Rabbi Loewy, 1975–2018. Received from Robert H. Loewy, Metairie, LA

Maslin, Simeon J.

Papers of Rabbi Maslin (1931–2022), including correspondence, sermons and writings, and subject files, 1957–2007.

Received from Judith Maslin, Philadelphia, PA

Neuman, Isaac

Papers of Rabbi Neuman, including correspondence, sermons and writings, Sinai Temple (Champaign, IL) records, student papers, and files pertaining to civil rights activities; and papers regarding the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1956–2014.

Received from David and Mark Neuman, Champaign, IL

Northern Hills Synagogue Congregation B'nai Avraham (Cincinnati, OH)

Collection of congregational records including correspondence, board minutes, reports, programming material, Sisterhood records, oral histories, photographs, and additional records, 1940–2020.

Received from Northern Hills Synagogue Congregation B'nai Avraham, Cincinnati, OH

North Shore Congregation Israel (Glencoe, IL)

Collection of congregational records and bulletins, together with a collection of recordings of Rabbi Herbert Bronstein, 1985–2020.

Received from North Shore Congregation Israel, Glencoe, IL

Philo, Isadore

Digital transfers from phonograph records of Rabbi Philo, 1946. Received from Jesse Kendall, Potomac, MD

Priesand, Sally J.

Accrual to collection of Rabbi Priesand's papers, including correspondence, scrapbooks and clippings, and material relating to Rabbi Priesand's retirement from Monmouth Reform Temple (Monmouth, NJ), 2006.

Received from Sally J. Priesand, Ocean Township, NJ

Quaker City (Philadelphia, PA) Lodge B'nai B'rith records

Records of Quaker City Lodge 1380 of B'nai B'rith, including newsletters, correspondence, and additional records, 1952–1960.

Received from Bonnie Eisenman, Richmond, VA

Rachlin, Sidney G.

Papers of Dr. Rachlin, DDS, including dental school records, military service records and V-mail, additional family correspondence, journals, and writings, 1940–1975.

Received from Joan Rachlin, Boston, MA

Rosenberg Family

Collection of papers of Esther Kaplan Rosenberg, her son Arnold, and additional family members, 1918–1953.

Received from Amy Cohen, Philadelphia, PA

Rubenstein, Richard L.

Accrual to papers of noted scholar, rabbi, and theologian Richard L. Rubenstein (1924–2021), including correspondence, drafts and writings, photographs, and additional files from throughout his career, 1952–2016.

Received from Hannah R. Rubenstein, Bridgeport, CT

Sasso, Dennis and Sandy

Papers of Rabbis Dennis and Sandy Sasso, including correspondence, records of Congregation Beth-El Zedek (Indianapolis, IN), and records of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association and Rabbinic Assembly, 1977–2022.

Received from Dennis and Sandy Sasso, Indianapolis, IN

Seligman, Scott

Collection of genealogical and biographical material pertaining to the Abrahamowitz and Liebman (Loveman) of Slovakia, New York, New Jersey, Tennessee, and Alabama Rudbart/Milsky, and Seligman families of Belarus and New Jersey Sternreich and Zimmerman families of Poland and New Jersey including vital records, passenger manifests, correspondence, diaries and memoirs, photographs, and additional records,

1811-2022.

Received from Scott Seligman, Washington, DC

Shore, Yvon

Collection of personal and professional papers of Cantor Shore, together with audio/visual recordings of musical programs in synagogues and at HUC-JIR, 1994–2012.

Received from Yvon Shore, Cincinnati, OH

Temple Judea Mizpah (Skokie, IL)

Congregational records including correspondence, board minutes and reports, Sisterhood records, membership files, religious school records, scrapbooks, and photographs. Collection includes records of Temple Mizpah and Temple Judea of Niles Township, and files on their 1954 merger, 1929–2018.

Received from Helayne Levin, Morton Grove, IL

Wise, Isaac Mayer

Collection of Isaac Mayer Wise family artifacts, including inscribed kiddush cup, photographs, family album, carved wooden handbag, and jade beads, 1775, 1865–1930.

Received from Susan Dryfoos, New York, NY

Wishner, Maynard

Papers of lawyer and community leader Maynard Wishner (1923–2011), including correspondence, writings, scrapbooks, American Jewish Committee records, awards, and memorials, 1964–2014.

Received from Jane Wishner, Ellen Kenemore, and Mimi Segel

Zoberman, Israel

Reflections of Rabbi Zoberman on the High Holidays, entered in the Congressional Records, 2022.

Received from Israel Zoberman, Virginia Beach, VA

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Rabbi Lucy H.F. Dinner Temple Beth Or, Raleigh, NC

Rabbi Rebecca L. Dubowe

Moses Montefiore Congregation, Bloomington, IL

Rabbi Amy B. Ehrlich

Congregation Emanu-El of the City of New York, NY

Rabbi Steven W. Engel

Congregation of Reform Judaism, Orlando, FL

Rabbi Dena A. Feingold

Temple Beth Hillel, Kenosha, WI Rabbi Marla J. Feldman

New York, NY
Rabbi Daniel J. Fellman

Temple Sinai, Pittsburgh, PA

Rabbi Steven M. Fink

Temple Oheb Shalom, Parkland, FL

Rabbi Karen L. Fox

Wilshire Boulevard Temple, Los Angeles, CA

Rabbi Anthony B. Fratello

Temple Shaarei Shalom, Boynton Beach, FL

Rabbi Ronne Friedman

Temple Israel, Boston, MA

Rabbi James S. Glazier

Congregation of Temple Sinai, South Burlington, VT

Rabbi Edwin C. Goldberg

Beth Shalom of the Woodlands, The Woodlands, TX

Rabbi Jay B. Goldburg St. Louis, MO

Rabbi Mark N. Goldman

Loveland, OH

Rabbi Samuel N. Gordon

Congregation Sukkat Shalom, Wilmette, IL

Rabbi Adam B. Grossman

University of Florida Hillel, Gainsville, FL

Rabbi Rosette Barron Haim Beachwood, OH

Rabbi Stephen A. Hart

Temple Chai, Glenview, IL

Rabbi Michael E. Harvey West Lafayette, IN

Rabbi Lisa Hochberg-Miller

Temple Beth Torah, Ventura, CA

Rabbi Abie Ingber

Cincinnati, OH

Rabbi Bruce E. Kahn

Temple Shalom, Chevy Chase, MD

Rabbi Mark Kaiserman

The Reform Temple of Forest Hills, Forest Hills, NY

Rabbi Lewis H. Kamrass

Isaac M. Wise Temple, Cincinnati, OH

Rabbi Kenneth A. Kanter

Roots of Reform Judaism, Cincinnati, OH

Rabbi Ronald W. Kaplan

Warren, NJ

Rabbi William I. Kuhn Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Martin S. Lawson San Diego, CA

Rabbi Bradley G. Levenberg Temple Sinai, Sandy Springs, GA

Rabbi Daniel Levin Temple Beth El, Boca Raton, FL

Rabbi Seth M. Limmer Chicago, IL

Rabbi John Linder

Temple Solel, Paradise Valley, AZ

Rabbi David Locketz

Bet Shalom Congregation, Minnetonka, MN

Rabbi Ari Lorge

Central Synagogue, New York, NY

Rabbi Steven Lowenstein Am Sholom, Glencoe, IL

Rabbi Bruce Lustig

Washington Hebrew Congregation, Washington, DC

Rabbi Devorah Marcus

Temple Emanu-El, San Diego, CA

Rabbi Gregory S. Marx

Congregation Beth Or, Maple Glen, PA

Rabbi Steven S. Mason

North Shore Congregation Israel, Northbrook, IL

Rabbi Bernard H. Mehlman

Temple Israel, Boston, MA Rabbi David J. Meyer

Temple Emanu-El, Marblehead, MA

Rabbi Stanley R. Miles Temple Shalom, Louisville, KY

Rabbi Aaron D. Miller

Washington Hebrew Congregation, Washington, DC

Rabbi Evan Moffic

Makom Solel Lakeside, Highland Park, IL

Rabbi Jay H. Moses

Wexner Heritage Program, Columbus, OH Rabbi Michael L. Moskowitz

Temple Shir Shalom, West Bloomfield, MI

Rabbi Randi Musnitsky

Temple Har Shalom, Warren, NI

Rabbi Howard Needleman

Temple Kol Ami Emanu-El, Plantation, FL

Rabbi Geri Newburge

Main Line Reform Temple, Wynnewood, PA

Cantor Adelle R. Nicholson

Hallandale Beach, FL

Rabbi Jordan Ottenstein

Congregation Dor Tamid, Johns Creek, GA

Rabbi Stephen S. Pearce

Congregation Emanu-El, San Francisco, CA

Rabbi Mark A. Peilen Southside, AL

Rabbi Amy R. Perlin

Rabbi Aaron M. Petuchowski

Denver, CO

Rabbi Joe R. Rapport

Congregation Adath Israel Brith Sholom, Louisville, KY

Rabbi Frederick Holmes Reeves

Congregation KAM Isaiah Israel, Chicago, IL

Rabbi Fred N. Reiner

Chevy Chase, MD

Rabbi Sarah H. Reines

Temple Emanu-El, New York, NY

Rabbi Donald B. Rossoff

Evanston, IL

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein

92nd Street Y, New York, NY

Rabbi David Sandmel

Anti-Defamation League, New York, NY

Rabbi Daniel A. Schwartz

Temple Shir Shalom, West Bloomfield, MI

Rabbi Joshua L. Segal Bennington, NH

Rabbi Jeffrey M. Segall Washington, DC

Rabbi Isaac D. Serotta Makom Solel Lakeside, Highland Park, IL

Rabbi Benjamin A. Sharff The Reform Temple of Rockland Upper Nyack, NY

Rabbi Scott L. Shpeen Congregation Beth Emeth, Albany, NY

Cantor Wayne S. Siet Temple Shaari Emeth, Manalapan, NJ

> Rabbi James L. Simon Miami, FL

Rabbi Jonathan L. Singer Congregation Emanu-El, San Francisco, CA

Rabbi Jeffrey J. Sirkman

Larchmont Temple,

Larchmont, NY

Rabbi Donald M. Splansky
Framingham, MA

Cantor Howard M. Stahl
Temple B'nai Jeshurun,
Short Hills, NJ

Rabbi Jonathan A. Stein San Diego, CA

Rabbi Richard M. Steinberg Congregation Shir Ha-Ma'alot, Irvine, CA

Rabbi Andrea C. Steinberger UW-Madison Hillel, Madison, WI

Rabbi Shira Stern
Lenox, MA

Rabbi James A. Stoloff Temple Avodat Shalom, River Edge, NJ

Rabbi David E. Straus

Main Line Reform Temple, Wynnewood, PA

Rabbi Lance J. Sussman Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, Elkins Park. PA

Rabbi Susan A. Talve Central Reform Congregation,

St. Louis, MO

Rabbi Miriam P. Terlinchamp Cincinnati, OH

Rabbi Karen Thomashow Temple Isaiah, Lexington, MA

Rabbi Gerry H. Walter Blue Ash, OH

Rabbi Donald A. Weber Temple Rodeph Torah, Lenox, MA

Rabbi Michael A. Weinberg

Temple Beth Israel,

Skokie, IL

Rabbi Max W. Weiss
Oak Park Temple,
Oak Park, IL

Rabbi Victor H. Weissberg

Lincolnwood, IL

Rabbi Jeffrey S. Wildstein Waltham, MA

Rabbi Hanna G. Yerushalmi Arnold, MD

Rabbi Benjamin J. Zeidman Temple Mount Sinai

El Paso, TX

Rabbi Daniel G. Zemel Temple Micah, Washington, DC

Rabbi Irwin A. Zeplowitz
The Community Synagogue
Port Washington, NY