INSTRUCTIONS FROM AUTHOR TO LIBRARY FOR THESES AND PRIZE ESSAYS

AUTHOR Elizabeth B. Hersh

TITLE The Rise of the Jewish Day School in the United States Since World War II

TYPE OF THESIS: Ph.D. [ ] D.H.L. [ ] Rabbinic [✓]

Master's [ ] Prize Essay [ ]

1. May circulate [✓]) Not necessary
2. Is restricted [ ] for ___ years.) for Ph.D.) thesis

Note: The Library shall respect restrictions placed on theses or prize essays for a period of no more than ten years.

I understand that the Library may make a photocopy of my thesis for security purposes.

3. The Library may sell photocopies of my thesis. ✓ yes ___ no

March 1, 1993
Date

Elizabeth B. Hersh
Signature of Author

Library Record

Microfilmed ___
Date

Marilyn Kaider
Signature of Library Staff Member

The Rise of the Jewish Day School in the United States Since World War II

Elizabeth B. Hersh

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for Ordination

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

1993

Referee: Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus

This thesis is lovingly dedicated to my husband Howard Scott Podolsky, M.D. For his love, devotion, and humor have made this an unforgettable journey. His unyielding belief in me has always been a source of my inspiration. To you I owe more than I can express.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus for his advice and his immeasurable patience. Without his wisdom and experience this endeavor would not have been possible. For this I am forever grateful.

The Rise of the Jewish Day School
in the United States Since World War II

Table of Contents

DIGEST

The value of Jewish education has been an inherent value to the Jewish people throughout history. Our tradition teaches that it is prohibited to live in a city which there is no teacher of tradition.[1] The Mishnah recounts that each day the Lord himself spends several hours studying and several hours instructing school children.[2]

Upon their arrival in America Jewish immigrants struggled to provide a Jewish education for their children while encouraging assimilation into American society. Since the first Jewish immigrants settled on the shores of this land there have been five stages of Jewish education in America. This Rabbinical thesis will historically examine each of these stages. This will be followed by an historical documentation of the various movements in Judaism and how each responded to the concept of Jewish all-day schools following World War II.

During the Colonial Period of Jewish education, 1654 to 1785, Jewish immigrants began to consider the concept of combining secular studies with religious instruction. Communities often employed a private tutor to educate the Jewish students. Religious studies included siddur reading,

---

[1]Dr. Alvin I. Schiff, Contemporary Jewish Education: Issachar American Style, (Dallas: Rossel Books, 1988), p. 3.

[2]Ibid.

translation, and review of synagogue rituals. Despite these initial attempts at organized education, many congregations were generally uncertain as to their role in education.

The second period of Jewish education is referred to as the Century of Growth and Decline, 1786 to 1879. Jewish education experienced many diverse transformations during this era. Jews began to enroll their children in public schools as this type of schooling became the fashionable form of education. However, the wave of German immigration was accompanied by the development of all-day schools. By the close of this period American Jewry witnessed the rise and decline of day schools.

Between 1881-1914 Jewish education witnessed the development of the Pioneer Yeshivot. This period established the foundation of the paradigm for day schools to follow. During this era approximately two million Jewish immigrants traveled from Eastern Europe to the United States. Dissatisfied with the level of assimilation in America, the ultra Orthodox established their own schools closely resembling their schools in Eastern Europe. This era also observed the rise of Yiddish and Socialist schools.

The fourth period of Jewish education is commonly referred to as the Rise of the Modern Yeshivot, 1917-1939. This period denoted the true maturation of the Day School Movement in America as noted by a revival of Yiddish and Poale-Zion schools as well as the establishment of

Progressive and all-women institutions. In addition, American Jewry witnessed the establishment of Talmudic-centered Yeshivot.

The fifth stage of development of Jewish education has been termed the "Era of Great Expansion." This epoch includes the period between 1940-1964. During this era the Jewish day school movement experienced tremendous growth and maturation. As examined through the analysis of Dr. Alvin Schiff, educational historian, there were five major reasons for this post-war phenomenon including the Holocaust, the birth of the State of Israel, a rise of ethnocentrism in America, the deterioration of the public school system, and the support of the day school movement by its advocates.

The development of the Orthodox Day School Movement is best depicted by the organization known as Torah Umesorah. Begun by Rabbi Shraga Feivel this organization became the umbrella structure for the entire Orthodox day school movement following World War II.

The Conservative Day School Movement experienced a modest beginning. Many such institutions were the outgrowth of what were previously known as "Foundation Schools." The Solomon Schechter Day School Association was envisioned in December 1965 at the First Conference of Solomon Schechter Day Schools. This structure would subsequently become the model organization for the Conservative Movement.

In contrast to Orthodox and Conservative American

Judaism, the Reform Movement, with a few notable exceptions, was not involved with the establishment of day schools during the Nineteenth and early to mid Twentieth centuries. Private schools were antithetical to the very position the Reform Movement held during this century. Due, in part, to this dogma Reform day schools were not a lasting reality until 1970.

Each of the various movements were challenged by obstacles, some of which were particular to the movement while others have remained universal. However, the success of these institutions has lead educators to believe that Jewish all-day schools have developed into a permanent and important aspect in the education of American Jews.

CHAPTER ONE

THE HISTORY OF THE JEWISH DAY SCHOOL IN THE UNITED STATES PRIOR TO WORLD WAR II

The first Jewish immigrants landed in the continental United States in September 1654. They were a group of twenty-three settlers of Spanish and Portuguese heritage.[1] Their arrival heralded the Colonial Period (1654-1785) of American Jewish education.[2]

They were essentially Orthodox Jews who established congregations in the Sephardic tradition. By 1790, the Sephardim were already a minority in the expanding Jewish population.[3] In response to the dearth of public school education, they created schools to educate their young in both secular and Jewish studies.[4] They recognized their dual responsibility. First, as conscientious Jews, they were obligated to perpetuate Jewish Halacha and culture in the tradition of their ancestors. Concurrently, they now lived in America which implied learning to live as Americans. This meant teaching their children about American law and culture. The immigrants' goal was to create an educational system that would perpetuate both cultures.[5] In short,

---

[1]A History of Jewish Education in America, ed. Judah Pilch (New York: Walden Press, Inc., 1969), p. 2.

[2]Dr. Alvin Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America (New York: Jewish Education Committee Press, 1966), p. 20.

[3]Pilch, p. 2.

[4]Rabbi Daniel B. Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," Religious Education, 78 (1983), 153.

[5]Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," p. 155.

education prior to 1800 consisted of a tutor who taught the rudimentary aspects of religion and the requisite secular knowledge necessary for survival in America.[6]

In 1730 Congregation Shearith Israel in New York was built, and in 1731 they opened a Jewish school, Yeshivah Minhat Areb. By 1755, it was cited as a "publik school" where the hazzan of the congregation taught Hebrew, Spanish, English, writing and arithmetic in his home or in his home Sunday through Friday. Hence, the first Jewish Day School had been establish in the New World.[7]

Although it was called a "publik school", it was actually a private institution where one paid a tuition in order to educate a child.[8] Shearith Israel's doors remained opened with the noted exception of the period during the British occupation of New York.[9] The school was subsequently reopened in 1793.

In 1808 Congregation Shearith Israel opened the Polonies Talmud Torah. This was the congregation's second school which operated as a day school until 1821.[10] Once

---

[6]Jewish Education in the United States, ed. Lloyd P. Gartner (New York: Teacher's College Press, 1969), p. 5.

[7]Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," p. 155.

[8]Pilch, p. 5.

[9]Gartner, "Jewish Education in the United States," p. 6.

[10]Ibid.

again, the curriculum consisted of both Jewish and secular studies. The former included Bible reading and translation, Halacha, customs, as well as Hebrew and rabbinic literature.[11]

The school attempted to instill a strong sense of morality and honor in its students.[12] As stated in its charter these goals included "To instill in the youthful mind a love of learning, a veneration for religion and morality, and an attainment of useful instruction . . ."[13] Moreover, communal prayer was an integral part of the school. Either before or after classes, a competent student was selected to lead the community in prayer.[14] Until 1856, the Polonies Talmud Torah school was part of the Common School System, and subsequently received grants from the city and state.[15]

It was not long before schools in America began to teach both secular and religious studies in the same setting. The first Jews had landed on American soil almost a hundred years prior. Unlike the immigrants, their descendants only knew and spoke English as it was their

---

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid., p. 45.

[13]Ibid., p. 46.

[14]Ibid., p. 45.

[15]Noah Nardi, "The Growth of Jewish Day Schools in America," Jewish Education, 20 (1948), 23.

native language. Therefore, instruction at these Jewish Schools was in English. Yet, there had been no such precedent in Eastern and Central Europe. According to Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus:

> Intellectually, the introduction of such studies implied a rejection of the past and of the cultural separatism which had been the norm; it connoted a recognition and affirmation of the new modern world of tolerance and acceptance in which the American Jew found himself.[16]

In 1759 Congregation Yeshuat Israel in Newport, Rhode Island, appealed to Mikveh Israel in Philadelphia for money to fund the construction of a school and a synagogue. On December 2, 1763, Yeshuat Israel dedicated its synagogue and school. While the members at Congregation Yeshuat Israel recognized the importance of education, there are no extant records describing the relationship between the congregation and the school.[17]

By 1782 a similar school opened in Philadelphia. In 1798 the constitution of Mikveh Israel called for the position of a rabbi or teacher. Sadly, it remained vacant.[18] Unfortunately, the schools in Newport and Philadelphia had a transient life, leaving only Shearith Israel until 1821 when it was remodeled as an afternoon

---

[16]Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, The Colonial American Jew 1492-1776 (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970), II, 1065.

[17]Pilch, p. 8.

[18]Ibid.

school. Essentially, the high cost of operating such schools prevented their success. Thus, Jewish education returned to the home. Compared to a quality school in 18th century Poland, these schools accomplished little. They were not considered a great advancement in American Jewish education.[19]

There were instances, particularly in the south, where Jewish children attended "secular" private schools which also offered an array of general Hebrew studies. A school operated in Charleston, South Carolina from 1811-1814 by Emmanuel Nunes Carvalho. "Instruction was given in Latin, French, English and Spanish besides Hebrew."[20]

During this post Revolutionary War period, the establishment of day schools was erratic and unstable. For many Jewish children in the pre-revolutionary period the parents or the community hired private tutors. In some cases the tutor served a dual role such as teacher and shohet. In other instances, the teacher was an individual whom the congregation hired in return for teaching the children of the indigent.[21] All of the schools during this period were tuition schools. The community compensated for the poor. America was the land where everyone, rich and poor alike,

---

[19]Marcus, "The Colonial American Jew, II, 1067.

[20]Pilch, p. 14.

[21]Marcus, The Colonial American Jew, II, 542.

deserved an education.

Educational options varied according to one's station in life.[22] As the immigrants reached a higher standard of living through economic and social status, they acquired far more educational opportunities. Still, others made educational decisions based upon where the family lived, rural or urban; the father's occupation; and the educational traditions from the family's country of origin.[23] Nevertheless, each student would receive a religious and secular education.

Jewish immigrants came to America with a rich history of all-day religious schools.[24] The typical American Jewish parent believed the purpose of these lessons as stated by Dr. Jacob Marcus was, "to make observant Jews of their children who were to be conditioned emotionally to take up their religious identity."[25] Jewish studies referred to reading and translating the siddur, in addition to understanding synagogue ritual.[26]

The end of the Colonial Period marked a significant stage in Jewish education in the New World. Several of the struggles and patterns in Jewish education which were

---

[22]Pilch, p. 5.

[23]Ibid., p. 6.

[24]Marcus, The Colonial American Jew, II, 1057.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 244.

present, at that time, continue to plague education today. It was during this period that Jewish schools began to follow the patterns of American education. Separation of religious and secular education was commonplace. Therefore, supplementary religious teaching was encouraged. Sadly, the Jewish teacher held a very low status, in conjunction with the uncertainty of the congregation's role in education.[27]

Since Jews were no longer forced to live in shtetls, the Jewish community was open to new possibilities. Jews could pursue an education, thus advancing their socio-economic status. The Jewish community was more individualistic and heterogenous than ever before.[28] At the close of the Colonial Period in 1790, there were 1,500 to 2,000 Jews in America.[29]

The second period of Jewish education in America as defined by Dr. Alvin Schiff, was the Century of Growth and Decline (1786-1879). This era can best be characterized by the many new changes in Jewish education. In 1840, there were only 40,000 Jews in the United States. Yet, the number was to grow to 250,000 in merely forty years.[30] Jewish education, just based upon these numbers, experienced tremendous change. Whether education was family, synagogue

---

[27]Pilch, p. 23.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Ibid., p. 1.

[30]Ibid., p. 26.

or community oriented, according to Dr. Judah Pilch the goal was to, ". . . train the child to believe in the existence of the creator and to observe Jewish law."[31]

As the public school became a distinct reality Jews gradually shifted their emphasis on education. Hebrew and Judaic training became a secondary importance. Despite the growth of many Jewish all-day schools during this period, they were all closed by the end of this period. None of the schools established resembled the thriving day schools of the 20th century.[32]

As early as 1779, Thomas Jefferson advanced the notion of public schooling, although it never came to fruition during his lifetime. For many new Americans the public school system was more than an American transformation. It was the passport to success and acceptance in this society. As described by Dr. Lloyd Gartner public schools were:

> Free, tax supported, open equally to all children, it was the place where the child would be imbued with democratic ideals and prepared to assume the responsibilities of citizenship in his maturity.[33]

Horace Mann, years later, echoed similar sentiments. He believed that public schools were the vehicles that would

---

[31]Ibid., p. 27.

[32]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 245.

[33]Lloyd P. Gartner, "Temples of Liberty Unpolluted: American Jews and Public Schools, 1840-1875," A Bicentennial Festschrift for Jacob Rader Marcus, ed. Bertram Wallace Korn (Massachusetts: American Jewish Historical Society, 1976), p. 157.

eradicate differences and provide equal opportunities for all citizens. The school was the institution by which all children would learn about democracy and liberty. Private institutions threatened this message.[34] Knowing that Jews inherently valued education, Horace Mann strove to strengthen the public school thereby, making it more inviting to Jews.[35] Mann also stressed that each child had a natural right to education. He believed it was society's duty to serve as a trustee, by assuring each student's right to an education.[36]

Many immigrants reluctantly sent their children to the public schools despite the blatant Christian influences in the school system. Wealthier Jews enrolled their children in private Christian institutions, while the poor relied on the free public schools.[37]

As Jews became more comfortable in America their sense of community changed. There was a metamorphosis from the closed shtetl mentality to that of a pluralistic society. In the process many Jews lost interest in Jewish education,

---

[34]Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," p. 157.

[35]Ibid., p. 158.

[36]Michael B. Katz, The Irony of Early School Reform (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 43.

[37]Dr. Jacob Radar Marcus, United States Jewry 1776-1985 (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989), I, 383.

indicating that it was no longer a primary concern.[38] Assimilation, conversion, and intermarriage were now a reality. Clearly, for them, the concept of a Jewish school was threatening. Already, a generation of illiterate Jews was born. A member of an Ashkenazic synagogue in New York City commented:

> We witness in our generation the decline of the knowledge of the sacred tongue [Hebrew]. Very few among the young are familiar with it; most of the boys do not even know how to read the prayers correctly.[39]

Interestingly, other parents were convinced that the home and the synagogue provided enough of a Jewish education. For they believed that it was not necessary to supplement a Jewish education beyond the home and synagogue. There was the perennial problem of a shortage of trained teachers and appropriate textbooks. Tuition at Jewish all-day schools was expensive; public schools were free. Parents wanted their American children to obtain the skills they would need to advance themselves socially, academically and economically in America. These skills were to be found at the public schools.[40]

Parents also had the option of enrolling their children in supplementary or communal schools. Once again, the Jewish

---

[38]Doniel Zvi Kramer, The Day Schools and Torah Umesorah: The Seeding of Traditional Judaism in America (New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1984), p. 2.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Ibid.

community was often fragmented, making it difficult to develop a sound educational system. Thus, many children were unable to attain a Jewish education beyond elementary school. The Orthodox took exception to this trend. They believed in the necessity of all-day Jewish schools in order for their children to survive as Jews. Through 1820 Jews generally believed that it was their obligation to preserve and transmit Judaism, not to change or adapt it to their new surroundings.[41]

The German migration during the 1840s and the rise of Reform Judaism further transformed the educational system for American Jews. Initially, the new immigrants were reluctant to send their children to these new public schools. Therefore, they established their own day schools in the communities where they settled.[42] Subsequently, schools developed in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Baltimore, Boston, Cincinnati, and Albany.[43]

Why were these new immigrants so unwilling to participate in the concept of the common school? They refused to allow their children to attend classes that were indoctrinated with Christian teaching. Furthermore, Germans

---

[41]Gartner, "Temples of Liberty," p. 164.

[42]Dr. Michael Zeldin, "Establishing Reform Day Schools: A Revolutionary Move in Perspective," The Pedagogic Reporter, 38 (1987), 13.

[43]Dr. Alvin I. Schiff, "From Sunday School to Day School," Jewish Education, 50 (1982), 7.

had a history of all-day schools. In Germany Jewish all-day schools with inclusive secular studies already existed.[44] Their nationalistic, German-Jewish, heritage was very important to them.[45]

Not unlike Catholics, many Jews resented the Protestant Christianity which was common in the public schools. The new Germans looked down on the Jews who allowed their children to be educated under these circumstances. Moreover, the German immigrants believed that the schools which they established were of a higher quality of learning than the public schools.[46] German immigrants were deeply committed to their native culture. They felt that American schools were antagonistic to their German and Jewish needs.[47] This was exemplified by the fact that the public schools would not accommodate the Germans' wishes to use the German language in school.

In 1830, Congregation Anshe Chesed, comprised of mainly German immigrants, opened a day school in New York City. A supplementary school had been attempted but failed.

---

[44]Ibid.

[45]Dr. Michael Zeldin, "A Century Later and Worlds Apart: American Reform Jews And The Public School - Private School Dilemma, 1870, 1970," June 1986, p. 5.

[46]Zeldin, "Establishing Reform Jewish Day Schools: A Revolutionary Move in Perspective," p. 13.

[47]Zeldin, "A Century Later and Worlds Apart: American Reform Jews and the Public School- Private School Dilemma, 1870, 1970," p. 13.

Thereafter, students were taught by private tutors until the day school reopened.[48]

By 1831 Philadelphia Isaac Leeser was conducting classes in his boarding house in Philadelphia. Due to his sustained success, in 1833, he asked Mikveh Israel to assist him in opening a Hebrew-English communal school. The request was denied. The congregation was unsympathetic to his appeals. The wealthy sent their children to private Christian schools and the poor welcomed the concept of free public schooling, despite the overt Christian influences in the classroom.[49]

Five years later in 1835 Leeser attempted to establish a Hebrew and English school for boys in Philadelphia. He opened the school on limited funds in March taking pre-school age children who were mostly funded by scholarships. It operated for less than two years.[50]

Six years later, in 1841, Rabbis Isaac Leeser and Louis Salomon, submitted a plan to create day schools in every town which had a sizable number of eligible students. Each community would be responsible for hiring the teachers. While each school was under the auspices of the local congregation all schools would operate under the Orthodox

---

[48]Nathan H. Winter, Jewish Education in a Pluralist Society: Samson Benderly and Jewish Education in the United States (New York: New York University Press, 1966), p. 5.

[49]Marcus, United States Jewry 1776-1985, I, 383.

[50]Ibid., p. 384.

tradition.[51] This idea never came to fruition. Leeser and colleagues also tried to establish a national system of all-day schools for boys and girls. That, too, unfortunately failed.[52]

During the 1840s and 1850s, Congregations began to establish their own all-day schools. Although they were considered Hebrew day schools they mainly focused on secular studies.[53] They were primarily founded for the children of the German immigrants, but any member from a Congregation could send their children as long as they paid tuition. Once again, the indigent were taken into special consideration.[54]

In 1847, Dr. Max Lilienthal, of New York City, attempted to consolidate Rodeph Shalom and Sharrey Hashamayim Congregations into a united Union School.[55] They were joined by Dr. Herman Felsenheld, the principal of the Anshe Chesed Day School. The Reform Jewish day schools were now under the same auspices with a total pupil enrollment of 250.[56] However, this was a short-lived

---

[51]Marcus, United States Jewry 1776-1985, II, 309.

[52]Ibid., p. 250.

[53]Ibid., p. 273.

[54]Ibid., p. 250.

[55]David Sanford Cohen, "American Reform Judaism and the Jewish Day School," Thesis, Hebrew University, 1974, p. 2.

[56]Ibid., p. 3.

endeavor. By 1848 they closed and each Congregation opened its own school.[57]

Other day schools attempted in New York included the B'nai Jeshurun Educational Institute. Founded in 1853, the school noted an enrollment of 177 students, after one year of operation. It functioned until 1855 when more and more parents opted for the public school system.[58] The Shaarey Zedek Hebrew National School, founded in 1853, was also short-lived.[59] Another institution in New York was the Hebrew Free School. A number of congregations established this school in 1856 in order to provide an alternative to the Christian missionary schools, which disguised themselves under the title "Hebrew Day Schools," and were attracting Jewish students.[60] Eventually, the Hebrew Free School was turned into a supplementary afternoon school.

Cities other than New York were also engaged in establishing Jewish day schools. The Hebrew Education Society in Philadelphia opened an elementary Jewish day school in 1851. The academic quality of this institution was far superior to any of its secular competitors. This was exemplified by the fact that graduates of the elementary Jewish day school did not have to sit for the customary high

---

[57]Ibid.

[58]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 23.

[59]Ibid.

[60]Cohen, p. 3.

school entrance examinations. They were automatically admitted into the local high schools.[61] The Hebrew Educational Society operated for thirty years.[62]

In Detroit sixty Jews opened a "Hebrew-English-German" day school in 1850. Unable to compete with the success of the public schools this day school closed in 1869.[63] A day school opened in Easton, Pennsylvania for three years from 1850 to 1853. Baltimore also established a Jewish Day School in 1851. Kehillath Ansche Maariv, of Chicago, founded a day school in 1853. This school operated for nearly twenty years.[64]

Kehillath Ansche Maariv School, an Orthodox institution, was similar, in concept, to the day school in Germany. There were ten hours per week of German and grammar; eight hours per week of English; five hours per week of prayers and reading from the Pentateuch; and two hours per week of catechism in Jewish religion and history. In addition to these subjects mathematics, geometry, drawing, singing and geography were taught.[65] Non-Jews were permitted to teach the secular subjects while only the

---

[61]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 25.

[62]Ibid.

[63]Gartner, "Temples of Liberty," p. 166.

[64]Nardi, p. 23.

[65]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 25.

cantor, rabbi, or shoket taught Hebrew.[66]

This style was atypical since one teacher, usually the hazzan, taught both religious and secular subjects in other schools.[67] As stated by Dr. Lloyd Gartner, reasons for the decline of Kehillath Ansche Maariv included:

> The want of a central location, the protection generally accorded to public schools, and the general aversion of scholars as well as the indifference of parents for Hebrew education. . .[68]

Also in Chicago was Sinai Congregation which also established a similar school.[69]

By 1854 there were Jewish all-day schools in Boston and Albany, New York. In Boston the school was affiliated with Anshe Shalom, while the day school in Albany was associated with Congregation Anshe Emeth.[70] Cleveland's Anshe Chesed sponsored a day school for twenty-five years. It did not close until 1867. Bnai Jeshurun, the day school in Newark, New Jersey, closed in 1869.[71]

In Cincinnati, Ohio, Isaac Mayer Wise opened a day

---

[66]Ibid.

[67]Ibid., p. 26.

[68]Gartner, Jewish Education in the United States, p. 96.

[69]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 26.

[70]Nardi, p. 23.

[71]Gartner, "Temples of Liberty," p. 166.

school in the basement of his congregation in 1849.[72] Regarding his school, he wrote the following in A History of the Isaac M. Wise Temple:

> Only seven years elapsed after the incorporation of the congregation (in 1842), when they determined upon the inauguration of a parochial school. All Jews then lived close together in the heart of the city. They came of a people that loved learning, that would not be content with a minimum of education for their children. They believed, too, that religious education need not be divorced from secular, that both could be imparted as aspects of one integral whole.[73]

1856 marked the construction of a separate building adjacent to the Temple for use by the school.[74] Talmud Yeladim, as it was called, prospered until 1868.[75] Rabbi Wise's school closed due to not only a paucity of students but finances.[76] The discipline was poor and the quality teachers gravitated toward the public schools.[77]

Isaac Mayer Wise had the ability to view both sides of the Jewish all-day school debate. Although I.M. Wise was initially in favor of all-day schools, after his Talmud Yeladim closed, he boasted that the only schools remaining

---

[72]Rabbi Daniel B. Syme, "The Reform Day School: Its History and Future Prospects," The Pedagogic Reporter, 29 (1977), 14.

[73]Dr. Michael Zeldin, "The Status of a Quiet Revolution: Reform Day Schools in the 1980's," 1985, p. 1.

[74]Ibid.

[75]Rabbi B. Daniel Syme, "The Reform Day School: Its History and Future Prospects," p. 14.

[76]Pilch, p. 33.

[77]Ibid., p. 34.

in Cincinnati were part of a Congregation. To this sentiment Wise added:

> It is our settled opinion here that the education of the young is the business of the State, and the religious institution, to which we add Hebrew, is the duty of religious bodies. Neither ought to interfere with the other. The secular branches belong to the public schools, religion in the Sabbath schools, exclusively.[78]

The New York Talmud Torah and Hebrew Institute was an anomaly. Overall, it was better than other day schools. It most closely resembled the modern Yeshivah as we understand it.[79] Its achievements were noteworthy.

> At an examination in this year (1843), the highest class proved that it could translate nearly all of Genesis. In 1845, this class could translate most of the Pentateuch, and two of its members were able to read and translate Rashi. . . an accomplishment that was almost unheard of in the city at that time."[80]

The New York Talmud Torah and Hebrew Institute differed from other days-schools during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in that it was never affiliated with a congregational school.[81] Reverend Samuel Isaacs, the principal, attempted to transform the school into a community project in order to engage more support. However, the plan failed and without communal support, it would not

---

[78]Gartner, Jewish Education in the United States, p. 86.

[79]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 27.

[80]Ibid.

[81]Ibid.

be long before the school could not continue its operation.[82]

Many Jewish immigrants had climbed the ladder of opportunity and could afford the luxury and status of sending their children to these private all-day schools. According to Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, by the 1850s: "almost every Jewish town of size in the United States had at least one all-day school. . . larger cities had several."[83] In fact, there were at least seven Jewish "parochial" type schools in New York City by 1854. The total enrollment of Jewish denominational schools was greater than the sum of New York City's Protestant schools.[84]

The German immigrants did not stay at the Jewish all-day schools for long. As soon as religion was either modified or removed from the common schools, the new Germans embraced the public schools and abandoned their all-day schools.[85] Comfortable in their new environment German Jews soon became labeled as "upwardly mobile."[86] Essentially, Jewish parents wanted to enroll their children

---

[82]Ibid.

[83]Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, United States Jewry, II, 250.

[84]Ibid.

[85]Zeldin, "Establishing Jewish Day Schools: A Revolutionary Move in Perspective," p. 13.

[86]Syme, "The Reform Day School: Its History and Future Prospects," p. 14.

in the institution that would provide the best education.[87] The German Jews subsequently embraced supplementary and Sunday Schools for their childrens' religious education. Jewish day schools were established and closed based upon the academic standards in the public schools.[88] In essence, Jewish parents enrolled their children in the school, either public or private, which provided the best education.

There were numerous arguments for and against the Jewish day school. A noted difference separated the views of Isidor Busch (1822-1898) (later Bush) and Isaac Leeser. Busch was a man of optimism and counsel. He believed that the future of American Jewry depended upon the support of public schools. In 1851 Busch wrote:

> Support as much as you can the public school system, and lend no help whatever to sectarian institutions: *do not send your children*, neither your sons nor your daughters, to such, and don't complain about heavy school taxes. .[89]

Three years later he believed that the public education assumed an even greater importance. For the public schools, he argued, provided the assurance and security for a better life for all children.

Isaac Leeser debated that it was absolutely necessary

---

[87]Zeldin, "A Century Later and Worlds Apart," p. 22.

[88]Dr. Michael Zeldin, "The Promise of Historical Inquiry in Jewish Education: 19th Century Day Schools and 20th Century Policy," p. 7.

[89]Gartner, "Temples of Liberty," p. 170.

to separate Jewish children from their Christian counterparts. Essentially, Leeser held that the public schools were Christian institutions, and Jewish children would never be more than a "tolerated minority."[80] In response to Isador Busch, Isaac Leeser noted:

> [Busch] overrates the advantage of a public school education, and overrates the difficulties of evening religious schools. The mode of instructing children in Hebrew in the extra (afternoon and weekend) hours, has been tried and has signally failed. . .[81]

Leeser believed that religion, in and of itself, was at the fundamental basis of education and thus, wanted the public schools to use a universal religion, rather than a particular one. While Leeser remained cautious, the Jewish American public generally supported Busch.

Emanuel Brandeis, an individual with a similar background to Busch supported his fellow academician's argument. He believed that Jews ought to be grateful that the public schools opened their door to Jews. It was in public school that all children were treated equally. To segregate oneself, in his belief, was anti-American. American citizenship represented the essence of religious freedom and tolerance. However, Brandeis held that such religious beliefs should be exercised privately, not in the

---

[80]Ibid., p. 173.

[81]Dr. Alvin I. Schiff, Contemporary Jewish Education: Issachar American Style (Dallas: Rossel Books, 1988), p. 111.

common, public school.[92]

October of 1855 marked the first meeting of the Conference of American rabbis in Cleveland, Ohio. On their agenda was Jewish education. Again, opinions were sharply divided between those who were in favor of maintaining the separation between public and religious education and those individuals who supported a combined religious and secular education.

Rabbi Isidor Kalisch of Cleveland was one of those individuals who wished to maintain this educational separation. He believed that Jews should continue to support the public schools and educate their children in supplementary institutions.[93] Rabbi B.H. Gotthelf of Louisville clearly understood the importance of public school education but was fearful of the Christian influence the teachers and textbooks espoused. He, therefore, promoted separate schools for Jewish children.[94]

The sole dissident at the conference was Rabbi Bernard Felsenthal, a moderate Reform rabbi from Chicago. He was the only rabbi to plead for the continuation of the Jewish school. He acknowledged the importance of a public school education, but was dismayed by the fact that a one day a week Sunday School was not ample time to properly impart

---

[92]Gartner, "Temples of Liberty," p. 174.

[93]Ibid.

[94]Ibid., p. 175.

Jewish learning.[95] It was Rabbi Felsenthal's belief that in order for one to grasp the massive body of Jewish knowledge, one required instruction on a daily basis.[96]

Rabbi Felsenthal passionately argued that:

> In a Sabbath school where the Jewish children assemble once weekly, this given goal cannot be reached, especially when, as in the case in the American cities on account of the Jews having settled en masse, these Sabbath schools are overcrowded and pedagogic personnel and facilities do not exist in adequate quantity...."[97]

The only way to accomplish this goal was through the Jewish day school. Rabbi Felsenthal was consistently defeated in his arguments.

In 1869 the Cincinnati Board of Education passed a significant decision. They ruled that Bible reading was no longer permitted in the public schools. As expected, the Superior Court of Cincinnati hastily objected to this decision. By 1873, the Supreme Court of Ohio reversed this decision, thus upholding the original ruling.[98] Rabbis Isaac Mayer Wise and Max Lilienthal personally opposed Bible readings in the classroom as they felt it was not only bad for Jews, but because it was contrary to the American dogma

---

[95]Ibid., p. 177.

[96]Zeldin, "A Century Later and Worlds Apart," p. 26.

[97]Schiff, Contemporary Jewish Education, pp. 111-112.

[98]Gartner, "Temples of Liberty," p. 179.

of separation of Church and State.[99]

With the improvement of the public school came the demise of the Jewish all-day school. Protestants were fiercely against the Catholic parochial school. By 1855 the common school had made a transition from the religious nature which had previously characterized it to a more secular outlook. It was apparent that the immigrants no longer wished to be separated from the rest of society. Integration was their goal.[100] For it was widely perceived that if Jews were to become an intrinsic part of American society, they were obligated to champion the American institution of the public school. Ideally, public schools would provide children of all nationalities an environment free of prejudice.[101] American Jews desperately feared building a wall between themselves and their Christian neighbors.[102]

Jews and non-Jews would learn to associate with one another at an early age in the public school. How could children who studied together and were dedicated to the same democratic ideals not learn to live together? As eloquently stated by Isador Bush:

---

[99]Zeldin, "The Promise of Historical Inquiry in Jewish Education," p. 9.

[100]Marcus, United States Jewry, II, 254.

[101]Zeldin, "A Century Later and Worlds Apart," p. 11.

[102]Pilch, p. 34.

> . . . which class of our children are in a better condition to meet and overcome the spectre of Intolerance: those whom we have thus excluded from all intercourse with the children of others, who, when they leave the Jewish school are wholly unprepared to meet 'the spectre' or those who already learnt to know it, and under our guidance have been taught to repel such indignity in this country of civil and religious freedom?[103]

The Hebrew day school during this period cannot be summarily dismissed. It served the greater purpose of bridging the new immigrants from the Old World to the New World. Jewish American immigrants now raised American Jewish children. A high school diploma from a public school meant acceptance into higher education. While Jews chose this route, Catholics held onto their beliefs and continued to enroll their children in parochial school.

As greater segments of Jewish American society endorsed the public school system, the majority of Jewish all-day schools were eventually closed by the outbreak of the Civil War. Rabbi Edward N. Calisch's words of twenty years ago clearly echoed the general sentiment of the times:

> Judaism earnestly upholds the public school system of America, because it believes that the strength and the glory of the country lie therein. The public schools are the cornerstone of the nation, on which and by means of which, she has reared the superstructure of her unparalleled achievements.[104]

Public schools stood for democracy. Through these schools, American children could work together for a shared

---

[103]Schiff, Contemporary Jewish Education, p. 110.

[104]Gartner, "Temples of Liberty," p. 181.

goal. Hebraic studies were less a priority to the majority of Jewish parents. With the secularization of schools, free tuition, and improved management and supervision, the day schools could simply not compete with the public schools.[106] There was no Jewish Communal Agency to assist in supplementing the prohibitive costs of the Jewish all-day schools.[106] Hence, Jewish institutions were encouraged to direct their attention and funds towards the afternoon and supplementary school concept.

Of note, the Reform Movement was an important catalyst in the transition from all-day school education to public school education during this period. Reform Judaism embraced the vision which Horace Mann articulated. Consequently, Reform Jews were deeply committed to the public school system.[107] The common school offered benefits for everyone. With a public school diploma, one could more easily enter into the world of higher education. It was the road to upward mobility. Regardless of heritage, public schools meant freedom and equality for all.[108] These concepts, of course, were in keeping with the beliefs of Reform Judaism.

---

[106]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 24.

[106]Ibid.

[107]Syme, "The Reform Day School: Its History and future Prospects," p. 14.

[108]Zeldin, "A Century Later and Worlds Apart," p. 3.

Julius Frieberg, in 1874, referred to the public schools as:

> veritable 'temples of liberty' in which American children, 'high and low, rich and poor, Protestants, Catholics, and Jews,' prepared their own future and that of their country.[108]

It was unpatriotic to support any other full-time institution save the public school, and the flag.

Several Jewish day schools remained open until the 1880s, but they were mainly in the South and West. Schools existed in cities such as Memphis, Tennessee, Mobile, Alabama, Shreveport and New Orleans, Louisiana, Dallas, Chicago, Portland, Oregon, and San Bernardino, California.[110] These institutions were also open to Christians who were not required to attend classes when the Jewish subjects were instructed on Saturday and Sunday.[111]

Dr. Michael Zeldin proposed four possible explanations of the rise and fall of day schools during the 19th century. His interpretations are based upon: 1. religion in the public schools, 2. the question over the German language, 3. the quality of education, and 4. the issue of Jewish education, itself.[112]

---

[108]Gartner, "Temples of Liberty," p. 182.

[110]Marcus, United States Jewry, II, 251.

[111]Ibid.

[112]Zeldin, "The Promise of Historical Inquiry in Jewish Education," Abstract.

The German immigrants were most eager to be total participants in American life. This sentiment was echoed by rabbis at the Cleveland Conference of Rabbis in 1870.

> We love and revere this country as our home and fatherland for us and our children; and therefore consider it our paramount duty to sustain and support the government; to favor by all means the system of free education, leaving religious instruction to the care of different denominations.[113]

Yet, as previously mentioned, many German immigrants immediately established their own all-day schools. Others were opening congregational schools, while still others enrolled their children in the public schools. It was conceivable that more Germans would have embraced the public school sooner had their wishes been met.

Jews embraced the public school once religious instruction was removed. Dr. Zeldin argued that one could not escape the Christian indoctrination in the public schools. One of the public schools' mission was to instill moral values into the students. This translated to Christian moral education.[114] Occasionally, there existed a Christian teacher who felt it was his job to influence the Jewish children. Furthermore, the textbooks had traces of Protestant influences.[115] Jews believed that the public schools should be absolutely secular. Not even a "neutral

---

[113]Ibid., p. 4.

[114]Ibid., p. 6.

[115]Ibid.

religion," as Isaac Leeser advocated would be tolerable.[116] Another reason why German immigrants established their own schools was the language factor. Germans were dedicated to the perpetuation of their own language and culture. When the public schools would not accommodate their demands they created their own, German, institutions.[117] Interestingly, Rabbis Wise and Leeser opposed the teaching of German in the public schools. They believed that it was the responsibility of the immigrants to learn English. Hence, the public schools were the ideal medium by which to accomplish this goal.

In 1858 the State of Pennsylvania was embroiled in a debate regarding the use of German in the public schools. The question was raised as to whether the German language should be given official sanction in the public schools. The very concept of a "common school" was contrary to the proposed use of German. Multilingual status would only serve to further divide students by language and culture.[118] One of the precepts of the common school was to create a "melting pot." Therefore, based on this concept, all cultural distinctiveness should be eradicated.[119]

---

[116]Ibid., p. 9.

[117]Ibid., p. 10.

[118]Michael B. Katz, Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools: The Illusion of Educational Change in America (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), p. 39.

[119]Ibid.

The German-Jewish view was to enroll children in the school with the highest standard of education. At first the German immigrants perceived the educational standards of the public schools to be rather poor, once again an additional reason to establish their own day schools. This perennial debate often determined the number of day schools during the mid-nineteenth century.[120]

According to Dr. Zeldin, the fourth interpretation of Jewish education during this period was the issue of Jewish education. For most Jews during this time, their children's Jewish education was not an issue. During the 1850's and 1860's Jewish education had very little to do with the day school debate.[121] The enlightened German Jews gradually accepted secular education. A supplementary or Sunday School education was adequate for their Jewish education.

Hence, at the close of this period, American Jewry had witnessed the rise and fall of Jewish all-day schools. Although many schools in numerous cities were established, none represented the model with which we are presently familiar. The next period in American Jewish Education would introduce new and lasting changes.

The year 1880 witnessed an unparalleled number of Jewish immigrants to the United States. Most came from

---

[120]Zeldin, "The Promise of Historical Inquiry in Jewish Education," p. 12.

[121]Ibid., p. 14.

Russia, Poland Romania and Galicia. These Jews were from places which were deeply committed to Jewish tradition allowing little or none of the secular culture to infiltrate into their lives. In 1900 there were one million Jews in the United States. By 1915 the number rose to 3,500,000, followed by 4,500,000 in 1925.[122]

Between the period of 1881 to 1914 approximately 2 million Jewish immigrants traveled from Eastern Europe to America.[123] The period from 1880-1916, with regard to day schools in the United States, was the era of the Pioneer Yeshivot.[124] This period began to establish the foundation of the paradigm for day schools to follow.[125]

These new immigrants were unaccustomed to a hospitable secular environment. Those Jews emigrating from Russia, in particular, were abandoning a more hostile environment. Those wishing to obtain a secular education in Russia were denied it by law of the Czars. As Dr. Gartner illustrates in Jewish Education in the United States:

> However, the modern secular culture which was seeping into East European Jewish life overwhelmed the immigrant in America, where he indeed expected and wanted to enter the modern world while preserving something of the traditional culture. It is truly

---

[122]Gartner, Jewish Education in the United States, p. 10.

[123]William B. Heimreich, The World of the Yeshiva (New York: The Free Press, 1982), p. 18.

[124]Schiff, Contemporary Jewish Education, p. 119.

[125]Ibid.

> remarkable with what ease and alacrity immigrant Jewish children were dispatched by their parents to the government's compulsory public schools.[126]

The new Americans immediately encouraged their children to learn English so they could be enrolled in the public schools. It was through this educational system that these children would master American culture and eventually become true "American citizens." Although Jewish education was not emphasized by immigrant families initially, they eventually turned their support towards all-day schools.[127]

For many of the new immigrants, traditional Jewish values seemed to be of little importance.[128] Free public schooling was ideal for these new, indigent immigrants. Parents did not want to see their children toiling in sweat shops. Public schooling was the ideal alternative and key to upward mobility. Separate Jewish day schools were antithetical to their belief in the American concept of the "melting pot."[129]

The ultra-Orthodox Jews were far more hesitant to become a part of the great American "melting pot." Secure in their Jewish identity, they initially enrolled their

---

[126]Gartner, Jewish Education in the United States, pp. 10-11.

[127]Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools," p. 153.

[128]Schiff, Contemporary Jewish Education, p. 113.

[129]Pilch, p. 55.

children in the public schools.[130] They attended Sunday Schools briefly but found them "deficient in both subject matter and religious spirit."[131] Hence, Eastern European Jews divided themselves into two categories: those who remained faithful to the public schools, and those who placed their children in Jewish all-day schools.[132]

Day schools, commonly called *yeshivot ketanot*, were established to accommodate the children of those immigrants who feared assimilation. Dissatisfied with the level of Jewish learning in America they assumed responsibility to open their own schools.[133] Their goal was to transmit their rich Eastern European heritage to their new home in America.

The yeshivah on the elementary school level was an intensive all-day Jewish school experience.[134] There were Orthodox, Hebrew and Modernist institutions.[135] Several institutions taught classes in Yiddish and were vehemently against any degree of assimilation. Despite these differences, they all had one goal in common: These schools

---

[130]Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," p. 161.

[131]Ibid., p. 162.

[132]Ibid.

[133]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 28.

[134]Pilch, p. 57.

[135]Gartner, Jewish Education in the United States, p. 28.

sought to instill within the child the notion that Jewish law was not only sacred but truly binding.[136]

The Etz Chaim Talmudic Academy was founded in 1886 for the children of Eastern Europeans. It was established by the parents who wanted their children educated in an environment which concentrated on emphasizing the Jewish tradition of commitment to a Torah-structured life. Although they concentrated on Talmudic and Rabbinic literature, secular studies were also taught.[137]

Yeshibath Rabbi Yitzchak Elchanan was founded in 1897. In 1915, Etz Chaim and Yitzchak Elchanan joined forces to become the Rabbinical College of America with Dr. Bernard Revel as their president. The Rabbinical College of America was according to Dr. Alvin Schiff: "a Jewish parochial school."[138] Both Jewish and secular courses were offered on the elementary and high school levels. Although they were not offered on the collegiate level, students were permitted to attend local college classes. By 1917 a total of 170 students (90 elementary, 40 high school, 50 advanced) were in attendance at the college.[139] Eventually, it developed into Yeshiva University.[140]

---

[136]Ibid., pp. 28-29.

[137]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 30.

[138]Ibid., p. 32.

[139]Ibid.

[140]Kramer, p. 4.

While the earlier Day Schools were more American in their style and personality stressing "bicultural" values, these newer schools more closely resembled the schools in Eastern Europe.[141] For they were the forerunners of the future American Day Schools in America.[142]

The first National School opened in 1893 by S.H. Neumann in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn.[143] Twelve years later, it was followed by the National Hebrew School for Girls. These schools were established in order to emphasize the importance of teaching Hebrew conversation. The schools also included modern Hebrew literature into the curriculum. A. H. Friedland opened a third school in Manhattan in 1910. Friedland's school was well-known for its intensive Hebrew language and literature program.[144]

By the 1890s, the Reform Movement was fully supportive of public school education. They were primarily concerned with unity. The Reform Movement believed that all American Jews should rally around this public institution. Rabbi Edward N. Calisch, at the 1892 CCAR Convention, articulated this vision when he said: "the public schools are the cornerstones of the nation. . . Judaism must unequivocally encourages, most emphatically endorses, most strongly

---

[141]Cohen, p. 5.

[142]Winter, pp. 22-23.

[143]Ibid. p. 23.

[144]Ibid.

supports it."[145] This endorsement included ardent opposition to any kind of religious instruction in the public school as they were also concerned with protecting Jewish students from Christian missionaries.[146]

Around the turn of the century several traditional Yeshivot opened. These schools were unique from the earlier day schools of previous periods. The traditional Yeshivot represent the most traditional and oldest day schools in America.[147] In 1901 Yeshivah Rabbenu Jacob Joseph was established. It was followed by the Yeshivah in Harlem in 1908 and Yeshivah Hayim Berlin in 1910. Seven years later in 1917, a central coordinating committee was formed in order to organize the work of these various day schools.[148]

Between 1900-1910, the Talmud Torah school became quite popular. Interestingly, they were more successful in America than they were in Europe.[149] However, these institutions were not without problems. Parents enrolled and removed their children without regard for the educational structure. Schools randomly opened and closed, and often students were assigned to a various classroom without regard to their age

---

[145]Cohen, p. 16.

[146]Ibid., p. 15.

[147]Nardi, p. 24.

[148]Ibid.

[149]Pilch, p. 57.

or background.[150] During this period, there were approximately twenty-four such schools with 10,710 students and 163 teachers.[151]

In 1912 Dr. Samson Benderly, commonly referred to as the "father of modern Jewish education in America," conducted a study regarding the condition of education in New York City. He discovered that there were about 200,000 Jewish children ages six to sixteen. Based on his study, he concluded that 150,000 of them received no formal Jewish education.[152] In addition, he found most of the teachers unqualified to teach not only Jewish but secular studies.[153]

Dr. Benderly encouraged the Bureau of Jewish Education to issue a number of reforms in Jewish education. These included written contracts and a new salary scale for the Talmud Torah Schools. In addition, guidelines were created by which the teachers were formally examined and evaluated.[154] Furthermore, textbooks were standardized throughout the city. As always, the Bureau sought the support of the community for these schools.[155]

---

[150]Ibid., p. 59.

[151]Ibid., p. 67.

[152]Ibid., p. 72.

[153]Ibid.

[154]Ibid., p. 73.

[155]Ibid., p. 74.

For the first time the community sensed an obligation for all Jewish students. The Jewish Community began to define itself it very positive terms.[156] They realized that in order to avoid total assimilation their children required quality Jewish education. The hope, of course, was that improved education would result in observant Jewish adults. In the spirit of early feminism, educational programs were also established for girls.

Another type of day school which opened during this period was the Hebraic Yeshivot. In essence it transcended the traditional Orthodox Yeshivot.[157] One such school was the Etz Hayim which opened in 1916 in Boro Park, Brooklyn. Hebrew was the language of instruction for the Jewish studies and English for the secular studies.[158]

The Yeshivah day school was controversial on two different levels. Doubts were raised as to the adequacy of the secular studies. Moreover, these day schools operated under questionable facilities for interminable hours.[159] However, the real issue was the opposition it posed to the public school system. Consequently, many Jewish day schools operated without the support of prominent Jewish

---

[156]Ibid., p. 77.

[157]Nardi, p. 24.

[158]Ibid.

[159]Gartner, Jewish Education in the United States, p. 29.

philanthropies.[160]

In addition to the Jewish religious day schools, there existed the secularist, socialist and Yiddish schools. The mission of the Arbeter Ring Folks-Shul included instructing the children to read, write and speak Yiddish, introduce them to Yiddish literature, familiarize them with the life of the worker, expose them to Jewish history and periods in secular history where people struggled for freedom, and feelings of "love for the oppressed, love of freedom, and respect for the fighters of freedom."[161]

Ultimately, the students were allowed to learn about bibical patriarchs as long as God and religion were not the primary theme. The only holidays which the children were allowed to observe were those centering around religious or secular freedom. Included in this group were Passover, Lag ba-Omer, the First of May, Hanukkah, March 18 (labor's struggle for freedom), Purim, the Fourth of July, Lincoln's Birthday (emancipation of the Negro), and the Russian Revolution.[162]

The Yiddish schools were not established on traditional day schools agendas. Due to the fact that it lacked a foundation of prior examples, the Yiddish school went through various stages. From 1910 to 1918, the first eight

---

[160]Ibid.

[161]Ibid., pp. 157-158.

[162]Ibid., p. 160.

years, the national-radical school was run by the Poale Zion and the Socialist Territorialists.[163] This was:

> a period when it was necessary to establish the very idea of teaching Yiddish and to seek support for it on the strength of the creativity of modern Yiddish literature.[164]

These Yiddish Schools taught the following subjects in Yiddish: history, literature, customs, ceremonies, music and socialism. Hebrew was taught irvit b'ivrit.[165]

There were three major reasons that all-day schools were not completely successful during this era. Many immigrants found it difficult to adjust to their new environment. Consequently, Jewish education was not a priority for them. Although many immigrants possessed strong feelings regarding their Judaism, many could not reject the opportunity to join the ranks of other Americans in the public schools. They had felt excluded for too long in Russia. Finally, day schools were simply too expensive for the average family.[166] Once these issues were resolved the all-day school became a reality.

The years 1917 to 1939 marked the fourth period of Jewish all-day schools in the United States. This period is significant as it denotes the true maturation of the Day

---

[163]Ibid., p. 188.

[164]Ibid.

[165]Pilch, p. 105.

[166]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 35.

School Movement in America. The Movement during this era, became most notable. Dr. Schiff commonly refers to this period as, "Rise of the Modern Yeshivot."[167]

The interval between the two World Wars witnessed the development of the modern Jewish day school as we understand it in the Twentieth Century.[168] The Quota Laws of 1921 and 1924 were significant for Jewish education. As Jewish immigration to the United States was restricted, American Jewry realized that it could no longer look towards Europe for its future teachers and rabbis.[169]

This period can be best understood by dividing it into two sub-periods. The first is post-WWI (1917-1928), and the second is pre-WWII, 1929-1939. During the former, twelve new schools opened in New York City and one in Baltimore, Maryland. By the close of the period, there were seventeen Jewish day schools with a student population of 4,290.[170]

Growth during the second period was affected by the severe economic crisis in America. Only two school were established between 1929-1935.[171] Within the next four years, however, thirteen yeshivot opened. By the end of this period there were thirty-two schools in the United States

---

[167]Ibid., p. 20.

[168]Schiff, Contemporary Jewish Education, p. 119.

[169]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 7.

[170]Ibid., p. 37.

[171]Ibid.

and Canada.[172]

Opening a new school was a precarious responsibility. Usually, schools opened with only a few children in the lower grades, gradually adding grades as the student body progressed. Establishing and maintaining a school was expensive. Students often gathered in the basement of a synagogue or home.[173] Consequently, schools usually only opened in areas such as New York, which possessed dense Jewish populations. In light of the fact that these schools depended upon local community funding, the founders often were forced to compromise their idealogy and submit to the wishes of their benefactors.[174]

In the all-boy schools the lower grades centered their attention on the study of Chumash. The focus of the older grades, fifth through twelfth, was on Talmud. Although the co-educational schools were Hebraic in orientation, they, too, espoused a similar pattern of study. They differed as the co-educational schools offered various courses in Hebrew, Hebrew writing and grammar.[175]

The new types of yeshivot which emerged during this period closely resembled the pattern of Etz Chaim (1886). These schools had an European precedent, which permitted the

---

[172]Ibid., p. 38.

[173]Ibid.

[174]Ibid., p. 39.

[175]Ibid., p. 42.

study of secular studies in conjunction with religious subjects.[176] Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, in 1853, founded the Buerger-und Realschule in Frankfort, Germany. This was the first Jewish all-day school in Europe. It stressed "Torah with worldly knowledge."[177] Similarly, in 1905 Rabbi Yitzhak Yaacov Reines, of Lida, Poland, known as the founder of the Mizrachi Movement, introduced secular studies in his Yeshivah.[178]

The Yiddish schools which were established during the era of The Pioneer Yeshivot, lasting from 1880 to 1916, continued to experience changes during this era. For example, the Poale-Zion school was re-established. From 1919-1926, it included a circle of cosmopolitan-assimilationists by tradition.[179]

The most illustrative years were from 1927-1930 when there was a Yiddish revival in the United States. Each school's ideology became clarified. For example: The Farband schools revitalized their intentions, "the Jewish child for the Jewish people."[180] The new program included, an intensive Jewish education, two languages, intensive study

---

[176]Ibid., p. 32.

[177]Ibid., p. 33.

[178]Ibid.

[179]Gartner, Jewish Education in the United States, p. 189.

[180]Ibid., p. 190.

of Hebrew and Bible, emphasis on the Jewish way of living.[181]

The Sholom Aleichem schools based their studies on the child's interests and on the vague concept of "Jewish worldly environment."[182] They preferred an apolitical school as opposed to one with a Poale-Zion orientation. Their goals were to instill survivalist, nationalism and Zionism in the students.[183] In the Workmen's Circle Schools the rationalist tendencies were strengthened. They considered the foundations of the school to be the Yiddish language, socialism and free thought.[184]

Each type of school tried to widely proliferate. Each school functioned like a small congregation but without the rabbi.[185] Often, the ambition of the individual organizations became a priority over the goal of educating students.

By 1936 the Yiddish schools changed their focus. They were more concerned with teaching Jewish content. The Sholom Aleichem schools decided to include the study of Humash. Indeed, they had always studied Bible, but now they were

---

[181]Ibid.

[182]Ibid.

[183]Pilch, p. 107.

[184]Gartner, Jewish Education in the United States, p. 190.

[185]Ibid.

publicly acknowledging their studies.[186] Both the Farband Schools and the Workman Circle Schools included more Hebrew and "Jewishness" into their studies.[187] With the rise of Hitler and anti-semitism in the 1930s, schools began to introduce more Judaic studies into their curriculum.

The Ramaz school was establish in 1937 as "a Progressive Day School offering a comprehensive Jewish and secular education to boys and girls of elementary school age."[188] It opened with only six students and two teachers.[189] It was a difficult time for Jews in 1937. Black clouds loomed dangerously over European Jewry, and American Jews were experiencing an uneasiness regarding what they considered their home.

One of the many goals of the Ramaz school was to reduce the sense of alienation many of the students experienced with regards to the Christian world. Outside of school, they encouraged their pupils to make friendships with non-Jewish children after school hours.[190] The school, itself, was absolutely dedicated to integrating secular studies into the curriculum. In fact, secular and religious studies

---

[186]Ibid., p. 192.

[187]Ibid.

[188]Jeffrey S. Gurock, ed., RAMAZ: School, Community, Scholarship and Orthodoxy. (New Jersey: KTAV Publishing House, 1989), p. 40.

[189]Ibid.

[190]Ibid., p. 42.

alternated throughout the day.[181] They recognized the importance of giving their students a strong secular education. They were concerned with providing their students with an adequate education enabling them to pursue a business or profession.[182]

Unlike more traditional yeshivot, Ramaz did not totally reject the secular world. They believed in imitating secular mores and culture when appropriate.[183] There educational goals included universal education. Moreover, they also held that education should be both quantitative and qualitative, in nature. Nonetheless, Ramaz was motivated by religion and held religious life in sincere reverence. In short, the institution provided what they considered to be a well-rounded education. It was composed of religious, ethical and national values.[184]

Beth Hayeled was established in 1939 as a progressive school for children between the ages three to eight. It was a Foundation school which acquainted its young students with Judaism. Its purpose was to provide its students a quality Jewish experience and to prepare the students for further Jewish studies at a day or supplementary school.[185]

---

[181]Ibid., p. 43.

[182]Ibid., p. 44.

[183]Ibid., p. 62.

[184]Ibid., pp. 196-198.

[185]Nardi, p. 27.

Also established in 1939 was the American Association for Jewish Education. Its intention was to further the cause of Jewish education in America.[186] AAJE was inherently against any type of Federal assistance to the day schools and consequently had a poor relationship with Torah Umesorah who, on the other hand, favored Federal aide.[187]

The Mizrachi National Educational Committee was established in 1939.[188] These religious Zionists based their philosophy on the fear of heaven and the love of Eretz Israel.

The Lubavitcher Hasidic Movement joined the ranks of day schools in 1940. They established their first day school in Brooklyn. They emphasized religious studies and their goal was to establish America as a "Torah Center." Although there was not an formal agreement between the two, Torah Umesorah received funds from the Lubavitcher Movement.[189] For each of these schools addressed the particular needs of a community.

Many immigrants were reluctant to accept the Jewish all-day school. As new immigrants, these Jews were faced with so many other problems of daily living that a Jewish education was not a priority. As previously discussed, after

---

[186]Kramer, p. 143.

[187]Ibid., p. 144.

[188]Ibid., p. 152.

[189]Kramer, p. 151.

being excluded from public education in Europe, they were grateful to enroll their children to America's public schools. Similar to today's concerns regarding the high cost of private education most new immigrants could not afford the economic burden of these private schools.

This period witnessed the establishment of four Progressive all-day Jewish institutions. They were co-educational, and wished to "achieve a synthesis between progressive education and Jewish education."[200] Unlike the more traditional all-day Jewish schools they gave relatively little attention to Hebrew subjects. These institutions also scheduled their vacation time in conjunction with the calendars of the private and public institutions.[201]

Three of the schools which opened during this period, The Center School of the Jewish Center of the West Side (1918), The Center Academy of the Brooklyn Jewish Center (1928), and the Beth Hayeled School in Manhattan (1939), all closed after a brief duration of time due to a lack of enrollment and high operating costs.[202] The fourth school, The Brandeis School opened in 1931 as a "bi-cultural" institutions. In 1962 the school became a part of the Conservative Movement and consequently changed its

---

[200]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 43.

[201]Ibid.

[202]Ibid.

mission.[203]

The new immigrants from Eastern Europe stimulated growth of the Beth Jacob Schools, an all-girls institution. Having been very popular in Poland between 1917 to 1938, they naturally proliferated in America during this period.[204] The first school opened in 1937 in the Williamsburg section in Brooklyn. Originally, the schools were called Beth Sarah and Beth Rachel. These merged in 1941 and assumed the name Beth Jacob of Williamsburg.[205] By 1947 there were eight schools with 1200 students enrolled.

In 1937 and 1938 Yeshivot opened beyond the borders of Brooklyn in the Bronx and Manhattan. The first suburban yeshivah, the Yeshivah D'Long Island, was established in 1937 in Arvene, Queens. Similarly, Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveichik established the Maimonides School in Roxbury, Massachusetts in 1937. One year later the Yeshivah of Hudson County in Union City, New Jersey was organized.[206]

The Reform Movement was also involved in the issue of day schools in America. The Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1912 passed a statement over the issue of moral education in the public schools. They concluded that:

Ethical instruction in the Public School - Be it

---

[203]Ibid., p. 44.

[204]Ibid., p. 61.

[205]Ibid., pp. 61-62.

[206]Ibid., p. 44.

therefore Resolved: that this conference go on record as opposed to the instruction of formal and systematic ethical instruction in the public school.[207]

In 1919 Rabbi Zepin, a Reform rabbi, was concerned about the survival of American Jewry. He believed that through education American Judaism and Jews would flourish. The result of his concern was the Commission of Religious School Literature. Four years later the young Emanuel Gamoran became the first director of the Commission on Jewish Education.[208] Gamoran laid the foundation for a very different Reform Jewish Educational system for decades to follow.

Several programs of release time were prepared for discussion at the 1916 CCAR conference. "The Gary Plan of Instruction" by Tobias Schanfarber was the only plan to be seriously considered. It was comprised of six points which essentially assured that the public schools would remain secular. It further suggested "release" time during the school day for religious instruction outside of the public school.[209] The Gary Plan was particularly appealing to many Reform rabbis since it maintained the separation of Church and State and allowed for maximum hours of Jewish instruction.[210]

---

[207]Cohen, p. 17.

[208]Ibid., p. 33.

[209]Ibid., p. 19.

[210]Ibid., p. 20.

Although rabbis in the CCAR believed that the Gary Plan was the key to preserving the separation between Church and State, others viewed the concept of release time as the place they should focus their energy. Although the Gary Plan was discussed at great length, it was never called to a vote.[211]

The United States Supreme Court in 1925 "ruled that religious training is to be left to the private domain."[212] This ruling, in conjunction with prior judgements, reinforced the notion of genuine public school education without interference from religious groups. This established the groundwork for the reemergence of the release time agenda.

The issue was brought to the CCAR table several times. In 1937 there was a motion presented, which essentially disapproved of release time. However, it was defeated.[213] The CCAR reaffirmed its stand again in 1941. Reform rabbis never abandoned their beliefs that it was to their benefit to have additional time for religious instruction. Therefore, they vehemently endorsed, the release time issue.[214] Of course, all religious instruction took place outside of the public school domain.

---

[211]Ibid.

[212]Ibid., p. 28.

[213]Ibid., p. 29.

[214]Ibid., p. 30.

The era of the "Emergence of the Modern American Yeshivot" witnessed many day school "firsts" including a Hebraic schools, a national-secular school, an all-girls school, a traditional-integrated program school, and progressive day schools. Furthermore, American Jewry witnessed the establishment of the Talmudic-centered Yeshivah. All of these schools, save the three progressive schools, were successful. Each of these institutions contributed to the various foundations from which other day schools would emerge.[215]

Schools which opened in the "Pioneer Yeshivot" stage continued to grow as did the concern for Jewish learning. The modern Jewish day school slowly emerged as a result of the developments in Jewish life and Jewish education during this period. In short, advances in Jewish education were the result of the constant, unrelenting tension American Jews experienced while attempting to balance the weight of two very different cultures.

---

[215]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 46.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PERIOD OF GREAT EXPANSION AND COMMUNAL DAY SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES SINCE WORLD WAR II

According to Dr. Alvin Schiff the fifth stage of development of Jewish all-day schools has been termed the "Era of Great Expansion."[1] Although this epoch includes the period between 1940-1964, the most significant years of this period commence with the close of World War II. During this era the Jewish day school movement experienced phenomenal growth and maturation. In comparison to congregational afternoon schools day school enrollment in the United States at this time was four times the actual enrollment of those in supplemental schools.[2]

Ninety-two percent of currently existing day schools were established during this era. In addition, Americans witnessed the rise in day school enrollment concurrent with the number of communities served by these institutions. Prior to this era the vast majority of day schools were located in and around New York City.[3] Although there was a total of seventeen Jewish all-day schools in America with a student enrollment of 4,600, in 1935, the number grew to ninety-five schools with a student enrollment of 14,385 in 1946. Two years later the number of schools rose to 128 with

---

[1]Dr. Alvin I. Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, (New York: Jewish Education Committee Press, 1966), p. 20.

[2]Ibid., p. 50.

[3]Dr. Alvin I. Schiff, Contemporary Jewish Education: Issachar American Style, (Dallas: Rossel Books, 1988), p. 120.

18,654 pupils.[4]

Dr. Schiff alluded to five quintessential reasons for the growth of the modern day school movement in America. The following motivations, according to Schiff, characterized the period of 1940-1964 as the most ambitious phase of expansion: 1.) the Holocaust, 2.) the birth of the State of Israel, 3.) a rise of ethnocentrism among Jews in America, 4.) the deterioration of the public school, and 5.) the tenacious support of the day school by unrelenting advocates who sought a system of better Jewish education.[5]

The devastating annihilation of the European Jewish community during the Second World War resulted in a tremendous impact on American Jews. The effects of the Holocaust forced American Jews to introspectively examine their heritage and their future in America. A subsequent increase in Jewish interests and activities was experienced throughout American Jewish communities. Furthermore, American Jewry could no longer rely upon European creativity, scholarship and religious leadership. The Jewish day school would henceforth provide the education for America's future Jewish leaders.[6]

Many Jews who emigrated from Europe desired an

---

[4]A History of Jewish Education in America, ed. Judah Pilch, (New York: Walden Press, 1969), p. 141.

[5]Schiff, Contemporary Jewish Education, p. 116.

[6]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 76.

alternative to the Sunday School paradigm. These immigrants were disappointed with the quality of Jewish education in the United States. Their goal was to perpetuate the style of intensive Jewish education, including an emphasis on Hebrew, as experienced in Eastern Europe prior to the war. It was, therefore, their hope that the Jewish all-day school would embody these goals.[7]

With the birth of the State of Israel, American Jewry developed a heightened interest in Hebraic education. American Jewry experienced a novel kinship towards the Jewish homeland.[8] Concurrently, there was a post-war religious revival in America. As congregations grew with new, previously unaffiliated members, Jewish families began to search for meaning in their "Jewishness."[9]

As a new American Judaism evolved so, too, were there new attitudes in Jewish education. Post war immigration resulted in the establishment of more diverse yeshivot.[10] Jews became increasingly supportive of American born and trained rabbis. And, as expected, day school graduates of the early twentieth century were anxious to establish a greater selection of day schools for their children.

Parents became disillusioned with afternoon,

---

[7]Ibid., p. 75.

[8]Pilch, p. 119.

[9]Ibid., p. 120.

[10]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 77.

supplementary Jewish education. Despite the efforts of many congregations to intensify their afternoon religious school education to three days a week their efforts were primarily unsuccessful. As educational standards deteriorated parents were increasingly dissatisfied with this type of education.[11]

Americans experienced improved economic conditions following the war. Thus, parents could now afford the luxuries previously unavailable to them. Music and dance lessons as well as intramural athletics were just a few of the many extracurricular activities encouraged and supported by parents. These activities, however, curtailed the number of hours Jewish children were able to spend in the classroom. Thus, children could not possibly receive a quality religious education under these circumstances.[12]

Concurrent with the demise of Jewish afternoon school education was growing concern regarding the quality and condition of public school education. Increased juvenile delinquency, overly crowded conditions, deterioration of the infrastructure and a general lack of emphasis on academia provided parents with greater disdain for public education. Moreover, parents, during this period, were hesitant to enroll their children in an environment replete with Afro-

---

[11]Ibid., p. 78.

[12]Pilch, p. 123-124.

Americans.[13] Consequently, Jewish day schools became a convenient solution to the litany of problems and concerns held by Jewish parents.

Day schools offered small classes, individual and personal attention, and the knowledge required to be an educated Jew in the Twentieth century. Furthermore, mothers who entered the work force enjoyed the mobility which day schools afforded to them. With the extended hours and day care services which many day schools provided, mothers were more comfortable returning to work. Day schools allowed children to participate in extracurricular activities as supplementary afternoon school was no longer a time-consuming requirement. Finally, in the opinion of many parents, the day school enjoyed the status and caliber of private schools.[14]

During the decades following World War II, there was a heightened concern and involvement in the role of the National Commission on Jewish Education. In their intensified awareness of the need for an improved program of Jewish education, the Commission began to publish educational periodicals for teachers, parents, and students. Their efforts to improve curriculum included published textbook material as well as the suggestion that educators

---

[13]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 79.

[14]Ibid.

extend the hours of actual classroom instruction.[15]

In the 1950s the Jewish Federation opposed, in principle, the establishment of Jewish day schools. Their argument was similar to that of the early Reformers in America. They held that Jewish children belonged in the public school system where children of various ethnic and cultural heritages would learn about one another and consequently grow to live together as Americans.[16] The Federation's sentiment dramatically altered when it realized the potential of Jewish leadership provided by the day school. The Federation also began to acknowledge that approximately five million American children were enrolled in a private or parochial school without public criticism. By 1948, as support grew, six Federations appropriated funding for eleven day schools.[17]

Examination of the Orthodox day schools, at this time, revealed a variety of educational styles. The traditional talmudic day school concentrated, as its name implies, on the study of talmud. Instruction at these institutions was either in Yiddish or English. In general, Jewish studies were conducted in the morning followed by secular studies in the afternoon. Naturally, the latter was required to meet

---

[15]Pilch, pp. 135-136.

[16]Ibid., p. 193.

[17]Ibid.

city and state educational standards.[18]

Another type of institution popular during this period was the modern Hebraic day school. This style of education emphasized the study of Hebrew and Hebrew literature. Other courses of instruction included Bible, Jewish history and tephillot. It was customary to instruct the Jewish studies courses in Hebrew. Secular studies were appropriated equal amounts of time and emphasis.[19]

The integrated school attempted to integrate both American and Jewish heritages. The founders of these schools wished to accomplish the task of blending Judaism and "Americanism." In order to stress the mutual relationship both secular and Judaic studies were taught on an interdepartmental basis.[20] Faculty members from many departments participated in the development and instruction of the curriculum.

The Hebrew-English private schools were created for families with a progressive view of Judaism. They primarily featured a secular curriculum, thus, allowing for approximately five to eight hours per week of Jewish studies. These schools were designed for parents who did not want the burden of enrolling their children to a supplementary afternoon school and who wished to enroll

---

[18]Ibid, p. 142.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Ibid.

their children on a private school.[21]

The years following War II witnessed a decline in the number of Yiddish all-day schools. By in 1946 they constituted a marginal percentage of the total Jewish student population in day schools. They comprised less than 5% of the total Jewish pupil enrollment in such private institutions. In 1950 this number fell to less than 3% and five years later it was less than 2% of the entire Jewish student body attending day schools.[22]

A prevailing explanation for the decline in these schools was the change in Jewish demographics and the inevitable process of acculturation to new circumstances. Originally Yiddish Schools were established by immigrants who were influenced by the popular socialist theories of eastern Europe. Once settled in America, they struggled to resist the inexorable process of assimilation. The result of this struggle was the development of their own educational system.[23] The curriculum at these schools consisted primarily of the Yiddish Language and Literature, Jewish history, and socialism.

Further explanation of Jewish day schools reveals the fact that the majority of such day schools do not function under the auspices of a local congregation. Rather, they are

---

[21]Ibid.

[22]Ibid., p. 130.

[23]Ibid.

considered communal schools. However, many of these communal schools operate under the umbrella organization of an institution such as Torah Umesorah or The Solomon Schechter Day School Association. There are, on the other hand, other institutions which are not affiliated with a parent organization. One such institution is the Yavneh Day School in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Yavneh was founded in 1952 through the advocacy of a group of dedicated Labor Zionists. Although these Labor Zionists were uncomfortable in a synagogue environment, they practiced their own form of Judaism through earnest study. They built their own synagogue named "Yavneh" and subsequently constructed their own prayerbook. These pioneers wished to create their own Jewish identity within a secular Zionist world.

The twelve founders of Yavneh Day School envisioned an environment where the school developed an intimate relationship with the community. The RAMAZ school, located in New York City, was to be used as the model by which Yavneh was to be developed. Similar to Yavneh the RAMAZ school was an unaffiliated institution. The Yavneh day school was established on the fundamental precept that all Jewish children would be welcome. This was consistent with their Zionist belief of "K'lal Israel." In contrast to their colleagues in other Jewish educational institutions, the founders of Yavneh refused to impose specific ideological

constrictions on their pupils or their families. In short, Yavneh day school was to be a private Jewish school incorporating many traditional aspects while simultaneously espousing the role of the assimilated Jew.

The Hebrew teachers at Yavneh were required to teach their students in Hebrew. Interestingly, the establishment did not permit Israeli "Yeridim" to teach at the school. The founders did not want their children to associate with these Israeli emigrants. Hebrew as a modern, living language was emphasized. Students worked from textbooks also used by their Israeli contemporaries.

The Cincinnati Federation hoped to combine Yavneh Day School with the Orthodox day school, Chofetz Chaim, also located in Cincinnati. However, there were too many hurdles which could not be overcome in order to achieve this merger. For example, the Orthodox leaders objected to Dr. Ezra Spicehandler, of Cincinnati, as a board member of the joint day school as he was a Reform Jewish professor at the Hebrew Union College. In addition, Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus also of Hebrew Union College was asked to intervene. Colleagues requested that Dr. Marcus write a letter protesting a merger between two divergent philosophical institutions even though they enjoyed a common linguistic medium. Furthermore, neither institution could agree on how the subjects of evolution and creation should be taught. Consequently, the concept of a merger these institutions failed.

Due to the open admissions policy the student body at Yavneh was rather diversified. Therefore, it was crucial that the faculty refrain from judging their pupils as Jews. Therefore, Halacha was never taught as binding law. Alternatively, teachers presented Halacha as: "This is what Judaism teaches . . ." Children were encouraged to practice Judaism in the manner of their parents. Students were motivated to learn as much of Judaism as possible before they randomly rejected laws and customs. Based upon the philosophy that children needed to do in order to learn, male students were urged to wear kippot during Hebrew lessons. Similarly, when discussing the Torah, students would actually remove the Torah from the ark and examine it to locate the passage they were discussing in class.

During the 1960s, in response to the belief that public schools were failing to provide a quality education for their children, many parents searched for alternative academic institutions. It was clear that parents' greatest concern, in selecting an alternative academic institution, was the quality of the secular studies program. In response to this perceived need Yavneh developed an excellent reputation for its general studies as well as Jewish curriculum. Many parents, deprived of a quality Jewish education, have enrolled their children in schools such as Yavneh with the hope that the next generation of Jews will share a closer intimacy with their heritage.

In comparison to other day schools Yavneh possesses its share of weaknesses. Many students find the dual program of Hebrew and English rather difficult to master. Consequently, Yavneh suffers from a steady rate of attrition for which few creative measure have been instituted. Furthermore, Yavneh is not equipped to educate children who suffer from various learning disabilities. Due to the paucity of qualified Jewish studies teachers professional creativity and enthusiasm are occasionally sacrificed in order to staff the classrooms. This is most problematic as children inherently enjoy secular studies more than Jewish studies.

Other challenges include the Jewish home. Additional education must be conducted in the home in order for the children to attach any value to the lessons and customs learned within the institution. There are those parents who fear the insidious development of ethnocentrism in their children should they remain in a sequestered Jewish environment. It is, therefore, not uncommon for parents to enroll their children in public high schools in order to achieve greater cultural diversity.

According to one of the teachers at Yavneh, Mrs. Ophra Weisberg, it is integral for teachers to create within the children a "Jewish spirit." Moreover, aside from providing a quality education, Yavneh day school hopes to create a "Jewish state of mind" within the pupils. From these early Jewish seedlings, will blossom a rich and fulfilling Jewish

experience. Mrs. Weisberg eloquently summarized the mission of Yavneh day schools as not being so different from that of other such institutions. Yavneh strives to provide an environment where children can learn, grow, and ultimately develop a strong Jewish identity.

CHAPTER THREE

ORTHODOX JEWISH DAY SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES SINCE WORLD WAR II

In order to fully appreciate the development of the organization eventually known as Torah Umesorah it is important to recognize and understand the personality and motives behind its chief proponent and organizer, Rabbi Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz. Born in 1886 in Vilag, Austria-Hungary, Mendlowitz arrived in America in 1913 and settled in Scranton, Pennsylvania.[1]

Mendlowitz functioned as a teacher and principal in the local Talmud Torah school until 1921 when he was offered a position as principal at Yeshiva Torah Vodaath, located in New York City. It was not long before Reb Feivel proved to be an excellent pedagogue and administrator. However, Mendlowitz soon realized that an elementary school religious education was not sufficient for his students. In 1928 he established a yeshiva high school where students could continue to enjoy a Jewish studies program in a religious climate while simultaneously receiving an accredited secondary education.[2]

Despite his success Mendlowitz had not realized his greatest dream. He understood the future survival of Orthodox Judaism in America depended upon the education of the youth. Subsequently, Mendlowitz began to train his brightest students as educators. These individuals were

---

[1]Doniel Zvi Kramer, The Day Schools and Torah Umesorah: The Seeding of Traditional Judaism in America (New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1984), p. 7.

[2]Ibid., p. 8.

instructed in advanced religious and pedagogical skills as well as qualities such as devotion and self sacrifice, necessary for a life dedicated to Jewish education.[3] Reb Feivel was prepared:

> to create an organization that would undertake to establish throughout American day schools which would uphold the values of Torah and 'Mesorah,' Tradition. Thus was Torah Umesorah launched.[4]

After receiving initial support from the lay leadership of the Jewish community, a conference was held on April 20, 1944 in order to promulgate the development of Torah Umesorah.[5] The following statements of purpose were thereby adopted:

> 1. To open new Yeshivoth or parochial schools and Beth Jacob Schools in New York and the country. 2. To produce able leaders for the above institution. 3. To grant subsidies to existing Yeshivoth or Beth Jacob Institutions for building or remodeling purposes . . . 4. To extend service to our affiliated institutions in question of curriculum and kindred subjects whenever such service is requested, and to supervise the educational activities of institutions founded by Torah Umesorah. 5. Every Yeshivah shall become affiliated with Torah Umesorah and shall delegate its representative into [sic] the Board of Torah Umesorah.[6]

A further meeting was arranged for June 20, 1944. It was during this conference that Torah Umesorah was fully recognized.

---

[3]Ibid., p. 9.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid., p. 10.

[6]Ibid., pp. 10-11.

Prior to the June meeting, another conference was held whereby the June meeting was confirmed and the minutes from the April meeting were deliberated in further detail. Finally, members of this committee discussed possible cities which could serve as sites for future day schools.[7]

The First National Convention of Torah Umesorah convened on June 20, 1944 at The Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City. Three months later this organization was formally incorporated in New York State as the "Torah Umesorah Society for the Establishment of Torah Schools."[8] Based on the standards of the Torah, this organization was governed by the Rabbinical Administrative Board.[9] Members of this Board included many prestigious Orthodox rabbis committed to the growth and development of the Torah Umesorah day schools.

In November, 1945 a general Rabbinic conference was held in New York City in order to generate broader support for the Torah Umesorah Movement. During this conference the members of this delegation adopted three resolutions. They held that the Orthodox Movement should mobilize all of its energies into a campaign for a: "Torah education for every

---

[7]Ibid., pp. 11-12.

[8]Ibid., p. 12.

[9]Hebrew Day School Education: An Overview, ed. Dr. Joseph Kaminetsy (New York: Torah Umesorah: The National Society for Hebrew Day Schools, 1970), p. 64.

Jewish child."[10] In addition, all Orthodox rabbis were urged to fully cooperate with Torah Umesorah in order to establish Yeshiva day schools in their communities. Finally:

> Every devoted Jew has a duty to become a member of the "Elef Hamogen" Committee, composed of 1,000 sponsors who are to contribute from $100 upwards to implement the sacred program of Torah Umesorah.[11]

The establishment of Torah Umesorah sponsored day schools was not without its conflicts. As with other day school programs many parents feared isolating their children within the protective institutional walls of Torah Umesorah. The leaders of Umesorah were quick to address this concern. In response the directors of Torah Umesorah cited an extensive secular curriculum designed to not only provide students with the requisite survival skills, but to impart a deep appreciation of America, a land of religious tolerance.[12] This institution was committed to the values of both Judaism and American democracy. As the founders of Torah Umesorah believed that mutual faith in these values only created more educated Jews and more competent American citizens.[13]

During this era parochial schools generally possessed an unfavorable connotation. In an attempt to gain greater

---

[10]Kramer, p. 13.

[11]Ibid., p. 14.

[12]Ibid., p. 18.

[13]Dr. Alvin I. Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America (New York: Jewish Education Committee Press, 1966), p. 131.

public support educators emphasized the differences between Torah Umesorah and neighboring Catholic parochial schools. Not bound by a central, ecclesiastical authority each Torah Umesorah school was administered by an independent board.[14] Hoping to avoid further parochial school stereotypes the directors of Torah Umesorah schools refrained from the terms "Torah Schools," or "All-Day Schools," in marketing these institutions. Phrases such as "Hebrew Day Schools" and "Jewish Day Schools" were often incorporated into their marketing in order to provide a more amenable connotation to perspective parents and students.[15]

Although much of the success of the Torah Umesorah Movement must be attributed to its ardent and dedicated leaders, one must also examine the climate in which this organization flourished. As stated previously, Americans were acutely traumatized by the effects of the Holocaust and the creation of the State of Israel. In addition, between 1947 and 1951 approximately 120,000 Jews immigrated to the United States.[16] Included in this number were scores of Orthodox Jews who considered America a "wasteland of

---

[14]Kramer, p. 18.

[15]Ibid.

[16]William B. Heimreich, The World of the Yeshiva (New York: The Free Press, 1982), p. 45.

religious life."[17] Consequently, many new Yeshivot were established in order to replenish the spiritual and intellectual void experienced by these immigrants. With these Jews came a myriad of memories, customs, and traditions which permeated American-Jewish culture.

During its inaugural year Torah Umesorah opened seventeen institutions and directly assisted fourteen other schools. Thirteen additional schools opened the following year and fifteen schools were established during the period between 1949 and 1951.[18] Soon, the Torah Umesorah Movement permeated small Jewish communities and even the South.

As Torah Umesorah enjoyed dramatic, initial growth, similar efforts were being conducted to provide a secure and qualified service of instructors. Despite a series of attempts to develop a dedicated source of teachers Torah Umesorah met with little success until 1962. At that time Torah Umesorah created the Torah Umesorah Institute for Teachers.[19] Interested senior students continued their Jewish studies program while concurrently mastering various pedagogical techniques. Upon graduation students received Torah Umesorah Teacher's Licenses and placement priority.[20]

---

[17]Ibid.

[18]Kramer, p. 38.

[19]Ibid., p. 53.

[20]Ibid., p. 54.

In formulating a general studies program consistent with not only state requirements but with the high standards of education for which Torah Umesorah was committed educators hoped to borrow many of the quality textbooks successfully incorporated into the public school system. However, upon further examination of these resources, it was evident that many of these textbooks were pro-Christian in their orientation. The children depicted in these textbooks were playing ball on Saturdays and attending Church on Sundays. Christmas was a frequent subject and the concept of Judaism was essentially nonexistent in these texts.[21] Although yeshiva representatives convened in 1956 in order to address this issue, little resulted from this meeting. They did, however, recognize the need for integration between the secular and Jewish studies programs.

While all day schools were required to meet state requirements, there was no similar requisite for Judaic studies. The quality of Jewish education varied from school to school. Not surprisingly, many educators were concerned regarding the lack of educational standards and continuity in the Jewish studies programs. As articulated by Dr. Kaminetsky during the 1962 Convention of the Rabbinical Council of America:

> A Day School is a Yeshiva Ketana - even if for apparent reasons we call it by its more euphonious name - and it must provide an extreme program. Our pupils - and their

---

[21]Ibid., p. 67.

> parents - will water it down in due time. Tell your community leaders to have no fear of that. You as Rabbinic leaders must join us in the battle to maintain the religious and educational integrity of our Day Schools.[22]

In addition, members of the Council voiced doubts about boys and girls studying together and suggested that they be segregated as they had been in Europe. Unlike other Day School Movements Torah Umesorah attempted to provide alternative Jewish education for those children with special needs. There was the Maimonides Institute for the retarded, the Beverly Hills Academy provided a class for the handicapped, and Rabbi Ebstein's schools for the deaf in Brooklyn.[23]

The administration of Torah Umesorah realized that in order to administer a successful day school the parents needed to share or at least appreciate the religious goals and values which educators were imparting to the students. Hence, the National Association of Hebrew Day School Parent Teacher Association (PTA) was established in 1948 in Baltimore, Maryland at the Second Conference on Yeshiva Education.[24] The constitution of this Association was based on seven objectives: 1.) dedication to enlivening children with the love of God and commitment to study about the Jewish people; 2.) assisting the school in the

---

[22]Ibid., p. 69.

[23]Ibid., pp. 69-70.

[24]Ibid., p. 79.

preservation of high educational standards; 3.) the responsibility to educate all Jewish children; 4.) encouraging family education; 5) communication between teachers and administrators regarding the spiritual, psychological, and educational growth of all children; 6.) elevating the social and economical status of the day school staff in order to attract qualified personnel; and 7.) establishing the growth of future day schools.[25]

On a more practical note the Association began publishing the only magazine for Jewish day school parents. The Jewish Parent was circulated four to five times a year from April 1949 to 1976.[26] Due to lack of financing publishing was discontinued. Dr. Joseph Kaminetsky was the magazine's first and only editor. During its publication articles appeared on psychology, pedagogy, general curricular trends, and other topics from a Jewish perspective.

Dr. Kaminetsky, as Director of Torah Umesorah and editor of the Jewish Parent, exercised tremendous influence over the National Association of Hebrew Day School PTAs. In noting the many successes of the Association's first decade of service Dr. Kaminetsky amassed even greater support for this organization. In just ten years the Association had focused on a number of issues including the improvement of

---

[25]Ibid., p. 80.

[26]Ibid.

the social environment within the schools which involved more comprehensive health care and school lunches. The Association turned its attention on improving educational features of the schools. The Association sought to establish an organized system of affiliation. The next task of the Association was to create yeshiva high schools.[27]

Although Torah Umesorah experienced numerous successes and accomplished tremendous advancements, additional funding was needed to maintain this institution. During the early years of its development Torah Umesorah had little contact with the federal government. However, with the conquest of space in 1957 by Sputnik I and the subsequent technological humiliation the United States government began to evaluate America's educational assets. It became apparent that government assistance was required to rebuild an educational system replete with deficiencies.[28]

In 1958 the National Defense Education Act granted loans for mathematics, science, and foreign language programs. The Board of Directors of Torah Umesorah and the Rabbinical Administrative Board lobbied successfully to obtain a share of these loans. Therefore, it was not surprising when in 1961 Torah Umesorah began to actively support federal assistance to private schools.[29]

---

[27]Ibid., p. 82.

[28]Ibid., p. 115.

[29]Ibid., p. 116.

Furthermore, on April 20, 1961, Dr. Kaminetsky testified before the Senate Labor Relations Committee on "The Private School Construction Act," also known as the Clark-Morse Bill:

> It is our contention that there should be Federal aid to those religious schools on some formula which takes into account these two basic aspects: First, that while the parent who chooses for his children a religious school - out of deeply religious motives which are an asset to our total society - should expect to pay for that choice, he should not be expected to pay for all of the secular portion of that education which would otherwise be accepted without question as an obligation of the state; and second, that the school system which has been created to satisfy such parental goals should be recognized as taking over for such children the obligation of the state to provide a basic program of education for every child. . .

Furthermore he added:

> It is surely discriminatory that a public policy be evolved, embodied in our nation's legislation, which holds that children who receive an accredited secular education are to be denied help in a crisis which affects all primary and secondary education solely because they receive a parallel and integrated religious education with it.[30]

Subsequently, in 1965 President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act allowing private institutions to receive federal aid. Technically it was the student who benefitted from the federal assistance, not the institution.

In addition to the establishment of a day school network, Torah Umesorah lent credibility to the perpetuation of Jewish education. As a result of Torah Umesorah's efforts

---

[30]Ibid., pp. 116-117.

Jews began to seriously consider the importance of Jewish education for their children. Consequently, Bar Mitzvah boys were conducting greater portions of their Shabbat Service. Children were inspired to adopt more Sabbath and holiday rituals in the home. Furthermore, many parents began to reconsider maintaining a kosher home.[31] As one observer noted:

> We, through these [day schools] children have changed the entire picture of the community. Our boys and girls speak with confidence and pride when they describe a holiday to their playmates. They observe the commandments, not with blind faith alone, but with the assurance of knowledge.[32]

For many children Torah Umesorah provided the initial essence of Jewish identity from which a love of Judaism and our rich heritage developed. Moreover, the days school program embodied within its students the zest for learning. Consequently, many day school graduates continued their studies with a quality secondary Jewish education. Graduates of Torah Umesorah have served as teachers as well as role models for nonobservant Jews.

As with other day school movements Torah Umesorah shares many of the concerns regarding the fate of day schools. Survival is predicated upon adequate enrollment. Filling the classroom remains a perennial concern for Torah Umesorah educators. Success, as held by Torah Umesorah, is

---

[31]Ibid., pp. 175-176.

[32]Ibid., p. 176.

often mitigated by the amount of support provided by the local Orthodox synagogues.[33] However, effective teaching does not preclude the requisite educators. Orthodox day schools often have a particular difficulty in recruiting qualified staff. Many Orthodox schools have required their instructors to be fluent in Hebrew, hold certification in secular and Jewish studies, and be committed to the tenets and practices of Orthodox Judaism.[34]

Further areas of reevaluation include improved communication between the Jewish and secular studies departments. Greater integration of these subjects serves to facilitate the transition made by the students. Extracurricular activities have also been a perennial deficiency for the students. Consequently, greater emphasis has been placed on youth activities as well as summer programming.[35]

As with other movements Torah Umesorah has been interested in solicitating more family participation. Experts claim that "the lack of parental support is perhaps the most debilitating reality factor for the Hebrew Day School . . ."[36] Parents must recognize the fact that the

---

[33]Ibid., p. 180.

[34]Mordecai M. Schnaidman, "The Orthodox Day School: An Overview of the Day and High Schools," The Pedagogic Reporter, 29 (1977) 9.

[35]Kramer, p. 180.

[36]Ibid.

home is merely an extension of the day school.

> While the family within the Jewish community may be in the process of disintegration, it is also true that the Hebrew Day School, because of its unique position, is indeed uniquely geared to restore the family to its real meaning and significance.[37]

Finally, Torah Umesorah must continue to reach out to the entire Jewish community in order to serve those who are currently unaffiliated with any Jewish education.

Despite the fact that most Jewish day schools operate independently many similarities exist among the various Orthodox day schools. They are akin for several reason: First, Orthodox all-day schools share a common purpose and comparable educational philosophy. They hope to instill within their students the love of Torah and a life replete with educational pursuits. This is illustrated by Rabbi Aharon Kotler:

> The perpetuation of Jewish peoplehood depends on the development and growth of authentic Torah scholars . . . In the absence of Torah scholars, Jewry lacks the great teachers who are the links in the great chain of Tradition, spanning the ages. It lacks the educators to instruct the coming generations in the purity, wholeness and perfection of Judaism. And it lacks those who can intuitively articulate the unique wisdom and insights of Torah and make them relevant and available to Jewish youth.[38]

In keeping with this tenet Orthodox educators believe that

---

[37]Ibid., p. 181.

[38]William B. Heimreich, The World of the Yeshiva (New York: The Free Press, 1982), p. 132.

"Judaism is lived twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year."[39] Secondly, the integrated network of institutions allows educators and administrators to easily exchange concepts involving pedagogical techniques as well as curricula. In fact, the successful techniques of the older institutions are the foundation by which many newer schools operate.[40]

Demographics suggest that most Orthodox day school students are from Orthodox backgrounds. The determination as to what institution a child will attend rests with the parents. However, additional factors involved in this decision include: knowledge of a specific rabbi, the testimony of friends or family, and the location of the child's friends.[41]

The Orthodox schools, with the exception of Hasidic institutions, teach a variety of subjects including Humash, Rashi, Prophets, Hebrew Language Arts, Laws and Customs, History, Mishnah, Gemara, Ethics and Israel. Generally, Humash is emphasized in the lower grades while Talmud is stressed in grades five through high school. Since children are enrolled in Hasidic schools at age four they commence

---

[39]Eugene I. Kwalwasser, "Yavneh Academy: A Modern Orthodox Jewish Day School," The Pedagogic Reporter, 38 (1987), 7.

[40]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 108.

[41]Heimreich, pp. 130-132.

with the study of Talmud at approximately age eight.[42]

There has been tremendous discussion over the language of instruction in the religious studies department of Jewish day schools. One school of thought is to use Hebrew in the religious studies classroom. Another group opposes the use of the "Holy Tongue" as a means of instruction since Hebrew should only be spoken during prayer. A third group of educators believe it is important to utilize Hebrew as the medium of instruction However, they recognize difficulties in successfully implementing the language and concede the benefits of utilizing the indigenous language as a means of instruction.

Educators have noted both advantages and disadvantages in using the "ivrit b' ivrit" method. Benefits in using Hebrew as the language of instruction include the notion that as the original language word connotation and time are not lost during translation. By using Hebrew to teach the Jewish studies curriculum children are more thoroughly equipped to study Torah, Commentaries, Prophets and Writings. Through this method educators argue that children will experience a unique bond with the State of Israel while also developing foreign language skills.[43]

Those opposed to this method believe that as Hebrew is considered the Holy Tongue it should not be spoken as a

---

[42]Schiff, The Day School in America, p. 108.

[43]Ibid., p. 110.

language of conversation especially in the Diaspora. Many educators believe that children more readily communicate in their native language. In addition, Orthodox day schools encourage positive attitudes and values towards Jewish learning in the early grades which may effectively be achieved through the students' native tongue. Finally, on a practical note, there are simply not enough qualified instructors who can teach using this approach.[44]

The following represents brief outlines of three different Orthodox day school programs and the unique styles of education they represent. For the sake of comparison as well contrast, the curriculum in grades two, five, and seven will be examined. The first is an outline of the Hebraic Day School institution based upon a number of programs at Hebraic day schools including The Hebrew Academy of Washington, D.C. and the Yeshiva Dov Revel of Forest Hills, N.Y.

By the times these children enter the second grade, students at this institution begin to use their rudimentary skills in Hebrew on a more regular basis. Simple stories are read in Hebrew, classroom conversation is encouraged in Hebrew, and basic Hebrew grammar as well as composition are now staples of the second grade curriculum.[45] Further, prayerbook Hebrew is a regular aspect of the class.

---

[44]Ibid., p. 111.

[45]Ibid., p. 112.

In addition to their impressive Hebrew skills, these second graders will continue to learn about the customs of Shabbat and the holidays as well as the rituals and prayers associated with them. Through Bible stories they cover Jewish history from Abraham to the destruction of the First Temple. During the year concepts regarding Jewish values and the State of Israel are emphasized. In many schools students begin to study Humash in the second grade.[46]

Fifth grade students continue to reinforce their knowledge of Hebrew language and literature. In history class they study the period between the Second Commonwealth and the Golden Era in Spain. Pupils review the book of Exodus with portions of Rashi and the Book of Judges. Further study is perpetuated through the introduction of Mishnah and the Shulhan Arukh.[47]

The seventh grade marks the completion of the study of the Bible with the culmination of the study of the Books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. Then the cycle begins anew with an examination of each sidrah. Students continue with their study of the Talmud. Classes study Samuel II and the history program reviews the end of the Spanish period to the Haskalah period. In several institutions girls will study Aggadah and Jewish home economics in lieu of Talmud. Finally, the introduction of Jewish current events occurs

---

[46]Ibid.

[47]Ibid., p. 113.

during seventh grade.[48]

The curriculum of a Talmudic day school is not as Hebrew- language orientated as the Hebraic day school. The following outline is based upon the curriculum of the Rabbi Jacob Joseph School. In the second grade of a Talmudic day school students concentrate on learning the daily prayers and reading simple stories in Hebrew. Pupils study the stories of Genesis and Noah as well as Lekh-Lekha, Vayera, Haye Sarah, and Toldot in the unabridged Humash text.[49] In addition, they regularly work on Hebrew grammar and penmanship. Finally, the second grade class studies Jewish life through the laws and customs of Shabbat and the holidays.[50]

Fifth grade students continue their Bible study with the last seven chapters of the Book of Leviticus and the Book of Numbers. They also review the sidra of the week as well as explore Samuel I, chapters 15-31 and Samuel II.[51] After an introduction to Talmud in the fourth grade these fifth grade pupils continue learning Talmud with Rashi commentary. Hebrew is studied in the form of verbs and compositional prose. Jewish life is emphasized through The Kitzur Shulhan Arukh. Their education is appropriately

---

[48]Ibid., p. 114.

[49]Ibid., p. 115.

[50]Ibid., p. 115.

[51]Ibid., p. 116.

completed with cantillation of Torah and Prophets.[52]

The seventh grade class studies the sidra of the week with Rashi commentary, and reviews the Early Prophets. The study of Talmud is intensified with the addition of Tosafot. Jewish life is covered with the abridged review of the Shulhan Arukh regarding daily, Sabbath, and holiday religious observances. Finally, the seventh grade curriculum includes a class on the ethics of Judaism.[53]

The third outline is from a review of the curriculum from the Hebrew Academy of Cleveland Heights, Ohio. Rabbi N.W. Dessler is the Director of Education at this institution. The Hebrew Day School is under the guidance of the Telshe Yeshiva and its Rosh Yeshiva. This particular curriculum is published in New York City by Torah Umesorah and focuses on the instruction of Torah and mitzvot. There exists a separate curriculum for male and female students.[54]

The weekly time allotment for particular classes varies from grade to grade. During the first and second grades male students spend a large quality of time on Hebrew reading skills. In the first grade they spend six hours per week acquiring Hebrew language skills. This is reduced, however,

---

[52]Ibid.

[53]Ibid., p. 117.

[54]Hebrew Curriculum for the Day School, Prepared by the Hebrew Academy of Cleveland Heights, Ohio (New York: Torah Umesorah Publications, 1968) p. 1.

to four and one half hours per week in the second grade.[55] Despite these intensive hours little of this actual time is spent in Hebrew conversation. Rather, emphasis is placed on Hebrew grammar.

As the students progress greater time is allocated toward the study of classical text. In second grade young, male students spend about five hours per week studying humash with Rashi. This amount of time is increased to six hours in the third grade then averages approximately four hours per week through eighth grade. The study of Prophets and Writings begins in the fourth grade averaging four hours per week.[56] During the fifth grade the students allocate a significant amount of time learning gemara. By seventh grade boys are spending ten and one half hours per week on the study of gemara. Pupils study the laws of prayer for one and one half hours per week throughout their tenure at the day school. In contrast to the other institutions who emphasize history only forty-five minutes per week is devoted to this subject.[57]

In a rather sexist policy the female students only study through the sixth grade as opposed to the male students who enjoy classes through grade eight. The focus for young women is very different from their male

---

[55]Ibid., pp. 4-5.

[56]Ibid.

[57]Ibid.

counterparts. The female pupils study the laws pertaining to prayer only three hours per week. Hebrew comprehension remains intensive during the first grade in which they spend a mere four and one half hours a week reading. By the third grade the time is drastically reduced to one hour per week. Female students focus primarily on humash and Rashi averaging five hours per week. Moreover, they learn Parashat Hashevuah one half hour per week along with one hour of history class per week.[58]

The curriculum is rather specific regarding how students should conduct themselves. During the second grade children learn the laws of Shabbat, including the proper time to kindle the Sabbath candles, types of food to eat, and the appropriate blessings for erev Shabbat.[59] Similar to the other institutions the Hebrew Academy of Cleveland stresses gemara, Rashi commentary, details of blessings, and proper conduct both in and outside the synagogue.

The general studies program in all schools is essentially uniform since the local and state boards of education are responsible for these guidelines, and not the individual institution. Generally, similar textbooks and supplies, which are employed in the public school system are utilized in the Jewish day school. Teachers and principals in the general studies department are often employed based

---

[58]Ibid.

[59]Ibid., p. 29.

upon their knowledge of the general studies, not Judaica.[60] In many cases, particularly outside New York City, there are non-Jewish principals and teachers in this field.[61]

According to Mordecai M. Schnaidman's article, "The Orthodox Day School: An Overview of the Day and High Schools," the Jewish community has been more accepting of Orthodox day schools due to the many contributions its graduates have made to society. Furthermore, many graduates continue to study Bible and Talmud in yeshiva and secular environments of higher study.

As concern grows for Jewish survival in America many view the day school as the "most effective instrument for halting the erosion of the Jewish population base."[62] Consequently, day schools are calling for open enrollment. Orthodox schools are responding with special education classes, improved resource rooms and more teachers. Their goal, as with all institutions, is to attract a larger enrollment.

Torah Umesorah must be credited with the successes of the day school movement in America after World War II. As an organization Torah Umesorah contributed most to the progress of Jewish education and Jewish life. Although factors such

---

[60]Schiff, p. 120.

[61]Ibid.

[62]Schnaidman, p. 8.

as the Holocaust, the creation of the State of Israel and disillusionment with the public school system, contributed to this transformation, it was Torah Umesorah who made the day school a viable institution. Whether it was the establishment of a kindergarten or an entire day school, the founders of Torah Umesorah assisted communities in need of Jewish education and provided the requisite educational institutions. Through the relentless efforts of dedicated individuals who believed in a vision the day school became an accepted reality in America.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONSERVATIVE JEWISH DAY SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES SINCE WORLD WAR II

Upon initial examination of the Conservative Day School Movement it is evident that no single event marked the inception of this organization. However, two schools were noted precursors to the Solomon Schechter Day School Movement. The Brandeis School, founded in 1930, and the Bialik School, established in 1945, were independent institutions which later merged with the Solomon Schechter Day School Movement in 1966.[1] Prior to their creation families affiliated with Conservative congregations were enrolling their children in day schools under Orthodox and Communal supervision.[2] In response to this phenomenon a Conservative congregation founded The Beth El Day School in 1951 under the leadership of Rabbi Robert Gordis in Rockaway Park, New York.[3]

The Conservative Day School Movement experienced a modest beginning. Under the chairmanship of Rabbi Hyman Chanover the United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education in 1951-1952 structured a school similar to a "a head start" program. This was an all-day school through the third grade. The child would then enroll in a public school and continue with a Jewish studies program in a supplemental afternoon setting. These institutions, known as "Foundation Schools,"

---

[1]The Solomon Schechter Day School (Manual for Organizing and Administering) United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education, 1983, p. 8.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

provided the child a sound Hebrew foundation and strengthened Jewish identity in the early developmental years.[4] With the encouragement and support of both the Conservative lay and rabbinic leadership, as evidenced by these "Foundation Schools," the concept of day schools accumulated the strength and impetus required to become a reality. Many Solomon Schechter Day Schools eventually developed from what were once known as "Foundation Schools."

In 1955 the United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education began the Day School Education Committee under the leadership of Rabbi Josiah Derby.[5] In conjunction with the Commission Rabbis Derby, and Ben Zion Bokser prepared to open the first Solomon Schechter Day School in Queens, New York, in the following year.[6]

During this time Solomon Schechter Schools began to emerge in various cities throughout the United States. In response the United Synagogue Commission sponsored the "First National Conference on Day School Education" at the Jewish Theological Seminary on April 30, 1957.[7] The goal of this conference was "to encourage and to assist individual schools."[8] As a result of this conference the Regional

---

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid., p. 9.

[6]Ibid., pp. 8-9.

[7]Ibid., p. 9.

[8]Ibid.

Commission on Jewish Education and the Regional Offices of the United Synagogue facilitated the development of Conservative all-day schools in cities as Chicago and Washington D.C.[9] The aim of this cooperative effort was to assist congregations in pooling their resources to adequately fund these institutions.

By 1958 the United Synagogue Commission on Education recognized the outstanding need to develop a reservoir of deeply committed and educated individuals who would develop into the Conservative lay and rabbinical leaders of future generations. They believed this dream would only be accomplished through a day school educational system supported by the Movement. Rabbi Simon Greenberg, the Vice Chancellor of the Jewish Theological Society, spoke of teaching the Jewish tradition with its moral and ethical implications. Yet, he believed this would best be accomplished without the fanaticism and rigid structure of the Orthodox Movement.[10]

During the 1962 Rabbinical Assembly the rabbinic leadership made the following endorsement:

> The Rabbinical Assembly . . . in recognition of the invaluable contribution that the Day School can make to our movement and to American Jewry, . . . urges the establishment of Day Schools in our congregations and

---

[9]Ibid.

[10]Jewish Day Schools in the United States, prepared by Amy Malzberg, New York, 1971, p. 11-12.

communities wherever possible . . . .[11]

They recognized the disappointing failure of the Conservative afternoon school. In short, supplemental, afternoon schools were not accomplishing their goals.

The Solomon Schechter Day School Association was envisioned in December 1965 at the First Conference of Solomon Schechter Day Schools which convened at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City. This umbrella organization would subsequently make provisions for universal standards in day school education, provide a structure by which to assist these schools, and generate the development of further schools.[12] It was at this conference that Mr. Horace Bier, the current president of the Solomon Schechter Day School of Northern New Jersey, was selected to be the first president of the Solomon Schechter Day School Association.[13] Enthusiasm abounded regarding the development of a program where the Judaic and secular studies would be fully integrated and Judaism would not be limited to only a life of study; it was to be lived as well.[14]

Progress continued in 1967 when the United Synagogue of

---

[11]Dr. Alvin Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, (Jewish Education Committee Press: New York, 1966) p. 63.

[12]The Solomon Schechter Day School, p. 9.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Malzberg, p. 13.

America's Biennial Convention hosted a meeting of the second Conference of Solomon Schechter Day Schools. It was at this memorable convention that Dr. Louis Finkelstein, then Chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, paid tribute to the growing Solomon Schechter Day School Movement.[15] During this convention the majority of members of the Conservative Movement had the opportunity to become acquainted with their day school colleagues.

The third Conference gathered in New York City in March, 1969. This assembly marked a turning point in the history of Solomon Schechter Day Schools. It was the first time that teacher and parental representatives participated in the workshop sessions. The Association has subsequently held biennial conferences on a regular basis and remains an integral factor in the success of the Solomon Schechter Day Schools.

> The Association is led by its Executive council which meets periodically, is governed by elected officials, operates with a frame of bylaws as approved by the United Synagogue commission on Jewish Education, its 'parent,' and realizes its programs through the Department of Education.[16]

Today, the Solomon Schechter Day School Association continues to offer many services and benefits to its affiliate schools. For example, the Association supervises the network of schools, develops curriculum, develops new

---

[15]The Solomon Schechter Day School, p. 8.

[16]Ibid., p. 10.

day schools, provides educational consultation, and publishes a newsletter for day school faculty.[17]

Solomon Schechter Schools grew from the eight Solomon Schechter Day Schools and Foundation Schools in the United States and Canada in 1962, to nineteen schools in 1966. Growth continued with thirty-two institutions by 1970. In 1976 there were 7,000 students registered in forty-one Solomon Schechter Schools which included high schools.[18] This number subsequently grew in a short period of time to sixty-seven schools with a total of 12,000 pupils in the United States and Canada.[19] According to the United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education, in 1992, there were approximately seventy Solomon Schechter Day Schools in North America. It should be noted that it is difficult to provide an exact number of schools as many of these institutions have two or three satellite schools.

Until the 1970s there existed a perception that many parents sent their children to day schools in order to not only avoid the inadequate educational system of the public schools but to achieve the status of sending one's child to a private school. The Solomon Schechter Day School parent held an unique view of education during this decade. The day

---

[17]Ibid., p. 11.

[18]David Singer, "The Growth of the Day School Movement," Commentary, (56) 1976, 53.

[19] The Solomon Schechter Day School, p. 10.

school was the means by which a child could obtain a solid Jewish education and thereby solidify one's Jewish identity. It would be through this intensive instruction that young Jews would enjoy the opportunity to discover security and tranquility in their Jewishness. Ideally, graduates would not feel threatened by assimilation, intermarriage or ignorance.[20]

The Conservative Movement became involved in day school education, in part, as a response to the success of Orthodox day schools.[21] Since many Conservative families were already enrolling their children in Orthodox day schools, the Conservative Movement believed that they were also capable of creating effective day schools for their students. The Solomon Schechter heritage hoped to bequeath two fundamental educational values to American Judaism. These goals were the fervent communication of Judaic wisdom and the emotional devotion to Judaism as a way of life.[22] The day school was the next logical extension of this system. In essence the three underlying assumptions which support the existence of the Solomon Schechter Day Schools

---

[20]Dr. Morton Siegel, "The Conservative Day School: The Solomon Schechter Day School Association," The Pedagogic Reporter, (29) 1977, 11.

[21]Ben Zion Bokser, "Solomon Schechter Day School Education and the Conservative Movement," Paper delivered at the Second Biennial Conference of the Solomon Schechter Day School Association, November 1967. Second reprint, Spring 1978, p. 3.

[22]Ibid., p. 5.

were:

> . . . the day school is best equipped to acquaint its pupils with a significantly substantial portion of the large body of the original sources of our religio-cultural tradition . . . it can emancipate its students from . . . the schizophrenic concept of living in two cultures . . . and replace it . . . with a psychologically and intellectually integrated Jewish version of American civilization . . . and aspires to educate young people to recognize not only that Judaism should be their 'ism' - - their lifestyle; but that the conservative Movement in Judaism is squarely and securely established as the collective heir of the most genuine and the most relevant in our tradition and warrants their loyalty and adherence.[23]

The Conservative Movement viewed itself as historical Judaism. However, education was not be bound to fundamental beliefs or rigid structure as was experienced in the Orthodox day schools. The philosophy of the Conservative day school echoed the sentiments of its parent Movement which recognized that human element worked in conjunction with the Divine throughout the universe, evolution developed within the precepts of tradition, and the rapport of change existed within the tradition.[24] The Solomon Schechter Schools reflected the Movement's convictions regarding halacha and mitzvot as well as general religious observance and practice.

The founders of the Solomon Schechter Day Schools envisioned their schools as an emancipation from the cycle of alteration between two very different cultures. They

---

[23]The Solomon Schechter Day School, p. 15.

[24]Bokser, p. 6.

believed that the day school would provide an environment where a student would learn to naturally integrate his secular and Judaic worlds. In lieu of attending both a public school as well as an afternoon school, students could now learn American history taught in Hebrew and flow easily from Hebrew to math all under one roof.

The Conservative Day School is, above anything else, a Jewish day school. It does though, have much in common with other day schools. The majority of Jewish day schools have in common the physical environment, the relationship between study and communal prayer, holiday celebrations, concerns regarding the relationship between the United States and Israel, and the dual responsibilities American Jews maintain.[25] Nonetheless, the day school's strictly Conservative premise is clearly emphasized. Whenever possible, Jewish texts are taught and discussed in Hebrew. D'rash and P'shat are instructed as two different levels of interpretation. As mentioned previously, history remains at the core of the Conservative Movement, and subsequently, this is reflected in the classroom through inquiry and analysis. The schools are committed to involving the entire family in this learning process while simultaneously encouraging the individuality of the student.[26] In

---

[25]Elliot D. Spiegel, "Reflections on a Conservative Day School," The Pedagogic Reporter, (38) 1987, 10.

[26]Ibid.

addition, daily prayer is reaffirmed as an essential component to the Conservative Jewish experience.

The United Synagogue of America Commission on Jewish Education has remained a strong advocate of the relationship between the school and the home. During the inception of these schools, parents held a non-educational role. However, in 1987 the Commission finally realized the true capacity of parents. Recognizing that the home functioned as an integral aspect of a child's life, the parents became "honorary members of the teaching profession."[27] They "teach" a way of life through the examples they set for their children and the lifestyle they live. Biographical data indicates that the average parent of a Solomon Schechter Day School student is not only a college graduate, but holds a litany of post graduate degrees.[28]

The creation of any day school originates with a period of exploration often conducted by a handful of interested and committed parents. The first Solomon Schechter Day School was fortunate to commence with the assistance of a local rabbi and educator. They began by asking many relevant questions. Those involved were not interested in isolating their children from other children. Parents hoped to assure themselves that the Solomon Schechter curriculum would not

---

[27]Edya Arzt, "The Parent and the Day School," The Pedagogic Reporter, (38) 1987, 23.

[28]The Solomon Schechter Day School, p. 54.

create this barrier. Further, the need for such an institution had to be established. It was essential that the general studies program was equivalent to the curriculum found in the local public school. There was much sentiment that a solid Jewish educational experience should not be sought at the expense of a secular education.

Initially there were concerns regarding the curriculum and the criteria for admission. Further questions developed as to the initial number of students, range of grades, and the source of educators. As with public schools discussion arose regarding the need for extra-curricular activities. Meals, transportation, and financing were also issues discussed rather frequently.[29]

Affiliation with a Solomon Schechter Day School program requires the adherence of various guidelines. These guidelines are for example, an enrollment standard and liaison policy, as well as a policy regarding the number of hours of instruction which the students must receive. By virtue of this affiliation, the schools are required to follow the practice of kashrut, and maintain a Conservative environment, which includes a policy relating to Shabbat and the holidays. Finally, there are guidelines by which the faculty is hired.[30]

In addition to the emphasis on Conservative Judaism,

---

[29]Ibid., pp. 20-21.

[30]Ibid., p. 60.

the Solomon Schechter Day School encourages the student to engage in artistic and intellectual creativity. It provides for this expression in a variety of opportunities, including regularly scheduled classes within the framework of the school period. Moreover, many schools have taken the initiative to establish extra-curricular clubs in music, dance, chess and photography. The possibilities are endless as the schools are generally receptive to new ideas in avocational pursuits.[31]

Lenore P. Koppel, Director of the Solomon Schechter Day School of Cleveland, Ohio, outlined a number of features offered by this particular school. This Solomon Schechter Day School operates through the eighth grade. On the primary and elementary school level, actual class time is divided equally between secular and Judaic studies. The middle school, however, had to reduce Hebrew/Judaic time by approximately 2%, to 48% of the total time, in order to meet state requirements for secular studies. As many educators believe that students learn more effectively in the morning, the entire school alternates days for studies in the morning. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday Judaic studies are in the morning and general studies are taught in the afternoon. This schedule is reversed on Tuesdays and Thursdays. There is a daily minyan according to grade level.

In keeping with Conservative tradition, the Cleveland

---

[31]Ibid., p. 68.

Solomon Schechter Day School observes the laws of kashrut. Therefore, parents alternate days serving lunch at school. Other Solomon Schechter Schools allow food to be provided from the outside.

The curriculum at the Cleveland school, according to Mrs. Koppel, is well-diversified which is what most educators would expect in a classroom. The language arts program includes speaking, listening, writing, and literature, as well as reading, spelling and handwriting. The math curriculum is similar to one in a public school. Students study calculation, comprehension and application. In the science department the lower grades study natural science while the higher grades learn the physical sciences which include biology, chemistry, and physics. Regarding social studies, pupils in the eighth grade study the state of Ohio through the strategy of problem solving whereas ninth grade students write exams in civics, reading and writing.

In addition, students participate in health, music, physical education, and art classes. All students learn how to use a computer keyboard and become familiar with educational software. Once a week an Israeli teacher conducts lessons on a Hebrew-based keyboard.

The Solomon Schechter Day School of Cleveland has developed a sophisticated guidance counseling program which allows students to explore various career opportunities.

Three quarters of the counselor's time is devoted to working with students on interpersonal problems. This particular school is dedicated to working with both parents and children.

The Judaic program is divided into three categories: tephillah, language, and Humash and Commentaries. Students from the second grade learn Rashi while pupils in the sixth through eighth grades study the Prophets. Classes are introduced to gamara during seventh grade.

With the advent of non-Orthodox Day Schools comes the question of the relationship between the day school student and the local congregation. Where does the day school student fit into the afternoon school system? Furthermore, does a family need to belong to a congregation if the children are educated in such an influential environment which is being concurrently supported at home? After all, it is possible that the day school may be drawing upon the Congregation's enrollment population. It should be noted, however, that the day school was never meant to replace the Congregational school.[32]

In January 1973 the United Synagogue of America's Commission on Jewish Education adopted a "position paper" regarding those issues under consideration for possible revision. One of the issues was a discussion of the relationship between day schools and afternoon

---

[32]Siegel, p. 13.

congregational schools. Since the Conservative Day Schools were considered an acceptable option for Jewish education the Conservative Movement now had two normative educational structures from which parents could choose.

The Commission agreed to study issues such as the synagogue's role in the day school students' religious experience, the relationship between the parents of day school children parents and the congregation, and the situation in which parents enrolled some of their children in day schools while others attended afternoon classes.[33]

Another issue that the Commission in 1973 examined was the growing number of community day schools. These schools were the result of those who supported the "community approach." Community day schools were not supported by one religious movement. Rather, children from Orthodox, Conservative and Reform families attended these institutions. However, in practice, community schools were either Orthodox-oriented or they favored the approach of "cultural Judaism." Once again, parents enjoyed yet an additional choice in their selection of an educational system for their children.[34] The Commission utilized this information in order to appeal to the Conservative Movement for a more secure financial commitment. It was rather clear

---

[33]"Bikezur," Solomon Schechter Day School Association Newsletter, (3) November 1973, 2.

[34]Ibid., p. 3.

that the Movement, in order to survive, would need to be more responsible for funding new schools, lend greater assistance to existing schools, and culture further educational research.

The day school student presumably has a level of Hebrew which is far superior to that of the child in afternoon school. Yet, to refrain from any type of instruction at the religious school may be detrimental to the student. The overriding factor encouraging communication between the day school family and the congregation is the simple fact that the day school is not a synagogue and should not be viewed as such. Holidays and family education should be celebrated at the synagogue and not merely in the classroom. The synagogue can provide a sense of community through prayer, study, and family celebration.[35]

Interestingly both the Reform and Conservative movements, consider this situation an educational challenge. All congregations have an obligation to provide a religious education for their youth whether or not the child attends a Jewish day school.[36] Yet, the difficulty remains in providing the day school student a challenging curriculum not found to be redundant. Therefore, the Congregation must seek to develop additional programs for these students which

---

[35]Dr. Kerry M. Olitzky, "Nurturing Jewish Education: Day Schools and Supplementary Schools," p. 4.

[36]Ibid., p. 2.

will provide them with an unique educational experience. While day school students should not be expected to join the afternoon Hebrew class, the synagogue can create an advanced program for these pupils, thereby serving to complement their day school education. Another concept is to involve these students in a youth group or social action program. Finally, it is important to remember that "elu v'elu divrei elohim chayim."

In the March 1974 issue of "Biktzur," the Solomon Schechter Day School Association Newsletter, Harry Kessler, the Principal of the Sager Solomon Schechter Day School in Northbrook, Illinois, published an article entitled, "The Religious Life in a Solomon Schechter Day School." When Solomon Schechter Schools began, the founders spoke of the need for "religious practices" in the education of children. Mr. Kessler articulated what he believed these religious practices in the school should involve. He held that the day school environment should provide an opportunity to practice these religious duties.

Kessler conceived that Solomon Schechter Schools should require the following: a Blessing before eating and Birkat Hamazon following meals, prayer with tefilin for age appropriate males, the study of Torah, Hebrew, Prophets, mishna and talmud. This was in conjunction with a tzedakah program as well as observing the laws of kashrut. During Passover religious practice included B'dikat Hametz, Beur

Hametz, and M'hirat Hametz. Kessler emphasized the importance of respecting teachers, synagogue, rabbis and cantors. To Kessler, religious practice was a paradigm by which values were to be taught and morals to be imparted. Finally, modest dress and appropriate behavior were to be regular tenets of order and discipline within the classroom.[37]

The Solomon Schechter Day Schools encourage a healthy relationship with not only the local Conservative congregations but with the Jewish and non-Jewish communities. It is important for the Jewish community to understand that there exists a symbiotic relationship between the Jewish community and the day schools rather than a financially parasitic engagement between needy day schools and benevolent congregations. Ample opportunities arise for the mutual sharing of facilities as well as participation in joint activities. Day schools should extend themselves to the "secular" community by partaking in the celebration of national holidays, participating in civic activities, and sponsoring various community services.[38]

The United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education, the parent organization of the Solomon Schechter Day School Association, in October 1974 approved a new "Statement of

---

[37]"Biktzur," Solomon Schechter Day School Association, (3) March 1974, 3.

[38]The Solomon Schechter Day School, p. 73.

Requirements for a Charter of Affiliation with the Solomon Schechter Day School Association. These requirements apply to both existing schools and de novo institutions. The Commission established the minimum number of hours of Judaic studies in the classroom at twelve hours per week or approximately 40% of the total instructional time.[39] All general and secular studies were required to comply with the mandates as stated by the various local and state educational bureaucracies. Furthermore, the curriculum needed to provide for integration of the Judaic and secular studies "as interpreted by the Solomon Schechter Day School system."[40] With regard to the admissions policy children who were not Jewish were not admitted to a Solomon Schechter Day School unless the parents made a documented commitment by the time of registration for conversion of both the parent and child.[41]

The Solomon Schechter Day School Association has supported psychological testing of all its potential applicants. The rationale given for this policy reasons that students must be socially and emotionally mature in order to participate in this type of day school education. Also,

> . . . it establishes whether the child's intellectual competency is (at least) the 'average' category. The

---

[39]"Biktzur," Solomon Schechter Day School Association, (4) March 1975, 1.

[40]Ibid., p. 2.

[41]Ibid., p. 3.

> purpose of the psychological examination is not to sift out all but those who have an unusually high intelligence or unusual maturity. Its purpose is to make certain that, as far as one can determine in advance, the pupil can function with reasonable effectiveness within a day school setting and belongs there.[42]

Unfortunately, in an era of emphasis on learning disabilities, most schools to date do not sponsor classes for children with special educational needs.

As with most successful institutions, the Solomon Schechter Schools have survived controversies and debates. During its history many questioned the organization's legitimacy and authenticity. It was challenged with accusations of attempting to "ghettoize" Jewish youth, and undermine the validity of public school education. Over time, these allegations have disappeared. Parents now worry about their children becoming too American and casting off their Jewish heritage in order to blend into the great melting pot of American society.

The Solomon Schechter Schools wish to provide their students with a solid foundation in which to grow and mature. They expect their graduates to understand the meaning of living a Jewish life in America. Dr. Morton Siegel articulates this goal:

> The child who attends a Day School finds himself in an educational system which provides a complete integration of Judaic studies and general studies so that the two worlds which exist for the child who attends public school and congregational school - the

---

[42]The Solomon Schechter Day School, p. 76.

> secular world and the religious world - do not exist for the Day School child. From the very beginning, therefore, he comes to look upon Judaism and his American life as inextricably interwoven which, in itself, is a fundamental difference between the two educational systems.[43]

According to Dr. Siegel and other Conservative day school advocates, Judaism is a way of life and the Conservative movement provides the most authentic manner of preserving this fine heritage.

The Conservative all-day school Movement is not without problems. The Solomon Schechter Day School Association is troubled by the financial pressure of a poor economy. As with many private institutions, Solomon Schechter Schools are increasingly concerned regarding the financial health of existing schools and the goal of establishing further institutions. Obligatory tuition increases may only serve to prohibit qualified, yet financially less fortunate students.

The Association would like to create new day schools in those communities where Conservative day schools do not already exist. The Association would also like to develop new Solomon Schechter high schools. Other goals include training qualified teachers and principals committed to the Solomon Schechter Day School philosophy, consolidating and strengthening existing schools, and the further formation of

---

[43]Dr. Morton Siegel, "What Kind of Child Do We Want to Produce in the Solomon Schechter School?" Paper delivered at the 1965 Solomon Schechter Day School Association Conference, New York City.

a committed laity.[44]

In addition, the Association would also like to develop an arrangement for those students who did not attend a Solomon Schechter elementary day school but wish to enroll in a secondary day school. Furthermore, the Conservative Movement is striving to provide supplemental family education so that learning may continue in the home. Moreover, the Solomon Schechter Day School Association hopes to continue to train faculty on the supervisory and classroom level through the graduate program of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.[45] Finally, the survival of this organization is predicated upon the ability of the Conservative movement to attract eligible students from among Conservative congregations and unaffiliated Jews.[46]

---

[44]The Solomon Schechter Day School, p. 12.

[45]Ibid., pp. 12-13.

[46]Dr. Alvin Schiff, "The American Jewish Day School: Retrospect and Prospect," The Pedagogic Reporter, (38) 1987, 2.

CHAPTER FIVE

REFORM JEWISH DAY SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES SINCE WORLD WAR II

Unlike the Orthodox or Conservative Movements the Reform Movement was not concerned with establishing day schools during the Nineteenth and early to mid Twentieth centuries. The very notion of abandoning the public school system during this time period was unthinkable.[1] Private schools, especially Jewish all-day schools, were antithetical to the very position the Reform Movement held during this century.

In 1948 the Reform Movement publicly supported President Harry S. Truman's Commission on Education. Vast numbers of American citizens did not have sufficient educational opportunities available to them. Therefore, national and state legislation were required in order to create more educational opportunities.[2]

The Central Conference of American Rabbis held a symposium on the day school question in 1950. This was the first time in which the CCAR candidly discussed the day school issue. Rabbi Victor Reichert of Cincinnati delivered a paper entitled, "The Jewish Day School: Its Fallacy and Danger." He claimed that:

> The Jewish all-day school, like Jonah's gourd, has come up in the night of despair. It will wither in the broad daylight of renewed faith in freedom and democratic

---

[1]Rabbi Daniel B. Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," Religious Education, 78, (1983), 153.

[2]Ibid., pp. 166-167.

process.[3]

Those who opposed day schools raised the issue of separation. Day schools would "narrow Jewish loyalty" and thereby curtail a child's vision of the world.[4] The general consensus in the CCAR was to affirm the merit of public school education rather than create new day schools.[5]

The Holocaust and the creation of the State of Israel created lasting impressions on the Jewish community in America. Proponents of day schools wished to maximize these feelings to show the Reform Movement that greater efforts should be made in the area of Jewish education.

Emanuel Gamoran, Reform Judaism's Director of Education, continued to speak on behalf of day schools. There were several arguments in support of these institutions. In response to the issue that day schools promoted separation advocates argued that all-day schools produced knowledgeable members of the Jewish community. Many parents who were concerned with assimilation were grudgingly enrolling their children in Orthodox day schools. In addition, Reform parents were sending their children to other types of private schools. Hence, separation was not an

---

[3]Rabbi Daniel B. Syme, "The Reform Day School: Its History and Future Prospects," The Pedagogic Reporter, 29 (1977), 14.

[4]David Sanford Cohen, "American Reform Judaism and the Jewish Day School," Thesis. Hebrew University, 1974, p. 45.

[5]Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," p. 167.

issue for them. In fact, several Reform rabbis already enrolled their children in various day schools. Finally, and most simply stated, there was no reason that the concept of democracy and American values could not be taught in day schools.[6]

Gamoran voiced his appeal again in 1951. He believed that the Reform Movement had an obligation to provide a liberal environment for those seeking a day school education. On the other hand, his opponents maintained their belief that Reform Jews should remain loyal to the public schools. After all, it was through public education that Jews were afforded so many opportunities. By remaining in the public schools Reform Jews could aid other minorities. Through the public school as an institution, Jews would have the chance to eradicate racism, prejudice, and misconceptions held about them. Together they would hope to create a better world. Lastly, day schools were a symbol of the ghetto which so many Jews had longed to forget.[7] Although Gamoran was ignored at the time, the very issues that he raised would surface in the future.[8]

In 1953 the Reform Movement repudiated the accusation

---

[6]Cohen, pp. 45-46.

[7]Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," p. 167.

[8]Dr. Michael Zeldin. " A Century Later and Worlds Apart: American Reform Jews and the Public School-Private School Dilemma, 1870, 1970," p. 29.

that day schools were a mode by which to avoid integration. This resolution was in response to the rapid growth of Orthodox day schools. The Reform Movement was ardently opposed to any Jewish family deserting the public school system.

The decade of the 1960s witnessed a different outlook to the day school question. This was an era of change and re-evaluation for the Reform Movement. Most Reform Jews were in a very different position as compared to their parents. By 1960 the majority of Reform Jews were third generation and no longer required the process of "Americanization."[9] They had become quite successful. These Jews were a part of professions which once barred them; they had entered into white-collar government positions, and they were gaining access to businesses once owned by non-Jews.[10] The 1960's Jewish family was thoroughly middle class. These two children families lived in beautiful homes in larger cities. Moreover, approximately, 90% of Reform Jews had attended college.[11]

By 1961 the day school issue was once again a serious topic of discussion. A group of New York rabbinical students appealed to the UAHC-CCAR Commission on Jewish Education to

---

[9]Cohen, p. 50.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid.

re-evaluate its stance on full-time Jewish education.[12] These students believed there was a genuine need to train future Jewish leadership. Within the day school environment students enjoyed a sense of security. Unfortunately, the converse was often the case in the public school system.[13] There, Jewish children were frequently indoctrinated with Christian values.

A motion was passed that a committee should study the day school question and report back to the Commission. Although, the Commission reconvened in November 1961, there were no formal plans for the prospective study. The following statement was issued, however, at the Biennial Assembly of the UAHC as the Movement asserted:

> We respect the right of any religious denomination to establish and administer its own educational institutions. We applaud their contributions to the cultural and spiritual diversity of our nation.[14]

The CCAR passed the same resolution, but did not condone federal aid to any type of parochial school. The Commission had yet to address the issue of day schools by 1962.

The National Association of Temple Educators (NATE) also shared a vested interest in day schools. In 1962 the educators held a debate entitled, "The Day School and Reform

---

[12]Syme, "The Reform Day School: Its History and Future Prospects," p. 14.

[13]Dr. Alvin Schiff, The Day School in America, (New York: Jewish Education Committee Press, 1966), p. 212.

[14]Ibid., p. 211.

Jewish Education."[15] The two speakers were Rabbi Samuel Glasner and Samuel Rosenkranz. Rabbi Glasner spoke on behalf of the establishment of day schools. He believed that day schools would help to create a Jewish identity in the staunchly Christian society in which American Jews lived. In addition, he raised the question of whether or not Reform parents wanted their children learning in an Orthodox environment. Without Reform day schools parents had no other choice but to enroll their children in Orthodox schools if they desired an intensive Jewish education.[16]

Samuel Rosenkranz feared that day schools would create a "domino effect:"

> I know that they want to establish only one or two or three Jewish Day schools - a limited number - to meet their needs . . . Please note . . . that in 1910 there were only two Jewish All Day Schools in America - the same magic number that the proponents of the Reform Jewish Day School are willing to accept . . . But the movement took on a life of its own . . . From two All Day Jewish Schools in 1910 to 274 Jewish All Day Schools in 1961! . . . We must face the fact that the Reform Movement would probably have the same experience - the Day School program if it is ever initiated, will grow until there are scores of schools in dozens of communities.[17]

Many Reform parents agreed with this sentiment.

The study committee of the UAHC-CCAR Commission on Jewish Education, in October of 1963, submitted their

---

[15]Ibid., p. 210.

[16]Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," p. 170.

[17]Ibid.

report. In principle they saw no reason to prevent the establishment of day schools. It was held that any group of individuals or Reform congregation should be allowed to establish a liberal day school.[18]

Conversely, the committee stated that they were not convinced that they should champion or promote the day school cause. They did not believe it would be wise to publicly endorse the issue since there were many conflicting views. By pledging their backing the Reform Movement would be obliged to publicly give these schools, at the very least, moral support. In addition, the committee believed it could not officially endorse the project until they were convinced that day schools were a practical need.[19] In order for the day school movement to emerge as a reality, it would have to develop at the grassroots level.

Arguments for and against Reform Jewish day schools could be found in every discussion. Many educators felt that Reform day schools would provide an ideal context by which to pursue excellence in education and to encourage individuality and creativity in the classroom.[20] For those who recognized the limitations of the public school they

---

[18]Syme, "The Reform Day School: Its History and Future Prospects," p. 14.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Rabbi Samuel Glasner, "The Day School and Reform Jewish Education- The Case for a Reform Jewish Day School," The Jewish Teacher, p. 16.

wished to develop a series of small, experimental schools which would not only encourage individual progress but inspire "educational exploration."[21] Once again, parents and educators voiced concerned regarding the overt and implied Christian values which so inundated the public schools.

The goals of a Reform Jewish day school were to not only provide an environment free of Christianity but cultivate the future leaders of the Reform Movement. For the sake of cultural diversity, day school advocates encouraged Jewish children to befriend non-Jewish contacts after school hours.[22] Jewish children no longer suffered from a lack of Americanization. Rather, they were deficient in Jewish literacy.[23] Damaged by the loss of European roots, American Jews urgently needed to follow Hillel's maxim, "go and study."[24]

In November 1963 the UAHC General Assembly gathered in Chicago. Rabbi Alexander Schindler, vice-president of the UAHC and director of the Commission on Jewish Education, publicly supported Jewish day schools. He argued that the entire Jewish community would benefit from such

---

[21]Ibid.

[22]Ibid., p. 17.

[23]Rabbi Alexander Schindler, "Day Schools a Vital Option for the Reform Jewish Community," Temple Israel, MA, 1988, p. 2.

[24]Ibid.

institutions. After all, Jewish all-day schools were cultivating a new generation of Jewish leaders. Furthermore, these schools would not jeopardize the constitutional premise of the separation of Church and State.[25]

The question of financing was addressed in a New York Times interview when Rabbi Schindler stated that he hoped that several private individuals would support the first Reform Jewish Day School.[26] The Reform Movement collectively issued a statement.

> America's system of public education is not fulfilling either the needs of individuals or of the nation as a whole . . . Inadequate schools facilities, understaffed and underpaid school personnel, and outmoded curricula and materials threaten deleterious consequences for our society.[27]

Not all Reform rabbis were as supportive as Rabbi Schindler. Rabbi Sylvian Schwartzman in his article, "Who Wants Reform All-Day Schools?" directed his readers' attention to those Reform Jews who clearly opposed such institutions. In addition, he argued that Reform all-day schools would result in a "fait accompli" regardless of the community's desires.[28]

Schwartzman argued that the Reform Jewish community was

---

[25]Schiff, The Day School in America, p. 215.

[26]Syme, "The Reform Day School: Its History and Future Prospects," p. 14.

[27]Ibid., p. 15.

[28]Sylvian Schwartzman, "Who Wants Reform All-Day Schools?" CCARJ 12 (1964), 3.

not truly supportive of day schools. In fact, Reform Judaism and all-day schools were incompatible. Rabbi Schwartzman conceded that there was room for improvement in the educational department, yet there were means by which to address these deficiencies prior to establishing day schools.[29]

All-day schools contradicted some of the very tenets of Reform Judaism such as equality for all Jews, complete separation of Church and State, Israel's "calling" as a mission to the world, and support of the public school as part of a democratic society.[30] Rabbi Schwartzman suggested that an alternative to the day school dilemma was augmented family education. He held if that parents were more committed to Jewish education, then their children would consequently enjoy an improved attitude towards Judaism.[31]

Rabbi Schwartzman offered many alternatives to day schools including family summer camping, innovative ways of teaching by enlarging the curriculum committee, improving the high school curriculum, and promoting Kallah programs for college-age students who were home during vacations.[32]

The Commission on Jewish Education continued to reject

---

[29]Ibid., p. 4.

[30]Ibid., p. 7.

[31]Ibid., p. 8.

[32]Ibid., p. 10.

resolutions which called for the establishment of Reform day schools. In 1964 the vote was seventeen votes against and one vote for the creation of day schools. By 1965, the vote was slightly improved. A similar trend was noted in 1966 with a seventeen to three vote.[33] On the other hand, on April 19, 1964, the UAHC's New York Federation of Reform Synagogues requested that the Commission on Jewish Education establish six Reform day schools in large American cities.[34] This was largely due to a energetic grassroots endeavor. These creative schools would pioneer the way for other institutions to follow.

Opposition remained strong to the creation of day schools. The rationale for Reform day schools was incongruous with the philosophy of Reform Judaism. In keeping with the educational dogma of the Reform Movement, if members of the Movement were unhappy with the current public school education, they should strive to improve it rather than create all-day schools. In short, the Reform Movement held that day schools were not a necessity for liberal Jews.[35]

Arguments within the Movement for the creation of day schools included the fact that private schools had always

---

[33]Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," p. 172.

[34]Ibid.

[35]Schiff, The Day School in America, pp. 217-218.

been an accepted option in American education. Moreover, there were many who believed that private schools, of any kind, made integral contributions to American education and society.[36]

Through 1967 the Reform Movement failed to possess day schools. American Jews, especially Reform Jews, desired to be Jewish only within a pluralistic context.[37] It was not until Israel's Six Day War in June of that year that American Reform Jews formed a different opinion regarding day schools. Following Israel's miraculous victory Reform Jews altered their thoughts as to how they defined an educated Jew.[38] With their new sense of identity and pride, American Jews began to search for their Jewish roots.[39]

The Six Day War marked a watershed in Reform Judaism's attitude towards all-day schools. Reform Jews had always viewed themselves as pluralistic in thinking and action. Reform Jews were proud of their relationship with another minority, Blacks. Reform Jews had championed the Civil Rights Movement only years prior to Israel's war. However, Afro-Americans did not support the Jews in a reciprocal

---

[36]Dr. Michael Zeldin, "Beyond the Day School Debate," Reform Judaism, 1986, pp. 10-11.

[37]Cohen, p. 57.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Syme, "The Reform Day School: Its History and Future Prospects," p. 15.

fashion. Shamefully, the very same Afro-American leaders who worked closely with many Reform Jews during the Civil Rights Movement were now vocally anti-semitic.[40] Subsequently, many Reform Jews found themselves disillusioned with the Civil Rights Movement and the concept of desegregation.

The Jewish leaders were particularly disappointed in the Christian community. When Israel was attacked, the Church remained silent and indifferent towards Israel.[41] The Reform Movement was disenchanted with their Christian neighbors whom they had engaged in productive interfaith dialogue.

As a result, many Reform Jews became less liberal and more ethnocentric in their attitudes towards education. Their commitment to public school education dramatically changed, as many Reform parents enrolled their children in traditional Jewish day schools.[42] Ignorant of their own heritage, Reform Jews turned inward. Since there were no liberal day schools, they had no alternative but to enroll their children in Orthodox and Conservative schools.[43]

Whether for or against Jewish day schools, there were numerous questions which needed to be addressed. They were:

---

[40]Ibid.

[41]Ibid.

[42]Ibid.

[43]Syme, "Reform Jews and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," p. 174.

1) What was the rationale of a Reform Jewish day school? 2) Was this type of education compatible with Reform Judaism? 3) Is the day school "American" or does it have a place within American culture? 4) Is the Reform community ready for full-time Jewish education? 6) Can the UAHC financially and morally support these schools? 7) Will the Reform Movement be forced to change its position on federal funding of private institutions? 8) Are the day school proponents attempting to escape the public schools? Is this a form of "ghettoization?"[44]

Reform leaders turned to their heritage for answers. Many of the original Reform leaders actually supported Jewish all-day schools. However, the Reform Movement was the first Jewish organization to champion the public school.[45]

One compromise was to schedule an additional day of Religious School to the mid-week schedule. Yet, other rabbis encouraged the study of Hebrew after the age of Bar Mitzvah.[46] Others rabbis argued that this was not enough. Rabbi Stanley Chyet, in 1968, delivered the sermon at the Hebrew Union College Founder's Day ceremony. Concerned about Jews abandoning their Jewish identity and heritage, Rabbi Chyet argued:

If Judaism is a way of life and of looking at the

---

[44]Cohen, p. 61.

[45]Ibid., p. 64.

[46]Ibid., p. 66.

> world, it is a way which cannot be experienced on weekend mornings. It cannot be experienced even on Monday and Wednesday afternoons, or in the finest summer camps. It can be experienced only within the confines of a daily ongoing exposure to Jewish concerns- and there is but one institution able to offer such an exposure. I mean, of course, a Reform Jewish Day School.[47]

In October 1969 the Commission on Jewish Education passed a day school resolution. The resolution indicated that day schools were not necessarily in direct conflict with public schools.[48] The Commission recognized the need for more intensive structured Jewish education, and outlined a number of points supporting their position. Reform Jews would remain loyal to public schools but day schools would provide an alternative educational choice. In short, the Commission implied that day schools were congruous with American democracy.

The Commission was vehemently against federal funding for day schools. Such institutions were financed privately. The Commission denied any plan to establish a series of "parochial" schools under the auspices of the Reform Movement. Finally, the Commission favored pilot programs on a local level.[49] The Commission would not establish all-day schools, but they would help those who were interested

---

[47]Ibid., pp. 67-68.

[48]Syme, "The Reform Day School: Its History and Future Prospects," p. 15.

[49]Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," p. 175.

in undertaking such a project.[50]

Although they supported the day school idea, Reform Jews were not willing to openly take a stand that would compromise their support for the public school.[51]

In the same year the UAHC defeated an attempt for an experiment with full-time Jewish education. Once again, Reform Jews proclaimed their commitment to public education. It was not long after this resolution that the Reform Movement realized that it was, in fact, possible to remain as loyal Americans while pursuing Jewish knowledge through all-day Jewish education.[52] Consequently, individuals were encouraged to pursue Reform day schools. However, the Reform Movement could not give its official sanction to the plan.[53]

The Reform Jewish Day School question entered a new phase in 1970. Congregation Rodeph Sholom in New York City established an elementary all-day grade school in 1970. Rodeph Sholom had a nursery and kindergarten school since 1957.[54] Also in the same year, another Reform day school

---

[50]Ibid, p. 176.

[51]Zeldin, "A Century Later and Worlds Apart," p. 30.

[52]Dr. Michael Zeldin, "Establishing Reform Jewish Day Schools: A Revolutionary Move in Perspective," The Pedagogic Reporter, 38, (1987), 13.

[53]Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," p. 176.

[54]Cohen, p. 79.

opened in Miami, Florida at Congregation Beth Am. This school was an extension of the previously established pre-school program.

In Miami the Temple's Religious School Board and subsequently the Temple's Board were quite enthusiastic regarding the prospect of a Reform Jewish day school on an experimental basis, using the Temple's existing facilities. The first class consisted of fifteen students, until one of the teachers removed seven of the pupils and established a Conservative day school at another synagogue.[55] Today, in 1992, there are 450 pupils in grades one through six at the Beth Am Day School.

There were several important factors involved in the creation of the Beth Am Day School. Realizing that Jews generally seek quality education for their children, it was not unusual that Reform parents would also desire the same type of education for their children. Therefore, the secular education at a day school must either be of equal or superior quality to other private schools or the public schools in the community.[56] The ultimate goal was to ensure excellence in education within these day schools.

The founders of Beth Am Day School were aware that a Reform Jewish day school needed to be distinguished from

---

[55]The Formation of the Temple Beth Am Day School, Mission Statement, Miami, Florida.

[56]Sima Lesser, "The Beth Am Experiment: A Reform Day School," Temple Beth Am, Miami, Florida, 1974, p. 5.

other established "parochial" schools in the community. Rabbi Leonard Beerman's Reform Day School Philosophy captured the essence of Beth Am's intentions.

> We want our children to be at home in their Jewishness, to have that comfortable sense of belonging which is such a rarity among us. We want their Jewishness to be neither a burden, nor a source of shame or contempt to them . . . We want our children to have a religious attitude towards life, to have a reverence for all that enhances life . . . We want life and the religious understanding of it to be a joyous thing . . .[57]

Actually, the intensity of the Judaic program was not considerably greater than what existed in the weekend Jewish school. One of the many benefits of the day school was that Judaic studies were integrated with other subjects, thereby making it more tangible for the young student. Take for example the subject of abortion. After studying the subject of abortion as a current events topic from a legal and ethical point of view, the Rabbi of the day school could explain Reform Judaism's position on abortion.[58] Thus, allowing the students to realize that Judaism has an integral role in their decision making on germane topics.

Perhaps an examination of a current role model in Reform Jewish day school education would provide further insight to this subject. Temple Beth Am's Day School Judaic Studies Director, Lenore C. Kipper, R.J.E. states that the school's curriculum is based on the notion that Judaism is a

---

[57]Ibid., p. 8.

[58]Ibid., p. 11.

Religious Culture. In doing so the school:

> aims to develop an educated American Jew who is emotionally stable, at home with his/her American and Jewish identity, who is spiritually and historically linked to the concepts of God, Torah and Israel, and who chooses to adopt a personal life style as an observing, literate member of a Reform synagogue and the total Jewish community.[59]

The day school's goals include integration of both American and Jewish heritages, a life-long love of education, development of leadership qualities which will enable the individual to serve both the Jewish and secular worlds, a commitment to practice ethical mitzvot, and to observe Shabbat holidays and life-cycle events.[60]

The philosophy at Beth Am Day School is learning for the sake of learning. This is reflected in the grading and evaluation process. Instead of report cards there are parent-teacher conferences. Progress reports are only sent home at the end of the school year.[61]

The Beth Am Day School is also committed to the education of the Hebrew language, with the hope of fostering a love and respect for this language. Another goal of the Hebrew curriculum is to teach Hebrew as a living, modern language. Through the study of Torah, Siddur, Holidays, and Midrashim, students learn about their Jewish heritage.

---

[59]Lenore C. Kipper, R.J.E., "Judaic Studies Goals and Curriculum," Beth Am Day School, Miami, Florida, p. 2.

[60]Ibid., pp. 2-3.

[61]Lesser, pp. 95-96.

At each stage of development students will learn comprehension and linguistic skills, in both the oral and written fashion. Although Hebrew classes are scheduled for approximately fifty minutes a day, Hebrew is used in other ways as well. For example, arithmetic instructions may be written in Hebrew. The most important goal of the Hebrew curriculum is to: "create a positive attitude about Hebrew and encourage students to become lifelong students of Jewish studies."[62]

In teaching liturgy the students at the Beth Am Day School are exposed to both the Union Prayer Book and traditions other than Reform Judaism. The students are also encouraged to conduct creative and integrated services.

Every child that applies for admission to the Beth Am Day School must undergo a series of evaluations. Included in these tests are an I.Q. test, achievement test, and a perceptual skills evaluation.[63] The testing is to ensure that the students are socially mature, emotionally stable and without a serious learning disabilities. Subsequent testing is conducted annually.

The curriculum is designed at the Beth Am Day School to accommodate each student as an individual. As Beth Am did not have the luxury of prior Reform educational models, much of the curriculum development was created on a trial and

---

[62]Kipper, p. 6.

[63]Beth Am Day School Parent Handbook, p. 2.

error basis.[64] The director of the school, Mrs. Lesser, believes that the curriculum should be centered around living, ethical Judaism.[65] This day school has a spiralled curriculum. Hence, each grade will learn about the Holidays, for example, but at an advancing cognitive level.

All student activities at the Beth Am Day School are centered around the expressed goal of integrating Judaism into the total life experience. For example, a study on the Evolution of Vertebrates may be augmented with a unit on Noah and the Ark.[66]

Two major areas of difficulty in the Reform curriculum are the study of God and Bible. When examining the question of God, Beth Am borrowed material from Rabbi Harold Kushner's book, When Children Ask About God. They attempt to teach children that God is a difficult concept for adults as well as children and our understanding of God changes as we mature.[67] With regard to Bible class, students are encouraged at the earliest ages to refer to the original text. Beth Am Day School wants its students to feel comfortable with the Bible.

This particular day school offers its students "clubs" once a week, in order to enhance their avocational

---

[64]Lesser, p. 42.

[65]Ibid., p. 44.

[66]Ibid., p. 65.

[67]Ibid., p. 62.

experience. Children can choose from activities such as, cooking, sewing, stamp collecting, chess-and-checkers, recorder and macrame, arts and crafts, sports and newspaper. Every six to eight weeks, students choose a new activity.[88]

The creators of Beth Am Day School believe that growth of student population should be slow and deliberate. It should be an evolutionary, not revolutionary process.[89] At its inception Beth Am Day School had many more non-members of the congregation than members' children enrolled. Presently, the converse has developed. Members do have priority over non-members at the time of admission.

Both the Beth Am Day School and the Rodeph Sholom School in New York City were accused of contributing to the phenomenon of "white flight" from the public school. Since both schools were established by suburban families, they were charged with trying to avoid desegregation in their childrens' schools. As with other communities throughout the United States, bussing in Miami began in 1970. Rabbi Herbert Baumgard of Beth Am responded with,

> Because I love the Black man, I do not have to sit idly by while Judaism and the Jewish community evaporates. I shall not do less for the Black man than I have always done. What the present seems to require for Jews is

---

[88]Ibid., p. 54.

[89]Ibid., p. 84.

more intensive [Jewish] education.[70]

Advancing Jewish education was not necessarily incompatible with social justice.

Parents of Beth Am and Rodeph Sholom were disillusioned with the quality of the public school education. They were also disappointed with the weekend and afternoon Religious Schools. It would be incorrect to omit segregation as an additional reason for the creation of Reform Jewish day schools.[71] Had these schools not opened, parents would have turned to other private institutions. Although the concept of social justice was taught, hypocrisy and prejudice prevailed.

Since the establishment of these two pioneer schools there has been a tremendous growth of the Reform Day School. In 1973 Rodeph Sholom broke ground for the construction of its new day school building. By the autumn of 1974 there existed three new institutions followed by another school in 1975.

At the 1975 UAHC Biennial in Dallas a decision was made to examine the status of these day schools. A conference was scheduled for February, of 1976, to present the results of this study of day schools in the Reform Movement.

The UAHC National Day School Conference assembled in

---

[70]Zeldin, "Establishing Reform Jewish Day Schools: A Revolutionary Move in Perspective," p. 13.

[71]Cohen, p. 80.

New York in February 1976. This was the first time that directors of the established day schools held a conference to review their work. No longer was the day school the subject of theoretical discussion.[72] Together with nine other UAHC congregations, the directors articulated the various challenges and processes involved in the creation of Reform day schools.[73] Reform Jewish Day Schools were now a valid alternative in Reform Jewish education.

By 1981 there were already a total of nine Reform day schools. This number grew to twelve in 1986, now serving approximately 2,000 students.[74] Also that year, the UAHC Biennial passed a resolution supporting the development of Reform Jewish Day Schools. The Reform Movement was estimated to have 1.8% of the total of students attending Jewish day schools.[75] Although the UAHC did not mandate the establishment of such schools, they did provide support to existing schools and were committed to assisting those communities which had the potential for the development of such schools.[76]

---

[72]Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," p. 178.

[73]Syme, " The Reform Day School: Its History and Future Prospects," p. 15.

[74]Zeldin, "A Century Later and Worlds Apart," p. 41.

[75]Dr. Alvin Schiff, Contemporary Jewish Education, (Dallas: Rossel Books, 1988), p. 279.

[76]In Progress, 1 (1992), 2.

According to Rabbi Alexander Schindler, Reform Day Schools provided a healthy alternative to Orthodox day schools. Reform day schools exhibit an equality between genders. Similar to congregations, day schools extend themselves to families of intermarried couples. They espouse the Reform commitment to social action, and the education of Judaism as a living faith.[77]

The Progressive Association of Reform Day Schools, otherwise known as PARDeS, is the newest associate of the UAHC. The first copy of their newsletter, In Progress, was published in 1992. PARDeS adds a unique dimension as their membership is composed of professional and lay leaders who advocate Reform Day Schools. Their stated goals are:

> . . . to educate a generation of Reform Jews who have a strong sense of their Jewish identity with an equally strong knowledge base about their heritage . . . they will be the leaders of tomorrow.[78]

As of the 1992 Newsletter there were thirteen Reform Day Schools in North America with a fourteenth school opening in September 1992. Three additional schools are currently being planned for 1993.

Prior to the Reform Movement's endorsement of day schools, several issues required resolution. These issues concerned, the "democratization" of private schools, the "de-coupling" of the public school-civil rights connection,

---

[77]Schindler, p. 4.

[78]In Progress, 1 (1992), 1.

and the concern for quality secular education. Once a consensus was reached on these issues the Reform Movement was now able to fully support, in theory and practice, day schools.[78] Reformers substituted the Catholic term "parochial" for the more secular category of private schools. The Rodeph Sholom school in New York emphasized the ethnic components of its school rather than its religious facets. It was considered a "private school for Jewish children," not a Jewish Day School.[80] The former sounded less parochial.

Always concerned with Civil Rights the Reform Movement emphasized that they were not abandoning the cause. Rodeph Sholom claimed that it maintained urban families, thereby avoiding the "white flight" to the suburbs. Thus, improving racial relations. The Day School Movement underscored the importance of combatting assimilation. They maintained that one or two day a week Religious School training was not sufficient to escape the perils of assimilation. Children required the daily exposure that day schools would provide.

> If our children are incessantly exposed to specious values in their public schools and in society, then we should provide them with greater opportunities to confront and explore the values of primary importance in Jewish tradition. Removed from the dehumanizing value system of their secular culture, they may be able to accept Judaism as the dominant reality of their lives . . . One way to assure the survival of Judaism in a secular society may be the creation of day schools

---

[78]Zeldin, "A Century Later and Worlds Apart," p. 31.

[80]Ibid., p. 36.

within the Reform movement.[81]

Reform Jewish Day Schools provide an integrated curriculum which is fitting for liberal American Jews in the late 20th century. Each day school must decide how best to achieve this goal.[82] These day schools have evolved into a type of laboratory for Reform education. Within the classroom setting full-time educators are empowered to fully develop Reform Judaism's vision both a theological and educational basis.[83] Proponents of Reform Jewish Day Schools affirm that these schools contribute to the betterment of America for several reasons. Reform Jewish day schools generate and encourage an important liberal religious voice in the exchange of ideas concerning America's future. Liberal day schools prepare students to enter the American democratic process with regard for religious ideals, while remaining dedicated to the principle of religious pluralism. Moreover, students possessing a strong background in both secular and religious studies share the unique opportunity to examine current issues challenging American society utilizing the knowledge of

---

[81]Ibid., p. 41.

[82]Dr. Michael Zeldin, "Merging General and Jewish Studies in the Reform Jewish Day School," Compass, Summer 1981, p. 4.

[83]Jacqueline Gilbert, Sue S. Klau, and Rim Meirowitz, "The Reform Jewish Day School - Vision of Excellence, 'May I Ask You a Question?'" p. 23.

their own religious values.[84]

Day Schools have also benefitted the Jewish community in the area of affiliation. Reform Day Schools allow for greater participation in Jewish life while simultaneously recognizing that children are also members of the greater society. "Part of the uniqueness of the Reform Day Schools is that - for the most part - they are synagogue sponsored and synagogue oriented."[85] Consequently, many Reform Temples have been witness to an increase in membership and attendance.

Reform Jewish Day Schools are generally more concerned with teaching Jewish context rather than Jewish content. The goal is to instill within students an underlying commitment to the betterment of American life. A goal of Reform Jewish Day Schools, according to Dr. Michael Zeldin, is to:

> help children and their families develop social, communal and religious ties that transcend the school and serve to provide a framework for a long-lasting commitment to Jewish life.[86]

Reform Jewish Day Schools have been in existence for a little more than two decades. Although they have evolved in terms of acceptance and reality, they are, nevertheless, faced with many challenges. Since each school operates autonomously, there needs to be an accepted set of criteria

---

[84]Zeldin, "Establishing Reform Jewish Day Schools," p. 13.

[85]Ibid.

[86]Ibid.

which each school must achieve in order to be considered a Reform Jewish day school.[87] By developing an accreditation for the Jewish studies program a uniformed standard would exist for the quality of education in the Reform Jewish day schools.

Another critical challenge to not only the day schools, but all religious schools, is the concept of family education. Students cannot be educated in a vacuum. Parents of day school students must understand that the schools are merely imparting Jewish knowledge, values and observances, and not ensuring the practice of them. Further emphasis must be conducted to involve the family as a Jewish unit in the instruction and implementation of life cycle events.

On the subject of economics the cost of day schools can often be prohibitive. According to a study conducted in 1986-1987 most schools provide some kind of scholarship assistance. Tuition accounts for approximately 79.8% of the total income of Reform day schools.[88] The percentage of funding from Jewish community is generally rather small.

Locating qualified teachers is also a concern for these schools. On the average day school teachers begin at 82% of the salary which they would earn in a public school. Many schools require their teachers to be Jewish. Others have

---

[87] In Progress, p. 5.

[88] Rabbi Julian I. Cook, A Data-Base Survey of Reform Jewish Day Schools, 1986-1987, p. 5.

additional qualifications such as, advanced degrees, teaching experience, and a working understanding of Reform Jewish ideology.[88]

Despite the many impediments, the number of Reform Day Schools is increasing with a growing student enrollment. Reform educators foresee a positive future for Reform day schools. Many have predicted that public schools will continue to decline and parents will look for alternatives in education. As we approach the 21st century time is becoming a precious commodity. Day schools allow for increased leisure time. Thus if a child is not attending a weekend Religious School, it leaves additional time allocated to family activities. Also, day schools provide an incentive to the single parent family. In the situation of a single-parent family the non-custodial parent often has visitation rights with the child on the weekend. Should the child attend a day school the visit will not be interrupted by Sunday School. Day Schools may offer the possibility of tuition tax credits. Finally, with the growing commitment to a more intensive Jewish education in a world increasingly filled with secularism, liberal day schools may be the answer for more families, their children, and the Reform Jewish community.[90]

---

[88]Ibid., p. 7.

[90]Syme, "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma," pp. 180-181.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

As the end of the Twentieth Century nears it is evident that Jewish day schools have achieved respectability and gained acceptance throughout the United States. According to Dr. Michael Zeldin, Education Professor at Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles, these once fledgling institutions are presently supported and subsidized by most American Jewish communities.[1] Historians would have erred had they relied upon past sentiments to determine the future outcome of such institutions. For there were numerous opponents to all-day Jewish schools. Yet, history does play an important role. As noted by Dr. Zeldin:

> history can give our decisions meaning. History can add perspective; the decisions we make today are a part of a larger struggle - to carve out a place for Jews in a non-Jewish world. History helps to point out the issues we face as Jews, Americans and as human beings.[2]

As noted previously day schools have evolved through five stages. According to Dr. Alvin Schiff these stages are: the Colonial Period, (1654-1785), the Century of Growth and Decline (1786-1879), The Pioneer Yeshivot (1880-1916), The Emergence of the Modern American Yeshivot (1917-1939), and The Era of Great Expansion (1940-1964). Since World War II American Jewry has witnessed the growth of Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and Communal Day Schools.

---

[1]Dr. Michael Zeldin, "The Promise of Historical Inquiry in Jewish Education: 19th Century Day Schools and 20th century Policy," p. 1.

[2]Ibid., p. 3.

There are several reasons given for the current existence and success of the wide variety of Jewish all-day schools in the Twentieth Century. According to one educator it is not merely enough to credit the deterioration of the public schools system with the rise of Jewish day schools. Similarly, it would be incorrect to point solely towards an ethnic and religious revival in American Judaism. Indeed, it was the amalgamation of these two factors.[3]

As initially witnessed in the Nineteenth Century, Jews have assumed a practical approach with regard to education. With the exception of the Orthodox, parents have consistently enrolled their children in the school system which offers the highest quality secular education. After all, ". . . secular excellence is a road to Jewish survival [which] should be openly acknowledged."[4]

Those in favor of day schools argue that Jewish all-day schools are dedicated to the highest values in Judaism and American democracy. Each approach enriches the other. The result is a well informed Jew and a truly educated American able to contribute to society. Those opposed to Jewish all-day schools maintain that such institutions segregate Jewish children. They conclude that parents who support such education value the religious program at the expense of secular education.

---

[3]Ibid., p. 16.

[4]Ibid., pp. 16-17.

Additional reasons for the support of Jewish day schools include the failure of the supplementary afternoon schools. Irving Greenberg articulated this sentiment as early as 1966:

> We must reckon [with] student and teacher lateness and absences; the ballet lessons and dentist appointments that receive first priority; the host of distractions and interruptions . . . ; the fact that [such schools] are generally of margin concern to rabbis upon whom congregations place . . . a host of other rabbinical obligations . . . ; the frequent lack of commitment of teachers and administrators . . . ; the frequent absence of standardized and/or properly evaluated curricula . . . .[5]

In short, afternoon Congregational schools have been unable to compete with all-day institutions regarding the quality and content of education. Greater allocation of time and resources must be committed if the study of Jewish and Israeli culture as well as the study of Hebrew are to remain priorities for American Jewry.

In 1900 Professor B.A. Abrams, Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Milwaukee made the following rather poignant and timeless observation:

> But even the activity of the best teacher cannot be fruitful if he has to fight against the indifference in the home. It is a strange fact that parents who take great care to see to it that their children attend public school regularly and punctually keep the very same children at home for nonsensical reasons, since it is only Sabbath School that they are missing. A mere whim of the child, a party, a music lesson, are often considered important enough to justify an absence from religious school.

---

[5]David Singer, "The Growth of the Day School Movement," Commentary, vol. 56, no. 2. Aug 1976, p. 54.

Additionally,

> Their mothers rarely realize that the child learns soon enough the subtle difference between public and religious school, that he uses it with the utmost cunning, and that, thereby, a certain indifference is being awakened. The fact that often, in the presence of the children, the value of religion in general, and of religious instruction, in particular, is being judged in a negative way, and that even jokes are being made on the subject, while the school at the very same day should enthuse the child with the religion of his parents, is still the most important obstacle which prevents a more efficient influence of the Sabbath School. If we could only convince the mothers that only an intimate understanding-cooperation of home and school-is able to arouse in the younger generation the true feeling for our ancestral religion; if we could only encourage them to increase the interest of their children by coming frequently to the classrooms or by finding out the progress of the child, then, a new, more successful activity of our Sabbath Schools could be brought about, and the future of Israel in this country would be assured.[6]

Through curriculum integration teachers enjoy the opportunity to instruct Judaism on a similar level of contemporary importance as other subjects. Based upon this technique, educators integrate Judaism into the entire American-Jewish, educational experience.[7] As noted by Professor Abrams parents and children share other priorities. Consequently, afternoon activities including sports, scouting and socializing have replaced the afternoon religious school experience. In addition, public school children are often saturated with information and,

---

[6]Dr. Alvin Schiff, "From Sunday School to Day School," Jewish Education, vol. 50, no. 2, Summer 1982, p. 9.

[7]Judah Pilch, ed. A History of Jewish Education in America. (New York: Walden Press, Inc., 1969) p. 211.

therefore, unable to maximize their religious school education.

In 1962 approximately 540,000 Jewish children were enrolled in Congregational supplemental schools. By 1986 this number had decreased to 250,000.[8] However, during this period Jewish day school enrollment increased from 60,000 to 130,000.[9] Currently, 85% of the school population is enrolled in Orthodox sponsored schools, 9% study in Conservative sponsored schools, 3% are under communal auspices, and 3% are divided between Reform and secular sponsorship.[10] Factors contributing to this unprecedented growth include the extraordinary high birthrate among Orthodox Jews, the growing number of single and working mothers, dissatisfaction with Jewish afternoon schools, and the immigration of Israeli, Russian and Iranian Jews.[11]

There are essentially five types of parents who enroll their children in Jewish all-day schools. There are those parents who possess little knowledge of Hebrew or Judaic studies but wish to enlighten their children. Other parents appreciate an institution's cultural orientation but do not

---

[8]Dr. Alvin I. Schiff, "The American Jewish Day School: Retrospect and Prospect," The Pedagogic Reporter, vol. 38, no. 3, Nov. 1987, p. 1.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Dr. Alvin I. Schiff, "On the Status of All-Day Jewish Education," Jewish Education, vol. 51, no 1, Spring 1983, p. 2.

[11]Ibid., p. 3.

hold similar religious values. Observant families enroll their children in day school programs. Moreover, there are parents who are unaffected by the sectarian precepts of the institution but are impressed with the particular secular studies program. Unofficially, many families suffer from a phenomenon known as "white flight." With the advent of court mandated laws of desegregation in the 1960s, large numbers of Jewish parents enrolled their children in all-day schools in order to avoid contact with Afro-Americans. Finally, there were the European parents who had enjoyed an intensive religious school program and desired such a curriculum for their children.[12]

Although proponents of Jewish all-day schools hope that graduates of these institutions will retain Jewish values and practices into their adult lives, studies have yet to prove that ". . . the day school by itself can counteract the forces of an open society."[13] Many Jewish students enroll in a public, junior or senior high school, hence completing their formal Jewish education at a young age. Precious little data are known as to the amount of information retained or the percent of those children who continue their Jewish studies either formally or informally. Jewish education does not guarantee a life of Judaism. It is

---

[12]Amy Malzberg, "Jewish Day Schools in the United States," New York, 1971, p. 22.

[13]Ibid., p. 19.

impossible to separate the influences of the home, the litany of external forces, as well as those of a spouse, on the continuity of Judaism during life.[14]

Day schools face numerous challenges. Economically it is extremely difficult for day schools to maintain present operations based upon tuition alone. Consequently, these institutions attempt to enlist the support of the local community. Communities subsequently decide if they should support day schools of all religious movements or insist upon interdenominational coordination. As the day school program grows it will continue to reflect the dogma and interests intrinsic to the Jewish community.

Another issue plaguing Jewish day schools is whether such institutions serve only the financially privileged or are all Jewish children entitled to a quality Jewish education?[15] Additionally, the issue of special education is at stake. Are Jewish day schools only for the gifted child? Is the supplementary afternoon school adequate for the child with learning disabilities or should he be encouraged to obtain a Jewish education through an all-day program? Many educators believe that all children regardless of emotional, physical, mental, or financial disabilities are entitled to such an education.

Many Jewish schools encounter perennial staffing

---

[14]Ibid., p. 21.

[15]Pilch, p. 212.

problems. There is a dearth of qualified educational personnel who find Jewish education a laudable profession. Consequently, schools are often forced to hire educators with less than ideal curriculum vitae. Other careers offer greater financial renumeration and status. It must be the responsibility of the Jewish community to elevate the status and standards of full-time Jewish educators. By assembling a qualified staff of educators the goal of academic excellence must be pursued. As noted by Dr. Shimon Frost:

> The task of maintaining the highest level of scholastic offerings, coupled with a genuine education mindedness in the administrative/supervisory/curricular domains of the school is the second challenge we must consider.[16]

A challenge unique to the non-Orthodox schools is the development of a Hebraic curriculum. Schools must provide a reasonable level of Hebrew proficiency. Otherwise these institutions are merely private schools, Jewish in name only. In addition, most Communal, Reform, and Conservative day schools only operate through the sixth or eighth grade. Educators, with the support of parents, need to build upon this education or the day school will have failed to produce any enduring effects.[17] Areas of suggested growth include full time Hebrew high schools as well as more rigorous continuing education.

---

[16]Dr. Shimon Frost, "Crucial Challenges to the Non-Orthodox School." Jewish Education. vol. 51 no. 1 Spring 1983, p. 26.

[17]Ibid.

Schools of all denominations are troubled by the inherent problem of lack of commitment in the home. Too many parents do not practice a similar level of Judaism that is taught in the schools. The home remains the greatest influence on the student. In order for Jewish education to be completely successful parents must provide an educational environment in the home.[18] Furthermore, there are those parents who send their children to a school which is ideologically inconsistent with their practices in the home. Ideally, Reform parents should not enroll their child in an Orthodox day school. In order for the institution to be successful children require constant reinforcement and consistency in the home. Educators must act as effective role models as well as facilitators with the parents.[19] The goal, of course, is the home developing into a natural extension of the classroom.

The Jewish day school has emerged as a salient factor in the American Jewish educational and social philosophy. Although Jewish day schools were a segment of American society prior to World War II, the greatest period of growth has been since 1945. The factors which account for this development include: the effects of the Holocaust, the emergence of the State of Israel, the rise of ethnocentrism

---

[18]Ibid.

[19]Dr. Alvin I. Schiff, Contemporary Jewish Education: Issachar American Style, (Dallas: Rossel Books, 1988) p. 150.

in America, the deterioration of the public school system and consequent "white flight," and the promotion of the day school by zealous advocates. Although these schools were initially established by various Orthodox groups, they have been joined by their Conservative, Reform, and Communal counterparts.

It is questionable whether or not all of the goals of Jewish day schools have been accomplished. Although it is difficult to realize the efficacy of enrolling children in all-day schools, research has shown that these graduates will often seek congregational affiliation and may become active in Jewish communal affairs as well as provide leadership to organizations.[20]

Nonetheless, Jewish day schools must not be construed as anything more than educational institutions. Graduates are not automatically conferred a life of Judaism. In fact, Dr. Schiff has noted: ". . . [many graduates] display greater interest in building home libraries of general literature than in acquiring books of Jewish content."[21] Jewish day schools have not necessarily guaranteed future Jewish leadership for the American Jewish community.

All movements have been challenged by countless successes and failures. Yet, each movement continues to sponsor a system of thriving institutions. While Orthodox

---

[20]Schiff, The Jewish Day School in America, p. 152.

[21]Ibid.

day schools and yeshivot will continue to exist and grow non-Orthodox Jewish day schools will also remain as a viable educational alternative. For many Jews day schools are viewed as the most effective medium for extensive Jewish education in a Diaspora marked by assimilation and intermarriage.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arzt, Edya. "The Parent and the Day School." The Pedagogic Reporter, 38 (1987), 23-25.

Bokser, Ben Zion. "Solomon Schechter Day School Education and the Conservative Movement." Paper delivered at the Second Biennial Conference of the Solomon Schechter Day School Association. Second reprint 1978.

Chorowsky, Joshua, and Louise Stein. "Federation, the Central Agency, and the Day Schools as Partners." The Pedagogic Reporter, 38 (1987) 11-14.

Cohen, David Sanford. "American Reform Judaism and the Jewish Day School." Thesis: Hebrew University, 1974.

Cook, Julian I., (Prepared by) "A Data-Base Survey of Reform Jewish Day Schools - 1986-1987.

David, Jerome Paul. "The Jewish Day School in America 1940-1971." Hebrew Union College Archives: Near Prints Special Topics, All Day Schools, December 1971.

Dushkin, Alexander M., "The Role of the Day School in American Jewish Education." Jewish Education, 20 (1948) 5-15.

_____ and Uriah Z. Engelman. Jewish Education in the United States. New York: American Association for Jewish Education, 1959.

Feuerman, Chaim. "Critical Clallenges Facing the Jewish Day School in the Coming Decade." Jewish Education, 51 (1983) 20-22.

Frankel, Ephraim. "The School in the Intermediate Size Community." Jewish Education, 51 (1983) 11-16.

Frost, Shimon. "Crucial Challenges to the Non-Orthodox School." Jewish Education, 51 (1983) 25-26, 37.

Gartner, Lloyd P., "Temples of Liberty Unpolluted: American Jews and Public Schools, 1840-1875." A Bicentennial Festschrift for Jacob Rader Marcus, ed. Bertram Wallace Korn. Massachusetts: American Jewish Historical Society, 1976.

Gilbert, Jacqueline, Sue S. Klau and Rim Meirowitz. "May I Ask You a Question?" The Reform Jewish Day School -

Visions of Excellence. pp. 22-23.

Glasner, Samuel. "The Day School and Reform Jewish Education-The Case for a Reform Jewish Day School." The Jewish Teacher, April 1963, pp. 16-18.

Hebrew Day School Education: An Overview. Ed. Joseph Kaminetsky. New York: Torah Umesorah: The National Society for Hebrew Day Schools, 1970.

Heimreich, William B., Wake Up, Wake Up, to do the Work of the Creator. New York: The Free Press, 1982.

_____ The World of the Yeshiva. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1976.

A History of Jewish Education in America. Ed. Judah Pilch. New York: Walden Press, 1969.

Hoffman, Eric H., "The Dangers of Reform Day Schools." Reform Judaism, Fall 1982, p. 28.

Jewish Education in the United States. Ed. Lloyd P. Gartner. New York: Teacher's College Press, 1969.

Kaminetsky, Joseph. "Establishing a Jewish Day School." Jewish Education, 20 (1948) 33-39.

Katz, Michael B., Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools: The Illusion of Education Change in America. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971.

____ The Irony of Early School Reform. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968.

Kohn, Eugene. "The Zionist Interest in the Jewish Day School." Jewish Education, 20 (1948) 16-22.

Konovitz, Israel. "Israel Konovitz: Jewish Education in America at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century." Jewish Education, 51 (1983) 3-15.

Kramer, Doniel Zvi., The Day School and Torah Umesorah: The Sedding of Traditional Judaism in America. New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1984.

Kwalwasser, Eugene I., "Yavneh Academy: A Modern Orthodox Jewish Day School." The Pedagogic Reporter, 38 (1987) 7-9.

Lesser, Sima. "The Beth Am Experiment: A Reform Day School." Temple Beth Am, Miami, Florida, 1974.

Maltzer, Lillian. "Day School Debate." Reform Judaism. Fall 1985.

Malzberg, Amy. (Prepared by) "Jewish Day Schools in the United States," New York, 1971.

Manual for Organizing and Administering: The Solomon Schechter Day School. United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education. Revised, Second Edition 1983-1984.

Marcus, Jacob Rader. The Colonial American Jew 1492-1776. 3 vols. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970.

_____ United States Jewry, 1776-1985. 2 vols. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991.

Mirsky, Norman B., Unorthodox Judaism. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1978.

Nardi, Noah. "The Growth of Jewish Day Schools in America." Jewish Education, 20 (1948) 33-39.

Olitzky, Kerry M., "Nurturing Jewish Education: Day Schools and Supplementary Schools."

RAMAZ: School, Community, Scholarship and Orthodoxy. Ed. Jeffrey S. Gurock. New Jersey: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1989.

Schiff, Alvin I., "The American Jewish Day School: Retrospect and Prospect." The Pedagogic Reporter, 38 (1987) 1-3.

_____ Contemporary Jewish Education: Issachar American Style. Dallas: Rossel Books, 1988.

_____ "From Sunday School to Day School." Jewish Education, 50 (1982) 6-13.

_____ The Jewish Day School in America. New York: Jewish Education Committee Press, 1966.

_____ "Jewish Day Schools in America: 1962-1977." The Pedagogic Reporter, 29 (1977) 2-7.

_____ "On the Status of All-Day Jewish Education." Jewish Education, 51 (1983) 2-7.

Schnaidman, Mordecai M., "The Orthodox Day School: An Overview of the Day and High Schools." The Pedagogic Reporter, 29 (1977) 8-11.

Schwartzman, Sylvian D., "Who Wants Reform All-Day Schools?" CCARJ. 12 (1964) 3-10.

Siegel, Morton. "The Conservative Day School: The Solomon Schechter Day School Association." The Pedagogic Reporter, 29 (1977), 11-13.

_____ "What Kind of Child Do We Want to Produce in the Solomon Schechter School?" Solomon Schechter Day School Association Library 102, Fall 1982.

Singer, David. "The Growth of the Day School Movement." Commentary, 56 (1976), 53-57.

Spiegel, Elliot D., "Reflections on A Conservative Day School." The Pedagogic Reporter, 38 (1987), 10-12.

Spotts, Leon H., "Organizing the Jewish Day School." The Pedagogic Reporter, 29 (1977) 33-37.

Syme, Daniel B., "The Reform Day School: Its History and Future Prospects." The Pedagogic Reporter, 29 (1977) 14-16.

____ "Reform Judaism and Day Schools: The Great Historical Dilemma." Religious Education, 78 (1983) 155-181.

Weisberg, David and Ophra. Review of Ramaz: School, Community, Scholarship and Orthodoxy, ed. Jeffrey S. Gurock. America Jewish Archives. Fall/Winter 1991, pp. 266-269.

Weiss-Rosmarin, Trude. "Despite all Odds, Jewish Day Schools are a Success." The Jewish Week, Inc. January 18, 1985.

Winter, Nathan H., Jewish Education in a Pluralist Society: Samson Benderly and Jewish Education in the United States. New York: New York University Press, 1966.

Zeldin, Michael. "Beyond the Day School Debate." Reform Judaism, Spring 1986, pp. 10-11.

_____ "A Century Later and Worlds Apart: American Reform Jews and the Public School-Private School Dilemma, 1870, 1970." Unpublished Paper.

_____ "Establishing Reform Jewish Day Schools: A Revolutionary Move in Perspective." The Pedagogic Reporter, 38 (1987) 12-14.

_____ "Merging General and Jewish Studies in the Reform Jewish Day School." Compass, Summer 1981, pp. 3-4, 18.

_____ "The Promise of Historical Inquiry in Jewish Education: 19th Century Day Schools and 20th Century Policy." Unpublished Paper.

_____ "The Status of a Quiet Revolution: Reform Jewish Day Schools in the 1980's." Paper, 1985.

CURRICULUM

Beth Am Day School, Judaic Studies and Curruiculum, Lenore C. Kipper, R.J.E.

_____ Admissions Proceedure.

_____ Mission Statement, Rabbi Herbert M. Baumgard.

_____ Social Studies Curriculum.

Hebrew Curriculum for the Day School, Prepared by the Academy of Cleveland Heights, Ohio. Torah Umesorah Publications, 1966.

The Reform Jewish Day School Kit, Reform Curriculum Resource Center, United American Hebrew Congregations, 1988.

Solomon Schechter Day School of Cleveland, Ohio.

INTERVIEWS

Mr. & Mrs. Nachum and Sham Eden - Founders of Yavneh Day School, Cincinnati, Ohio
Mr. & Mrs. Martin and Shoshi Grad - Founders of Yavneh Day School, Cincinnati, Ohio
Mrs. Lenore Koppel - Director, Solomon Schechter Day School of Cleveland
Mrs. Ophra Weisberg - Teacher at Yavneh Day School, Cincinnati, Ohio

NEWSLETTERS

BETH AM DAY SCHOOL PARENT and STUDENT HANDBOOKS
BIKEZUR
OLOMEINU
IN PROGRESS (PARDeS)
TORAH UMESORAH in ACTION