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What a Rabbi Should Know: A Historical and Comparative Study of Rabbinical School Curricula

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for ordination

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Referee: Dr. Michael A. Meyer

DEDICATION

To Stephen S. Wise, who founded the Free Synagogue where my parents met, were married, and developed their deep love of and commitment to Judaism which they transmitted to me,

and to Jonathan,
limitless is my love for you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the process of researching this thesis I learned a great deal about rabbinical seminary curricula, not only from the course catalogues, but from a number of people as well. One living lesson was that a curriculum is only as good as the professors who teach it. My special appreciation and admiration goes to my teacher, Dr. Michael Meyer, from whom I have learned not only about Jewish history, but about how to teach in an integrated and inspiring manner. I can only hope to emulate Dr. Meyer's skill in making classes so thoroughly engaging and enjoyable.

My thoughts on curricular reform were especially stimulated by my conversations with Dr. Jack Wertheimer, Dr. Ira Eisenstein, Dr. Robert Fierstien, Mrs. Marjorie Weiler, and my friend, John Schechter, who is currently involved in JTS' own process of curricular revision. My thanks to all of them for their time and their ideas.

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Finally, my thanks and gratitude to Jonathan, the love of my life, for all the encouragement and the chocolate which kept me going.

CONTENTS

DIGEST

As the Jewish community has developed over time, so too has the role of the rabbi. With the emancipation of the Jews in nineteenth century Europe and the removal of the rabbis' legal authority, many in the Jewish community looked to their rabbis to fill capacities other than that of legal decisor. Increasingly, communities expected their rabbi to serve them in a pastoral role, visiting the sick and comforting the bereaved. Rabbis also, desired and were expected to obtain Ph.D.s. The scientific method of study, which the rabbis learned at the universities, was brought into contact with Judaism, and had a profound affect on curricular development in the modern seminaries which were founded to train rabbis to fill these new roles.

The European seminaries served as models for the establishment of American rabbinical seminaries. This thesis traces and compares the development of American rabbinical seminary curricula at Hebrew Union College (and later the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion), the Jewish Theological Seminary, and the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. The material is presented in terms of what each seminary administration thought a rabbi should know. In a final analysis, this thesis investigates specific factors which have most influenced the development of these rabbinical seminary curricula.

Introduction

In the transmission of Torah through the generations as described in Mishna Avot, rabbis in each generation passed along valuable lessons. Yehoshua ben Perahya stated, עשה לך רב "Acquire for yourself a rabbi." The verb osah can also mean make or construct, so we could read the instruction as, "Make for yourself a rabbi." But how does one make a rabbi? Certainly the rav of which ben Perahya spoke was "constructed" differently than the rabbi of today. And even when we speak of today's rabbi, we realize that there are different models, and that, depending on the seminary from which they were ordained, some rabbis might possess one repertoire of skills, and other rabbis an entirely different repertoire.

As the Jewish community has developed over time, so too has the role of rabbi. When Jews were exiled from Israel and dispersed to different lands, attempts were made to maintain the unity of the people by codifying a more or less uniform set of Jewish laws. The legal system grew so dense and complex as to require the presence of scholars who were interpreters and adjudicators of that law in each Jewish community. In this context, the rabbi or rav was a master of the legal text and one who could serve as an intermediary between the text and the people. As such his program of studies was highly defined and

necessarily "limited" to an intensive study of legal texts in order to fulfill his duties.

This thesis explores the changes that have taken place in the process of "making a rabbi" in modern times, since the Jews were emancipated and legal authority removed from the rabbi's jurisdiction. Since this change first took place in Europe, this study begins in Europe with an examination of some of the first modern rabbinical seminaries. These seminaries were founded in order to provide an educational alternative to the eastern European yeshivot and in order to train rabbis to better serve in their newly defined roles. I begin with a brief introduction to the changes faced by Jewish communities in different parts of Europe and include as well some background on the interests and values of the individuals who were instrumental in the establishment of the new seminaries. The initial curricula of each of the seminaries are the focus of the introductory chapter. Although limited by a language barrier and a lack of access to original curricular proposals or registers, I was able to locate descriptions of the course offerings of six European seminaries. They are useful not only for observing their divergence from the traditional yeshiva program of studies, but for the sake of comparison with subsequent American rabbinical seminary curricula.

The main body of the thesis focuses on the development of American rabbinical seminary curricula. Beginning with Hebrew Union College in 1875 and the Jewish Theological Seminary in

1887, I investigate the events leading to the founding of these seminaries, the individuals whose visions shaped the first curricula, and the relationship between these institutions and European seminaries. In each chapter, I discuss the revised curriculum of each seminary in light of the prior curriculum and in relation to the other seminary's curriculum. The establishment of the Jewish Institute of Religion is also included, as well as its merger in 1950 with Hebrew Union College. I carry the study through 1971 in order to include the establishment of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in 1967. The inclusion of this seminary enabled me to analyze the distinction between a brand new curriculum and curricula which had undergone the process of gradual revisions over a long period of time.

American seminary catalogues serve as the primary source of information. This method is limited because the catalogues reveal only what the directors intended to be taught and not what was actually taught; some courses listed may not have been offered for lack of instructors or perhaps even to make the program look more complete than it actually was. In other cases, the title of the course may not necessarily indicate the material which was actually taught in the classroom. In spite of these limitations, the catalogues do accurately reflect the visions of the seminary president and/or faculty curricular committee which formulated them. Especially in the earlier years, presidents included lengthy explanations for the choice of each course, and

these are valuable in understanding their goals for what a rabbi should know. In a sense, the catalogues contain "recipes" for making American rabbis, and the careful examination of their contents enables us to understand the ways in which the recipes have been altered over time.

Chapter I

Nineteenth Century Europe: The First Modern Rabbinical Seminaries

Jewish communities throughout Europe were transformed by events of the nineteenth century: revolution, emancipation, tolerance; a desire to see the Jews fully assimilated into Christian society; an aspiration on the part of Jews to integrate into society without abandoning Judaism. All of these were factors which reshaped the Jewish community as it emerged from the Middle Ages into modernity. A multiplicity of causes led Jewish communities to divide into factions, each developing its own response to the challenge of modernity. One change which resulted from increased Jewish contact with the non-Jewish community was a tendency for state and local governments to reduce Jewish autonomy within the community by removing from the rabbis the authority to enforce Jewish law. Jews increasingly turned to the civil courts to settle legal matters. Gradually, Jews participated in other secular institutions such as the universities and certain professions.

Such developments had an effect on the nature of the religious community itself. Living in a self-contained environment had enabled the Jewish community to function in time-honored religious patterns. Jews lived a more or less

traditional Jewish life in accordance with the customs of the community. Yeshiva-trained rabbis utilized their education in Talmud and halakhah to serve primarily as legal decisors and as teachers within the community. Secular education was not part of the yeshiva curriculum, as it did not provide necessary preparation for the rabbi's role. Leaders of the yeshivot also feared that secular study might lead the rabbinical student away from Judaism. Increased contact with non-Jews, coupled with a strong desire on the part of many Jews to be accepted as equal citizens of their country of residence, led to a series of changes in the structure and content of European Judaism. Certain Jews, observing that Christians managed to maintain loyalties to both their religion and their country, desired to reshape Judaism, using the church as a model, in order that they too might come to be regarded as both loyal to Judaism and their country.

Not all Jews agreed with this approach. Some, while cautiously welcoming an increased measure of participation in society, were particularly concerned with the preservation of traditional Judaism against the threat of assimilation. The Jewish community became increasingly factionalized. More liberal groups saw the need for new leadership to respond to the new situation. Traditional yeshivot in central Europe shut down as halakhically trained rabbis were less in demand. Communities continued to employ rabbis trained in eastern European yeshivot, but the chasm between the traditionally trained rabbi and the

rapidly changing Jewish community widened. Those Jews most interested in combining modern living with the continued observance of Judaism saw the need for developing a new rabbinical training program in which to prepare rabbis to serve modern European Jews.

In some cases the state government sought to influence the curriculum of new seminaries. Certain state authorities desired the rabbis to obtain a secular education along with their rabbinical education. Their chief motivation was to create a Jewish religious leadership that was more open to the non-Jewish world. In other instances, governmental authorities pressed the seminaries to include required lessons on patriotism and the compatibility of Jewish law with defending one's country, even at the expense of temporarily suspending the fulfillment of religious obligations.[1]

Reformers saw the minister or priest as a proper model for redefining the function of the rabbi. Like the Christian clergy, modern rabbis would be expected to deliver edifying sermons and serve as community pastors who would teach the young and comfort the sick and bereaved. In order to perform such tasks, rabbinical students would have to be offered courses in homiletics, pedagogy, and in human relations along with traditional rabbinic studies.

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[1] Jay R. Berkovitz, "The Shaping of Jewish Identity in Nineteenth Century France" (unpublished manuscript, 1987), 283-84.

Increased Jewish enrollment in universities also affected the shaping of a new rabbinical curriculum. More and more, rabbis would be expected to possess a secular education in addition to their rabbinical training in order to gain the respect of the highly educated members of their communities. Additionally, in the second decade of the nineteenth century Jewish intellectuals, influenced by their own university educations, developed a scholarly and developmental approach to the study of the Jewish religion and people. Wissenschaft des Judentums was the name given to this new way of study, and it soon became a fundamental approach to learning in the new seminaries.

The most extensive reforms occurred in the German Jewish community. The earliest reforms were primarily aesthetic and centered on the worship service. German sermons were introduced and attempts were made to conduct the worship with all the dignity and decorum of a church service. Before there were rabbis specifically trained to preside over such services, educated laymen served as "preachers." Eventually, Jewish leaders in Germany and in several other European countries established seminaries in which to train modern rabbis. What follows is a description of some of the most notable modern seminaries in Europe, focusing on the curricula which they utilized upon first opening.

THE COLLEGIO RABBINICO OF PADUA

In 1820, Emperor Francis I of Austria, whose jurisdiction included parts of Italy, promulgated an edict proclaiming that henceforth all rabbis must be able to demonstrate competency in philosophical and religious knowledge before they would be granted positions in the community. Although this edict was not necessarily intended for the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom, a group of Jews there embraced the concept of a modern seminary in which to train rabbis in Torah and philosophy, and in 1821 a conference was held in Padua in which it was decided to establish such a seminary.[2]

The Istituto Convitto Rabbinico which opened in 1828 was the first of the modern seminaries in Europe. Italian Jews, in spite of having lived in the ghetto, had had continued exposure to Italian language, culture, and secular education, and had also instituted aesthetic reforms in many of their worship services. Therefore, the introduction of a modern Italian rabbinical seminary which combined traditional and secular studies was not such a radical idea.[3] The original inspiration for both the seminary and its curriculum came from Isaac Samuel Reggio, a disciple of Moses Mendelssohn. Reggio held traditional beliefs in some areas and departed from tradition in others. While he wrote a defense of divine authorship of the Torah, he also wrote

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[2] Cecil Roth, The History of the Jews of Italy (Philadelphia, 1946), 494-96.

[3] Michael A. Meyer, Response to Modernity (Oxford, 1988), 163.

HaTorah V'hafilosofia, a defense of the compatibility of Torah and secular philosophy.

Lelio della Torre and Samuel David Luzzatto, both Jewish scholars, emphasized textual study in the Seminary. Della Torre taught Talmud and Luzzatto taught Bible, a subject not generally included in a standard yeshiva curriculum. In addition, classes were also offered in philology, philosophy, Jewish history, and homiletics. These were novel requirements for rabbinical students and would subsequently be required in all of Europe's major modern seminaries.

After della Torre's and Luzzatto's deaths, the Istituto Convitto Rabbinico closed in 1871. The Seminary reopened in Rome in 1887 with the new name Collegio Rabbinico Italiano. In 1899, the seminary moved to Florence where, under the direction of Samuel Hirsch Margulies, a Galician-born rabbi and scholar, it continued to train several generations of Italian rabbis. After Margulies' death in 1932, the seminary returned to Rome until it was closed down in 1939 under the Fascist regime.[4]

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[4] Getzel Kressel, "della Torre, Lelio," Encyclopedia Judaica, 5: 1476;
Alfredo Mordechai Rabello, "Collegio Rabbinico Italiano," Encyclopedia Judaica, 5: 736;
Umberto Cassuto/Ed., "Margulies, Samuel Hirsch," Encyclopedia Judaica, 11: 970.
Louis Isaac Rabinowitz, "Rabbinical Seminaries," Encyclopedia Judaica, 13: 1484.

ÉCOLE CENTRALE RABBINIQUE, METZ

With the emancipation of the Sephardim and Ashkenazim of France in 1790 and 1791 respectively, steps were taken both by Jews and by government authorities to separate religious and political loyalties. Judaism became more of a private matter as Jews strove to become integrated into French society. In 1808 Napoleon established a consistorial (governing body) system for the Jews, as he had done for other religious denominations, in order to insure that the government would have control over the community and the community would maintain its loyalty to the government. "Chief" rabbis and laymen served in the central consistory in Paris while other rabbis and laymen represented the local consistories in cities and villages throughout the areas under Napoleon's control. Napoleon was interested in fully integrating the Jews into society. Many Jews also focused their energies on the pursuit of civil integration. The term régénération, or "civic betterment" which had been used by Henri Gregoire in 1785, was reintroduced and redefined as a movement whose goal was "the formation of Jewish Frenchmen capable of preserving their religious identity while participating in, and contributing to the social, economic, and cultural life of France."[5] The régénérateurs and the consistorial leadership saw the necessity for a modern rabbinical seminary in order to properly prepare rabbis to uphold these values in the Jewish community.

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[5] Berkovitz, 181-82, 194.

In 1808, the following list of rabbinical duties had been established as a new law.

> The reglement of 1808 specified the following rabbinical functions: (1) to teach religion; (2) to teach the doctrines included in the decisions of the Sanhedrin; (3) to teach obedience to French law; (4) to teach that military service is a sacred duty, and that Jewish law offers dispensation from religious observances during such service; (5) to preach in the synagogue and to recite prayers for the Emperor and his family; (6) to perform marriages and divorces following the completion of the civil ceremony.[6]

These requirements reflect the government's interest in utilizing the rabbinical curriculum to influence the nationalism of the people. Preaching was envisioned as a primary vehicle for transmitting the values of civil morality. The seminary would aspire to teach the student the art of persuasive rhetoric from the pulpit. The rabbi's pulpit message would be transformed from the traditional derasha to the modern sermon. The Protestant sermon had served as the model for German reformers, and now it would provide the model for régénérateurs in France.[7]

The actual process of curricular revision was slow. In 1820 the Metz consistory prepared a proposal, but the Metz yeshiva showed little interest in implementing its changes. In 1827 the central consistory made plans to open a rabbinical seminary in Metz. It proposed a curriculum including studies in French, German, Latin, logic, rhetoric, Jewish and French history, and geography. Still the Metz yeshiva disdained to adjust its

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[6] Phyllis Cohen Albert, The Modernization of French Jewry: Consistory and Community in the Nineteenth Century (Hanover, 1977), 346-47.

[7] Berkovitz, 264.

program to the proposal.

The école rabbinique opened in Metz in 1829. Although technically under the authority of the central consistory, it was actually the local consistory in Metz which supervised the program. The curriculum had been designed by the central consistory to include studies in Hebrew, Bible, Talmud, works by Alfasi and Maimonides, and Shulhan Arukh, as well as French, German, Latin, logic, rhetoric, elocution, Jewish history, geography, and state patriotism.[8]

The seminary functioned, though not in perfect accordance with the plans. Students who enrolled in the program were frequently ill-equipped for anything but the most basic classes. They lacked knowledge in both Jewish and secular studies. Governmental officials, members of the consistory, and régénérateurs all had different ideas for remedying this and other problems. The community was at odds over the desire of the government for every rabbinical candidate to possess a baccalaureate degree prior to ordination. The government, which through its support of the seminary believed it had a right to participate in the shaping of the program, desired to model the école rabbinique on the existing structure of the Christian seminaries. It was felt that the Christian students did better in their seminary studies because they were first required to pursue baccalaureate studies. Some citizens wanted no government interference in the training of rabbis; some wanted to modify the

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[8] Albert, 244-45.

program but to maintain an emphasis on rabbinic studies over secular studies; others saw the necessity of a strong secular component, especially in order to draw disenchanted Jews back into the Jewish community.[9]

Adolphe Franck, a professor of philosophy in Paris, was a member of the régénérateur movement who was especially concerned with curricular reform. In 1841 he criticized the program for lacking a systematic approach to traditional Jewish and modern scientific study and instead focusing on halakhic details. He was one who believed that rabbis needed modern intellectual training to reach out to those Jews who had turned away from traditional Judaism:

> In accord with the general distinction which his fellow régénérateurs saw between dogma and culte, Franck argued that theology should replace the ceremonial law as the principal focus of study. The works of Saadiah, Albo, Maimonides, Bahya, and Philo would offer the finest material for theological studies... The medievals combined 'solid piety' with 'scientific achievement,' and were consequently the most useful models for modern Jewish theologians. The école rabbinique, as envisioned by Franck, should continue the work of the medieval philosophers by providing future rabbis with the opportunity to inquire into the meaning of life, duty, justice, etc.[10]

He was influential in the seminary's eventual move to Paris in 1859. He felt strongly that Paris was the best equipped city to provide rabbinical students with opportunities for secular study.

In 1847, the central consistory announced its intention to augment its involvement in shaping seminary policy. Entering

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[9] Ibid., 266-70.

[10] Berkovitz, 272-73.

students would be required to have completed the equivalent of an eighth grade education at a public secondary school. Students were required to study rhetoric, philosophy, history of literature, and preaching. Religious studies would include biblical exegesis, Jewish history and literature, history of Oral Law, Talmudic methodology, and medieval Jewish philosophy. In fact, professors were hired "to teach philosophy, French literature, and rhetoric."[11] The seminary also added courses in "Biblical exegesis, German language, and homiletics...and a chair in theology and religious history was established in 1851...."[12]

The school did transfer to Paris in 1859, where it was renamed the séminaire israélite and was indeed recast into a more modern seminary. The seminary's administrators worked diligently to upgrade the quality of the academic program. Among other changes, students were required to deliver sermons in the school chapel which were evaluated before and after the delivery. Eventually. the bachelier es lettres became a requirement for entering students, so that the seminary was able to require advanced studies in a few areas. The seminary also introduced Wissenschaft des Judentums, the scholarly study of Judaism, and some of its graduates would become active producers of Jewish scholarly research.[13]

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[11] Archives Israélites de France VII (1847), 77-78, as cited in Berkovitz, 276.

[12] Michael Graetz, From Periphery to Center (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1983), 52-53, as cited in Berkovitz, 276.

[13] Berkovits, 275-78.

MODERNIZATION OF THE RABBINATE IN GERMANY

The modern seminaries at Padua and Metz provided a start toward redefining rabbinical education, but the changes they envisioned often were more on paper than in reality. Nineteenth-century Germany was a different story. There, the modern rabbinate evolved and became the norm before the establishment of the first German modern rabbinical seminary. A number of internal and external factors affected all segments of the German Jewish community so that the nature and shape of Jewish expression changed, and along with it the expectations and function of the rabbi. Included among these factors were the political reality of the partial emancipation of the Jews, the feelings of anti-clericalism which had arisen among many Jewish laymen, pressure from the government, and the influence of the German university.[14] Certain Jews looked for alternatives to the traditionally-trained halakhic scholars. They were primarily interested in improving the worship service through the implementation of aesthetic reforms such as the inclusion of a German sermon and an orderly, structured service such as those conducted by the Protestant church. Communities occasionally employed educated, erudite Jews who were not ordained to conduct services. One goal was to bring back into the synagogue Jews who had grown bored and unimpressed with traditional rabbis who

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[14] Ismar Schorsch, "Emancipation and the Crisis of Religious Authority--The Emergence of the Modern Rabbinate," in Werner E. Mosse et al., eds., Revolution and Evolution 1848 in German-Jewish History (Tübingen, 1981), 228.

seemed to show no awareness of the changing world around them. Another was to develop Judaism as a religion according to the model of the Protestant church so that, like the members of the church, Jews could participate fully in German society. Concerns such as these laid the foundation for the desire on the part of many of Germany's Jews for rabbis trained to meet the needs of modern times.

As in Italy and France, the government also sought to influence the criteria for the rabbinate in order to realize its own goals. Prior to the Prussian edict of emancipation of 1812, Secretary of State Schroetter stated:

> Because of the great influence which the rabbis have over the community, it is necessary to ensure that educated and, what follows naturally from this, tolerant people be elected as rabbis.[15]

Of course, the government was not so concerned with the rabbi's religious education, but rather with his secular education, which was viewed as evidence of greater understanding of the society, if not a step toward full assimilation. Although his advice was not followed in Prussia, other states did place requirements on their rabbinical candidates for the acquisition of specific secular knowledge. Through the enforcement of examinations or other evidence of academic training, "firm government intervention applied effective leverage to modify the nature of rabbinic education."[16]

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[15] Ismar Freund, Die Emanzipation der Juden in Preussen (Berlin, 1912), II, 246-47, as cited in Schorsch, 234-35.

[16] Schorsch, 235-36.

Communities discussed the redefinition of rabbinical duties long before the establishment of a modern seminary. In 1808, the Westphalian consistory published a document containing their understanding of the "Duties of the Rabbi."[17] In addition to matters of administration and patriotism, they present a number of duties which heretofore had not been expected of a rabbi. These included the duty to set a moral example to the community, to provide pastoral care such as visiting the sick and comforting the bereaved, to maintain a sense of decorum in the synagogue, and to prepare and deliver inspiring sermons, preferably in German.[18] Clearly, in order to fulfill these duties, the rabbi would have to look elsewhere than the yeshiva for proper training, and secular studies would be necessary as well, at least for the content and language of the sermon.

The desire for increased secular knowledge for rabbis was something on which both liberal reformers and some members of the German Orthodox community could agree. Where they maintained differences was in respect to the amount of secular training in relation to traditional rabbinic studies. These differences would account for the establishment of three different seminaries, all dedicated to the training of modern rabbis, but each with a slightly different emphasis upon traditional texts and secular education.

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[17] First published in Sulamith, 2:2 (1808), 300-5, as cited in Meyer, Response to Modernity, 34.

[18] Meyer, Response to Modernity, 34.

JÜDISCH-THEOLOGISCHES SEMINAR, BRESLAU

Part of the initial disagreement between the visionaries of the first seminaries centered on whether a Jewish theological faculty should be set up as part of an existing German university or whether a separate seminary should be established. Since the Reformation, Protestants had trained their ministers in conjunction with the university. Abraham Geiger and Ludwig Philippson saw the Protestant model as the correct one upon which to formulate a program of rabbinical studies. They believed that by aligning a Jewish faculty with a major university the rabbinate would gain greater respectability than had the Catholic clergy, who maintained separate seminaries. They also reasoned that the academic environment of the university would have a positive effect on the nature of Jewish study.[19] However, no German university was interested in including a Jewish faculty, and Geiger would eventually have no choice but to align himself with a seminary independent of any university.

When Jonas Fraenckel, a prominent Breslau businessman, died and left a legacy for the establishment of a modern rabbinical seminary, Zacharias Frankel was appointed as its director. Born in Prague in 1801, Frankel possessed both a traditional religious and university education. As a pulpit rabbi he embraced the

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[19] Abraham Geiger, "Die Gründung einer jüdisch-theologischen Facultät," Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift fur Jüdische Theologie, II (1836), 1-21; Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums, I (1837), 349-51, as cited in Schorsch, 223.

concept of moderate reforms while at the same time maintaining a strong belief in the divine origin and eternal validity of the Torah. His approach to Judaism combined religious faith and ritual observance with Wissenschaft des Judentums. He was interested in training rabbis who would study halakhah scientifically but would also live by it.[20] For this reason, he favored the establishment of a seminary separate from the university, so that students could study in an explicitly religious atmosphere.

Frankel was an advocate of positive-historical Judaism. He believed that the transmission of Torah by God to the people Israel was an act of revelation, and that the Torah was not a human product of its own time like Geiger believed it to be. Therefore, Torah was positive in that it was fixed rather than changeable. He did recognize the dynamic nature of subsequent halakhic development, which was open to reinterpretation in light of changing circumstances.[21]

The curriculum of the Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar reflected Frankel's philosophy of Judaism and his ideas about what a rabbi should know. The seminary was first organized with three departments: a seven-year rabbinical program, a preparatory department (primarily designed for those with a yeshiva background who entered with minimal secular knowledge),

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[20] Meyer, "Conflicting Views on the Training of Modern Rabbis in 19th-Century Germany" (in Hebrew), Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress for Jewish Studies II, (Jerusalem, 1976), 189.

[21] Meyer, Response to Modernity, 86-87.

and a three-year program in which to train Jewish teachers.[22]

The rabbinical curriculum included courses in:

> Tanah --in the language of the original source
> Commentaries -- Hebrew and Aramaic
> Talmud
> Religion and Ethics
> The History of Jewish Literature together with the History of Israel
> Pedagogy
> Teaching Religion in the School
> Philosophy of Religion and Ethics --based on Jewish sources
> Homiletics (darshanut)
> The Spirit of the Civil Law of Moses' Torah and the Talmud, with a special emphasis on the laws of marriage[23]

Throughout Frankel's tenure as director, for the most part the requirements remained the same. In accordance with his personal philosophy, Talmud was the central focus of the curriculum. His approach was to teach positive-historical Judaism in the Seminary and to require all rabbinical students to pursue an outside degree at a local university. The Seminary's goal was to graduate rabbis who would work in the Jewish community to preserve traditional Judaism and to continue to study the Jewish past in a critical manner.[24] The first final examination which Frankel prepared for the students dealt exclusively with legal matters such as kashrut and divorce. Geiger scoffed at the exam, which he saw as evidence that Frankel's seminary had returned to

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[22] Gotthard Deutsch, "Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar," Jewish Encyclopedia, 7: 386.

[23] Uri Kober, "The Rabbinical Seminary in Breslau," in Samuel Hirsky, ed., Jewish Institutions of Higher Learning in Europe (in Hebrew) (New York, 1956), 610.

[24] Editor, "Juedisch-Theologisches Seminar, Breslau," Encyclopedia Judaica, 10: 465.

the Dark Ages.[25] Geiger's criticisms not withstanding, the Breslau seminary was a success. Its teachers were well regarded and its requirements were enforced. As in the seminaries in Italy and France, Frankel introduced homiletics into the curriculum. His was the first seminary to attempt to provide systematic training to its rabbis to enable them to teach Judaism to Jewish youth. The Juedisch-Theologisches Seminar became a model for other seminaries in Europe, and would train at least one of the rabbis who would eventually become involved in the founding of America's first seminaries.

HOCHSCHULE FÜR DIE WISSENSCHAFT DES JUDENTUMS, BERLIN

When it became clear that no German university was willing to allow a Jewish faculty on its premises, alternative plans were made for the establishment of a separate seminary for the teaching of Wissenschaft des Judentums.[26] The Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums opened in Berlin in 1872 with Abraham Geiger as one of the principal shapers of its philosophy. Unlike the Breslau seminary, the Hochschule would be open to critical scholarship and to divergent points of view and practice among the faculty and students. Geiger felt that in spite of the fact that the Breslau seminary was intended to be modern, it did not

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[25] Abraham Geiger, "Rabbis of our Time," in Michael A. Meyer, ed., Abraham Geiger: Selected Writings on Religious Reform (Jerusalem, 1979), 102-108.

[26] Meyer, "Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums," Encyclopedia Judaica, 8: 800.

go far enough in preparing modern rabbis the way that he believed modern rabbis should be properly prepared. His intention was to train rabbis as experts not in halakhah, but in Jewish theology and historical development.[27] Geiger believed that Judaism had undergone four specific stages of development and was currently in its latest developmental stage. In order to foster the continued historical development of Judaism, Jewish leaders were needed who possessed a clear understanding of the nature of this development.

Geiger believed that each period of Jewish history should be studied in its own context, "possessing relative validity as the revelation of the religious consciousness of the community of faith at a particular point in Jewish history."[28] Furthermore, he stressed the importance of commitment to "an evaluation of the previous manifestations of Jewish religion in terms of their organic connection or lack of connection with the present and their viability for the future."[29] He believed that rabbis should be trained as evaluators of Jewish tradition for the present and as actual practitioners of the science they studied in the Hochschule.

Geiger only lived for two years after the Hochschule opened. In those two years he taught introductory courses in Biblical

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[27] Meyer, Proceedings, 199.

[28] Meyer, "Jewish Religious Reform and Wissenschaft des Judentums: The Positions of Zunz, Geiger and Frankel," Year Book of the Leo Baeck Institute, 16 (1971): 28..

[29] Ibid.

literature and "Introduction to Wissenschaft des Judentums" as part of the five-year rabbinical program. Other professors conducted classes in Jewish history, the history of the literature of Israel, the history of the Hebrew calendar, Tanakh, biblical exegesis, Talmud, the Poskim, philosophy, musar, Hebrew, and theology. The professor who replaced Geiger taught Jewish philosophy, homiletics, and midrash. This curriculum remained approximately the same for the next twenty years.[30] As in Breslau, in addition to the internal program, students were expected to attend a local university and work toward a doctorate.

The Hochschule attracted students from Germany and elsewhere who found the other seminaries to be too traditionally oriented. Unlike the other existing seminaries, this one focused on developmental history rather than halakhic studies. It also attempted to introduce students to other subjects not found in the yeshiva, such as philosophy and homiletics. And, of course, courses were taught in the traditional areas of study, such as Talmud, though not with the traditional intensity or approach. It graduated a great number of Jewish scholars, both rabbis and other teachers, who carried out their scholarship in order to participate in Judaism's development as Geiger had intended them to do.

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[30] Judah Rosenthal, "The University of Jewish Studies in Berlin," in Mirsky, 662.

RABBINERSEMINAR FÜR DAS ORTHODOXE JUDENTUM, BERLIN

The third modern German rabbinical seminary was founded in Berlin in 1873 by Azriel Hildesheimer. Hildesheimer, a German Orthodox rabbi and scholar, had previously founded a yeshiva in a small Austrio-Hungarian community which included both secular and religious studies.[31] His interest was in promoting Torah im Derekh Eretz (Jewish loyalty and participation in modern culture). Although Hildesheimer believed that the Oral Torah, like the written Torah, was divine in origin, he acknowledged the development of the form of Oral Law over time, and agreed that it was open to study without contradicting the halakhah.[32]

If a student had a background in rabbinics, he could complete the rabbinical program in four years; otherwise, it was a six-year program, divided into upper and lower sections. As at the Hochschule, students were expected to work as well toward a doctorate at a university. While at the Seminary itself, students were immersed in classical rabbinical texts. What separated the curriculum from the yeshiva course of studies was that passages were specifically chosen for their relevance to the modern rabbinate. A rough outline of the program follows:

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[31] Mordechai Eliav, "Hildesheimer, Azriel," Encyclopedia Judaica, 8: 476.

[32] David Ellenson, "Continuity and Innovation: Rabbi Esriel Hildesheimer and the Creation of a Modern Jewish Orthodoxy," (unpublished manuscript, 1988).

FIRST YEAR
Talmud
Orah Hayim
Pentateuch
Hebrew grammar and Exegesis
Midrash and Homiletics

[It appears that each succeeding year contained a selection of the above classes in addition to what is listed below]

SECOND YEAR
Jewish history
Responsa

THIRD YEAR
Exodus
Jewish history
Geography of Palestine

FOURTH
Prophets
Jewish History and Literature

FIFTH AND SIXTH
Talmud
Responsa
Pentateuch
Prophets
Jewish history and literature[33]

Other course offerings included: "Historical Sources in the Talmud and Midrash," a comparison of Judah Halevi's Kuzari with portions of Maimonides' Moreh Nevuchim, and "Poetic Parts of Onkelos." Homiletics, medieval Jewish philosophy, and more historical source courses were added to the curriculum over the next few years.[34]

The Rabbinerseminar, like the Breslau Seminary, required students to pass examinations in Talmud and Codes in order to qualify for rabbinical ordination. The examination did not

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[33] Ibid., 280-92.

[34] Ibid., 294.

include halakhic material dealing with civil law. "Thus, the rabbinic curriculum of the Rabbinerseminar reflected the reality of a world in which Jewish civil autonomy had disappeared."[35] Torah was central to the curriculum, but it was studied selectively in light of derekh eretz.

THE RABBINICAL SEMINARY OF BUDAPEST

With the emancipation of Hungary's Jews in 1867, the Jewish community expanded and many enjoyed economic success. The resentment of other citizens who did not advance economically led to antisemitic feelings and behavior. Jews were the victims of numerous campaigns of negative propaganda and were put into a position of having to defend themselves. Learning to defend Judaism was incorporated into the curriculum of the new seminary which was inaugurated in Budapest in 1877.

The original proposal for a seminary had been made by David ben Meir haCohen Friesenhausen in 1808. Friesenhausen proposed an elaborately detailed curriculum, but never lived to see it materialize. In 1864, three rabbis were asked by Hungarian authorities to draft a proposal for a seminary. The rabbis relied both on Friesenhausen's proposal and on their own knowledge of the seminary in Breslau. They proposed a five-year secondary school program of Jewish and secular studies to be followed by a three-year theological program. They also suggested that students attend a state college of higher learning

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[35] Ibid., 294-95.

concurrently with the theological studies. The theological component would include courses in the Bible and its commentaries, Talmud and its commentaries, Codes, Jewish philosophy, ethics, history, homiletics and pedagogy.[36]

In 1869, the government appointed a new committee to continue the process of creating a seminary. The group followed the 1864 proposal but added that "special emphasis would be given to repudiating the calumnious accusations contained in the history books used by the non-Jewish world."[37] This is one example of the way in which seminary leaders began to formulate certain courses geared toward meeting the needs of the present day community. The Hungarian government also expected that the seminary which it supported would encourage Hungarian patriotism by teaching Hungarian language and culture.[38]

Like the seminaries in Germany, the Budapest Seminary prepared a final examination. Students were required to write three "theses" in Hebrew on Talmudic and halakhic jurisprudence, one thesis in Hungarian on biblical exegesis, and one thesis in Hungarian or German in Jewish philosophy. They were given six months to complete the assignment. Then in one day they were given a written examination on halakhah, followed by an examination on a theological subject. In a series of oral

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[36] Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, ed., The Rabbinical Seminary of Budapest 1877-1977: A Centennial Volume (New York, 1986), 7.

[37] Ibid., 9.

[38] Ibid., xi.

examinations they were drilled for two hours on Talmud and Codes, one hour on Bible, and one hour on Jewish history and philosophy. The examination topics are indicative of their concern with preparing rabbis well-trained in traditional and modern subjects.

By the 1869 General Congress of Budapest, Jewish leaders had divided into three distinct organizations: Neolog, Orthodox, and Status Quo. The Neologs, the faction most open to innovation and modernity, were the directors of the school, but they appeared to seek the approval of the Orthodox by emphasizing halakhic studies. In spite of such attempts at appeasement, the Orthodox leaders, who had opposed the establishment of the seminary before it opened, continued to oppose its existence.

CONCLUSION

The European seminaries were clearly a product of their time and environment. Their founders were Jews who sought to meet the challenges of social and political integration, which they understood as a whole new phase of Judaism's development. As Jews moved out of the ghetto into the midst of modern society, they sought to actively participate in that society. Just like Protestants who lived as proud Germans in Germany, or like Catholics who lived as proud Italians in Italy, so too did the Jews desire to live as proud and productive citizens in their countries of residence. The answer for many Jews to the challenge of integrating Judaism with modernity was to define Judaism as a religion rather than as a nationality. Jews looked

to the dominant Christian religion of their country as a proper model upon which to re-form Judaism. In many cases, Christian clergy became the model for redefining the functions of the modern rabbinate. To be sure, the ensuing similarities were to be found in form rather than substance. Rabbis continued to study the Jewish past, but they were also expected to serve the developing needs of those living in the present. Perhaps the most profound change was the increased expectation that a modern rabbi would possess at least some knowledge of secular subjects, if not a doctorate from a major university. An increased emphasis was also placed on the rabbi's ability to preach, and the old style derash was transformed into an edifying sermon, delivered in a manner similar to that of Christian clergy. With greater numbers of Jews obtaining secular knowledge, the Jewish community realized the need to train rabbis, well educated Jewishly and secularly, to command the respect of their congregants and to bring back those who had given up hope in finding significance in the traditional Judaism of their youth. Once introduced to the modern methods of scientific study at the university, Jewish scholars adapted those methods to the study of Judaism and introduced them into the modern rabbinical seminaries.

The nature of the Jewish community's relation to the government markedly influenced the goals of the seminary and frequently its curriculum. As we shall see, the fact that the Jewish community in the United States enjoyed full freedom in

conducting its own affairs was to have a pronounced effect on its establishment of American seminaries and curricula. The European Jews relied on the government for permission to open seminaries and were sometimes directed by the government to provide a certain kind of training. Most European governments seemed interested in assimilating the Jews as completely as possible into the larger society so that Jews would no longer stand out as a separate entity. Sometimes rabbis were required by the government to obtain a secular degree simultaneously with their rabbinical studies.

Each of the modern seminaries whose initial curriculum we have discussed in this chapter shared certain commonalities. All deviated from the yeshiva approach to rabbinical education by creating a curriculum which combined religious and secular studies. The seminaries in France and Germany were committed both to Wissenschaft des Judentums and to university training. The seminaries also began training their students in homiletics. Whereas legal judgment was once the main task of the rabbi, scholarship and preaching now developed as two integral functions of the rabbinate.

Although the existence of three modern seminaries in Germany might lead one to assume that each must have employed a radically different approach, in actuality even these three seminaries were more alike than dissimilar. Each seminary taught the "basics" of a traditional education, though none of them focused on Talmud to the same extent as did most yeshivot. They all also offered more

or less the same types of non-traditional courses, such as philosophy, philology, pedagogy, and homiletics. The greatest differences probably existed in the atmosphere surrounding the program and the emphasis on certain subjects over others. Frankel and Hildesheimer consciously strove to create a particular atmosphere which would encourage the practice and preservation of traditional Jewish ritual. The curricula at their seminaries focused on Talmud and halakhic subject matter. They did attempt to present legal material such as that dealing with issues of marriage, divorce, and kashrut which would be germane to the lives of modern observant Jews. The Hochschule also required its students to be familiar with Talmud and halakhic literature, but the material was taught from a much more historical perspective. The Hochschule curriculum also emphasized Bible more than did the other two German seminaries, probably because of the theological orientation of its faculty.[39]

Because the modern rabbinical seminaries in Europe were established well after many social and political changes affected the development of Judaism in Europe, it cannot be said that the seminaries produced rabbis in order to change and mold Judaism in a particular way. Rather, the seminaries were founded as a consequence of the ways in which European Jews had chosen to respond to the challenge of integrating Judaism into the modern world. In our survey of American rabbinical seminary curricular development we shall see a continuation of this pattern in which

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[39] Ellenson, 298.

curricular changes occur as a consequence of the changing needs of the American Jewish community.

Chapter II

Beginnings: The Founding of Hebrew Union College and the Jewish Theological Seminary

Jews lived in the United States for two hundred and twenty years without a rabbinical seminary in which to train the spiritual leaders of the country's growing Jewish community.[1] By the two hundred and thirty-third year there would exist two modern rabbinical seminaries, each with its own distinct characteristics and goals. The founding of these seminaries coincided with the immigration of vast numbers of Jews to the United States. It is estimated that the Jewish population in America grew from 15,000 in 1840 to approximately one million by 1900.[2]

As the Jewish population expanded so did its needs. Some Jews who settled in America sought to recreate their religious institutions and religious life in a manner which most closely resembled that of the "old country." Others gladly shed all external expressions of Judaism in order to assimilate as fully and as quickly as possible into American life. Still others desired to live a Jewish life in a way that enabled them to also

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[1] The first group of Jews is thought to have arrived in New York (formerly New Amsterdam) from Brazil in 1654.

[2] Jonathan D. Sarna, ed., The American Jewish Experience (New York, 1986), Appendix 1, 296.

live a fully American life. The various inclinations of American Jews called for a variety of responses, and America, by its very nature, was conducive to diverse expressions of belief.

During that long period of time before the establishment of rabbinical seminaries and organized Jewish religious movements, synagogues sprang up in towns as needed. If a dispute arose regarding a synagogal matter, the congregants first tried to solve the dispute. If the dispute could not be resolved or if a large enough faction of the congregation was unhappy with the outcome, they could leave and form a new congregation. As more immigrants arrived and more disagreements in practice occurred, the numbers of synagogues in the United States increased.

Prior to the second quarter of the nineteenth century, no rabbis were employed in any of these synagogues.[3] It may be difficult for Jews in our time to imagine a land of synagogues without rabbis since the contemporary rabbi functions primarily as the spiritual leader of the synagogue. However, before the nineteenth century this was not the case. American Jews for the most part neither needed nor desired rabbis who would serve as legal decisors or talmudic scholars, but they did begin to find the need for rabbinical leaders who would teach and preach and provide them with a religious and spiritual component to their lives.

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[3] Jacob R. Marcus, "The American Colonial Jew: A Study in Acculturation," in Sarna, 10.

The first attempts at creating a modern rabbinical seminary in America were not successful. In 1841, Isaac Leeser, a German-born rabbi who served a congregation in Philadelphia, wrote about the need to establish an educational institution for the purpose of training rabbis.[4] Seven years later, another German-born rabbi, Isaac Mayer Wise, also began campaigning from his home base in Cincinnati, Ohio for the establishment of a rabbinical seminary. Toward the end of 1885, a Cincinnati coalition, led by Wise, opened Zion College for the purpose of training American rabbis. The local Jewish paper, the Israelite, announced the College's intention to offer a full program which included courses in Hebrew, Bible, Talmud, history, geography, archeology, Latin, Greek, rhetoric, English composition and grammar, French, German, United States history, geography and Constitution, chemistry, math, and scientific penmanship.[5] The founders created a curriculum suited to training high school students whom they hoped would grow to be rabbis. Zion College did not, however, have the widespread support of the Jewish community and so it closed only a year or two after it opened.

In 1867, Leeser established Maimonides College in Philadelphia and also provided the press with a description of his curriculum:

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[4] Joseph Buchler, "The Struggle for Unity, Attempts at Union in American Jewish Life: 1654-1868," American Jewish Archives, II, No. 1 (June 1949), 42, as cited in Bertram Wallace Korn, Eventful Years and Experiences (Cincinnati, 1954), 154.

[5] Korn, 157-58.

> The branches of instruction are as follows: Greek, Latin, German, French, Hebrew, Chaldaic and their literatures, the Natural Sciences, history, Mathematics and Astronomy, Moral and Intellectual Philosophy, Constitutional History and Laws of the United States, Belles Lettres, Homiletics, Comparative Theology, the Bible with its commentaries, the Mishna with its commentaries, the Shulchan 'Aruch, Yad ha-Chazakah, Jewish History and Literature, Hebrew Philosophy and the Talmud with its commentaries.
>
> Competent instructors in Chazanut and Shechitah will be provided for those desiring to become Chazanim.[6]

Like the Zion College curriculum, this course outline assumed that the student would need basic secular courses such as math, history, and English. Both seminaries planned to offer courses in the United States Constitution much like the European seminaries who included as part of their curricula courses which fostered understanding and loyalty to the country in which they resided. The broad range of requirements from basic secular to religious studies characterized all the seminaries. As in Europe one seminary, in this case Maimonides College, placed a greater emphasis on traditional studies than the other due to the orientation of its founder. Although two of Maimonides College's students went on to serve as rabbis, neither was actually ordained, and the school closed shortly after they finished their studies.[7]

This chapter focuses on the establishment of the first two successful seminaries: Hebrew Union College, founded in 1875, and the Jewish Theological Seminary, founded in 1887. Emphasis has been placed on the individuals who were primarily responsible

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[6] Ibid., 167.

[7] Ibid., 177.

for the establishment of each seminary, their motivations and their goals, and how they translated their vision into a rabbinical curriculum. The original curricula of the two seminaries, presented in this chapter, will be used as a basis for comparison with subsequent curricular developments.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REFORM SEMINARY IN AMERICA

The majority of Jews immigrating to the United States between 1825 and 1875 came from Germany. During this time, a distinct German-Jewish identity began to emerge in America.* New congregations formed which embraced religious reforms transplanted from German synagogues. As some of the synagogues in Germany had introduced a measure of decorum, a sermon, and prayers in the vernacular into the service, so too did these new synagogues institute similar reforms. Established congregations in New York, Baltimore and Cincinnati also introduced reforms for the purpose of adapting Jewish practice to the American way of life.

Since there were no American seminaries to train rabbis for these growing congregations, synagogues, as had been the case in Germany, were frequently served by knowledgeable laymen. Some seminary-trained rabbis did emigrate to America and assume pulpit responsibilities, while in other cases American-born students traveled to Europe to attend the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft

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* Michael A. Meyer, "German-Jewish Identity in Nineteenth-Century America," in Sarna, 46.

des Judentums in Berlin or the Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar in Breslau and then returned to serve American congregations. Many of the German-born rabbis preferred the German language to the English language, and they frequently maintained Jewish laws and customs learned in Germany. There were no alternative models in existence upon which to establish American Jewish religious customs, nor were they necessarily interested in alternatives to German traditions.

ISAAC MAYER WISE

Isaac Mayer Wise was different from those who merely wished to transplant German Judaism onto American soil. Born in 1819 in the town of Steingrub, in Behemia, Wise grew up studying both religious and secular subjects under his father's tutelege. When he had learned all that his father had to offer, Wise studied with his grandfather. After the death of his grandfather in 1842 he went on to study in a yeshiva near Prague. He studied both secular and Jewish subjects. It is uncertain whether or not he actually obtained rabbinical semicha.

While continuing his studies, Wise served in a rabbinical capacity in the Bohemian town of Radnitz, delivering sermons in German. Altercations between Wise and rabbinical and government authorities were likely factors in Wise's decision to move to a land free of emperors and chief rabbis. Wise had found himself unable to follow what he believed to be immoral or repressive rules and, ultimately, to live in such an authoritarian society.

In 1846, Isaac Mayer Wise arrived in America. From 1846 to 1854 Wise served a congregation in Albany, New York. In the spring of 1854 he moved to Cincinnati Ohio, where he would live until his death in 1900.

Theologically, Wise could be considered a radical in some respects and a conservative in others. He believed that God had directly revealed His will to Moses, and that Moses had written the Pentateuch. Therefore, the Pentateuch was not open to criticism. In contrast Wise expressed doubts about the personal nature of God.[9] Wise held other non-traditional beliefs. He "never accepted the divinity of the Oral Law or even of the Torah in its totality. Nor could he, on the other hand, espouse a Judaism devoid of divine revelation, providence, and the traditional Sabbath."[10] Ultimately, Wise believed that all laws and interpretations after Sinai were products of their time and therefore subject to change. He regarded the American Jewish community as the latest stage of development in Jewish history.[11]

While still in Germany, Wise had attended the reformers' conference in Frankfort in 1845. He was stirred by the debates, and brought some of the ideas he had heard with him to America. In America, he encountered an environment more conducive to his ideas than the environment from which he came. David Philipson

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[9] Meyer, "A Centennial History," in Samuel E. Karff, ed., Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion At One Hundred Years (Cincinnati, 1976), 43-44.

[10] Meyer, Response to Modernity, 240.

[11] Ibid., 241.

said of Wise that he was "the embodiment of the American spirit; he was democratic through and through."[12] Having entered a land which espoused the separation of church and state, Wise felt free to work toward the creation and development of a Judaism specifically suited to the temperament of America and American Jews. He saw no reason for divisiveness within the ranks of Judaism. In sharing his vision with fellow Jews in Albany in 1847, Wise noted:

> While the complete freedom of conscience which people enjoy here causes immense trouble in other religions, and splits up the church into sects which conflict on the most trivial absurdities and condemn each other altogether intolerantly, pursuing one another with an endless number of missionaries, Judaism--unhampered and of one opinion--makes use of this freedom to develop, seeking to establish a firm footing everywhere, and thereby attain its goal more swiftly.[13]

In spite of the forthright and optimistic tone of his words, Wise's subsequent actions demonstrate that American Jewish unity was more of a desired goal at that time than an actuality. In the Israelite, a national Jewish paper which he published, Wise frequently editorialized on the need for a union of congregations and for a seminary in which to train all American rabbis. Wise did not consider himself to be a member of a movement, nor did he see any need for the establishment of more than one seminary. The establishment of a Reform seminary was not his initial

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[12] David Philipson, "History of the Hebrew Union College, 1875-1925," in David Philipson, ed., Hebrew Union College Jubilee Volume (Cincinnati, 1925), 3.

[13] Isaac M. Wise, "The New American Jew: American Life as Seen from Albany, New York, September, 1847," Sefton D. Temkin, transl. and ed. (New York, 1977), 5.

intention. Later, Wise would say, "To me, Reform was never an end to itself, I considered it only as a necessary means to clarify the teachings of Judaism and to transfigure, exalt, and spread these teachings...."[14] Wise's editorials established the fact that he maintained no illusions about the state of American Judaism in the later part of the nineteenth century. He saw a lack of leadership, and he saw a lack of interest in many of the old Jewish traditions and European customs. In order to garner support for his ideas, Wise iterated them in sermons, lectures and in the Israelite. An Israelite issue in 1874 contained one of his typical messages:

> The Israelites of this country...know and understand that Judaism as a religion must have its competent expounders, and they must be rabbis -- men of rabbinical and academical learning. Hitherto we were supplied from European colleges....we must have rabbis who speak our language, love our country, know our wants; who feel, think, hope, and pray with us....our co-religionists are determined to have a Hebrew theological institute somewhere in this country, at the side of some liberal university or classical college.[15]

Although his first attempt at founding an American seminary had failed, his second proved to be a success.

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE

Although the majority of Wise's articles in the Israelite regarding the establishment of a seminary specified the need for rabbinical training, Wise periodically reminded his readers that he envisioned an academic institution for Jewish laymen as well.

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[14] Wise, The World of my Books (Cincinnati, 1954), 20.

[15] The Israelite, April 24, 1874, 4.

As late as September 3, 1875 he wrote

> The Hebrew Union College is intended for the education of all who seek education, and not only for the education of rabbis. So the Council decided. The advantages it offers to those students who will not choose to be rabbis are manifold. It offers them a thorough course of Jewish learning besides all the other branches of education....It offers them an enlightened religious and moral training in temples grand and gorgeous as well as in the orthodox synagogue, to see Judaism in its glory and to hear it expounded intelligently. Turn your attention to Cincinnati, to place your growing up sons where the opportunities are highly promising, to educate them to be men, citizens and Israelites in the noblest sense of these terms.[14]

One difference we shall see in the founding of each of the first two American seminaries is the place and importance of secular education in relation to rabbinical education. Wise always intended his graduates to have studied religious and secular subjects. Wise desired to place the rabbinical college alongside an established university. The founding of the University of Cincinnati in 1873 made it possible for Wise to found the seminary in Cincinnati. In 1874 the Committee for the Theological College met and determined that it should be named Hebrew Union College (HUC). Their committee report called for the establishment of a Board of Governors who would be responsible for the appointment of professors. The report also stated that three departments would be established: the Preparatory, Hebrew Classical and Rabbinical. The Preparatory Department would be open to students currently enrolled in high school and college. The Hebrew Classical Department would be open

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[14] American Israelite, September 3, 1875, 4. (On July 3, 1874, the Israelite officially changed its name to the above.)

to graduates of the Preparatory Department, and the Rabbinical Department would be open only to graduates of the Hebrew Classical Department or to graduates of any university. This report confirmed that the College would be located in Cincinnati and would open on or before October, 1875.[17]

Wise realized the need for a preparatory department for those students who possessed little in the way of Jewish knowledge. This, of course, was a new innovation, something not found or needed in the traditional yeshiva, whose students all entered with the Jewish education of their years in heder. The European seminaries had also offered preparatory work, but the situation in Europe tended to be the reverse of that in the United States. In Europe, although some of the students entered the seminaries with backgrounds in traditional Judaism, many required remedial training in basic secular subjects such as math and language. Like the modern European seminaries, HUC would provide courses in rabbinic texts, and it would also teach biblical literature, Hebrew and Aramaic grammar, Jewish history, philosophy, and theology, and homiletics. One of Wise's goals was to challenge the notion that American-born Jews were incapable of mastering rabbinic literature. But he also knew that he was training teachers and preachers and not legal decisors, so the percentage of time spent mastering halakhic material would necessarily be minimized. Secular knowledge was also stressed for its role in creating a truly American rabbi

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[17] American Israelite, July 24, 1874, 5.

with an understanding of modern thought and values. Wise hoped that by providing a depth and variety of traditional subject material along with secular and non-halakhic Jewish studies, the seminary might escape being labeled as "too Orthodox" or "too Reform".[16] As we shall later see, there was probably nothing Wise could have done within the dictates of his own conscience to avoid these labels.

HUC opened with a single class in the Fall of 1875. Wise served as president and Solomon Eppinger, a teacher in Wise's synagogue religious school, was hired as his assistant. Students who could pass a Hebrew entrance examination and who were qualified to enter a public high school were admitted to the class, which was conducted from four to six every weekday afternoon. Fortunately, Wise, wrote down the initial curriculum and provided a rationale for the choice of courses. By 1877 there were two classes ("C" and "D") of the Preparatory Department, and Dr. Max Lilienthal, rabbi of Congregation Bene Israel in Cincinnati, joined Wise and Eppinger as instructors. At the fourth annual meeting of the UAHC, Wise reported the following curriculum:[17]

Grade "C": Wise
ARAMAIC GRAMMAR
TORAH- Portions referring to sacrifices and the tabernacle.

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[16] Meyer, One Hundred Years, 22.

[17] I have taken the liberty of organizing this material with capital letters and spaces not found in the original document for the purpose of easier reading. I have left the grammar and transliteration as it was in the original.

Joshua and the Proverbs of Solomon, complete analytical reading.

MISHNA - Pesachim, chapters i. to iv. and x
Yoma i.,ii., vii. and viii.
Succah iv. and v.
Rosh Hashonah
Taanith
Megillah
Moed Katan
Chagigah

TALMUD - The first chapter of Berachoth, and [sic] of the fourth chapter.

LITERARY HISTORY, from Zerubabel to the close of the Mishna.

This was taught in nine hours weekly, viz., Bible three, Talmud three, Mishna two, and history one, with the time between for Aramaic grammar.

Lilienthal:

PROPHETS two hours weekly. Judges, Samuel, portions of Kings, and seven of the minor prophets....

The Doctor also lectured to both grades Saturday and Sunday on post-biblical history from Zerubabel to 40 A.C.

Grade D Eppinger

HEBREW GRAMMAR

TORAH - Exodus 1. to xxv., xxxii. to xxxiv.; Leviticus - xvi. to xix.,xxiv. xxv. and xxvii.
Numbers - x. to xii., xxxv. and xxxvi.
Deuteronomy - complete.
Psalms i. to li., c., cxiii., cxxxv., cxxxvii.,cxxxix., civ., cxx., lxxiii.[sic], and cxlv. to the end.

MISHNA - Aboth, Sanhedrin seven chapters, and Sotah three chapters.

MECHILTA - Pesichta, in Jethro i. and ii.; Mishpatim i., iv., v., vi., vii., ix. and x.

Preceptor Solomon Eppinger taught ten hours weekly, viz., five hours Bible, alternately Torah and Psalms, and five hours Mishna and Mechilta alternately, with time between the two hours for Hebrew grammar.[20]

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[20] Wise, "Report of the President of the Hebrew Union College," in Proceedings of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Cincinnati, 1879), I, 337-338.

Wise followed this list with several pages of explanation. He took into account the fact that most students had little time outside of this program for homework because of their commitment to their secular education; therefore, he organized the lessons so that most of the work would be completed in the classroom. His primary objective was to teach the students the original sources as a basis for the rest of their rabbinical work. Therefore, the preparatory years focused on careful reading and analysis, "leaving profound speculations and theories to the Collegiate Department."[21]

Wise viewed grammar and history as, necessary supplements to understanding the Hebrew and Aramaic source literature and so advocated studying them in the context of the source material itself and not in the abstract as independent subjects. Quite unlike the traditional yeshiva method, Wise devoted half of the time to Bible study and the other half to rabbinic literature. Referring to the Bible and Talmud as "THE text-books," Wise believed that "if one has a considerable knowledge of Bible and Talmud, he reads with ease any and everything in Jewish literature."[22] The preparatory curriculum contained no practical rabbinics courses, and as we shall see, the the Collegiate curriculum contained only one senior year homiletics course. Wise' curriculum demonstrates his interest in producing rabbis who were primarily scholars. He "built" his scholars from the

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[21] Ibid., 340.

[22] Ibid., 341-342.

ground up with a solid foundation. He would later add courses in philosophy and theology once he felt the students were properly equipped to judge such material critically.

These Proceedings provide a truly rare glimpse of the pedagogical methods and motives underlying a curriculum. Wise went so far as to explain in detail the motive behind the rabbinics courses.

> In the Mishna, Aboth was selected as a start on account of its ethical and historical value. Next Sanhedrin was selected, because it offers the key to main points of the Mishnaic laws by its statutes on the organization of the courts of justice, the procedure and testimony. The three closing chapters of Sotah were added, because they contain valuable historical notices and commentaries to Biblical passages, partly expounded also in Sanhedrin.
> Linguistically also the treatises mentioned are well calculated for beginners, because they mostly contain Bible Hebrew.
> SEDER MOED was selected for Grade C in order to make the students acquainted with the ancient laws and customs concerning holidays, feast and fast days, of which, as a general thing, the American youth knows very little, and without which progress in the rabbinical literature is very difficult.
> BERACHOTH was selected from the Talmud to start with, because (a) it contains in its Hagadoth and Halachoth the fundamental material of Jewish theology; (b) it contains the main technical terms used in the Talmud; (c) it contains quite a number of purely Aramaic passages well adapted for exercises; (d) its dialectics offer less difficulty to the beginners than that of other treatises, and its subjects are mostly familiar.[23]

Such detail demonstrates Wise's deep preoccupation with the curriculum itself. In it he showed a concern for laying foundations. Like Geiger, he utilized the traditional sources for their historical perspective and for their methodological value. He also expressed an awareness of major deficiencies in

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[23] Ibid.

the Jewish educational level of American youth. Such attention to detail suggests Wise's need to counter either anticipated or actual criticism of his program. The focus on text may have been intended to appease Orthodox critics, though it also seems clear that Wise truly believed in his chosen method.

In 1878, the curriculum for the Collegiate Department was instituted, but not until after a struggle between Wise and the Commission which had been appointed to design the curriculum. Wise decided to formulate his own proposal before the Commission ever met. Much to his dismay, when the Commission did meet, it rejected Wise's proposal and formulated its own, which was adopted by the UAHC. Wise countered with a line-by-line critique of the Commission's proposal. He quoted them as having said, "We disregarded all notions of an exalted scholarship, unattainable in this country, and, if attained, at present not of the highest usefulness."[24] Wise felt strongly that high-level scholarship could indeed be obtained in the United States and believed that such an education would be most useful. In his letter he stressed the importance of preparation in Hebrew and cognate languages. Though he did not explain why, he felt that a student would not be able to handle competently a Hebrew dictionary without some knowledge of Syriac.[25] Yet he did not agree with the Commission's concern that students receive German training.

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[24] Wise, "Dissenting Report of Isaac M. Wise to the Union of American Hebrew Congregations," n.d. American Jewish Archives Documents Files.

[25] Ibid., 5-6.

In fact, he was anxious to move away from German prayers and sermons toward a more American service with English language prayers and sermons. He also emphasized the need for competence in Rashi and familiarity with Aramaic prior to entering the Rabbinical Department. He felt that Talmud study should be limited to the liturgical themes and that halakhah should be studied in order to understand the legal principles rather than the decisions themselves. He believed that sections of Maimonides dealing with ethics should be covered. "Without any one of these points," he declared, "a young man is not prepared to enter upon collegiate or academic rabbinical studies..."[26] In spite of the fact that the UAHC adopted the committee's proposal, it was Wise's own curriculum which he employed at the College.[27]

Wise's curriculum for the four-year Collegiate program was as follows:

FIRST Collegiate Class:

TORAH - Deuteronomy with Targum, Rashi, and Ibn Ezra
The book of Job, translated and analyzed exegetically and grammatically.

TALMUD - Chulin, with Rashi and Tosafot
selections from Baba Batra.

Professor Mielziner taught nine sections of Maimonides' Mishneh Torah; also Shulchan Aruk selections. He lectured on Talmudic hermeneutics which lectures were incorporated in his later publication, The Introduction to the Talmud. In philosophy, Dr. Wise taught Maimonides' Moreh Nebukim (selections)...also seven sections...in the Mishneh Torah; he lectured also on the Pentateuch, defending the Mosaic

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Meyer, One Hundred Years, 21.

authorship and breaking a lance with the so called higher criticism.
In history, Doctor Lilienthal taught the period from the close of the Talmud to Moses Maimonides.

SECOND Collegiate Class:

BIBLE - the major portion of the Book of Numbers with Rashi, Ibn Ezra and the Targumim
Jeremiah

TALMUD - Makkot (selections) with Rashi and selected Tosafot
Abodath Zarah (selections)
Lectures on Talmudic hermeneutics (completed) and on the fundamental legal principles of the Talmud with special reference to responsibility in the civil and criminal law, and the acquisition and transfer of property.

PHILOSOPHY - Moreh Nebukim (selections)

Dr. Wise also lectured on theology. In history, the period from Maimonides to 1350 with special reference to the literature and culture of the period.

JUNIOR Class:

BIBLE - Ezekiel with historical introduction, translation and interpretation.

TALMUD - Kiddushin (selections) with commentaries
Lectures on Laws of Marriage and Divorce

MIDRASH - Bereshit Rabbah, critical and literary introduction and translation of selected passages.

PHILOSOPHY - Moreh Nebukim (selections)

History to 1492 with special stress laid on the literary masterpieces of the period in various countries.

SENIOR Class:

BIBLE - The Books of Joel, Amos and Hosea, Song of Songs and Lamentations studied critically. Lectures on Introduction of Sacred Scriptures.

TALMUD - Gittin (selections)
Lectures on Talmudical hermeneutics and on Civil and Ritual Laws.

PHILOSOPHY - Sefer Ikkarim

MIDRASH - Rabbah selections.

CODES - Shulchan Aruk

HOMILETICS - Lectures on Sermon Writing and Text Development.
Practice in Preaching by students.

HISTORY - To modern times.[28]

Wise's primary goal seems to have been the creation of rabbis who were scholars. What should a rabbi know, according to Isaac M. Wise? He should be able

> to read and expound scientifically the original sources of Judaism and its history....It is necessary therefore that the student master the Hebrew and Aramaic languages thoroughly and possess as sufficient a knowledge of the Syriac and Arabic languages, of Assyriology and Egyptology, as of the classical languages and literatures....[He should] acquire the scientific method and apparatus necessary for free research into these literatures for the acquisition of truth.[29]

This rabbinical curriculum emphasized the development of skills necessary for research and acquisition of truth. Although Egyptology was never actually offered, beginning in 1894/95 students were required to take courses in Syriac and/or Arabic each year of the program. A fifth "graduate" year was added to the program to commence with the class of 1899.[30] In the course of the five year program students were required to take seventeen hours per week of Bible, Twenty-seven hours per week of Mishna,

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[28] Philipson, Hebrew Union College, 28-29.

[29] HUC Catalogue, 1894-95, 16-17.

[30] It seems that this fifth year did not materialize until the next administration, but it did appear in all of the catalogues from 1896/97 on.

Talmud, and Codes, and five hours per week of grammar. Like Geiger, certain texts were taught from a historical or methodological perspective. For example, the fifth year Talmud class focused on "selections for scientific research in the Talmudical sources, especially in Ethics and Theology."[31] But like The Jüdisch-Theologisches seminar and the Rabbinerseminar, Talmud courses at HUC tended to concentrate more on matters of practical significance such as marriage and divorce. Even if a Reform rabbi was not going to actually serve as a judge in such cases, he was expected to be familiar with Jewish perspectives.

With the exception of added courses in cognate languages, few changes were made in the content of the HUC curriculum under the Wise administration. Two years were added to the preparatory department thus making it a four year program. To the initial preparatory curriculum, "Lectures on the Massorah," "Lectures on Calandration," and "The Best Parts of Maimonides' Sepher Hammadda" were added. The four year program included eighteen hours of Bible and eleven hours of Mishna and Gemara. There was more Bible than Talmud in the preparatory department, and more Talmud than Bible in the Collegiate department. Presumably, this was in keeping with Wise's philosophy of progressing from a foundation of original source material. In accordance with Wise's plan, the student was first required to gain familiarity with the Bible, after which he was better prepared to study the next historical layer of material, namely, the Talmud.

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[31] HUC Catalogue, 1896-97, 19.

Perhaps the greatest surprise of Wise's curriculum is in its apparent neglect of training in practical skills beyond the single homiletics class offered in the senior year. Wise had written extensively in the Israelite about the need to train rabbis who "know and understand the wants and desires of this country, who can honorably represent and defend us in this community, teach our young ones in their own language...."[32] But he had also written about the need to prove that it is possible to raise Jewish scholars on American soil, and he wanted to establish an American seminary that would appeal to traditional as well as Reform Jews. It seems that Wise came to the realization that there are only so many classes one can fit into a curriculum. By devoting sufficient time to scholarly courses, there was little time left for other types of training. Wise was also faced with limited funds and a limited staff. He would not be the last rabbinical seminary director to struggle with the question of how to provide rabbis with the means for obtaining a variety of skills.

In 1883, the first class of four rabbis was ordained. In spite of growing criticism and labeling of HUC as a "Reform" seminary, Wise continued to espouse Jewish unity, promoting his institution and its graduates as American rabbis, neither Reform nor Orthodox. In a letter to an ordinee from the second graduating class, Wise advised him,

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[32] The Israelite, July 15, 1870, 8.

> Tell them [the congregation which is considering hiring you] in plain English, that you are an American and a teacher in Israel who considers it his duty to edify, enlighten, and elevate the community, to preserve and honor Judaism...hence you are no orthodox rabbi of former days and no destructive reformer of yesterday. You are always ready to preach and to do that which unites and elevates the congregation and brings honor and glory to Judaism and its votaries.[33]

The academic load at HUC was demanding and students were expected to cover a great breadth of material before they were considered worthy of ordination. Including the four preparatory years the program was an eight year curriculum, and when the graduate year commenced, it became a nine year program. In addition to their class work, Wise also initiated the rabbinical thesis and a comprehensive examination, both to be completed in the senior year. Although the comprehensive examination would eventually be dropped, the thesis remains to this day a requirement for all rabbinical students at HUC.

In the first quarter-century of HUC's existence, the seminary ordained seventy-five rabbis and built up a faculty of ten and a fine library. The school faced serious financial problems and lacked a sufficient number of congregations for as strong a Union as it would have liked. On March 24, 1900, Isaac Mayer Wise collapsed from a massive stroke while teaching a class and died two days later. But by that time he had laid the foundations of the oldest rabbinical seminary in America and had determined the basics of an American rabbinical education.

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[33] Wise to Stolz, March 18, 1887, in Michael A. Meyer, ed., "Letters of Isaac Mayer Wise to Joseph Stolz," Michael, III (1976): 56.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONSERVATIVE SEMINARY IN AMERICA

Wise's assurances of a non-denominational rabbinical seminary initially convinced a few of the Jewish traditionalists in the country to lend their support to HUC.[34] Although the traditional Congregation Mikveh Israel of Philadelphia refused to join the UAHC, its rabbi, Sabato Morais, supported the institution and served the College as one of its public examiners in 1877 and 1878. Benjamin Szold, rabbi and scholar, also served as an examiner. Rabbi Marcus Jastrow and Philadelphia layman Mayer Sulzberger were members of the committee which set curricular standards for HUC. Morais, Szold, Jastrow, and Sulzberger all considered themselves to be traditionalists and not reformers. However, in a report which Morais wrote to the UAHC in 1877, he called the results of the HUC public examination "very satisfactory"; he suggested a few changes, but concluded that, "The College at Cincinnati may unequivocally be pronounced an object deserving of the support of

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[34] The term "traditionalist" is used in this section to refer to the forerunners of the Conservative movement. At the time of the establishment of HUC and JTS there was no Conservative movement per se. The label "Conservative" was applied sporadically, but those whom we might now consider to have been Conservative often considered themselves to be modern or enlightened orthodox. The founders of JTS brought with them the perspective of Western European (as distinguished from Eastern European) Orthodoxy. They embraced rabbinic tradition for the most part, but made certain concessions to modernity which the strict Orthodox were unwilling to make. Their main goal, as we shall see, was the creation of institutions for the preservation of traditional Judaism in America.

all Israelites."[35] The traditionalists were able to support Hebrew Union College because of the original curriculum's emphasis on text study. It has also been suggested that the support was at least partially politically motivated. The traditionalists may have believed that they could ultimately wrest control of the Seminary out of the hands of Wise and run it according to their own values and beliefs.[36]

The gradual erosion of support from the traditionalists has been attributed to a series of events. At the UAHC convention in Milwaukee in 1878, Reform rabbis from the East Coast and the Midwest assented to work together. It was agreed that the reformers in the East would establish a school to prepare students from the East Coast to enter HUC. Since the East Coast leaders involved in the conference were considered to be members of the "radical" camp, traditionalists began to realize that the College would not move in the direction they deemed appropriate. Morais in particular may have hoped that he would have the UAHC's support in establishing a seminary in the East but instead the support was given elsewhere.[37]

The famous "Treifa Banquet" has frequently been cited as the principal cause of the split between reformers and

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[35] Sabato Morais, Report "To the Council of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations," 1877, as cited in Robert E. Fierstien, "From Foundation to Reorganization: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1886-1902" (Ph.D. dissertation, Jewish Theological Seminary, 1986), 20-21.

[36] Fierstien, From Foundation to Reorganization, 21.

[37] Ibid., 22-23.

traditionalists. The incident occurred on Wednesday, July 11, 1883, celebrating the first ordination at HUC. At the evening banquet, waiters served trays of foods forbidden by the laws of kashrut to all of the guests. Traditionalists who had been invited either stormed out in protest or indignantly refused to eat the meal. Whether or not Wise had previous knowledge of the menu (it is reasonable to believe he did not), and whether the non-Kosher items were included deliberately was not pertinent to the effect of the incident, which was perceived as a gross insult by some traditionalists, while others saw it as further, if not conclusive, proof that the traditionalists could not work with the reformers.

The third event which was considered a cause for the traditionalists' departure from the HUC coalition was the Pittsburgh Platform of 1885. Although Kaufmann Kohler, another Reform leader, had greater influence over the content of the Platform than did Wise, Wise chaired the conference and endorsed the final draft of the document which, among other things, denied the absolute authority of halakhah, denied the notion of the Messiah, and rejected the principle of a return to Zion. Although Wise claimed not to have integrated the precepts of the Platform into the HUC curriculum, he did become associated with the ideals of the Platform, and ultimately Wise, HUC, and the Platform all became associated with Reform Judaism. Whether the Pittsburgh Platform actually was the "last straw" which drove the final wedge between the traditionalists and the reformers, or

whether the Platform controversy provided the traditionalists with an excuse to withdraw all support for HUC is of less consequence than the fact that there now existed two separate groups, each of which defined itself in contrast to the other.

Wise refrained from choosing sides as long as possible. Although his goal had always been the establishment of a seminary to train all American rabbis, the departure of the traditionalists from his coalition and the interests of less moderate reformers would inevitably lead HUC closer to clearly established Reform principles. As HUC became increasingly identified with Reform principles and practices, the traditionalists called for the establishment of a truly non-denominational seminary in which to train American rabbis. The irony is though, that throughout Wise's tenure as president, the actual HUC curriculum remained, as we have described it, one which should not have necessarily driven traditionalists away. In fact, we shall see that the first JTS curriculum did not differ substantially from that of HUC. Nevertheless, just as the quest for a non-denominational seminary led Wise to found HUC, so too did this vision lead the traditionalists to found the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS).

Sabato Morais

The principal founder of JTS was Sabato Morais. Born in Leghorn, Italy in 1823, Morais received a thorough traditional education from the rabbis of his community, while also pursuing

secular studies. He headed a school for orphans in London before coming to the United States in 1851. Upon his arrival in the United States, he assumed the position of hazan at Mikveh Israel of Philadelphia, from which Isaac Leeser had recently resigned. In addition to his pulpit duties, Morais pursued his scholarly interest in a variety of areas, most notably Hebrew Literature and Sephardi studies. He also became involved in numerous local causes such as the Philadelphia cloakmaker's strike and support for Jewish farmers in southern New Jersey.[38]

Morais was an advocate of enlightened orthodoxy. He was strictly observant in his own practices and followed traditional practices in the synagogue as well. He believed that change should only come about by the decree of a synod composed of traditional American rabbis, but no such synod existed in the United States. Like Wise, he was a vocal opponent of Biblical criticism, but he did acknowledge the possibility of textual errors in the Prophets and Writings sections of the Tanakh. Morais believed the existence of diverse minhagim to be a result of history and hoped that in America a single minhag would prevail.[39]

Morais called upon Henry Pereira Mendes, rabbi of Congregation Shearith Israel in New York, to be his chief co-worker in the establishment of a new seminary. "For many years, Mendes was involved in combatting a movement for reforms in his

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[38] Fierstien, 43.

[39] Ibid., 46.

congregation; and in 1884, he actually received an M.D. degree from New York University in preparation for leaving the rabbinate."[40] Mendes also considered himself to be a proponent of enlightened orthodoxy, with a special interest in adult education and interfaith activities.

Alexander Kohut, rabbi of Congregation Ahavat Hesed of New York, joined forces with Morais and Mendes. Kohut earned his doctorate in oriental languages at the University of Leipzig in 1865 and was ordained in 1867 by Zacharias Frankel at the Jewish Theological Seminary in Breslau. He published many scholarly works before and after his arrival in America in 1885. Kohut defended the authority of Jewish law; although he accepted the idea of moderate change in Judaism, "he felt that tradition was the anchor that modern Jews needed to maintain their ancestral faith in nineteenth-century America."[41] Morais enlisted the help of numerous other prominent traditional rabbis. The failure of Maimonides College coupled with the success of HUC had taught him an invaluable lesson in the importance of creating a strong supportive network before attempting to establish a seminary.

JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Just as the American Israelite served Wise as a forum for the establishment of HUC, the traditionalists voiced their need for new seminary in the American Hebrew. This paper carried

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[40] Ibid., 48.

[41] Ibid., 54.

stories criticizing Wise, the Pittsburgh Platform and HUC and its faculty. The articles it printed on the nature of the new seminary established the fact that, first and foremost, the founders wanted a seminary that was not HUC. Kohut, in an address printed in the American Hebrew, said:

> In the new seminary a different spirit will prevail, different impulses will pervade its teachings and animate its teachers. This spirit shall be that of Conservative Judaism, the conserving Jewish impulse which will create in the pupils of the seminary the tendency to recognize the dual nature of Judaism and the Law; which unites theory and practice, identifies body and soul, realizes the importance of both matter and spirit, and acknowledges the necessity of observing the Law as well as studying it.[42]

The underlying goals of the new seminary can be seen as a counter-response to HUC.

It is interesting to note Kohut's unabashed use of the label "Conservative" in this address. One year earlier Kohut had projected a different tone when he said,

> Reform, conservative, orthodoxy -- these are the watchwords under which the verbal battle is fought, and the result is that the pure faith cannot obtain its due acknowledgement. Therefore, we imperiously [sic] need a seminary which shall have no other ambition, and no other title than that it be purely and truly Jewish. We do not desire it to be destined for a sect, whether reform, conservative, or orthodox, we would have it be a Jewish theological seminary, like that of Breslau, for example.[43]

If the sentiment sounds familiar, it is because it is the same claim Wise made earlier regarding HUC. Although they never stated it explicitly, such a sentiment suggests that Wise and

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[42] American Hebrew, January 7, 1887, 8, as cited in Fierstien, 88.

[43] Ibid., February 5, 1886, 2-3, as cited in Fierstien, 71.

traditionalists such as Kohut and Morais each regarded his own movement's ideology as the suitable standard for American Judaism. Otherwise, they would have welcomed diverse approaches to rabbinical education in order to meet the needs of various elements in the Jewish community. In the United States, it was the translation of Wise's ideas into actual institutions which laid down an established expression of Judaism with which others could disagree. The process would later repeat itself as the traditionalists established their seminary in opposition to HUC, only to institutionalize a philosophy of education with which the orthodox would then disagree.

In January 1886, Morais issued a letter to Jewish laymen and rabbis in the East and the Midwest, asking for support

> for the establishment and maintenance of a seat of learning where Biblical and Talmudic learning may be taught and Jewish ministers may be reared in accordance with the tenets of historical Judaism, for the preservation of which it will be their duty to labor.[44]

On January 31, the primary instigators held a meeting, formed an executive committee, and plans for the opening of the Jewish Theological Seminary were under way. Representatives from over twenty synagogues attended a meeting in March 1886, in order to ratify a constitution for the Jewish Theological Seminary Association. The ideals upon which the first curriculum would be established were spelled out in the preamble:

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[44] The Jewish Record, January 22, 1886, quoted in Solomon Solis Cohen, The Jewish Theological Seminary: Past and Future (New York, 1919), 23.

> The necessity having been made manifest for associated and organized efforts on the part of the Jews of America faithful to Mosaic law and ancestral tradition, for the purpose of keeping alive the true Judaic spirit, and in particular the establishment of a seminary, where the Bible shall be impartially taught and rabbinical literature faithfully expounded, and more especially, where youths desirous of entering the ministry may be thoroughly grounded in Jewish knowledge and inspired by the precept and example of their instructors with the love of the Hebrew language and a spirit of fidelity and devotion to the Jewish law, in accordance with a resolution adopted at a meeting of ministers held January 31, 1886, at the Shearith Israel Synagogue of the City of New York, the subscribers have agreed to organize the Jewish Theological Seminary Association.[43]

The words "true" and "impartially" are likely a polemic against Wise and HUC. The reference to teaching Bible "impartially" is somewhat curious, given the fact that Wise was such a vocal opponent of biblical criticism. Perhaps this was said in reference to HUC's liberal interpretation of the law. The mention of "fidelity and devotion to the Jewish law" was certainly meant to stand in contrast to HUC, which did not require ritual observance of its students. The Breslau Seminary is considered to be the model upon which the Jewish Theological Seminary was based. Kohut regarded it as an exemplary institution and there Frankel had insisted upon the value of observing the Jewish law as well as studying it.

Article II of JTS Association's constitution called for the establishment of the seminary as well as "the attainment of such cognate purposes as may upon occasion be deemed appropriate."[44]

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[43] American Hebrew, March 12, 1886, 10, quoted in Fierstien, 77.

[44] Ibid.

Dr. Solomon Solis Cohen, who wrote the document, later explained that by "cognate purposes" the founders not only envisioned the eventual creation of a library, a scholarly publication, and a Conservative union, but a Jewish University as well "with the seminary as its Divinity School....to educate Jewish laymen...that there shall never be lacking among American citizens of the Jewish faith the knowledge of their history, their literature, their ancient language..."[47] Like Wise, the founders of JTS maintained this long-range goal.

JTS opened on January 3, 1887. Eight high school age students were enrolled under circumstances similar to those in HUC's first year. The entrance requirements were nearly identical to those of HUC. The students, all enrolled in the Preparatory Department, were required in advance to "be able to translate easy passages in the Bible and Talmud, possess some knowledge of Jewish history and be able to speak the English language."[48] Rabbis on the advisory board shared the teaching duties until Dr. Bernard Drachman of New York was hired in February to teach every afternoon for two hours. In addition to their seminary studies, the students attended public high school or the City College of New York.

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[47] Solomon Solis Cohen, "The Jewish Theological Seminary, past and Future," address delivered at the 1918 J.T.S Commencement (New York, 1919), 43-44.

[48] American Hebrew, August 31, 1888, 8, as cited in Fierstien, 85.

The first seminary curriculum, published in 1887, included:

> five chapters of Genesis, along with Rashi's commentary, selections from the Psalms, with special attention devoted to syntax and grammar, as well as an introduction to Biblical History. In Rabbinics, they had covered part of the Mishnah of Berachot, with the commentary of Bartenura, as well as selections from the Gemara of Bava Metzia. In his report to the Seminary Board, Dr. Morais lamented, 'We might have preferred that the Babylonian Gemara upon the same treatise (Berachot) should have been used to gradually familiarize the pupils with Talmudical language and debates, but the impossibility of procuring all the copies needed compelled the selection of Baba Metzia.'[**]

In comparing this description with Wise's description of the HUC Preparatory curriculum one discovers that the general subjects taught (Bible, History, Mishna and Talmud) were the same, except for the fact that HUC offered a midrash course and JTS did not. The JTS description does not specifically mention Aramaic, but it can be assumed that it was included within the rubric of Mishna or Talmud. Apparently more chapters of Bible and Mishna were covered at HUC, but perhaps JTS went into greater depth.

As at HUC, new classes were added as necessary. Courses were expanded, and students were required to study year round. By 1890, Morais and Alexander Kohut developed a model nine-year curriculum which was described in the Seminary Association Proceedings as follows:

> Preparatory Department
>
> 1st Year: Genesis 12-50 and Exodus with Rashi and Hebrew Grammar, 2 hours a week
> Samuel and Kings at sight, 2 hours
> History to Solomon, 1 hour
> Psalm Translation, 1 hour

[**] American Hebrew, July 1, 1887, 9, quoted in Fierstien, 91-92.

2nd Year: Leviticus and Numbers with Rashi and Grammar, 2 hours
Joshua and Judges at sight, 1 hour
Mishna: Berachot and Shabbat, 2 hours
History to Ezra, 1 hour

3rd Year: Deuteronomy with Rashi, 1 hour
Jeremiah and Lamentations, Nehemiah, 2 hours
Mishna: Pesachim and Yoma, 2 hours
Aramaic portions of the Bible with grammar, 1 hour
History to destruction of the 2nd Temple, 1 hour

Junior Department

1st Year: Torah with commentary and Onkelos, 2 hours
Isaiah with commentary, 2 hours
Talmud: Berachot and Pesachim with Rashi, 4 hours
Hebrew Prose Composition
History to Amoraim, 1 hour
Essays on Jewish History
Voluntary instruction in hazzanut

2nd Year: Hosea with commentaries, 2 hours
Avot with commentaries, text memorized, 2 hours
Talmud: Shabbat with commentary, 2 hours
Rosh Hashana at sight, 2 hours
Hebrew Prose Composition
History to Geonim, 1 hour
Essays on Jewish History
Lectures on Homiletics and Pedagogy -- history and methods, 1 hour (1st term)
Lectures on Biblical Archaeology (2nd term)
Voluntary instruction in hazzanut

Senior Department

1st Year: Bible: Psalms with ancient and modern commentaries, 2 hours (2nd term)
Ezekeal with commentaries, 2 hours (1st term)
Lectures on History of Biblical Exegesis and Versions, 1 hour
Midrash Raba, 2 hours
Talmud: Gittin with commentaries, Avodah Zarah at sight, 2 hours each
Jewish philosophy: Selections from R. Joseph Albo's Sefer Halkarim, 2 hours
History from Geon R. Channa to R. Shmuel HaNagid, 1 hour
Hebrew Composition
English Essays: Jewish Religion and Philosophy
Practice in conducting services and teaching General survey of Semitic Languages, 1 hour (2nd term)

Course for teachers and Hazzanim ends with this grade.

2nd Year: Lectures on History of biblical Versions, 1 hour
Job with commentary, 1 hour
Midrash, 2 hours
Talmud: Hullin with commentary, 4 hours
Sanhedrin at sight, 2 hours
Poskim, Orach Hayyim, 1 hour
Homiletics, 1 hour
Philosophy, Emunot V'Deot, 2 hours
Lectures on History of Jewish Philosophy, 1 hour
Hebrew and English composition (on History of Jewish Literature)
History to death of Maimonides, 1 hour

3rd Year: Minor Prophets with commentaries, ancient and modern, 2 hours
Talmud: Hullin, 6 hours
Baba Metziah at sight, 2 hours
Kiddushin thoroughly, 4 hours
Poskim, Yoreh Deah, Even HaEzer, selections, 2 hours
Moreh Nebuchim, selections, 2 hours
Selected Responsa, 2 hours
History of Modern Times, 1 hour
Essays on Biblical and Talmudic themes
Homiletical Exercises

4th Year: Talmud: Hullin, 6 hours
Yevamot, Ch. 10, 4 hours
Yoma at sight, 2 hours
Sukkah, 2 hours
Talmud Yerushalmi, 2 hours
Philosophy: Kuzari, 2 hours
Responsa, 2 hours
Yoreh Deah, 3 hours
Midrash, 3 hours
Practice of Homiletics in English and German
Essays on Biblical and Talmudical themes
Lectures: General Survey of the Talmud, 1 hour (1st term)
General Survey of Oriental History, 1 hour (2nd term)[80]

Once again, the basic subject categories were the same for HUC and for JTS. Both curricula emphasized traditional text study, emphasized Biblical study over Talmudic, introduced courses in practical rabbinics, and were tremendously ambitious. The JTS

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[80] Proceedings, J.T.S.A., 1890, 52-54, quoted in Fierstien, 103-105.

curriculum required certain texts to be memorized, which the HUC curriculum did not. JTS offered classes in Hebrew Prose Composition, hazzanut, biblical archeology, and homiletics all in the preparatory year, and three more homiletics courses in the senior department which is far more than the one homiletics course offered at HUC. Also unique, was JTS's course offering Homiletics in English and German. It suggests that JTS was not solely interested in meeting the needs of the influx of immigrants from eastern Europe, but also in continuing to serve a certain segment of the Jewish community for whom German rather than English was the spoken language. There is no mention of a distinct theology class in the JTS curriculum, as there was in the HUC curriculum. JTS had a nine-year requirement, while HUC required eight years of course work during the Wise years; however, due to a shortage of faculty members and funds, "the classes were generally combined so as to form two classes of Seniors, two classes of Juniors, and two classes of Preparatory students."[81]

It is interesting that such a traditionalist as Morais did not base his curriculum on the traditional yeshiva model. In one of his strongest statements of difference with the traditional rabbinical education, he proclaimed that the

> ...seminary shall vindicate the right of the Hebrew Bible to a precedence over all theological studies. It shall be the boast of that institute...that the attendants are surpassing Scripturalists -- if I may be permitted the expression -- though they may not rank foremost among skilled Talmudists.

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[81] Fierstien, 105.

> The latter have, at times, degenerated into hair splitting disputants -- pilpulists.[82]

In this statement of purpose, Morais laid the groundwork for a rift with the Orthodox. Like Wise, the curriculum began with more Bible than Talmud. From the first year of the Junior department on the amount of required Talmud increased greatly through the final year of the program which emphasized Talmud and halakhic literature courses.

What is most surprising about this curriculum is the attention paid to non-rabbinic subjects. In spite of the founders' protests against the non-traditional approach at HUC, their curriculum was as non-traditional as HUC's in its own way. HUC frequently abandoned the ahistorical yeshiva method of text study in favor of a historical scientific approach, though probably, some HUC text courses were taught in a highly traditional manner. JTS professors, too, probably taught some text courses in a traditional fashion and others from a more critical or scientific approach. But overall, JTS' curriculum does not represent that of an eastern European yeshiva. That JTS offered an even wider selection of practical rabbinics courses than did HUC is slightly surprising in light of their concern with tradition, and yet, given their primary goal of producing traditionally observant yet modern Jewish leaders, special training was necessary to help their rabbis fit specifically into the context of American Judaism. The lack of similarity to the

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[82] American Hebrew, February 19, 1886, 3-4, quoted in Fierstien, 69.

yeshiva approach is best understood in light of the fact that the model for JTS was to be found in the modern European seminary rather than in the eastern European yeshiva.

In June 1894, JTS ordained its first three rabbis. In 1896, the Seminary agreed that a college or university degree would be required for ordination. Evidence suggests that for a short time the Seminary attempted to provide its students with a secular education, but the effort did not succeed and students continued to pursue an outside degree along with their rabbinical studies.

Sabato Morais continued to supervise the Seminary with the assistance of men like Mendes and Kohut until his death in 1897. Like Wise, he had shaped the institution out of his own personal vision and determination. Although there was more than one man involved in the founding of the program, to an extent JTS came to be associated with Morais as HUC was associated with Wise. With the passing of Morais and the other luminaries of JTS's initial years, the Seminary faced a crisis of leadership. They would eventually engage Solomon Schechter, who was to stand firmly on the foundations which Morais and the pre-Conservative traditionalists laid and would then place his own personal stamp on the second successful seminary in the United States.

CONCLUSION

Both HUC and JTS laid lasting foundations for their academic programs from the very start. Although the first HUC curriculum was modified and developed over the years, parts of it are

present in the current College curriculum. Many courses were eventually added such as liturgy, education, music, modern philosophy, human relations, and a variety of electives, and several of the rabbinics requirements were abbreviated, but the foundation of Bible, Talmud, Codes, Hebrew, midrash, history, medieval philosophy, and homiletics remained. Two major differences between the original curriculum and subsequent HUC curricula were the later addition of Biblical criticism, originally omitted because of Wise's personal belief in Sinaitic revelation, and the inclusion of several more courses in professional development.

Morais, Mendes, Kohut, and the others involved in JTS' founding were determined to create an American rabbinical seminary which was not HUC. They ended up with a curriculum which was more similar to that of HUC than it was different. Both seminaries were modeled not after the yeshivot of eastern Europe, but after the modern European seminaries. They sought to produce rabbis who, armed with an understanding of both Jewish tradition and the modern world, would help preserve and further develop Judaism in America. HUC was similar to the Hochschule in its emphasis on a scientific approach to Jewish study, and JTS modeled itself after the Breslau Seminary in its stated goal to train rabbis to preserve Jewish law and ritual within the context of modern civilization. But both schools quickly moved beyond the European seminaries in the scope of their course offerings. JTS in particular developed a broad range of required courses

with a greater number of practical rabbinics requirements than any of the seminaries in Germany and greater than HUC.

The fact that JTS' curriculum was really quite similar to that of HUC suggests that the disputes which led to the establishment of a second modern rabbinical seminary in the United States were in regard to differences in personalities and ideas and less with the HUC curriculum itself. If the traditionalists had been seriously opposed to the HUC curriculum we can assume that they would have created a course of study which was markedly different than that of HUC. In actuality it would appear that their differences were with Wise and with the Pittsburgh Platform and that they assumed that the HUC curriculum was a mirror image of the two. Although the initial HUC curriculum indeed a reflected Wise's beliefs, his beliefs were diverse enough that they included a combination of traditional and modern ideas. The founders of JTS also held diverse beliefs, many of which were not so distant from those of Wise. Nonetheless, where for so long there had been no rabbinical seminaries, there now existed two individual seminaries, similar in regard to curriculum, but both with distinct visions and goals.

Chapter III

The Solomon Schechter and Kaufmann Kohler Years

With the passing of Sabato Morais in 1897 and Isaac Mayer Wise in 1900, both the Jewish Theological Seminary and Hebrew Union College lost their founders and strongest advocates. A proposal was made that the two schools merge, but each school concluded that it was preferable to continue to develop its own distinct approach to training rabbis.

Both institutions employed interim presidents until permanent presidents could be found. Henry Pereira Mendes, part-time history professor; Joseph Blumenthal, president of the Board of Trustees; and Adolphus Solomons, a leader in the establishment of American social welfare programs, all served as acting presidents of JTS before the arrival of Solomon Schechter. In Cincinnati, first Moses Mielziner, professor of Talmud, and then Gotthard Deutsch, professor of history, filled in until Kaufmann Kohler was appointed president of HUC.

By the turn of the century, the Jewish Theological Seminary lacked not only visionary leadership but financial resources as well. Fortunately, Cyrus Adler, one of the founders of the Jewish Publication Society of America as well as of the American Jewish Historical Society, actively participated in the reorganization of the Seminary. He challenged a group of wealthy New York Jews, including Jacob H. Schiff and Louis Marshall, to

raise sufficient funds to save the New York seminary. The group rose to the challenge and on April 17, 1902, the old Jewish Theological Seminary Association merged with the new Jewish Theological Seminary of America, and the search for a new president began.

SOLOMON SCHECHTER

A glance at some features of Solomon Schechter's studies, travels, and discoveries will help to explain why he was the top choice of the new JTS board. Born in 1847 in Focsani, Rumania, he was raised in a traditional Jewish home. He studied Bible and Talmud with his father and was considered a child prodigy. At age ten he was sent to the Yeshiva of Piatra, and at age thirteen to Lemberg to study with rabbinic scholar Joseph Saul Nathanson. He was first exposed to modern Jewish education, in 1875, when he enrolled in the Vienna Beth Ha-Midrash. He soon devoted himself to the "scientific study of the tradition and developed the central notion of the community of Israel as decisive for Jewish living and thinking. He was to call it 'Catholic Israel.'"[1]

After spending four years studying in Vienna, Schechter moved to Berlin and studied at the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums and also at the University of Berlin. One of his classmates at the Hochschule, Claude G. Montefiore, convinced Schechter to return with him to England. There

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[1] Meir Ben-Horin, "Solomon Schechter," Encyclopedia Judaica 14:948.

Schechter found employment, in 1890 as a lecturer in Rabbinics at Cambridge University and in 1899 as a professor of Hebrew at University College in London. With the publication of articles and books, Schechter became known as a prominent scholar, but probably his greatest claim to fame was his rediscovery, in 1896, of the Cairo Genizah. Schechter's name became known throughout circles of Jewish scholars in Europe and in America as well. Although earlier attempts had been made to bring Schechter to JTS, it was in 1902 that he and his family arrived in New York, Schechter having agreed to assume the responsibilities of president of the Seminary.

Schechter's primary reason for accepting the position was his belief that the future of Judaism was in America. He knew that institutions were needed to train the leaders of the American Jewish community. Before agreeing to take the position, Schechter made certain that the trustees of the seminary were willing to let him establish goals and organize the curriculum according to his own beliefs. He quickly learned that the new board shared some of his concerns. Like Schechter, they were not interested in the creation of a denominational seminary. They did call for a more traditional approach in order to appeal to the masses of Eastern European immigrants who were currently flooding the shores of America, but they did not wish to label themselves or to be considered merely a "branch" of Judaism. Like Morais, they regarded their seminary as a training ground for leaders for all segments of American Jewry. In a letter to

Cyrus Adler in October, 1901, Schechter expressed his agreement with the board:

> You know my conservative tendencies, both in life and thought, but I am thoroughly convinced that, if the Seminary is to become a real blessing, it must not be degraded as a battle-ground for parties. It must above all give direction to both Orthodox and Reform.[2]

However, Schechter did have some very particular ideas regarding the approach he desired the Seminary to take. As a disciple of the historical school of Jewish thought, he wished to introduce this method into the curriculum. He saw America as the land in which historical Judaism would be preserved. In addition to his reverence for Jewish history, Schechter espoused loyalty to Jewish law, love for the Jewish people (he recognized Jewish nationalism as valid and saw Zionism as an integral part of Judaism), and nurturance of the spirit through the study of mysticism. Schechter described mysticism as "a manifestation of the spiritual and as an expression of man's agonies in his struggle after communion with God..." and termed it a "vital current in [the] mainstream of historical Judaism...."[3]

Schechter did not reject biblical criticism, but he was critical of biblical critics. He resented the antisemitism which he saw embedded in much of the biblical criticism written by non-Jews, feeling that a fair amount of what was written was meant to "extol Christianity at the expense of Judaism." However, he did

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[2] Norman Bentwich, Solomon Schechter: A Biography (Philadelphia, 1938), 167.

[3] Herbert Parzen, Architects of Conservative Judaism (New York, 1964), 35.

see value in some of the literary and scientific criticism which had been produced.[4]

Schechter's general approach to Judaism was to "conserve." Among those factors which he believed to be essential to the conservation of Judaism were an affirmative process of Judaism adapting to its external environment, the centrality of Torah in the synagogue, respect for the authority of law, and maintenance of Hebrew language in the synagogue and school.[5] These factors would all find their expression in the new curriculum. The essence of Schechter's view of Judaism was summarized in his earliest report to the Jewish Theological Seminary Association:

> Judaism is...a positive religion, with a sacred Writ and a continuous tradition. It is a discipline of life and has a philosophy of its own. It has distinct precepts, and usages, and customs, consecrated by the consent of Catholic Israel through thousands of years, and hallowed by the agony and the tears of the martyrs. It has a wide literature running through all the historic ages, with numerous junctions branching off into every department of human thought. It has one of the most ancient liturgies in the world, of constant growth and development, but still remaining intact in its main features. But the knowledge of such a religion can only be acquired by a serious study and an elaborate training, which must necessarily last for years.[6]

The last point, regarding the need for Jewish knowledge, was of utmost importance to him. He believed that Jews in general and rabbis in particular had neglected proper Jewish study. His main

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[4] Ibid., 36-37.

[5] Ibid., 51

[6] Solomon Schechter, Jewish Theological Seminary Association Biennial Report 1902-1904 (New York, 1906), 64.

goal for the Seminary was to provide the scholarly resources necessary to train highly educated rabbis, who would in turn go out and teach Judaism, so that the general level of Jewish knowledge would rise significantly.

"THE CHARTER OF THE SEMINARY" -- SCHECHTER'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Nowhere is Solomon Schechter's vision for the seminary more clearly illuminated than in his inaugural address, which he delivered on November 20, 1902. He began by acknowledging the tremendous diversity in the New York Jewish community as represented at the inaugural ceremony. He realized that JTS would be called upon to serve the needs of the various groups. For this reason he desired to steer the seminary clear of denominational loyalties or partisan politics. In short, he envisioned JTS as "a theological centre which should be all things to all men, reconciling all parts and appealing to all sections of the community."[7] The language used expresses a seemingly impossibly high standard -- a tone which permeates the majority of the address.

In describing the direction and purpose of the seminary, Schechter began by quoting from the charter of the newly reorganized seminary, which painted a very broad portrait of its goals, and devoted the remainder of his lengthy address to what he called his own derash on the text of the charter. He

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[7] Schechter, The Inaugural Address of Solomon Schechter (New York, 1903), 7.

initially focused on the importance of the Seminary as a place for learning. Since he conducted his own research in a methodical, painstaking fashion, he expected no less of his students. He explained his philosophy of study by saying:

> The crown and climax of all learning is research. The object of this searching is truth--that truth which gives unity to history and harmony to the phenomena of nature....But while in search of this truth, of which man is hardly permitted more than a faint glimpse, the student not only re-examines the old sources, but is on the constant lookout for fresh material and new fields of exploration. These enable him to supply a link here and to fill out a gap there, thus contributing his humble share to the sum of total truth, which, by the grace of God, is in a process of constant self-revelation.*

This "humble" process called learning leads to the "sum of total truth" and therefore is not to be treated lightly. It cannot even be thought of as Torah for its own sake. For Schechter, it had a higher purpose. He believed that each generation had something to contribute to the "Temple of truth."* Schechter wished to train rabbis not only to contribute to the process of truth's self-revelation, but to be excellent teachers who would disseminate knowledge among members of the Jewish community. His expectations as to what a rabbi was capable of mastering were not small:

> Now, we all agree that the office of a Jewish minister is to teach Judaism; he should accordingly receive such a training as to enable him to say: '<u>Judaeici nihil a me alienum puto</u>.' 'I regard nothing Jewish as foreign to me.' He should know everything Jewish--Bible, Talmud, Midrash, Liturgy, Jewish ethics and Jewish philosophy; Jewish history and Jewish mysticisms, and even Jewish folklore. None of

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* Ibid., 14.

* Ibid., 16.

> these subjects, with its various ramifications, should be entirely strange to him.[10]

On the one hand, he was concerned that the rabbis his Seminary would produce should never know less than their congregants in any area of Jewish knowledge. On the other hand, of primary importance was that the rabbis know this material in order to transmit it to the primarily Jewishly ignorant masses. Certainly to the relief of any prospective students listening to his address, Schechter went on to state that it would be an impossible expectation to train students in the depth of nearly four thousand years of Judaism, but that the Seminary would provide a foundation with the expectation that graduates would carry on their studies after ordination and others would continue to the level of scholarly research.

Schechter also spoke of training rabbis in "the subject or thing called life."[11] He acknowledged that deeds once considered incumbent on all Jews were increasingly being relegated solely to the rabbi's domain. While he did not endorse this trend, he did recognize the necessity for rabbis to be properly trained in the pastoral role which included duties such as visiting the sick and comforting those in distress. Like Zacharias Frankel, he asserted the importance of training rabbis in an environment infused with religious spirit and in training them to carry this religious spirit with them into the synagogue and classroom. He

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[10] Ibid., 17.

[11] Ibid., 27.

envisioned an institution for teaching historical Judaism, not a yeshiva that would refuse to "confront the philosophies and issues of the modern world," but certainly a seminary with Torah as the very core of its teachings.[12] His basic message was one of optimism in which he cast no doubt that the Seminary, under his direction, would be able to provide the high-quality training and fulfill the goals which he outlined in his address.

Schechter valued one other area of rabbinical education which he mentioned in other addresses, though not directly in his inaugural address. He advocated the study of certain secular subjects, such as the Greek and Latin classics, as well as English grammar and composition and especially English literature. The classics were deemed important in their function of illuminating the contributions of other civilizations to the development of Judaism. Schechter believed that English literature would provide rabbis with a model of elegance and refinement for the development of their thought and style.

KAUFMANN KOHLER

With the appointment of Solomon Schechter as president of JTS in 1902, the Seminary set a high standard in leadership which HUC felt compelled to attempt to match. In 1903, HUC appointed Kaufmann Kohler as its new president. He was selected because he was a widely respected scholar, a leader in the Reform movement,

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[12] Ibid., 12, 20.

and an experienced congregational rabbi.

Kohler was born in Furth, Bavaria in 1843. On his mother's side he was descended from a long line of rabbis. His parents were both very pious Jews. His father was a director of a Jewish orphan asylum where Kohler began his studies. By age ten the rabbi of the orphanage felt that Kohler had mastered all he had to teach him, so he was sent to Hassfort on the Main, where he studied traditional subjects until his bar mitzvah. For the next five or six years he studied at various yeshivot, including the yeshiva in Altona, where he studied with Rabbi Jacob Ettlinger, a champion of neo-Orthodoxy. It was not until he moved to Frankfort in 1862 that he received private tutoring in secular studies, at the same time continuing his traditional education with Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch. Kohler studied at universities in Munich, Berlin, and Erlangen, receiving in 1867 his doctorate in philosophy. His dissertation on "The Blessing of Jacob" was strongly influenced by contemporary biblical criticism and was denounced by many of his former teachers. In fact, after its publication, Kohler was unable to find a congregational position, and so, in 1868, he pursued post-doctoral studies at the University of Leipzig. Abraham Geiger knew Kohler and recommended him for a position in Detroit, Michigan. In 1869, Kohler immigrated to America.

Kohler became a leader in American Jewish Reform. In Detroit he stopped wrapping himself in a tallit and dropped observance of the second day of festivals, among other reforms.

His next position was in Chicago in 1871 where in 1874 he was the first rabbi in the United States to introduce a Sunday morning worship service as a supplement to the Saturday Shabbat service. In the early years of HUC, Kohler opposed the educational program established by Isaac M. Wise because he thought Wise was too concerned with pleasing everyone and did not carry reform far enough. It was largely Kohler's draft of the Pittsburgh Platform, adopted in 1885, that fanned the fires of controversy and dissent within the ranks of the Reform movement as well as between those Jews who identified themselves as "reformers" and those who did not. Kohler had travelled a far distance in more ways than one since his days in the yeshiva. On the face of it, Kohler turned as far away as one possibly could from the viewpoints of his earliest teachers. Yet he frequently credited those teachers, especially Samson Raphael Hirsch, with having planted the seeds of his radical theology. He once explained:

> It may sound paradoxical, and yet it is true, that without knowing it, Samson Raphael Hirsch liberated me from the thraldom of blind authority worship and led me imperceptibly away from the old mode of thinking, or rather of not thinking, into the realms of free reason and research. His method of harmonizing modern culture with ancient thought, however fanciful, fascinated me. His lofty idealism impressed me. He made me, the Yeshibah Bachur from Mayence and Altona, a modern man. The spirit of his teachings electrified me and became a life long influence to me.[13]

Although the compliment might have been lost on Hirsch, who grew to see such reforms as Kohler espoused as a threat to the very

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[13] Max Heller, "Samson Raphael Hirsch," CCAR Yearbook, XVIII (1908), 211.

existence of Judaism, Kohler adopted certain fundamental values learned from Hirsch and was led by them to far different conclusions than those arrived at by his teacher. Although Kohler shared Hirsch's rootedness in the Jewish tradition, he grounded his faith, not in traditional Judaism, but rather in an evolutionary model of Jewish history which he adopted from Geiger.[14]

Kohler's philosophy of rabbinical education, like Schechter's, combined a mix of Torah and modern sources. However, each regarded Torah differently. Schechter stressed the value of living the tradition and practicing the rituals while studying them. Kohler, in the tradition of Geiger, believed that Torah was revealed progressively throughout the generations and that many of the commandments were the result of the sociopolitical conditions of specific times in history. Kohler, like Geiger, did not advocate ritual merely for the sake of tradition, but only as a means of experiencing religious exaltation or for the purpose of moral development. Both leaders found a place for scientific text criticism within their respective curricula, but Schechter expressed much more wariness and caution in the use of such tools. While Schechter at first worked very hard to promote a non-denominational atmosphere in his curriculum in particular and in his seminary in general, Kohler unabashedly set out to develop an educational program with which to indoctrinate his students in the teachings of Reform

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[14] Meyer, <u>At One Hundred Years</u>, 54.

Judaism. He did this by deliberately regulating the curriculum, the worship services, even the content of student sermons delivered from the pulpit of the chapel.[18]

"WHAT A JEWISH INSTITUTION OF LEARNING SHOULD BE" -- KOHLER'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS

In the course of his address, Kohler established five goals for the training of a rabbi. The first section was entirely devoted to the concept of empowering leaders with the knowledge of Torah. In particular, Kohler stressed, rabbis should be trained as powerful leaders enabling them to convey the spiritual force of the Torah. In fact, in the first seven pages of his address, Kohler used the word "power" twenty-six times! One might imagine that the expression of an intense desire for power was the result of a perceived lack of rabbinical authority within the Reform movement when compared to halakhic Judaism, however, it seems more likely that Kohler observed a general crisis in which the Jewish people as a whole had lost the sense of Torah's great power as expressed by the passionate, zealous prophets of old. In line with his notion of prophetic Judaism, Kohler spoke of the need to train rabbis to excite and inspire their congregants. In order to do this, the rabbi had to be well-educated. Kohler described a lofty vision:

> The theological school must be the power-house to supply pulpit and people with the dynamic force of all-ruling, all-electrifying religious truth. It is not enough that Bible

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[18] Ibid., 56-58.

> and Talmud, halakah and Haggadah, Hellenic and Arabic literature, philosophy and Cabala, History and Literature, Liturgy and Homiletics be taught; they must all be turned into vitalizing sparks of truth. They must all be transformed into spiritual helps and lights to unfold the inherent power of Judaism in its manifold stages and phases of growth. It is in this light that each teacher, by showing the organic connection, the inner relations...can single out the potencies, the spiritual, moral and intellectual kernel beneath the shell, and so lay bare the deeper impulses and show the higher motives that give lasting value and zest to each specific study and movement. In other words, the theological curriculum must mean not the registration, but the profound appreciation, of all the religious forces....[14]

Like Schechter, Kohler saw a far greater purpose for study than torah lishma, study for its own sake. Both valued study in that it led to truth. But for Kohler, truth was found in the historical study of the evolution of each period of Judaism. The understanding of each stage in history was the key unlocking the inner power, the spirit or essence of Judaism. In stating that "the theological curriculum must not mean the registration, but the profound appreciation of all the religious forces," Kohler railed against the traditional yeshiva approach to study, in which students memorized vast amounts of text in an ahistorical manner. This approach, according to Kohler, was responsible for the loss of an appreciation of the power within the active development of Judaism over time. He included the traditional yeshiva curriculum of Talmud and halakhah, but to it he added numerous other fields of study which would assist the rabbinical student in his endeavor to understand Judaism's development in a

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[14] Kaufmann Kohler, "What a Jewish Institute of Learning Should Be," Proceedings of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Cincinnati, 1907), VI, 4985.

historical context. Hellenistic and Arabic literature, philosophy, history, and literature, in particular, were included for this purpose. Kohler believed that, in general, Jews had seriously neglected their studies of these subjects. His chief goal was to train highly educated rabbis. Therefore, he hoped that HUC would "become a light-house to illumine the path of all seekers after truth."[17]

Kohler's second goal was to provide the students with adequate training as spiritual leaders. He realized the difficulty of creating a spiritual atmosphere in an academic institution, but he believed it was necessary in order for the student to be able to serve the spiritual needs of his "flock" in times of sadness or personal crisis. He utilized the images of priest and shepherd to make his point, more clearly describing his vision of what a rabbi should be.

Related to the second goal, yet distinct, was Kohler's desire to train Jewish religious leaders. He acknowledged the benefit to those reformers such as himself who grew up in traditionally religious households and retained their subsequent understanding, if not warm regard, for certain elements of the tradition. "What was dear and sacred to the fathers must still be treated with tender regard and reverence by us, however obsolete and superstitious the practice of the belief."[18] His approach to rabbinical training would include an awareness of the

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[17] Ibid., 4992.

[18] Ibid., 4993.

limits of those students who had grown up with a disdain for things traditional and who tended to over-rationalize.

Fourth, Kohler stated his intention to train ethical leaders. "Yes the Hebrew Union College should not only be a seat of learning, but a schoolhouse for religious, social, and civic virtue; it must not give us merely wise and intelligent leaders...but men of unbending strength of character and truthfulness...."[17] For this reason, he would eventually add classes in ethics and Pirke Avot to the curriculum.

Finally, Kohler wished to train communal leaders. He proposed courses in social economics, philanthropy, sociology, pedagogics, psychology, and homiletics. Such courses were indicative of his desire to train rabbis with a broad base of knowledge and with the capacity to fill many roles and participate in a variety of activities.

There is a great deal of similarity in the visions of Schechter and Kohler. This may in some part be due to the fact that Kohler was present at Schechter's inaugural ceremony. Schechter may have set the style for what an inaugural address should be. However, Kohler was known to be a rugged individualist and never one to shirk from speaking his own mind, regardless of how others around him felt. In fact, Schechter was also known to possess this quality. Schechter and Kohler had met previously in England. They found that they shared many basic values while strongly disagreeing on others. Thus, while both

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[17] Ibid., 4994.

emphasized commitment to the Torah in their addresses, each maintained a radically different concept of the meaning of Torah. For Schechter it was the embodiment of Jewish tradition in the laws, rituals, and historical experiences of "Catholic Israel," while for Kohler Torah was the developing dynamic ideal of the prophetic teachings of Judaism. These contrasting definitions would lead to fundamentally different approaches to rabbinical education. The Seminary curriculum would stress the study of texts for the sake of understanding and transmitting tradition. Personal ritual observance would be a requirement, in order to serve as a model for the promotion of such observance for all Jews. HUC, during Kohler's reign, would ultimately reject legalism in favor of moral teachings, for the purpose of serving as a "light unto the nations." Their other primary difference was in their receptiveness to non-Jewish scholarly sources such as biblical criticism and the historical literature of other civilizations. Schechter, though not entirely opposed to the inclusion of such material, was cautious and critical of its usefulness, while Kohler welcomed it as long as it shed light on the "truth."

Both leaders embraced an approach which combined traditional and modern approaches to the sources. Both rejected the yeshiva model in favor of a system which would provide academic and professional training. Both advocated courses in Bible, Talmud, Jewish history and literature, mysticism, liturgy, philosophy, social science, philanthropy, psychology, and homiletics.

Finally, both clearly believed that the future of Judaism was in America, and that they were responsible for training the Jewish leaders of the future.[20]

JTS: THE REVISED CURRICULUM

The first thing Schechter did when he revised the curriculum in 1904 was to switch from a nine-year program which had been combined with undergraduate studies to a four-year graduate school. But by 1906-07, the preparatory department was reinstituted. Apparently, a number of the students lacked the background in basic Jewish studies to enter the graduate program with out some formal preparation. Except for the addition of a course called "Prayer Book," Schechter's three year preparatory program covered the same topics as the earlier curriculum, but in fewer hours. Schechter's new curriculum was based on five general categories of study:

> 1. The Bible - Under this title are included a thorough grounding in the grammar of Hebrew and Biblical Aramaic, the study of the versions, especially the Septuagint and the Peshitta, a thorough acquaintance with the ancient and modern commentaries, the introductory literature to the Bible, and Biblical Archeology.
> 2. Talmud of Babylon and Jerusalem - These will be taught on philological and critical lines, proper attention being given to their linguistic criteria and their historical bearings. Under this title are included the ancient Rabbinical Homilies (Midrashim), as the Mechilta, Sifri and Sifra, the Midrash Rabbah to the Pentateuch and other Biblical books; also the study of the Codes of Moses ben Maimon, R. Jacob ben Asher, R. Joseph Caro, R. Abraham

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[20] Howard Allen Berman, "His Majesty's Loyal Opponents: A Comparative Study of the Presidencies of Kaufmann Kohler and Solomon Schechter" (Rabbinical thesis, Hebrew Union College, 1974), 41-43.

Danzig, and other convenient digests.
3. Jewish History and the History of Jewish Literature, with specimen readings.
4. Theology and Catechism - Under this title are included Jewish Philosophy and Ethics, the Jewish liturgies, their genesis and development, and their doctrinal significance.
5. Homiletics, including a proper training in Elocution and Pastoral Work - This last comprehends the initiation of the students in their profession of teaching, by attaching them to a religious school; also visiting the poor, ministering to the sick and dying, familiarity with the Jewish charitable institutions in the city, and preparation for the practical part of the minister's vocation.[21]

This course of study appeared in the JTS Register from 1902-04 to 1912-13. There are no startling differences between this and the Morais/Kohut curriculum. In 1913-14, the Register presented the courses in an entirely new format. On paper, Schechter appeared to have balanced the Bible and Talmud ratio. Each year of the program included a Bible lecture, a Bible text class, a Talmud lecture, and a Talmud Text class. In the Bible department, Schechter introduced four lecture courses: "Biblical History," "Monuments and the Bible," "Canon and Introduction," and "Biblical Archeology." The four courses which he introduced into the Talmud Department were "Introduction to Talmud," "History of the Halakhah," "Outlines of Rabbinical Law and Literature," and "Religious Ceremonies and Institutions." The primary difference between this and the previous curriculum was the organization of Schechter's curriculum. He introduced a logical historical progression as the organizing principle of the curriculum. For example, in philosophy the four required courses were "From Saadya to Bahyah," then "Gabirol and Judah Halevi," then

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[21] JTSABR, 1902-04, 32-33.

"Maimonides," and in the fourth year "Post-Maimonidian Philosophy." The four history courses were organized in the same manner. The four literature courses were "Hellenistic Literature, Tannaitic Literature, Midrashic Literature, and History of Sects. The three courses in Hebrew Literature were "Historic Texts," "Poetic Texts," and "Ethical Texts." In keeping with the previous curriculum, courses in hazanut were also available if a student so desired.[22]

Besides the reorganization of the courses, Schechter's main contribution to the Seminary were the scholars whom he engaged as members of the faculty. Men such as Louis Ginzberg, Alexander Marx, Israel Friedlaender, Israel Davidson, and Mordecai Kaplan caused JTS to become a prominent center for Jewish studies.[23]

HUC: THE REVISED CURRICULUM

Although Kohler, too, desired to change the HUC program to a graduate school, this was not to happen during the course of his tenure. He maintained the structure of the Preparatory Department followed by the Collegiate Department. He was able, however, to add a year of graduate studies following the four

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[22] JTS Register, 1913-1914, 15-17.

[23] Schechter clearly moved the seminary in a more scholarly direction. Yet, it is interesting to note that he did not institute a thesis requirement at JTS in spite of the fact that he must certainly have been aware of HUC's requirement. Unfortunately, we do not know his reasons for choosing not to include a thesis as part of the rabbinical program. The requirement of a thesis at HUC has continued to distinguish the curricula of the two seminaries to the present day.

years of Collegiate studies so that for one year students could engage in an intensive course of rabbinical preparation.

The following curriculum, listed in HUC's 1908-09 course catalogue, is essentially the same program of studies throughout the Kohler administration:

Preparatory:
D Grade
1. Hebrew Grammar
2. Bible: (a) Genesis and Exodus
   (b) Joshua and Judges
   (c) Psalms
3. Pirke Abot
4. Prayerbook
5. Catechism

C Grade
1. Hebrew Grammar
2. Bible: (a) Deuteronomy and Numbers
   (b) Samuel and Kings
3. Mishna: Berachot and Bikkurim
4. Prayerbook
5. Biblical History
6. Catechism

B Grade
1. Hebrew Grammar
2. Bible: (a) Leviticus and Commentaries
   (b) Ruth, Esther, Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah
   (c) Psalms and Proverbs
3. Mishna: Some Tractate in Seder Moed
4. Aramaic Grammar
5. Biblical History
6. Prayerbook
7. Catechism

A Grade
1. Aramaic Grammar and the Book of Daniel
2. Bible: (a) Poetic portions of the Pentateuch with Targum and Commentaries
   (b) Psalms and Proverbs
3. Midrash Abot di Rabbi Nathan
4. Mishna: Sanhedrin and Makkot
5. Introduction to Jewish Philosophy
6. Jewish History
7. Catechism

Collegiate Department:

First

1. Bible: (a) Genesis with Targum and Commentaries
   (b) Amos, Jonah and selections from Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah
2. Midrash, Rabbah to Genesis and Canticles
3. Mishna Babba Kamma
4. Jewish Philosophy
5. Jewish History
6. History of Judaism

Second

1. Bible: (a) Hosea, Micah and Isaiah
   (b) Exodus and Commentaries
2. Introduction to the Talmud, Halakic and Agadic readings from Berakot and Sanhedrin
3. Midrash Kohelet and Shir ha-shirim
4. Jewish Philosophy
5. Jewish History
6. Apocrypha

Third

1. Bible: (a) Jeremiah, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Lamentations
   (b) Numbers with Commentaries
2. Talmud: Pesahim, Taanit and Shabbat
3. Midrash: Ekah and Leviticus Rabbah
4. Apocalyptic Literature
5. Jewish philosophy
6. homiletics
7. Jewish History

Fourth

1. Bible: (a) Ezekeal and Pentateuch
   (b) Selections from Ibn Ezra, Rashbam and Ralbag to Exodus
2. Talmud Hullin and Codes
3. Midrash and Homiletics
4. Systematic Theology
5. Jewish Philosophy
6. Jewish History
7. Ethics and Pedagogics
8. Elocution

Senior

1. Bible Exegesis, Job and Kohelet
2. Homiletics and Midrash
3. Talmud: Kiddushin, Gittin, Yebamot and Code Eben ha-Ezer
4. Jewish Philosophy
5. Practical Theology and Liturgy
6. Jewish History

7. Ethics and Pedagogics
8. Elocution[24]

Kohler's primary goal for the Preparatory Department was to provide the students with fundamental study tools such as Hebrew grammar, basic biblical text and history. He added courses in prayer book, catechism, and midrash which were not present in the Wise curriculum. Whereas Wise had introduced Talmud into the Preparatory Department, Kohler prepared students in Mishna only, saving Talmud for the collegiate Department.

His goal was for the student entering the Collegiate Department "to read the unpunctuated text of the Pentateuch with the commentaries as well as easy portions of the Mishna...[and] a general knowledge of the contents of Rabbinical literature and history, of the prayerbook and of the Psalms and of the doctrines and ceremonies of Judaism."[25] In order to fulfill this last goal, Kohler created and taught a "Catechism" class. Required in each year of the Preparatory program, the course included instruction in the Decalogue, System of Belief and of Duty, God, Man, and Israel, and Kohler's Guide to Instruction in Judaism. Kohler was not modest about the fact that he had a clear-cut answer to the question of "what should a rabbi know" and he created this course for the purpose of "indoctrinating" the students in accordance with his own beliefs.

In the introduction to each year's course catalogue, Kohler

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[24] Hebrew Union College Catalogue, 1908-09, 57-59.

[25] Ibid., 1906, 11.

printed a copy of his explanatory statement for each of the major courses in the curriculum. In addition to having added a Catechism course to Wise's curriculum, Kohler also added courses in apocryphal, apocalyptic, and Hellenistic literature, systematic theology, practical theology, ethics, pedagogics, and applied sociology. Apocryphal and Hellenistic literature were included for the purpose of teaching civilizational influences on the development of Judaism, for clearer understanding of the development of Talmud and the New Testament, and to impress the students with the universal nature of Judaism.

Kohler developed the systematic theology course in order to demonstrate the method by which rabbinic authorities translated biblical law into a system compatible with their own time and environment, hoping to train the students to continue to participate in the development of Judaism, as had the rabbis of old. Practical theology dealt with the origin and development of the ancient Jewish rituals and ceremonies as a means of understanding the evolution of Reform Judaism. Jewish ethics was created out of Kohler's desire to build a system of specifically Jewish ethics based on Jewish sources.[24] Pedagogics was developed to teach the student how to present Judaism to children and to provide the student with skills for managing a religious school.

In his introduction to the course catalogue, Kohler not only described the motives behind his new course offerings, he also

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[24] Ibid., 19.

explained his reasoning and approach to certain of the previously established courses. He began with a lengthy defense of the inclusion of biblical criticism in the Biblical exegesis course. He believed that a credible course in Biblical exegesis should include the entire spectrum of interpretation, from the most ancient to the most modern. He argued that the inclusion of "higher" textual criticism was not revolutionary and was, in fact, known to the medieval commentators.

Talmud was taught, not as a legally binding document, but as a body of literature representative of one of the phases in the evolution of Judaism. He structured Talmud study sequentially beginning with courses in Mishna only. Gemara was not introduced until the second year of the Collegiate program. Halakhic literature was introduced in the fourth year. Aggadic literature was taught from a theological and homiletical perspective. Midrash study was expanded and became a central part of the curriculum.

Kohler also included a defense of his inclusion of medieval Jewish thinkers in the philosophy class in spite of his belief that their ideas had been supplanted by modern philosophers. He explained that such thinkers as Saadya Gaon, Ibn Gabirol, Maimonides, Crescas, and Albo were "instrumental in shaping the Jewish mind, and form an important testimony to the powers of rejuvenation and assimilation of Judaism...."[27] Kohler emphasized the value of historically-oriented lectures over

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[27] Ibid., 15.

textual study. In part this was an ideological decision, and in part practical, since students were generally not able to master the difficult language of the original texts.

Kohler's organization of history classes successively covering Biblical times to the present was meant to impress the student "with the grandeur of the mission of the Jew as the world's martyr-priest, whereas the new era...points to the ultimate realization of the prophetic hopes for the Wandering Jew."[28] He used every avenue open to him to present a cohesive, integrated portrait of the doctrines of Reform Judaism. Homiletics, like ethics, was presented in such a way as to distinguish it from Christian homiletics by focusing on Jewish sources.

Kohler also eliminated classes which had been offered during the Wise administration such as the cognate languages. The deletion of these courses suggests that Kohler placed less emphasis on producing research scholars than had Wise. Gotthard Deutsch, the president prior to Kohler, had added modern Hebrew literature to the curriculum, which Kohler promptly eliminated, in accordance with his belief that the Jews constituted a religious body as opposed to a people and that the literature of American Jews should be English literature. In line with this reasoning, Kohler was, of course, fanatically opposed to any course offerings that could be used to instill Zionism; and, in fact, later in his presidency a serious dispute arose between

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[28] Ibid., 15-16.

himself and some of the faculty and students over this issue.

Kohler's curricular revisions reflect the fact of increased contact between Jews and Christians and the value of each group learning from the other. Kohler did not try to "protect" his students from the dangers of Christian thought, but rather desired to expose them to it in preparation for their task as Jewish representatives in the larger community. Kohler later suggested including courses in "Church History as it Affected the Destinies of the Whole Western Civilization" and "Relations Between Judaism and Christianity in the Past and at the present Time."[29]

All in all, the new curriculum reflected Kohler's philosophy of Judaism and conviction of what a rabbi should know. Departing from Wise's ideal of training American rabbis-scholars, Kohler sought to train Reform Jewish leaders who would carry on the task of interpreting Judaism in light of present circumstances. His approach was more doctrinal and practical. Kohler broadened the professional skills department while maintaining a strong academic program and encouraging the development of Jewish scholars. Several of the classes which he initiated are still included in the Hebrew Union College curriculum.

CONCLUSION

Schechter and Kohler both developed curricula heavy in text studies. At the same time, each added to the professional

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[29] Kohler, Jubilee Volume, 76.

element of the training program. Each expressed concern in both his address and in the creation of courses for balancing academic training with spiritual and professional training. Both were particularly cognizant of the difficulty of providing spiritual training, particularly in an environment dominated by modern rational thought. Both also stated an explicit desire for infusing the program with religiosity. Although Kohler did not desire the degree of ritual observance that Schechter did, he did see such rituals as mandatory attendance at daily services as part of the rabbinical training process. Each leader made it a top priority to improve academic standards during his administration, by adding requirements and by increasing the number of hours spent solely enrolled in the rabbinical program.

Beyond the many similarities there were differences. Each had a distinct notion of what a rabbi should be. Schechter trained rabbis to uphold and teach Jewish tradition. Ultimately, he was a Conservative Jew, and he trained rabbis to conserve Jewish tradition and practice in the contemporary context. Schechter turned JTS into a scholarly institution by developing a graduate rabbinical program and by bringing distinguished scholars onto the faculty. Kohler, on the other hand, trained Reform leaders to continue the age-old process of reforming Judaism. Each leader created a curriculum which would provide his students with the best and most proper tools for the task.

Solomon Schechter remained president of the Seminary until his death in 1915. His direction of that institution was to have

a lasting impact; we shall see that the Seminary remained largely committed to Schechter's view of what a rabbi should know. Kaufmann Kohler retired from his office in 1921 at the age of 78. Perhaps his most lasting contribution would be the fact that he had placed HUC on a path toward becoming a graduate institution. HUC would also continue to excel in its professional course offerings and its emphasis on homiletical Midrash. Many other areas of the curriculum would change as new presidents infused their own vision into the program and as times changed. Perhaps most importantly, both Schechter and Kohler walked into troubled institutions and turned them into stable, highly respected institutions for the training of rabbis.

Chapter IV

What American Judaism Should Be: Curricular Developments Between 1915 and 1948

There are various approaches to determining seminary course requirements. One is to ascertain the changing needs of American Jews and to train rabbis to meet those needs. Another is to decide what American Jews ought to know and do, and to train rabbis to lead the community in that direction. Both approaches were employed by the leaders of curricular development at HUC and at JTS. Since JTS was particularly concerned with the preservation of traditional Judaism in America, it appears to have favored the second approach. Although there were traditional Jews who desired traditional Jewish leaders, many more Jews were drifting away from traditional practice, and the Conservative movement realized the necessity for training rabbis who, by their learning and deeds, would rekindle a passion for traditional knowledge and promote observance within the community. The leaders at HUC often had a stronger tendency to ascertain the needs of the community, and then endeavor to train their rabbis to meet those needs.

At this point, there is a fundamental change in the nature of the curriculum source material. In each institution through the Kohler/Schechter era, the president was clearly the guiding force behind the curriculum. The curriculum was an expression of

his vision of what a rabbi should know. Each founder determined the initial curriculum, and each succeeding president revised the curriculum in accordance with the developing needs of the community and with his own personal Jewish beliefs. Both Schechter and Kohler had specific ideas. The JTS curriculum was the Schechter curriculum, and the HUC curriculum was the Kohler curriculum. Relatively minor curricular revisions were made throughout their presidencies. With the installation of Cyrus Adler as president of JTS, Schechter's primary curriculum was maintained. Yet, a number of small but significant revisions occurred over the years, and it is unclear who initiated them. For this reason, we will no longer speak in terms of Adler's curriculum, but rather in terms of changes which took place in the JTS curriculum throughout the Adler administration. Although to a certain extent both men exercised influence over the curricula of their schools by virtue of the faculty appointments they made, the ongoing process of curricular reform fell increasingly into the hands of faculty committees.

Another modification was the gradual movement away from a completely fixed program of required courses toward a program combining requirements and electives. Thus, the catalogues expanded their listings, and it is no longer possible to know precisely in which courses a student enrolled while in school, and no longer possible to conduct as exact a comparison between the curricula of the two schools. On the other hand, much can be learned about the direction of the academic program from the

titles of the electives presented in each catalogue.

During the terms of Adler and Morgenstern a new seminary opened in New York City --The Jewish Institute of Religion. The JIR, under the direction of Stephen S. Wise, wished to offer a program of rabbinical studies which could not be obtained in either of the existing non-Orthodox institutions.

After Cyrus Adler's death in 1940, Louis Finkelstein became president of JTS. The curricular developments which took place under his administration will be discussed in the following chapter.

CYRUS ADLER

Cyrus Adler was the first president of JTS born in America. He was born in Van Buren, Arkansas in 1863. When his father died four years later, Adler's mother, Sarah, moved the family to Philadelphia so they could live in close proximity to her brother, Mayer Sulzberger. A leader in the Philadelphia secular and Jewish communities, Sulzberger had a strong positive influence on his nephew, who as an adult would take a leadership position in the creation and development of several important American Jewish institutions. The Adlers, under Sulzberger's influence, became active members of Mikveh Israel, a prominent Sephardic congregation.

Adler began his formal education in a day school sponsored by Mikveh Israel, but soon transferred to a local public school. Throughout his public school years he pursued Hebrew study with a

private tutor and continued his traditional Jewish education during the summers. He entered high school at age eleven. During these years, he studied Judaism with Sabato Morais, Marcus Jastrow, and Samuel Hirsch. In 1883, at the age of sixteen, Adler graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and enrolled as a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. After receiving his doctorate of philosophy in Semitics at the age of twenty-four, he taught in the Semitics department at Johns Hopkins. Adler was both a fine teacher and an excellent administrator. He was involved in the establishment of several Jewish institutions including the Jewish Publication Society, the American Jewish Historical Society, the American Jewish Committee, and, of course, the Jewish Theological Seminary.

Adler began teaching at the Seminary in 1887. Desiring that the students be familiar with recent trends in scholarship, he taught biblical archeology once a week for several years. From 1902 to 1905, he was president of the Seminary's Board of Trustees. When Solomon Schechter died in 1915, Adler was first designated acting president and, in 1924, officially named president of the institution. Although changes in the curriculum occurred gradually in the twenty-five year period of Adler's presidency, no radical revision took place. As chief administrator, Adler maintained the institution in accordance with Schechter's established program. Like Schechter, Adler was a traditional Jew. In stating his position on what a rabbi should be, he said:

> It is our duty and our wish to conserve traditional Judaism in this land, but we are not satisfied merely to conserve. We wish also to promote, to further the cause of traditional Judaism, in other words, to be at once conservative, animated and alive.[1]

But in the running of the seminary, Adler was not animated. Critics of this period in the Seminary's history claim that although he carried on that which Schechter had already begun, he did not go forward with any of the potentialities which Schechter had envisioned.[2] Whereas Schechter had hoped for a vital institution with a high degree of interaction between the Seminary and the Jewish community, under Adler the Seminary had a tendency to separate itself from the community, as the professors buried themselves more deeply in their own study and research and the community drifted further away from traditional observance. Unlike Schechter, Adler was not a Zionist. Also, unlike Schechter, Adler was not a charismatic personality who attracted creative thinkers to the Seminary. Although an advocate of academic freedom, he was cautious in his selection of new faculty, and tried to hire only those who supported the dominant thought trends in the Seminary. He followed this path even when it meant leaving professional chairs unoccupied.[3] Adler did hire a few faculty members, and he did speak out on behalf of the Seminary, but for the most part, he became consumed with other

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[1] Herbert Parzen, Architects of Conservative Judaism (New York, 1964), 99.

[2] Ibid., 96-99. See also Herbert Rosenblum, Conservative Judaism: A Contemporary History (New York, 1983), 25-50.

[3] Ibid., 96.

activities and consequently was unable to devote sufficient time to the development of the rabbinical program. He was truly an administrator rather than an innovator.[4]

It is not that Cyrus Adler merely maintained Schechter's Seminary because as an administrator he was incapable of creative innovation. Rather, he continued along this steady path because he agreed with most of Schechter's objectives. He stated:

> The Seminary is an institution of Jewish learning designed for the purpose of creating an educated Jewish Rabbinate in the United States. It aims to carry the student back to the sources of Jewish law, history, liturgy, philosophy, theology and practice, believing that men so grounded in the knowledge and essentials of the great historic structure which we call Judaism will preach it and practice it.[5]

This was an objective shared by Schechter and Adler. In his semi-centennial address to the Seminary, Adler maintained that the specific objectives of the rabbinical program were presently the same as those which were stated in the Seminary's 1886 Charter, and that he would continue to uphold the original objective to perpetuate "the tenets of the Jewish religion, the cultivation of Hebrew literature, the pursuit of biblical and archeological research, the advancement of Jewish scholarship, [and] the establishment of a library...for the education and training of Jewish Rabbis and teachers."[6] Adler modestly

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[4] Herbert Rosenblum, Conservative Judaism (New York, 1983), 25.

[5] Cyrus Adler, "The Standpoint of the Seminary," Lectures, Selected Papers, Addresses (Philadelphia, 1933), 262-3.

[6] Adler, "Semi-Centennial Address," in Cyrus Adler, ed., The Jewish Theological Seminary of America Semi-Centennial Volume (New York, 1939), 7.

suggested that although he felt less equipped than Morais and Schechter to lead the Seminary, he brought to the presidency an administrative talent, a desire to advance knowledge, and a love for Judaism and for the Seminary itself.

JTS CURRICULUM: 1915-1940

Adler, in his concern for upholding the traditional character of the Seminary, hired new faculty in a highly selective manner. New faculty appointees such as Louis Finkelstein helped to unbalance the equilibrium which had been obtained by Schechter between Bible and Talmud as the number of Talmud text requirements increased. Although the number of lecture courses remained the same for both Bible and Talmud, the program called for seventeen hours of Bible, but twenty-five hours of Talmud. Courses were added in modern Hebrew literature and advanced Hebrew composition. In general, the curriculum was heavily text-oriented, though the Seminary now offered courses in public speaking, elocution and Jewish communal studies. Oddly, there were no courses offered in pedagogy. There were now three courses offered in the Hazanut Department: cantillation, "Traditional Melodies," and "Nusah Ha-tefillah."[7] Also, students were divided into sections A,B,C, and D, according to their level of expertise with the text. This tracking system enabled the Seminary to make demands which corresponded to the students' abilities.

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[7] JTS Register, 1920-21, 11-15.

In 1920-21, the division into Junior and Senior departments was abolished and a seven year curriculum was instituted. Although no explanation was offered in the catalogue, it is likely to assume a connection with the war and the need to provide military chaplains. Lack of funding may have also caused the Seminary to consolidate its program. In 1925-26, a summer Bible reading plan was introduced in which students were expected to read certain portions of the Bible during the summer for which they would be tested when the new term began in the fall.* Beginning in 1928-29, the summer reading program was expanded to include required assignments in Bible and Talmud. This was a way of dealing with the problem of too much material to teach and too little time in which to teach it.

Members of the faculty became increasingly involved in the process of curricular reform. In JTS' semi-centennial volume, Professor Israel Davidson explained the changes which took place:

> On June 9, 1933, the Faculty recommended that the curriculum of the Seminary be changed, so as to concentrate on the lectures in the first two years and to enable the students to take specialized courses during the third and fourth years. It also recommended that the course in Codes be conducted as a Seminar, the students to be divided into groups and each group to undertake the study of a special portion of the Code on which they should report. In the third and fourth years students were required to select at least one Seminar chosen from among the following subjects: Bible, History and Literature, Talmud, Liturgy and Mediaeval Poetry, Modern Hebrew Literature, Codes, History of Religion, Theology.

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* Ibid., 1925-26, 10-11.

> A course in School Administration and general Jewish education had been arranged for next year and in the following year a similar course in Jewish Social Work. Both these courses were limited to third and fourth year students.[9]

The proposed change by the faculty seemed to suggest their concern that students obtain both depth and breadth of study. The first two years would be geared toward a survey of Jewish language, history, and literature, in which the student would be asked to take notes, prepare readings, and absorb as much general subject material as possible. Having been properly introduced to the various areas of study, the student would then find himself in a better position to participate in seminar courses and to choose an area of study to explore in greater depth. In addition to these reasons, the Seminary was also aware of growing competition in the field of Jewish scholarship. Seminars were considered a respectable form of academic instruction, and it was hoped that a greater number of students would be attracted to this more flexible program which enabled them to make some choices in their course of studies.[10]

The 1933-34 Register reflected the proposed changes. First came the explanation:

> Beginning with the year 1933-4, the curriculum of the Seminary will be arranged so as to concentrate on the required subjects, and particularly lectures, in the first two years. The last two years will be devoted by the

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[9] Adler, Semi-Centennial Address, 84.

[10] Interview with Mrs. Marjorie Wyler, Director of Radio and Television for JTS, February 24, 1989.

> student largely to the subjects of his major interest, and also to training in practical educational and communal work of the Rabbinate.[11]

The curriculum which followed listed the required text courses, followed by a list of lecture courses, a list of seminars from which the student was required to select at least one, and a list of required courses in practical rabbinics. The curriculum remained in this form, with just a few amendments along the way, to the end of the Adler administration. The curriculum in 1941 was as follows:

TEXTS

Bible
Talmud
Mediaeval Hebrew Literature
Codes
Hebrew Language
Midrash
Philosophy

In addition to their class work, students of Classes A and B will be required to read privately 30 folios and students of Class C 15 folios of Talmud.

LECTURE COURSES

Talmud Lectures:
- Introduction to the Halakah
- History of the Halakah
- Outlines of Rabbinical Jurisprudence
- Religious Ceremonies and Institutions

Literature:
- Hellenistic Literature
- Tannaitic Literature
- Midrashic Literature
- History
- Liturgy
- Theology
- Homiletics

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[11] JTS Register, 1933-34, 9.

SEMINARS

Students of the third and fourth years must select, in addition to the required text and lecture courses, at least one of the following seminars:
Bible
Bible Versions
Talmud
History and Literature
Liturgy and Mediaeval Hebrew Literature
Modern Hebrew Literature
Codes
History of Religion
Theology

In addition to the work done during the academic term, students will be expected to do private reading in Bible and Talmud during the Summer vacation according to the following plan:
[Bible and Talmud reading schedule listed]

PRACTICAL COURSES IN THE MINISTRY

The following courses dealing with the practical work of the Rabbi are required of all students:
Education
Hazanut
Practical Theology
Public Speaking[12]

Until the 1935-36 Register, the lecture courses had included two Bible lectures: archeology and Biblical history. When the Bible lectures were dropped, the course "Bible Versions" was listed among the seminar choices. A practical course called "Social Service" was dropped in 1936-37, and "Practical Theology" was added in 1939-40. Otherwise, the program remained the same over the seven year period from 1933 to 1940.

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[12] Ibid., 1939-40, 9-12.

JULIAN MORGENSTERN

Julian Morgenstern, who became president of HUC in 1922, seven years after Adler became acting president of JTS, was also born in America. Morgenstern was born in St. Francisville, Illinois in 1881. He attended the University of Cincinnati, graduating in 1901, and was ordained by Hebrew Union College in 1902. He attended the University of Heidelberg, receiving his doctorate in 1904. In 1905, his dissertation, Doctrine of Sin in the Babylonian Religion, was published. Morgenstern taught Bible and Semitic languages at HUC for fifteen years before becoming president of the College. His deep interest in Biblical studies would affect the direction the curriculum would take under his leadership.

Morgenstern was not the first choice to replace Kaufmann Kohler as president of HUC, but he wanted the job badly and even did a bit of campaigning to get it.[13] In November, 1921, he was made acting president, and in October, 1922, he was officially named president of the institution. Unlike his predecessor, Morgenstern was not so concerned with indoctrinating his students with a complete understanding and acceptance of their mission as Reform rabbis. Rather, his interest was in creating leaders of an emerging American Judaism. He described his conception of American Judaism as follows:

> In American Judaism, Judaism is the basis. It furnishes the principles of belief and faith, of life and practice. America merely describes the application of these

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[13] Meyer, At One Hundred Years, 87-88.

> principles; it is the life setting in which this jewel is embedded.... These eternal ethical and spiritual principles American Judaism shares with Judaism in the abstract and with every particular, national form of Judaism.[14]

He viewed American Judaism as the most recent and important development in the history of the Jewish people. As a recent phenomenon, American Jews had special needs and concerns which its leaders and institutions must address. He believed that, from the start, HUC had been built to meet these needs.

> Its [Hebrew Union College] first, practical task was the preparation of rabbis. Its fundamental, concrete work and that of its parent organization, was and is the propagation of American Judaism through the development and spread of Jewish education in America...not merely in the narrow sense of religious school...but in the larger and truer sense of the careful investigation of every realm of Jewish thought and life, the wide dissemination of the resultant information, and its application to the problems of Jewish life in America.[15]

As American Judaism proceeded to take shape, so too would the HUC curriculum continue to develop in accordance with the desires and interests of American Jews. One of the first tasks Morgenstern undertook was to continue to move HUC further toward its goal of becoming a post-graduate institution. He introduced morning classes to be attended by college graduate rabbinical candidates, as well as by those rabbinical students currently attending the University of Cincinnati, who were able to accommodate their schedules. More professors were hired and courses were added.

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[14] Julian Morgenstern, "The Hebrew Union College," UAHCP (Cincinnati, 1925), X, 9274.

[15] Ibid., 9275.

HUC CURRICULUM: 1921-1947

Like JTS, HUC offered courses in the areas of Bible, medieval commentaries, Talmud, liturgy, theology, philosophy, history, midrash, homiletics, Jewish social studies, and public speaking. In addition to these departments, HUC listed departments of Hebrew and cognate languages, Jewish education, pastoral psychiatry, ethics, and Jewish art.

The most noticeable difference in the revised curriculum is the addition of elective courses. Until 1923, the catalogue listed precisely the courses required for ordination. For the first time, the 1923-24 catalogue listed all of the Collegiate courses by department, with asterisks next to each required course. To be sure, the majority of courses were required, but each department offered two or three electives. Many of the departments added an elective seminar. As at JTS, the more flexible curriculum was established in hope of attracting more students to the school. So, for example, the Bible department offered a seminar entitled "A Critical Study of the Book of Psalms," the Talmud department offered a seminar entitled "A Critical study of the Mishna and Tosefta and the Babylonian and Palestinian Gemara of Tractate Taanit," and the history department offered a seminar entitled "Study of some of the sources of Jewish history." The addition of so many courses emphasizing critical study reflects Morgenstern's own scholarly interest as well as that of the faculty he selected. Critical Biblical study, his area of expertise, "became a central pillar

of rabbinic education."[16]

HUC added courses in Hebrew conversation, Reform Judaism, Jewish tradition, and a course called "The Contacts of the Rabbi with the Modern Social Field." The Preparatory courses remained largely the same, except that Kohler's catechism class was modified and eventually abandoned; all "prayerbook" classes were henceforth called "liturgy;" and the Hebrew courses were expanded to include Biblical translation, modern Hebrew, sight reading, and conversation in addition to the pre-existing Hebrew grammar requirement.

Most of the curricular changes which occurred during the Morgenstern administration came as a result of those faculty appointments which Morgenstern made. Israel Bettan, appointed by Morgenstern in 1922, taught all of the courses in Midrash and homiletics. He emphasized the practical aspects of Midrash over and above their scholarly aspects.[17] He taught that Midrash could be drawn upon as a source for the contemporary sermon.

The same year, Morgenstern appointed Abraham Cronbach to direct the field of Jewish social studies, an area based on Reform Judaism's commitment to social justice. The 1940-41 catalogue described Cronbach's course in "Jewish Social Studies" as follows:

> General survey of the field of social endeavor with special reference to the services rendered in this domain by the American Rabbi. The Course will consider the scope of

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[16] Meyer, At One Hundred Years, 89.

[17] Meyer, At One Hundred Years, 91-92.

> Jewish social endeavor in America and current trends in such fields as those of social welfare, child welfare, refugee aid, public assistance, institutions for defectives, dependents, and delinquents, transiency, foreign benevolences, social hygiene, social security, and social approach to health, housing, recreation, and vocational fulfillment, industrial relations, civil liberties, communal organization (including public relations, fund raising, and antidefamation) and the religious approach to problems of social amelioration (including those of marital adjustment and institutional chaplaincy). (Six of the lectures will deal with mental hygiene and be delivered by Dr. Louis A. Lurie.)[18]

Although it is difficult to imagine that Cronbach managed to cover each of the subtopics sufficiently in the course of a semester, the description indicates a recognition of the broadened scope of rabbinical duties. The rabbi was increasingly expected to be both a leader of social activism among congregants, stirring them to take an interest in the needs of the larger community, and a pastor ministering to the needs of families, children, handicapped, prisoners, and the mentally ill. In order to serve in these capacities, he had to be sufficiently trained in the field of social service. In addition to this general survey, the catalogue listed a more intensive study "of a few selected divisions of the field of social welfare," a field study course in which students were to work in a local social service agency, and a seminar:

> Jewish social ideals as voiced in the Bible, Talmud Babli, Talmud Yerushalmi, the Midrash, the Tosefta, Maimonides, the Shulhan 'Aruk, the Sefer Hasidim, the Me'il Zedakah, and other Hebrew sources.[19]

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[18] HUC Catalogue, 1940-41, 56-57.

[19] Ibid., 57.

Students learned that social action is deeply rooted in Jewish tradition. Whereas JTS also offered a course in Jewish communal studies, there is no indication that any connection was made between the modern and ancient institutions.

In 1924, Abraham Z. Idelsohn joined the faculty and introduced the subject of Jewish music to the curriculum. These courses included an "Introduction to Jewish Liturgical Music," and "How to Arrange a Jewish Musical Service: Including Study and Critical Bibliography of Existing Musical Services."

Other significant faculty appointments included Jacob Mann in Jewish history, Samuel S. Cohon in theology, Sheldon Blank in Hebrew and later in Bible also, Jacob R. Marcus in Jewish history, and Nelson Glueck in Hebrew language and Bible. Bettan, Cronbach, Blank, Marcus, and Glueck were all graduates of the College. In that sense, they brought with them a measure of continuity to the program, but they also helped expand and change it with their own creative talents and scholarship. Morgenstern influenced the development of the curriculum indirectly through his choice of faculty. In the process he also raised the level of intellectual scholarship at HUC with these appointments.

Later, Morgenstern made more appointments, this time out of the necessity of saving lives of Jewish scholars who sought refuge from the Nazi reign of terror. Those who came to Cincinnati and remained on the faculty for more than a just a brief time included Julius Lewy who taught Semitics, Alexander Guttmann who taught Talmud, Eric Werner who replaced Idelsohn in

music, Samuel Atlas who taught philosophy and Talmud, Eugen Taubler who taught courses in Bible and Hellenistic literature, Isaiah Sonne who taught medieval Jewish history, and Franz Landsberger, who offered courses in Jewish art history.[20]

Apparently, at this point, the curriculum became somewhat crowded, so, as was being done at JTS, HUC added a summer reading requirement called supplementary Hebrew readings, in which students were required to read certain additional Hebrew sources from a list prepared by the faculty. In the 1947-48 catalogue, the "Supplementary Work" clause was expanded as follows:

> In addition to the forty-four course credits, a student must satisfactorily complete the following requirements:
> 1. In the summers between his First and Second, and his Second and Third years, he shall complete certain assigned readings.
> 2. Following the completion of his Second and his Fifth year he shall satisfactorily pass "Comprehensive Examinations."
> 3. In his Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth years he shall take prescribed courses in Public Speaking.
> 4. In his Fourth and Fifth years he shall complete certain assigned Supplementary Hebrew Readings.
> 5. In his Sixth year he shall submit to the Faculty an acceptable Thesis.[21]

Such a clause indicates the belief that there is a great deal a rabbi needs and ought to know, the totality of which can not be taught within the space of five or six academic years. Therefore, summer periods had to be utilized, and even during the school year the student was required to take on extra assignments on top of his regular course load. The issue of too much course

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[20] Meyer, At One Hundred Years, 126.

[21] HUC Catalogue, 1947-48, 11.

material and too little time in which to teach it remains a challenge to the present day. In 1947-48, the College chose to deal with the issue in the manner described above. As we shall see, the strategy continued to shift somewhat over time, but the basic problem remains.

Until 1948, most students began their studies with four years of preparatory courses while simultaneously enrolled in the University of Cincinnati. The 1946-47 HUC catalogue announced for the first time that in the following year, students would be required to possess an undergraduate degree before being admitted to the College. The catalogue explained the following preparation necessary for admission:

> Applicants for admission to the College must demonstrate, through a searching examination, both oral and written, ability to read Hebrew correctly and fluently, a sound knowledge of elementary Hebrew grammar of the narrative portions of Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers, of Jewish ceremonies, and of the Essentials of Judaism, and a survey knowledge of Jewish history and of the Books of the Bible. Sample copies of entrance examinations may be had upon request.[22]

Although these skills had previously been taught under the auspices of the Preparatory department, this catalogue no longer included such a listing of courses. It did, however, present a greatly expanded graduate course selection, on account of the greatly expanded faculty. In addition to Aramaic, a student could choose to study Syriac, Akkadian, or Arabic. The number of theology electives went from two to five. One was billed as "an introduction to the specific tasks of the rabbi in the American

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[22] Ibid., 1946-47, 5.

scene." Another was a seminar in Hasidism. New history electives included courses in American Jewish history, and an "Introduction to Historic Method and Scientific Research in the Field of Jewish Studies." An elective, "Creation of Religious School Materials," was added to the list of education courses. A course in pastoral psychiatry was added. So were more music courses, including a "Critical Study of Synagogue Music from 1810-1940," and a seminar concerning the "Discussion of Early Christian Writings in the 6th Century, with Special Emphasis Upon Judeo-Christian Literature and Sources of Liturgical Music." Public speaking courses were required for five years of the program. Outside of the Hebrew and cognate language department, the largest number of courses was added to the Bible department, on account of Morgenstern's special interest in Biblical studies. Morgenstern himself taught one required course and two electives. In addition to the eight required Bible classes, there were eight electives. Bible had been emphasized at HUC since the days of Isaac Mayer Wise and that emphasis would continue to the present day, as opposed to JTS where the emphasis gradually shifted from Bible to Talmud and Halakhic literature.

RESPONSE TO THE HOLOCAUST

The leaders at both JTS and HUC were compelled to broaden the goals of their curricula even further when the full horror of the Holocaust was made known. The 1941-42 HUC catalogue stated:

> Today, the Hebrew Union College is conscious that the greatest challenge in its history lies before it. Jewish

> life and scholarship in Europe have been crushed or rigidly circumscribed. The future of world Jewry, certainly for our generation, rests in America. No one at this hour can question this fact. American Jewry, and particularly the Hebrew Union College, is preparing itself to give to Jews, wherever they may be, the spiritual and religious leadership they must have, in order to survive.... Jewish scholarship, communal leadership, and religious idealism have been the guiding principles of this College throughout the past and will be fostered with even more determined purpose in the future which is dawning for the Judaism and Jewry of tomorrow.[23]

Just over twenty years later JTS added a strikingly similar paragraph to the standard introduction it had printed annually in its course catalogue:

> Perhaps the most significant recent development at the Seminary is its growing ability to train its own faculty. With the destruction of the great Jewish academies of Europe in the thirties and forties, it became clear that one condition for the survival of a vital Jewish community in America was its ability to train its own scholars, spiritual leaders and teachers. As a result of special programs initiated for this purpose at the Seminary--notably, the Herbert H. Lehman Institute of Talmudic Ethics and the postgraduate curriculum leading to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy--the Seminary today is profiting from the contributions of American-trained Judaic scholars. There are 150 Seminary alumni serving on its own faculties today, and almost 50 other institutions of higher Jewish learning have Seminary graduates in chairs of religion, Judaic studies, or Semitics.[24]

Both seminaries were painfully aware of their awesome responsibility. They believed it their task to dedicate themselves to the survival and growth of the Jewish people, and to somehow compensate for irreplaceable losses caused by the destruction of European Jewry's institutions of learning. Both expressed a need for trained scholars and spiritual leaders.

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[23] Ibid., 1941-42, 3.

[24] JTS Bulletin, 1966-69, 26.

Indeed, both institutions proceeded to add courses to their curricula and to work toward the development of graduate study programs which would encourage students to become scholars and would enable them either to return to their own seminaries as teachers or to become professors in Jewish studies departments beginning to appear on American college campuses. HUC's graduate studies program developed slowly, beginning in 1947, just after Morgenstern's retirement, but he helped get the School moving in the right direction toward the realization of the idea. There is some debate as to when the JTS graduate program actually began, but the first Ph.D. was not awarded until 1966.[28] Numerous students in both seminaries would complain--some with amusement, others not--that the faculties frowned upon the pulpit rabbinate and placed a higher value on the rabbi as scholar. Some say that the effect is felt to this day at both seminaries where individual faculty members continue to complain that the seminaries are not producing a sufficient number of scholar-rabbis.

A NEW RABBINICAL SEMINARY IN THE WORLD'S LARGEST JEWISH COMMUNITY

In 1922, Stephen S. Wise founded the Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City. To look at the first curriculum, one might erroneously conclude that Hebrew Union College had built a branch on the East Coast, so similar were the programs of study. But although the courses were similar, Wise endeavored to create

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[28] Interview with Marjorie Wyler, February 24, 1989.

a learning environment quite different from that which existed at the College in Cincinnati. And once again, this founder believed that he could create a rabbinical seminary free from institutional labels such as "Reform" or "Conservative." A glimpse at some of the events of Stephen S. Wise's life help to paint a picture of a man who developed his own very particular view of what a rabbi should know and be.

STEPHEN S. WISE

Stephen S. Wise was born in Budapest, Hungary in 1847, his family moving to New York just seventeen months later. Like Cyrus Adler, he attended public school and studied Jewish subjects privately with his father, Rabbi Aaron Wise, and also with Alexander Kohut, one of the founders of JTS, and Gustav Gottheil, a Reform rabbi. He studied Latin and Greek at City College of New York and graduated from Columbia University with honors in 1892, earning a degree in Semitics and philosophy.

After graduation, Wise took a trip through Europe, stopping first in Vienna. There, the chief rabbi of Vienna, Adolf Jellinek, ordained him. He travelled to England and studied at Oxford University for a short time, but returned to New York in 1893 and accepted a position as the assistant rabbi of B'nai Jeshurun synagogue. Later, when the senior rabbi died, Wise took charge of the congregation. Among other activities, he was instrumental in organizing the sisterhood service to aid the destitute. This was an early example of the way in which he

integrated social activism into his definition of a rabbi's duties, and one of many such social action programs in which he would involve himself throughout his career as a rabbi.

Wise was personally moved by what was happening not only to the people around him, but to those around the world, and he was particularly affected by the many stories of Jewish persecution. One person who greatly influenced him was Theodor Herzl. In 1898 Wise attended the Second Zionist Congress in Basle, Switzerland. That same year he also met Louise Waterman, whom he married in 1900. Never involved in just one project at a time, Wise returned to Columbia University while still an assistant rabbi and, in 1901, received his doctorate for his dissertation on one of the works of Solomon ibn Gabirol.

Wise moved to Portland, Oregon for a few years where he served a congregation. When he returned to New York, he was unable to find a pulpit in which his sermons would not be subject to the approval of a board of directors, so he went back to Portland. The next time he moved back to New York he was determined to find a synagogue suited to his own values and beliefs. Failing to find such a synagogue in existence, he founded his own, the Free Synagogue, in 1906. The three themes which predominated in his life were freedom of expression, social justice, and Zionism. These themes defined the bulk of his activities as rabbi of the Free Synagogue and would be the distinguishing marks of the rabbinical seminary which he would eventually found.

Just as Wise first tried to find an existing synagogue in which he could work, so too did he first desire to join the faculty of an existing seminary which would allow him to practice his belief in Lehrfreiheit, academic freedom. The obvious choice for a liberal social activist was, of course, HUC. He had joined the CCAR in 1896, and in 1901 was elected to the Conference's Executive Committee. Over the many years of his association with the CCAR he became involved in numerous disagreements with them, particularly concerning the way in which HUC was operated. Wise was especially critical of Kaufmann Kohler's administration. Kohler's dogmatism, unwillingness to allow certain viewpoints into the classroom and chapel, and especially his anti-Zionism had left little room for Wise's ideas and values. Although Morgenstern was far less dogmatic, HUC remained a school inconsistent with Wise's ideals. For a period of years during Kohler's presidency, Wise hoped to gain control of HUC through the CCAR, but eventually came to realize that this would not happen. Working with the membership of the Free Synagogue, Wise was determined to establish his own seminary, one that would embrace the principle of academic freedom. As a charismatic leader, he was able to convince the Free Synagogue that a new seminary was in order and worthy of their support. In 1920, a committee of the synagogue made the following notes:

> It was generally conceded that the Hebrew Union College had outgrown whatever usefulness it may have originally had, that it no longer attracted to it the finest of our American youth and those that it did attract, were but poorly trained

> to fill the pulpits of forward-looking, progressive American congregations.[24]

In such a dismal situation there was little left to do but open a new and improved seminary.

THE JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

Like the other founders of American rabbinical seminaries before him, Wise was determined to create a non-denominational "progressive" seminary to train American rabbis for American Jews. In a pamphlet entitled "Education for Leadership," Wise explained:

> I felt that there was a need in the largest Jewish community in history for the establishment of a school of training for the rabbinate--not Orthodox, not Conservative nor Reform, but for any and all Jewish youth who might wish to prepare themselves for the calling of rabbi without committing themselves in advance of their period of study to one or another division within the Jewish religion.[27]

Wise's concern with kelal yisrael dates back to his childhood--his father's stories of Russian persecution, his early Jewish teachers who were themselves of various denominations, and his own growing awareness of the plight of world Jewry. Also, since the founding of HUC in 1875, millions of immigrants had flooded the country. Jews came to America from all different Jewish

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[24] "Minutes of the Special Committee appointed to consider forming a new rabbinic institute," Free Synagogue House, Nov. 2, 1920 in Floyd Lehman Herman, Some Aspects of the Life of Stephen S. Wise to 1925, rabbinical thesis (Cincinnati: 1964), 63-64.

[27] Wise, "Education for Leadership," n.d. in HUC Cincinnati library SC Box 243.

communities with varying opinions as to how they would express their Jewishness in America.

Wise was interested in a further professionalization of the rabbinate, which he likened to a legal or medical career.[28] He insisted that his students all be graduates of colleges and universities and that they commit to a full-time study program at the JIR. He travelled to Europe in hopes of hiring some of the best and brightest Jewish scholars to teach the courses. While still in Europe, he wrote to Sidney Goldstein, associate rabbi at the Free Synagogue and member of the first teaching staff at JIR:

> I am enabled to make my program clear, Lehrfreiheit [academic freedom] as the atmosphere of Jewish study and Jewish loyalty. I have the feeling that before another week I shall have most of the great scholars of the four seminaries [Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, Breslau] enrolled as members of the visiting staff and perhaps some of the best of them as our permanent teachers; they seem to like the plan of a trial visit.[29]

Over the course of the years JIR did tend to have more visiting faculty and few full-time professors. Wise's primary stated goal for the students was that they "know the sources of Jewish literature and history and command the technique of scholarship which is all that an academic institution can give a man."[30]

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[28] Herman, Life of Stephen S. Wise, 64.

[29] Wise, "Letter to Sidney Goldstein," July 4, 1922, in Carl Hermann Voss, ed., Stephen S. Wise: Servant of the People (Philadelphia, 1969), 115.

[30] Ibid., "Letter to Maximilian Heller," March 20, 1922, 110.

The JIR Curriculum[31]

On paper there was very little distinction between the HUC and JIR curricula. The JIR catalogue for 1924-25 listed courses under the headings: Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic, Biblical Literature, Talmudic Literature, Medieval Jewish Literature and Philosophy, Midrash and Homiletics, History, Religion, Religious Education, Social Service, and Liturgy and Ceremonies. The only courses which HUC offered and JIR did not were in the areas of music and public speaking, but JIR added these a few years later. Several other minor adjustments were made over the years. The 1926-27 catalogue added courses in Educational Psychology, Teaching Procedure and School Management, and a seminar on the Board of Jewish Education. The 1927-28 catalogue included a course in the New Testament and a public speaking class. By 1933 the cognate language department was expanded to include courses in Greek and Syriac. The first course to mention "Palestine" was Palestine and its Educational System, offered in the 1935-36 catalogue. Also offered that year were courses in the "History of the Jews in Poland," music, "North Semitic inscriptions," and a course called "Synagogue and Personal Services" regarding serving individuals with personal problems. In 1936-37 two new practical rabbinics courses were added: "Marriage, Divorce, Sickness and Burial," and "Current Customs and Ceremonies." Part of the reason for the continual changes in the course offerings

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[31] Unfortunately, the JIR Bulletins do not indicate which if any courses were electives.

must have been related to the fact that JIR so often had visiting faculty members who came to the school for a year or two and then went elsewhere.

In 1939-40, JIR offered a seminar course on the History of Zionism. The course was described as follows:

> Since longing for the Holy Land is as old as the Jewish Diaspora, first, the religious movements for the restoration of the "Land of Promise" and the relationship of the diaspora Jewry to Palestine are to be traced through the centuries. Then the various projects for founding a Jewish State in Palestine and pre-Zionistic movements shall be studied. The course will concentrate on a study of political Zionism, its background, ideology, and historical development, of the opposing trends in and outside Zionism, its influence upon the political status of the Jews throughout the world and upon the reconstruction of Palestine. For advanced students.[32]

Neither HUC nor JTS offered a course in Zionism at the time. It was logical that Wise, an American Zionist leader, would include such a course in his curriculum. He believed in the future of a Jewish state, and naturally it would be important for rabbis to understand the relationship of the American Jewish community to the future Jewish state. But Wise did not only include courses which supported his personal views, he also worked to maintain an atmosphere conducive to freedom of thought for both faculty and students. In fact, he once argued in support of an invitation he had extended to Claude G. Montefiore, who was anti-Zionist, to speak at a JIR ordination ceremony. He believed his rabbinical students should be exposed to a variety of opinion and thought.

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[32] JIR Catalogue, 1939-40, 29.

Wise focused most of his life's energies on becoming a leading social activist and less on scholarly quests. In one of his letters he claimed to have created the JIR in part as compensation for his own lack of devotion to scholarly pursuits. He wrote:

> I have done one thing by way of self-compensation, namely, created an institution of Jewish learning. There, at least, I vicariously serve Jewish learning, and help our great faculty, including such men as [Shalom] Spiegel and [Chaim] Tchernowitz to do the things that I would fain do, and give our young men an appreciation of the dignity of Jewish learning and its supreme importance to the maintenance of the Jewish tradition....[33]

But JIR was only one of many institutions in which Wise was deeply involved. After having established the basic program and its curriculum, Wise became increasingly involved in his other organizations, especially the American Jewish Congress and the World Jewish Congress, and consequently spent less time developing the program at JIR. There were also financial difficulties. In 1950, years after negotiations had begun, JIR was merged with HUC.

CONCLUSION

The period between 1915 and 1947 was an eventful one for the world, for America, and for American Jews. Both world wars and the Depression occurred during this period of time, a multitude of Jewish immigrants were still settling into their new life in the United States as the doors to further immigration were

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[33] Voss, Servant of the People, 219.

barred, the atrocities of Hitler were exposed, the Zionist movement blossomed. Jews became both increasingly active in American Jewish institutions, including but not limited to the synagogue, and deeply involved in American politics and movements for social change. The rabbinical career began to assume a professional status. Rabbinical school was a place where college students and graduates studied and prepared to lead groups of Jews and serve their needs as teacher, preacher, minister, and sometimes as social activist. Both HUC and JTS desired to rise to the new challenge of the profession and to meet it with well-trained rabbis.

JTS maintained as its primary goal the preservation of traditional Judaism in America. In keeping with this goal, it trained young Jewish scholars, especially in halakhic literature. It was hoped that the graduates would go forth from the Seminary, armed with a love of Torah and knowledge of Talmud, and apply traditional law to modern situations. Graduates of JTS were expected, by their knowledge and by serving as models in the community--models of how all Jews should act -- to preserve the tradition.

Under Morgenstern the curriculum loosened up somewhat, in that there was less emphasis on training Reform rabbis in such a constricted way. Theology continued to be emphasized, but no particular theological doctrine was stressed over another, as Morgenstern had no particular theological leaning. Bible took precedence over Talmud, both because Morgenstern was a Biblicist

and because Bible was deemed to be more useful to the preacher/teacher than was Talmud.

Although the course listings in the JTS and HUC catalogues still did not look strikingly different, two distinct philosophies of what a rabbi should know did begin to emerge over the course of this period. HUC did much more to develop practical rabbinics training. Under Morgenstern's administration, midrash and homiletics were taught in a manner which stressed their practical value to the pulpit rabbi. Courses in Jewish social studies were introduced, including segments in which students were required to do field work in local social service agencies. Jewish music was also expanded in the curriculum. JTS too made a few developments in the practical training aspects of the curriculum, but not nearly to the extent as HUC. The curricula of both seminaries were very much shaped by the interests and talents of individual professors appointed to the faculty during this period of time. HUC's policy of rescuing scholars from Europe also contributed to changes in the program and requirements.

While HUC and JTS continued to develop their programs, the JIR was born in New York. Though geographically close to JTS, it was established as an alternative to both JTS and HUC for training liberal rabbis. The course listings did not appear different from those of HUC, with the exception of a seminar in Zionism, but, in general, the program was suffused with the values and beliefs of Stephen S. Wise. Academic freedom, the

value which was of greatest importance to Wise, was eventually incorporated into the HUC-JIR merger in 1950. Personally affected by the loss of Jewish scholars and schools in Europe, HUC and JTS both began to formulate ideas for the development of graduate programs in order to train their own future scholars and professors.

Chapter V

1940-1971: EXPANSION OF THE SEMINARIES AND ANOTHER NEW PROGRAM

A national religious revival occurred after World War II, with American families streaming back to church in large numbers. Jews, too, participated in this trend by affiliating with synagogues in greater numbers. Historian Deborah Dash Moore states that "third-generation Jews -- even more than their parents -- established the synagogue center as the key local Jewish institution in the suburbs."[1] Eventually, Jewish studies programs opened up in hundreds of American universities. There was a general reinvestment in America's Jewish religious, educational, political, and cultural institutions. This led to a greater demand for rabbis possessing a wide variety of skills.

Both JTS and the newly merged HUC-JIR showed a great desire to meet the needs of the American Jewish community by providing the necessary training for the country's future Jewish leaders. Both programs continued to shift further away from the yeshiva model of education, even away from their original models, the European seminaries, and closer to the model of the American graduate university. Rather than redesigning the entire program, faculty members and administrators from each school instituted gradual changes, making adjustments in the number of required

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[1] Deborah Dash Moore, "At Home in America," in Jonathan D. Sarna, ed., The American Jewish Experience (New York, 1986), 263.

courses in each area of study as well as in the course offerings themselves. Both seminaries were particularly concerned with expanding the breadth and depth of professional development classes to prepare rabbis to meet the ever-increasing expectations of the American Jewish community.

JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY: 1940-1972

Louis Finkelstein assumed the role of president of JTS upon the death of Cyrus Adler in 1940. Born in Cincinnati in 1895, Finkelstein travelled east to continue his formal education after receiving a traditional Jewish education from his father. He graduated from City College of New York in 1915 and, in 1918, obtained his doctorate at Columbia University at the age of twenty-three. He was ordained at JTS one year later. After ordination, Finkelstein took a job as a congregational rabbi in New York City, and one year later, in 1920, he began teaching Talmud at the Seminary. Later, he taught theology as well.

In his book, Architects of Conservative Judaism, Herbert Parzen relates a somewhat odd story concerning Finkelstein's succession as president. Parzen writes that he was present at a convention of the Rabbinical Assembly in 1940, where he heard Finkelstein describe a deathbed scene at Dr. Adler's home. According to Finkelstein's story, Adler "asked his guest [Finkelstein] to give him his hand as a pledge that he, the new leader of the institution, will pursue policies in accordance with established traditional patterns. Thereupon Dr. Finkelstein

gave his hand to his host as surety that, during his administration, he will not swerve nor falter from following the road built and trodden, during the years, by the famed men of the Seminary."[2] This account was published in an issue of Conservative Judaism, but apparently, shortly after the issue appeared, Dr. Finkelstein demanded a retraction and said that the story was not true. Parzen insisted that he had no reason to invent the story. The story would seem consistent with Adler, who was described as a leader who tried as much as possible to maintain the course of the Seminary as laid out by the leaders before him. Whether or not the incident actually occurred, changes did take place in the thirty-two years of the Finkelstein administration.

Finkelstein was a different kind of leader than Adler, yet even so, he did not revolutionize Seminary education. JTS faculty members, like their counterparts at HUC, periodically implemented changes in the curriculum. The direction of the Seminary was certainly influenced by the fact that Finkelstein was a Talmudist and supported a more traditional approach to Jewish observance. In an address entitled, "Tradition in the Making," Finkelstein explained the Seminary's role in the continued interpretation of Judaism as follows:

> Sabato Morais, who founded the Seminary, Solomon Schechter, who was its second president, and Doctor Cyrus Adler, who...is its third president, have all accepted the fundamental principle that Jewish law must be preserved, but

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[2] Herbert Parzen, Architects of Conservative Judaism (New York, 1964), 207-208.

> that it is subject to interpretation placed upon it by duly authorized masters in every generation must be accepted with as much reverence as those which were given in previous generations.[3]

By offering students a curriculum heavily laden with courses in Talmud and Codes, the Seminary hoped to prepare the "authorized masters" of the current generation to serve as interpreters of the law among the Jewish people. Finkelstein also indirectly expressed the feeling that many American Jews had distanced themselves from religion and that a fundamental task for the rabbi was to bring the people closer to God. He saw this task as one pursued throughout the generations toward the goal of preserving Judaism.

> Recalling that our forefathers who interpreted the science of their day in the terms of the religion, brought salvation to a whole world, it is natural to hope that we, their descendants, still bearing in our hearts a spark of the ancient fire, being if not prophets, the children and the grandchildren of prophets, will be able to bring about the synthesis between the modern intellectual life and the traditional faith that is needed for the happiness of our own time.[4]

Louis Finkelstein had a genuine regard both for the realities of contemporary America and for the needs of the spirit. During his tenure as president, he encouraged various enterprises in an attempt to further fuse both impulses. The Seminary, under his leadership, founded the Institute for Religious and Social Studies, an organization dedicated to the promotion of interfaith activities, the Eternal Light Radio

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[3] Louis Finkelstein, Tradition in the Making (New York, 1937), 16-17.

[4] Ibid., 22.

programs, and the Conference of Science, Religion and Philosophy, to discuss moral issues in the context of technological achievements.[5] During the Finkelstein administration, JTS expanded geographically as well by opening the University of Judaism in 1947. Though originally established for the purpose of training teachers, the University of Judaism also became a place where students could begin their rabbinical education in the Conservative movement.

JTS CURRICULUM: 1948-1972

The earliest curriculum listed in a catalogue during the Finkelstein administration does not appear until 1948. Unlike the last Adler curriculum, there is no mention of seminars or electives. The program seems to have been temporarily scaled down, perhaps due to the effects of the war. In this curriculum, which remains fairly fixed through the 1954-55 register, students were required to take a course in Bible, Talmud, midrash, history, homiletics, education, and speech each of the four years.[*] The first year, students were also required to take courses in modern Hebrew literature and theology. The second year, students were required to take courses in Bible, codes, medieval Hebrew literature, and philosophies of religion.

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[5] Herbert Rosenblum, Conservative Judaism: A Contemporary History (New York, 1983), 36-37.

[*] Students were required to attend the program for four years, but those who lacked the background in Hebrew and text were required to take courses for up to six years.

The third year, students took American Jewish history, Jewish philosophy in the middle ages, medieval Hebrew literature, and philosophies of religion. And the fourth year, students took a course in practical theology. Medieval Hebrew literature, codes, Hebrew, and philosophy were all cut back from the four year requirement of the Adler administration. Hazanut was no longer offered, nor was there any mention of summer requirements. The new courses were the two philosophies of religion classes as well as the course in American Jewish history. It is interesting to note the description of the "Practical Theology" class which is delineated in the catalogue for the first time. The course includes a discussion of the following topics:

> Areas of service and personal behavior of the Rabbi; his relationship to the organizations in the community; ministering to the sick and other pastoral activities; procedure at weddings, funerals and unveilings; the Rabbi's relation to the synagogue and school personnel.[7]

It seems to have served as a "catch-all" course in practical rabbinics. Although limited, this curriculum appeared to balance Bible and Talmud requirements, unlike the previous curriculum with its heavy emphasis on Talmudic studies. However, this was really just an interim program which was revamped in the 1958-59 catalogue.

The 1958-59 catalogue was organized somewhat like the academic catalogue of an American university. The rabbinical school was described as "a graduate professional school training

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[7] JTS Register, 1948-49, 27-28.

men for the rabbinate."[8] The School was broken into three departments: the Graduate Department, for college graduates who wished to pursue a four - to six - year program leading to a Masters in Hebrew Literature and ordination as a rabbi; the Postgraduate Department, for rabbis who wished to pursue a Doctor of Hebrew Literature; and the Pretheological Department, for undergraduates who needed to pursue preparatory studies prior to admission to the Graduate Department. The Pretheological Department was soon changed to the School of Judaica, a graduate school where Jewish laymen could pursue a Masters in Hebrew Letters. Our study will continue to focus on developments in the graduate rabbinical school curriculum.

The graduate rabbinical school Course of Study was preceded by the following explanation:

> The curriculum, which is prescribed in its entirety for all students, has been shaped to include instruction not only in such traditional studies as Bible, Talmud, Midrash, and Codes, but in the broad field of Jewish culture with courses in Jewish history, theology, and literature, and in such professional areas as homiletics, education, and pastoral psychiatry.[9]

The courses themselves did not seem so different from those in the past, either in name or in volume, but perhaps the Seminary had received some criticism for its heavily text-centered approach and consequently felt the need to explicitly portray its program as a balanced one which recognized the diversity of rabbinical roles. The four year program was listed as follows:

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[8] Ibid., 1958-59, 28.

[9] Ibid., 29.

FIRST YEAR
Bible
Codes
Homiletics
Jewish Literature and Institutions
Midrash
Modern Hebrew Literature
Orientation
Philosophies of Religion
Talmud
Theology

SECOND YEAR
Bible
Bible Lecture
Codes
Education
Homiletics
Jewish Literature and Institutions
Jewish Philosophy in the Middle Ages
Medieval Hebrew Literature
Midrash
Modern Hebrew Literature
Philosophies of Religion
Talmud

THIRD YEAR
American Jewish History
Bible
Bible Lecture
Codes
Education
History
Homiletics
Jewish Literature and Institutions
Jewish Philosophy in the Middle Ages
Medieval Hebrew Literature
Midrash
Philosophies of Religion
Talmud

FOURTH YEAR
Bible
History
Homiletics
Jewish Literature and Institutions
Midrash
Philosophies of Religion
Pastoral Psychiatry
Practical Theology

Speech
Talmud

In addition to these courses, each student is required to complete a minimum of two elective seminars, preferably before entering the senior year. Seminars are offered periodically in the fields of American Jewish History, Bible, Codes, History, Jewish Art, Jewish Philosophy, Medieval Hebrew Literature, Modern Hebrew Literature, and Talmud.

Each student must also submit at least two satisfactory class essays as a prerequisite for admission to the senior class....

All students, with the exception of those entering the senior year, are assigned summer readings in which they are individually examined in the Fall before the opening of classes. The readings may be in the nature of a specific assignment or optional choice as the faculty may prescribe in accordance with the needs of the student.[10]

Though both Bible and Talmud were required for the full four years, Talmud was required for five hours each of the first three years and four hours in the fourth year, while Bible was required for two hours in the first and fourth years, and three hours in the second and third years, meaning there was a slightly greater emphasis on Talmudic study. Quite surprisingly, history was not offered until the third and fourth years, and the requirements were somewhat minimal. However, the Jewish Literature and Institutions class, which was required each of the four years, traced the history and literature of the Jews from the conquest of Alexander the Great through the Middle Ages. Much of the program was not so different than the one listed beginning in 1948-49. The Seminary did add an orientation class which was meant to introduce the rabbinical student to Jewish community resources. Codes and Philosophies of Religion were added to the

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[10] Ibid., 29-30.

first year in addition to the other years in which they were already required. Education and Speech were both required for fewer semesters than before. A new practical rabbinics class in Pastoral Psychiatry was required. This course was taught by practicing psychiatrists who lectured on the nature of mental illness and techniques of counselling. Elective seminars were re-introduced, as were summer requirements. Like HUC, JTS was looking for every possible way to include the many courses which they felt students should study.

In 1957, JTS had initiated a special program which invited certain rabbinical students to obtain permission to concentrate on a single area of Jewish studies. The program was designed to encourage students to work toward doctoral degrees. Initially, this program was tied to the Herbert H. Lehman Institute of Talmudic Ethics, which meant that participating students could only concentrate in the area of Talmud, however the program soon enabled students to concentrate in areas other than Talmud.[11]

Over the next decade, other adjustments were made to the curriculum. In 1959, the program was contracted into three rather than four years. The orientation class was dropped as was one course each in homiletics, midrash, and modern Hebrew literature. Summer readings become optional at the discretion of the faculty. From 1961 on, there was an increase in the number of Talmud course options. In the 1962-64 catalogue, an

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[11] Charles S. Liebman, "The Training of American Rabbis," American Jewish Yearbook, 69, (1968): 37-38.

internship program was added to the course in practical theology. Students were assigned to a mentor rabbi in the area and were required to follow him as he went about his daily duties. The 1964-66 catalogue included a new requirement, "Psychology of Religion," described as an "analysis of normal mysticism in worship, and of the application of rabbinic value-concepts in Aggadah and in ethics, supplemented by reports on basic books in the psychology of religion."[12]

Each catalogue lists the seminar courses which were offered in the previous year.

The following seminars were offered in 1963-64:

The Genizah and Its Contribution to Jewish Scholarship
Contemporary Issues in Jewish Law
Job, the Guide to the Perplexed, and Job, the Great Perplexed.[13]

In this particular year, each seminar was related to an area of Jewish law or scholarship. The Jewish law seminar attempted to fuse modernity with tradition by offering a course which focused on contemporary issues.

The following seminars were offered in 1966-67:

Practical Theology
Judaism and the New Frontier: the New Politics, the New Morality, and the New Theology
Jewish Life in Medieval France
Codes: Selected Responsa from Rabenu Asher
Sources of Jewish Thought
The Crucial Problems in Job
Study of Hebrew Manuscripts.[14]

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[12] JTS Register, 1964-66, 43.

[13] Ibid., 35.

[14] Ibid., 1966-69, 40.

This list included more options and covered the full academic spectrum, from seminars in areas of Bible and Codes to those in philosophy, philology, and issues of contemporary significance. Students were required to enroll in a minimum of two elective seminars. Such a choice of seminar topics is representative of the overall curriculum of the Finkelstein era, in which attempts were made to better prepare the student to face contemporary realities without cutting back in areas of traditional Judaism or scientific scholarship.

The rabbinical program description in the last catalogue of the Finkelstein administration, 1970-73, demonstrates the emphasis of Talmud over all other studies by requiring that five of the fifteen credits a student earned per semester be in Talmud. Students were required to earn only two credits in Bible. Seminar options were no longer listed, but students were expected to take a number of elective courses. The research papers once required were made optional, and students were strongly advised to travel to the Seminary's Student Center in Jerusalem for a year of their studies. In spite of the predominance of Talmud, the explanation preceding the description of courses continued to describe a curriculum fully balanced between traditional texts, broader academic subjects, and courses in professional development. Like those at HUC, the curricular reformers at JTS attempted to base their curriculum in part on the needs and concerns of congregants, but they also attempted to maintain a vision of a certain kind of rabbi who would go out and

teach and transform the Jewish community.

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION: 1950-1971

The man who followed Julian Morgenstern as president of HUC was also an ordinee of Hebrew Union College. In fact, Nelson Glueck was born in Cincinnati in 1900. Although his family was Orthodox, Glueck entered HUC in 1914. One of nine children and the son of poor Lithuanian immigrants, Glueck probably had few other options for a proper education. Glueck was ordained in 1923 and travelled to Germany to continue his studies. He enrolled in Bible courses, wrote a dissertation on the use of the word hesed in the Bible, and received his doctorate in 1927. From Germany he went on to Jerusalem where he studied at the American School of Oriental Research. Glueck became interested in the field of biblical archeology. Through his association with this institution, he was fortunate to make the acquaintance of William Foxwell Albright, a renowned archeologist and the director of the school.

In 1928 Glueck returned to Cincinnati and began teaching Bible at HUC. For the next several years Glueck shuttled back and forth between Cincinnati and Palestine. Off and on for years he directed the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem and then in Baghdad. Glueck developed a excellent reputation for his work in the field of archeology, and although he spent more time in Palestine than he did in the United States, Morgenstern remained in touch with him. When Morgenstern did eventually

offer Glueck the presidency, Glueck had a difficult decision to make. With great ambivalence, Glueck eventually accepted the position. He was installed into the office in 1949.

The Glueck administration oversaw tremendous expansion of the College facilities. The campus in Cincinnati added an Archives, new buildings, and an expansion of the graduate studies department and more. JIR, of course, was now a part of the College (now called the College-Institute). In 1947, the School of Education was opened in New York, and a year later the College opened a School of Sacred Music. By 1954, HUC had connected itself to the College of Jewish Studies in Los Angeles which had been established by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Beginning in 1954 students could enroll in prerabbinical classes to prepare to continue their study in the rabbinical graduate program. That same year, the Los Angeles school also opened a Department of Sacred Music. By 1968, HUC-JIR in Los Angeles also included a School of Education for training religious school educators.

HUC-JIR had diversified. The College-Institute was no longer an institution solely for the training of rabbis. Instead, it prepared and produced professionals to fill a variety of jobs in the Jewish community. Nevertheless, Glueck stated on numerous occasions that the primary goal of HUC-JIR remained the training of rabbis.[15] In his report to the HUC-JIR Board of Governors, Glueck rarely failed to mention the status of the

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[15] Nelson Glueck, President's Report, January 27, 1954, 2.

ongoing process of curricular reform. He explained, "Any alert educational institution must constantly study its curriculum both with respect to what it is offering and the manner in which it is offering it."[16] He described curricular reform as a gradual but continual process. Occasionally he mentioned faculty committees and special investigations, but he did not limit the input of curricular suggestions to the faculty alone. He expressed an interest in making adjustments based on the needs of Reform Jewish lay people. In 1955 he endorsed a rather unique plan for gleaning information from the Reform populace. The College-Institute was preparing to celebrate the eightieth anniversary of Founders Day, and it was suggested that young families with children be encouraged to come to the program "so that through mutual exchange of opinion and information we might be guided in shaping our curriculum at the College-Institute and they [the young families] might become acquainted with the attitudes and atmosphere and courses of study of the institution which would supply their rabbis in the future."[17] Glueck was proposing no less than an open house to give people an inner glimpse of the College-Institute as well as a form of "market research" to sample the tastes of the "buyers."

Glueck frequently acknowledged the many challenges that faced the College-Institute in maintaining a proper curriculum. He expressed the goal of "trying to maintain a proper balance

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[16] Ibid., January 27, 1960, 8.

[17] Ibid., January 26, 1955, 2.

between the indispensable requirements of classical studies and the necessary training in human relations and education."[18] Under his administration, HUC-JIR indeed worked hard to maintain that balance while continuing to meet new challenges which arose in the American Jewish community.

HUC CURRICULUM: 1950-1971

As part of its goal to become a full-fledged graduate program, HUC had dropped its Preparatory Department. But the problem of training rabbis who entered the program with serious Hebrew deficiencies remained. When, in the fall of 1948, students were required to enter HUC with an undergraduate degree, a "Pre-Rabbinic" program was established to enable otherwise promising students to prepare for rabbinical study. Pre-Rabbinic Centers of Study were established in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Baltimore, and, of course, at the University of Cincinnati. This program was designed to prepare students to pass an entrance exam to the rabbinical college. For a period of time, beginning in 1954, the College also sponsored a summer Hebrew preparatory program at a camp in Towanda, Pennsylvania, and in 1960, when the Cincinnati campus acquired an air-conditioned building, the summer Hebrew preparatory program returned to Cincinnati. So whether a student needed a year or two of preparation or whether he needed a single intensive summer program, options were available to encourage young American

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[18] Ibid., May 15, 1957, 24.

Jewish boys to consider a career in the rabbinate.

In 1947-48, HUC inaugurated its Human Relations Department. The Department opened with the single requirement that HUC students enroll in an Abnormal Psychology class at the University of Cincinnati, but this department would expand during the Glueck administration.

In 1950, the catalogue outlined a five year course of studies which could last as long as six years depending on the student's level of Hebrew and Jewish knowledge upon entering the program. Students enrolled in all required courses for the first two years, including required independent studies both summers, and then, at the end of the second year, took a comprehensive examination leading to a Bachelor of Hebrew Letters. The next three years were composed of courses leading toward a Master of Hebrew Letters and rabbinical ordination. In the President's Report for 1950, Glueck wrote that the Masters degree and rabbinical ordination had been separated in order to encourage non-rabbinical students and non-Jews to study in the Masters program. A rabbinical student could opt to study for ordination, and could forgo the masters degree if he chose not to take the comprehensive examination. Glueck explained that in order to obtain a rabbinical degree, one must complete the required courses, write a thesis, and must also be judged to have an aptitude for the calling "involving such factors as personality, orientation, and general spiritual qualities."[14] He did not

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[14] Ibid., May 1, 1950.

mention whether there existed an standardized process for rendering such a judgment on each student individually.

In 1950, courses in Public Speaking, Human Relations, and Supervised Field Work were added to the list of requirements. First-year students were required to take an orientation course whose purpose was to orient students toward a clearer understanding of Judaism's "distinctive message."[20] Students were required to take eight electives in the last two years of the program. Among the elective offerings were: "Major Trends in Modern Hebrew Poetry," "The Modern Hebrew Novel," "Legal Concepts," "Jews in a Changing World, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries," "Hasidism," and "Church Fathers and Rabbis." Several of these courses were designed to meet the needs of the non-rabbinical graduate student, but they were options open to all students enrolled in the program.

The 1950-51 Catalogue was the first to include curricula for both the Cincinnati and New York campuses. In 1953, an agreement was made whereby students could attend the College in New York for the first two years of the program, after which they were required to transfer to Cincinnati to obtain the required courses leading to ordination, and then back to New York for an internship. Glueck had wanted to maintain Cincinnati as the main campus, and the only campus where one could be ordained. An out cry from Jewish leaders on the east coast prevented Glueck from realizing this goal. In 1957 each campus was established as

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[20] Ibid., January 27, 1954, 2.

a five-year program leading to ordination. But from 1950 to 1957 HUC-JIR in New York offered far fewer classes than Cincinnati. There were a few other interesting differences in the two campus programs. The New York curriculum listed Codes under the rubric of Practical Rabbinics because it presented halakhic literature from a topical perspective, covering only those topics such as wedding and funeral laws which would directly apply to a Reform rabbi's professional duties. At the Cincinnati campus in 1950 when Abraham Cronbach retired, the Jewish Social Studies Department was changed to Human-Relations, and a new course, "The Rabbi, the Congregation, and the Community," was introduced. The New York campus still maintained the social service department and offered such courses as: "The Synagogue," "Synagogue and Marriage and Family Counseling," and "Synagogue and Community Organization." A course entitled "Synagogue and Social Order" was described as follows:

> Relation of the Synagogue to problems in the economic, political and international organization, including unemployment, distribution of income, social security, civil liberties, war and peace. The social philosophy of Judaism and its relation to contemporary social philosophies, including capitalism, socialism, communism, fascism, and democracy. Special studies are made of post-war programs.[21]

Such a course suggests that the school was still influenced by Stephen S. Wise's belief in the role of rabbi as social justice activist. In 1954-55, this class was dropped, and the New York curriculum changed its listing from Social Service to Human-Relations. This is indicative of a general trend which occurred

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[21] HUC-JIR Catalogue, 1950-51, 81.

throughout the Fifties and Sixties, as a clear attempt was made to create identical programs in New York and in Cincinnati. In spite of this attempt, the two curricula never became identical.

With the appointment of Samuel Sandmel to the Cincinnati faculty, the 1952-53 catalogue listed one category of courses which was not available in New York: Apocryphal and Hellenistic Literature. The three seminar electives offered courses on "Apocryphal and Pseudepigrapha," "New Testament," and "Hellenistic Literature." The Cincinnati campus also offered its first introductory course in Ugaritic, and a study of the newly discovered Dead Sea Scrolls.

By 1954-55, both campuses had dropped their seminars on the topic of "Hasidism" which had been offered for many years. Unfortunately, we can not know whether the course was dropped for any particular reason, but it is interesting to note that, after all these years, the course was never restored to the curriculum.

In 1955-56, Cincinnati added two new practical rabbinics courses: an education seminar focusing on the functions of the modern rabbi as educator and religious leader, and a speech class called "Religious Television" to provide "students with practical experience in writing, rehearsing, and presenting religious television programs."[22]

Human Relations continued to be more carefully defined and developed to train students in the practical aspects of the rabbinate. The introductory course was described as

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[22] Ibid., 1955-56, 73.

> an introductory survey of the institutions of contemporary Reform Judaism from the standpoint of human relations. Special attention is given to the psychological and social needs and structures of family life, personality development, and healthy group functioning. Insights from the field of psychiatry, social work, and social science are correlated with those from the field of religious tradition and practice. The relevance of these insights for the work of the rabbi and the general program and goal of the modern synagogue is discussed. The course includes lectures and discussions on dynamic factors in personality, group life, and the sociology of religion by consultants from the field of human relations. Attention is given to the rabbi's self-understanding, his grasp of role expectations and the multiple determinants of those expectations.[23]

This course sought to deal not only with the various rabbinical roles from the point of view of the recipients of rabbinical services, but from the perspective of the rabbi himself. This course also tried to make a connection between religious tradition and current areas in rabbinical practice.

Philosophy and theology were combined under a new rubric called "Jewish Religious Thought" at both campuses of the College-Institute in 1956-57. The introductory course was described as a study of

> the development of attitudes toward the nature and redemption of evil, the relation between religion and ethics, the transcendence and/or immanence of God, the nature of man, religious knowledge and religious symbolism, mysticism and revelation. This course will make use of materials drawn from the Scriptures of the great religions supplemented by commentary, religious philosophy, and literature. Particular attention will be given to the development of the biblical concept of the Covenant.[24]

The course employed an interdisciplinary approach to studying different ideas that developed in Jewish history. In Cincinnati,

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[23] Ibid., 1956-57, 60.

[24] Ibid., 74.

the other two required Thought courses were "Major Concepts of Rabbinic Judaism" and "Problems in Contemporary Religious Thought." In New York, the other required Thought courses were "The Messianic Idea in Israel" and "Religion in the Modern Age." Both campuses also continued to require medieval philosophy courses.

In 1957-58, HUC-JIR found a new way to try to accommodate the ever-increasing number of courses it felt necessary for a proper rabbinical education. The school switched to a quarter system, which meant that students were enrolled in three sets of courses during the academic year. Consequently, more topics could be covered, though the volume of the subject material had to be condensed. The first two years listed supplementary reading requirements in Bible and rabbinic literature in addition to the regular course load. Students were required to take thirty-six quarter-hour credits in Bible courses and fourteen quarter-hour credits in Talmud, thus maintaining HUC-JIR's emphasis on Bible over Talmud. The other major areas of requirements included thirty quarter-hour credits in Hebrew, eighteen in history, and twelve in Jewish religious thought. Students were also required to select twenty quarter-hour credits in electives, which meant that, theoretically, a student could heavily concentrate in one field by taking a number of courses in that area. For the first time, Cincinnati and New York listed nearly identical requirements for the full five years, and separate lists of electives. The single difference in

requirements was a Hellenistic Literature course available only in Cincinnati, on account of Sandmel's presence, and a study of synagogue music available only in New York, because of the existence of the Cantorial school. Among the electives Cincinnati added were "Islamic Civilization," a Human Relations class in "problems, issues, and resources in motivating synagogue groups with respect to social and ethical problems," and a cantillation course. New York added electives in "Enlightenment as a Crisis of Religion," "The Documentary Theory Studied in Light of Post-World War I Discoveries," and a Talmud course entitled "The Examination of Key Texts For a Clue to the Jewish Ethos."

The curriculum of the Los Angeles school first appeared in the 1958-59 catalogue. Though chartered to grant a rabbinical degree, the Los Angeles campus was and remains limited in its rabbinical offerings to the first two years of the five-year rabbinical program. After obtaining the Master of Hebrew Letters, students at the Los Angeles school must then transfer either to the Cincinnati or New York campus in order to complete the requirements for rabbinical ordination. In 1958, the Los Angeles school operated on a semester system. The requirements in Los Angeles were virtually the same as those in Cincinnati and New York. There was no opportunity for electives in the two-year program.

The ratio of required courses to electives is often an issue in academic programs. Conflicts arise between the desire to

maintain the program's integrity by training the student in a number of specific areas and the desire for flexibility and choice so that students can concentrate in different areas. As the American Jewish community expanded, there grew a need for different types of rabbis possessing different skills. Some congregations wanted highly skilled orators, others desired rabbis with a strong ability to teach or to work with a specific group such as youth or the elderly. Naturally, congregants wished that their rabbi could be accomplished in all areas, but of course this was and is unrealistic. A more flexible program would allow certain students to specialize in Talmud, others in education, others in history and so forth. At first HUC had no electives; then in 1906 Kohler added a limited number to the curriculum. In 1966-68, HUC Cincinnati made a change which would once again distinguish its requirements from those of the New York campus. While the New York campus maintained the requirement of twenty quarter credit hours, the Cincinnati school increased their elective credits by twenty-two without increasing the overall number of quarter credit hours needed to graduate. Six more quarter credit hours were cut from Bible, four each from history and Talmud, and two each from Hebrew, philosophy, midrash, and music. The summer work requirement was also dropped. There was a stipulation attached to the elective choices. Of the forty-four elective credit hours required, twenty-two of those credits had to be earned in specific departments. Six credits had to be in the area of Bible, four

each in the areas of Talmud and history, and two each in the areas of modern Hebrew, midrash, philosophy, and philosophy or theology.

With minor exceptions, the first two years of the program were essentially the same for all three campuses. Cincinnati students were able to choose one elective in their second year, unlike students at the other two campuses. Second-year Cincinnati students took Aramaic in the first quarter followed by Talmud in the last two, whereas the sequence for New York students was Talmud, Aramaic then Talmud. Los Angeles maintained the semester system. Fourth-year New York students took another course in commentaries, which Cincinnati students did not, and an extra quarter each in homiletics, Bible, and Talmud. In their third year, Cincinnati students took no courses in Talmud, midrash or education, unless they selected them as electives. Both campuses enabled their students to take the largest number of elective courses in their senior year.

Over the years, each campus had developed a vast array of electives. Though the 1968-70 catalogue does not present many new electives, a few are worth noting. For the first time, Cincinnati offered a course in computer science. Listed under Rabbinic Studies, this course was meant to introduce students to the use of computers for literary scholarship. New York offered a Jewish Religious Thought elective described as "Religious issues in the contemporary novel, play and motion picture as seen

from the standpoint of Jewish theology,"[23] as well as a course described as "a study of historical and contemporary Jewish theologies of non-Jews, as the basis for an examination of Judaism's relation to religion both as a universal phenomenon and as organized in particular religious groups." All of these electives are indicative of the Reform rabbi's increasing contact with technology and the broader non-Jewish society. The elective options also very much depended on the areas of interest of the faculty members of each school. So, for example, in Cincinnati Werner Weinberg offered a course on A. A. Kabak, the novelist. Ben Zion Wacholder offered a course in the Kumran texts and their relation to halakhah. Alvin Reines taught a philosophy course on contemporary ethical theories and their relation to Reform Judaism. In New York, Harry Orlinsky offered a course on the documentary theory in light of post-World War I archaeological discoveries. Eugene Borowitz taught a course on the problems in creating a theology of social action. Henry Slonimsky taught a philosophy class on the basic problems and types of solution in moral philosophy and the contribution made by Jewish moral thinking and practice.[24] The electives constituted a broad selection of courses enabling the student to choose to study with certain professors in areas of the professors' own personal scholarly interest. The selection depended on the student's choice of campus and on the professor's decision of which

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[23] Ibid., 1968-70, 82.

[24] Ibid., 1966-68, 66-85.

electives to offer in any given year.

Although the College had opened a Jerusalem campus in 1963, it was not until 1970 that study in Israel became a regular part of the curriculum. From 1970 on students were required to spend their first year in Israel taking required courses at the Jerusalem campus. As the 1970-72 catalogue explained:

> The aim of this Program is twofold. Instruction is primarily for the purpose of developing a high degree of facility in Hebrew. In addition, a year of study in Israel will provide the future rabbi with the opportunity of gaining a well-founded understanding and appreciation of the land and people of Israel.[27]

The administration had finally realized the most efficient way of dealing with the problem of Hebrew deficiency in rabbinical candidates. Having spent an entire year involved in intensive Hebrew study, as well as daily exposure to the language, students would be able to return to Los Angeles, Cincinnati, or New York able to plunge into Hebrew text material. Although it did not always turn out that way, many students throughout the years have actually made significant gains in Hebrew ability because of the Israel program. Nor was it always the case that all students returned with an "appreciation of the land and people of Israel," but they certainly did gain a clearer understanding of Israeli society.

The curricula of Cincinnati and New York continued to be distinguished primarily by New York's greater number of text requirements, especially in the area of Bible, as opposed to

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[27] Ibid., 1970-72, 37.

Cincinnati's greater number of required electives. These differences are characteristic of the ongoing tension between the desire for specific standards and the realization of the desirability of choice. Generally it is faculty who lean toward a more defined set of courses and students who push for increased flexibility. By enabling each campus to maintain this distinction, HUC-JIR offered prospective students an opportunity to choose between a more defined or a more flexible curriculum, but, of course, location was undoubtedly the more critical factor to most students in choosing between campuses.

THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST RABBINICAL COLLEGE: A NEW CONCEPT OF RABBINICAL TRAINING

For all the differences in HUC-JIR and JTS' programs with respect to training goals and emphasis on certain areas of training over others, certain similarities prevailed. Both programs shared the initial goal of creating a program to train rabbis to serve the American Jewish community. Both began with the intention of creating a non-denominational seminary which combined traditional Jewish studies with courses in professional development. Both schools opened in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and have continued to make gradual curricular revisions to the present day. Finally, each school offered a curriculum organized in such a way that each year, students took a mix of courses in the areas of language, text, academics, and professional development. For the most part, the organization of

the curriculum was such that the students began with introductory courses and take successively advanced required courses in each area throughout the years as well as a number of more intensive electives in areas of personal interest. One might not have noticed these similarities had it not been for the creation of a rabbinical college with an entirely novel approach to curricular organization. The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC), established in 1968 by the Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation, was a manifestation of the ideas of Jewish thinker Mordecai Kaplan, and the result of the efforts of Ira Eisenstein, Kaplan's principal disciple, who envisioned a school which would utilize Reconstructionist ideas to train Reconstructionist leaders. In order to understand the unique structure of RRC's curriculum, one must first grasp the ideas of Mordecai Kaplan, and the thoughts of his son in law, Ira Eisenstein, who helped translate those ideas into concrete institutions.

MORDECAI KAPLAN AND RECONSTRUCTIONISM

Mordecai Kaplan was born in 1881 in Svencionys, Lithuania. His father, an Orthodox rabbi, received a job offer in the United States, and so at age nine Kaplan and his family moved to New York. Kaplan's education was Jewish and secular. He was ordained in both the Conservative and Orthodox movements. Although he began his career as a congregational rabbi in New York, he spent the majority of his working years as teacher and scholar at the Jewish Theological Seminary. He both taught in

the rabbinical school and was dean of the Teachers Institute of the Seminary. Kaplan also founded the Society for the Advancement of Judaism; he established the Jewish Center, the first synagogue combined with a Jewish center; and he initiated The Reconstructionist Magazine and the Reconstructionist Foundation.

Kaplan's most notable work is Judaism as a Civilization, published in 1934, in which he thoroughly critiqued the existing American Jewish movements, pointed out their shortcomings, and proposed a new definition of Judaism which he believed was necessary for revitalizing Jewish life in America. Kaplan looked to a more comprehensive definition of Judaism than one which limited it solely to the realm of religion. Judaism, for Kaplan, included the "nexus of a history, literature, language, social organization, folk sanctions, standards of conduct, social and spiritual ideals, esthetics values, which in their totality form a civilization."[28] Borrowing from traditional Jewish sources and American philosophers, Kaplan defined Judaism as an evolving religious civilization. By including the term "religious" Kaplan meant

> that Jewish civilization expresses its genius best in clarifying the purposes and values of human existence, in wrestling with God (who is conceived in nonpersonal terms), and in the ritual of home, synagogue, and community. However, because Judaism is a civilization, the secular elements of culture are essential to Jewish spirituality; they curb the tendency of religion toward rigidity, uniformity, and worship of the past. Thus, Jewish religion

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[28] Mordecai M. Kaplan, Judaism as a Civilization (New York, 1934), 178.

> embraces both the purpose and the unconscious product of the Jewish people's search for a meaningful existence for itself.[29]

In his explanation of the term "evolving" Kaplan explained that Judaism had undergone three distinct stages in its history. He believed that Judaism was in the midst of entering its fourth stage of development by transforming itself from an ancient into a modern civilization and by growing into a humanistic and spiritual civilization. In this stage, modern Jewish civilization would "be an adventure into the unexplored possibilities of creative living."[30] A grasp of this definition of Judaism is essential to understanding Kaplan's views on rabbinical education.

Another aspect of Kaplan's beliefs which would influence the development of the new seminary was his notion that American Jews live in two civilizations -- one that is American, and one that is distinctly Jewish. Kaplan believed it was important for American Jews to have an understanding of both civilizations and of the complexities which arise when one civilization meets another.

Although Kaplan never organized or directed a rabbinical seminary, he was asked by Stephen S. Wise to consider becoming the director of the JIR, and so was given a forum for sharing his views on how a student ought to be prepared for the modern

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[29] Jack J. Cohen, "Mordecai Menahem Kaplan," Encyclopedia Judaica, 10:752.

[30] Kaplan, Judaism as a Civilization, 214.

rabbinate. He not only believed that students should study their heritage, human nature, and social conditions, but that students should be given the tools to synthesize this knowledge and apply it to the situations they would encounter as rabbis. Although Kaplan believed strongly in the importance and validity of text study and historical study in general, he especially emphasized the importance of focusing one's attention on the present. He felt that Jews spent too much time glorifying the past and in so doing turned Judaism into an ancient relic devoid of life and relevance.

Kaplan saw the rabbi as a force for bringing about a renewal of the Jewish spirit. He stated:

> The rabbinical school should enable him to transmit the desire for a substantial Jewish life, for Jewish communal organization and responsibility, for Jewish customs and mores....[31]

In order to do this, he felt that the rabbinical candidate must himself possess a yearning for a "tangible" Jewish life, and that fostering this passion should be part of the training process. Kaplan was aware of the fact that many Jews looked askance at their heritage and frequently avoided any external expression of Jewishness. To this attitude he responded:

> This present attitude toward religion, an attitude compounded of contempt based on prejudice, confusion in thinking, and ignorance of facts, the rabbi must learn to face frankly and understandingly. To do that he must be equipped with all the possible knowledge of religion as an expression of human nature, that modern research has placed at our disposal. The rabbinical schools should not permit their students to shift for themselves. It is not enough to

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[31] Kaplan, Judaism in Transition (New York, 1941), 167.

> teach what the ancient authorities had to say about God, Israel and Torah, or how they reconciled tradition with the philosophy of their day. Each age must have its own theology. The theology for our day can no more be extemporized than were the theologies of the past.[32]

Like the founders of HUC, JTS, and JIR, Kaplan advocated the necessity of modern scholarship as part of rabbinical training. He believed that the scientific study of Judaism was necessary in order to teach modern Jews that religion is part of human nature. Most importantly, rabbis needed training to lead the community in the process of interpreting the latest phase of Judaism's evolution. History and traditional theology was to be studied for the sake of mastering the ability to develop a new theology and a new Judaism for the present.

Like the founders of the other American seminaries, Kaplan decried the existence of factionalism within the Jewish community. He said, "Any program which is to stimulate, direct and enrich Jewish life in this country will have to avoid the weakness, and appropriate the strength, of each of the existing Jewish ideologies."[33] He advocated a synthesis of each movement's best ideas into one new Judaism. Throughout most of his life, Kaplan tried to keep Reconstructionism from becoming a separate movement. He saw it as the new wave for all of American Judaism, but his protege, Ira Eisenstein did not agree.

IRA EISENSTEIN AND THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST RABBINICAL COLLEGE

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[32] Ibid., 172.

[33] Ibid., 183.

Ira Eisenstein was born in Harlem, New York, in 1906. His father and grandfather were both native New Yorkers. In his autobiography, Eisenstein admitted, "knowing that my roots reached back to the first half of the 19th century in New York, I sensed a deep kinship between myself and the American scene."[34] Such a feeling undoubtedly contributed to Eisenstein's interest in Kaplan's ideas. Eisenstein graduated from Columbia University and, influenced by his friendship with Milton Steinberg, decided to apply to rabbinical school. When choosing between attending the Seminary and the JIR, Eisenstein decided that if Kaplan left the Seminary for JIR that is where he would go, and if Kaplan remained at the Seminary, he would enroll there. Kaplan remained at the Seminary and so that is where Eisenstein received his rabbinical training. While a rabbinical student, he became involved in Kaplan's Society for the Advancement of Judaism, and continued to serve there after his ordination in 1939. He served a synagogue in Chicago for a few years, but returned to New York and became the President of the Reconstructionist Federation.

It was Eisenstein who seized upon the idea to build a new seminary to train leaders for the small but growing Reconstructionist movement. In his autobiography he stated:

> I had been working for some time on the basic concept of a curriculum for a Reconstructionist College. If Judaism was to be understood as an evolving religious civilization, it would be necessary for the curriculum to reflect that idea. In other words, in each of five years, the students would recapitulate, as it were, the total experience of the Jewish

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[34] Ira Eisenstein, Reconstructing Judaism: An Autobiography (New York, 1986), 3.

> people during one epoch in Jewish history, devoting one year each to the biblical period, to the rabbinic, medieval, modern, and contemporary periods.[33]

On the one hand, the concept of organizing the curriculum civilizationally was an absolutely logical outcome of Reconstructionist ideology. On the other hand, it was a revolutionary approach to rabbinical education. Eisenstein was aware of this break from tradition. He said, "The traditional way of studying humash is humash and Rashi, and I said to myself Rashi belongs to the medieval period. If you want to understand what the text says, you have to understand what the people who wrote the text said, not what the medieval[s]...thought it meant or should have meant."[34] Eisenstein believed that it was by studying the process of Judaism's evolution that the students would understand their mandate to continue to develop Judaism in response to Judaism's contemporary needs.

Whereas HUC-JIR and JTS acknowledged the existence of two civilizations by requiring students to possess a university degree and by offering courses in Christianity, Eisenstein wanted students to study simultaneously at a secular university and in the rabbinical program. For this reason he sought to establish RRC adjacent to a university. Although Brandeis University at first seemed to be the obvious choice, its lack of a religion department made it less feasible for Eisenstein's purpose, so on the advice of his associate, Reform rabbi Arthur Gilbert, he made

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[33] Eisenstein, Autobiography, 227.

[34] Interview with Ira Eisenstein, December 25, 1988.

arrangements with Temple University in Philadelphia, so that RRC students could "round out their Jewish studies with a broader knowledge of the world of religion and civilization...."[37] He believed that in affiliating itself with Temple University, RRC would offer something unique from the other seminaries in that rabbinical students would study Christianity with Christian scholars, Islam with Islamic scholars and so forth. He saw this as necessary preparation for rabbis who wished to take a leadership role in an ecumenical age.[38]

THE RRC CURRICULUM

Eisenstein created a three part program which consisted of five to six years of rabbinical studies leading to ordination, joint enrollment in the masters program at Temple University (which was to be followed by a doctorate after ordination), and an internship in the Jewish community for the purpose of gaining practical rabbinical experience. When students complained because they felt overwhelmed by the volume, Eisenstein, who was appointed president of the College when it opened in 1968, agreed to modify the program somewhat, but he insisted on maintaining the three part structure, including the Temple University program. He wanted his graduates to be qualified academically to serve in other areas of the Jewish community besides the

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[37] Ibid.

[38] pamphlet printed by the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, n.d.

synagogue. "My thought was," he said, "if at any time they did not want to go into a pulpit, they could do other things. They could do academic work, they could do Hillel work, they could do education."[39]

The first curriculum was published in pamphlet form in 1968. The two page listing of courses was evenly divided with Temple University courses on one side of the sheet and RRC courses on the other as follows:

Temple	RRC
FIRST YEAR Required: Bible course with Robert Gordis: Foundations of Biblical Theology Choice: 3 to 6 other credits per semester Language examination at the end of the year	1. Core Curriculum Biblical Civilization 2. Hebrew Language: Bible Text 3. Seminar - Reconstructionism Total--18 credits

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The following is the curriculum projected for the second through the fifth year:

SECOND YEAR 6-9 credits per semester Required: Course in Rabbinics 3 credits per semester Choice: 3-6 other credits per semester	1. Core curriculum Rabbinic Civilization 2. Hebrew language: Talmudic Text 3. the Jewish Community Total--18 credits

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THIRD YEAR 6-9 credits per semester Required: 3 credits per semester in Medieval Philosophy and Literature Choice: 3-6 credits per semester Take second language	1. Core curriculum: Medieval Jewish Civilization 2. Hebrew Language: Hebrew Philosophy 3. Jewish Life and Practice Hebrew examination Total--18 credits

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[39] Ibid.

examination

FOURTH YEAR 6-9 credits per semester Required: 3 credits in A. Education, or B. Advanced Academic discipline, or C. Some aspect of psychological or sociological studies Take preliminary exams	1. Core curriculum The Modern Jewish Civilization 2. Modern Hebrew Literature 3. Choice of A. Research in chosen field, *B. Skills required for congregational leadership, or *C. Educational administration Total--20 credits *Plus supervised field work in 4th and 5th year
FIFTH YEAR Those who have only 48 points conclusion of the 4th year continue to take credits of their choice until they have 60 credits. Then take preliminary exams	1. Core curriculum: at the Recapitulation 2. 4 units of 6 sessions each in: A. Jewish Art B. The Jew in Contemporary Literature C. Jewish music D. Judaism and the Inter-religious Dialogue 6 credits for the year Total--14 credits
SIXTH YEAR (if necessary) Work on [masters] thesis for those who have completed 60 credits at the end of five years	Supervised internship program individually arranged Grand Total--88 credits[40]

Compared to the highly developed programs at HUC-JIR and JTS, this program had very few classes to offer. Although Eisenstein's stated intention was to send students concurrently to Temple University to broaden their education, this first curriculum would suggest the Temple University program was

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[40] Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, (pamphlet) 1968-69.

actually used to supplemented the budding rabbinical program by requiring students to enroll in basic rabbinical classes already available at the University. However, in addition to the Jewish studies courses which students were required to take, they were also required to choose a number of other courses. Students tended to take courses in philosophy or religion.

Of the first entering class of thirteen students, only two graduated. Clearly, the initial program had been so ambitious as to be unrealistic. Over the next decade, the program was modified and the doctoral requirement was reduced to a masters. Gradually, RRC added more courses, and there was less need to rely on Temple University for Jewish studies classes. Ira Eisenstein served RRC as president until 1981. The curriculum has been further developed since that time, but the basic civilizational structure remains intact to the present day.

CONCLUSION

This period of American Jewish history did indeed witness tremendous expansion in its non-Orthodox rabbinical training institutions. Under the leadership of Louis Finkelstein, the Jewish Theological Seminary expanded its program, particularly in the area of interfaith relations. Both JTS and HUC-JIR established programs on the West Coast whose Jewish population was rapidly growing. In both institutions students were only able to complete the first two years of the rabbinical program after which they were required to go east to complete their

studies either in Cincinnati or New York.

HUC-JIR and JTS moved increasingly toward a university style curriculum with specific numbers of required courses combined with elective choices. The programs increased their course offerings, particularly the variety of electives, in part to meet new and developing needs in the Jewish community by offering students the appropriate training. Rabbinical students at both seminaries also reaped the benefits of greater choice of electives because of the graduate programs which both seminaries initiated. Rabbinical students were often able to register for academic courses which had been primarily designed for the graduate program, courses such as cognate languages or a very specific Bible course.

JTS continued to follow a conservative approach, emphasizing Talmud and halakhic study, and training their students to lead the Jewish community in maintaining the tradition in the context of American society. HUC-JIR continued to prepare their students with a slightly greater emphasis on Bible studies. The Human Relations program was initiated as the College sought to prepare their rabbis to meet the increased expectations of the Reform Jewish community for their rabbis. Although there existed roughly equal curricular structures on the campuses in Cincinnati and New York for a decade or so, they eventually each went their own way when Cincinnati changed its curriculum, cutting back certain requirements to give the students more opportunities to choose courses. The New York campus, choosing to emphasize

mastery of Hebrew texts, maintained the same number of electives as before. Over time the requirements of the two campuses grew increasingly disparate.

The establishment of RRC in 1968 presented prospective rabbinical students with an entirely new choice in rabbinical education. A student who desired non-Orthodox ordination could choose to study at JTS where he would concentrate primarily on legal texts and the critical study of such subjects as Jewish history or philosophy. He could choose to enroll in HUC where his education would focus on the study of Bible, Midrash, theology and professional development. Or he could jointly attend RRC and Temple University where he would study Judaism as an evolving religious civilization, and study an aspect of another civilization as well. All three of these rabbinical seminaries have continued to grow, and they are all still developing, but none of them has changed radically since its inception

Chapter VI

Conclusion and Epilogue

American liberal rabbinical seminaries have changed significantly since the establishment of the first modern seminaries in Europe, and yet there remain recognizable links between the "parents" and their "children." The founders of the European seminaries institutionalized the major alternative model to the yeshiva for the purpose of training rabbis. The required knowledge of some secular subjects, courses in professional development, a decrease in the amount of required Talmud study, and the addition of courses in other areas of Jewish text and study constituted the primary features of the European liberal rabbinical seminary. Compared to America's liberal rabbinical colleges, the European seminaries were still quite traditional. The emphasis remained on text study, and most of the seminaries offered little more in the way of practical rabbinics than a course in homiletics.

The seminaries upon which HUC and JTS modeled themselves were the Hochschule and the Judisch-Theologisches Seminar respectively. The Hochschule had dedicated itself to training rabbis in the science of Judaism, and so, too, did Wise, in the earliest HUC catalogue, establish the scientific study and understanding of Jewish texts as the primary objective of the course of studies leading to ordination. The founders of JTS shared with Zacharias Frankel a view of Judaism's place in the modern world and of the nature of rabbinical education. One of

the founders of JTS, Alexander Kohut, had been ordained at the Breslau Seminary, and viewed it as an appropriate model upon which to base a traditional yet modern American seminary. Both American seminaries soon faced a potential obstacle which had not been a major factor in Europe. Namely, HUC and JTS had to struggle with the reality of training rabbinical candidates with little or no Hebrew and who, in many cases, were Judaically illiterate. Both schools instituted preparatory programs as a means of managing the problem. The problem has persisted, and so too have the programs, in one form or another, to the present day.

The next generation of presidents, Solomon Schechter at JTS and Kaufmann Kohler at HUC, each implemented revisions in the curriculum of their programs in accordance with their own visions of what a rabbi should know and be. JTS became known as "Schechter's seminary" because he made such a strong and lasting imprint on the school, especially in the hiring of distinguished intellectual scholars and in the revised curriculum's emphasis on the positive historical approach to Jewish studies. Kaufmann Kohler, too, revised the initial HUC curriculum to reflect his own desire for rabbinical students to be trained in the doctrines of Reform Judaism and to be offered more practically oriented courses. Neither Schechter nor Kohler looked as directly to the European seminaries for guidance in revising the curricula of their seminaries as had the founders of JTS and HUC.

Schechter and Kohler superimposed their own ideas and values

on existing structures. Neither abandoned the previous curriculum in favor of a radically new approach to training rabbis. This became the standard process for curricular reform in both seminaries, and remains so to the present day. The only significant difference is that after Schechter and Kohler, the curricular reform process fell less into the jurisdiction of the rabbinical seminary president and increasingly into the hands of individual dominant faculty members or, more often, under the authority of specially selected faculty committees constituted for the specific purpose of recommending and implementing revisions of the existing curriculum. Adler and Morgenstern, and later Finkelstein and Glueck, did not revise the curricula directly by initiating course requirements, but, rather, they influenced their direction in their appointments of faculty members who designed new courses for the existing curricula.[1]

This study has outlined the history of an ongoing, gradual process of curricular revision at JTS and HUC. Compared to these two seminaries, RRC introduced a radically new curriculum when it was founded in 1967. In part, its curriculum was novel because it was based on the thought of one individual, Mordecai Kaplan. Yet we can not ignore the differences that are bound to arise

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[1] The process by which the JIR curriculum was created in 1922 was much more similar to that of HUC's initial curriculum in that it was almost all the work of Stephen S. Wise. However, Wise's primary concern regarded the issue of academic freedom rather than the specific courses in the curriculum. As we have seen, his course of studies was nearly indistinguishable, at least on paper, from the course of studies at HUC during that same period of time.

between a curriculum which was first formulated in the late nineteenth century and has been continually revised and one which was first developed in the second half of the twentieth century. We can speculate that if the Reform or Conservative movements were developing rabbinical school curricula for the first time in 1967, they too would have produced courses of study which differed greatly from the actual HUC and JTS curricula of 1967.[2] Rabbinical seminary curricula are never created in a vacuum. The social and political environment exerts its influence on the initial development of a program of studies, and subsequent developments in that program are influenced as well by the very existence of the previously established curriculum. The Jewish community, along with all other American communities, was affected by the events of the 60s. Students in particular desired greater choice and flexibility in the rabbinical program. Congregants wanted rabbis trained to counsel them in times of need and distress. The Cincinnati campus of HUC-JIR endeavored to meet these needs by decreasing the number of required courses in order to increase the number of electives. The human relations department was also strengthened to better prepare

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[2] RRC's present situation upholds this point. The current president, Arthur Green, has a vision of Judaism and rabbinical education which differs significantly from that of Kaplan and Eisenstein. Although Green and the faculty have instituted changes into the curriculum, they have kept revisions within the established framework which maintains the original civilizational structure of the curriculum as envisaged by Eisenstein. Again, we can only speculate that if Green had initiated a rabbinical seminary he might not have chosen to employ the same structure as is currently in use at RRC.

rabbis to serve in the role of pastor. The established curriculum was adjusted, but remained intact.

The 1950s and 60s ushered in other changes as well. America witnessed a proliferation of Jewish studies programs in colleges and universities throughout the country. JTS encouraged the growth of rabbinical scholars with the implementation in 1957 of a program which encouraged participating students to concentrate on one area of Jewish studies, with the expectation that they would go on after ordination for a Ph.D. in order to teach either at the Seminary or at a university. In keeping with the long established pattern of curricular reform, the existing program was not abandoned in favor of an entirely new approach to training rabbis, but rather adjustments were made including the addition of this new study option.

In both content and structure, the entire RRC curriculum was influenced by the social and political environment of the time in which it was created. For example, RRC students were required to enroll in courses in Christianity and Islam taught by members of those faiths in order to participate fully in an age of increased ecumenicism. An alliance with Temple University was established, among other reasons, to bolster direct and open relations with secular civilization, as opposed to staying within the "cloistered" environment of the seminary. Whether or not he did so consciously, Eisenstein sided with Geiger, who had proposed an alliance with a German university for just this reason, whereas Frankel had opted for the nurturing, controllable environment of

a separate seminary. Methodologically, too, the classes at RRC were influenced by an environment which encouraged democracy and equality. Virtually all of RRC's classes were taught in the style of graduate seminars, as opposed to the lecture classes which prevailed at HUC-JIR and at JTS.

Clearly, the process of curricular development at all of the seminaries was influenced by a number of internal and external circumstances. Chief among these were the power of the curriculum in force, the social environment, the goals of the president and faculty, the wishes of the students, and the needs of the Jewish community, not to mention such considerations as finances, availability of academicians to serve on seminary faculties, and retirement or death of former faculty members. All of these were factors in the process of curricular reform.

We have seen shifts in emphasis on the various roles a rabbi plays, and this has both influenced and been influenced by the rabbinical curriculum. The modern rabbi of Europe was expected to be a scholar, a preacher, and a pastor. He was modeled after the Christian clergy of Europe who served in these capacities. Therefore, rabbis increasingly sought Ph.D.s, and the seminaries included homiletics classes to teach their students the art of preaching. Interestingly, there is no evidence of any sort of training for pastoral work, although rabbis were expected to fulfill pastoral duties. Perhaps it was assumed that these would come naturally and could be considered as "on the job training."

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century liberal Jews

expected their rabbis to be outstanding orators. Both HUC and JTS eventually added courses in homiletics and provided opportunities for individual and group development in oratorical skills. After the Holocaust, the seminary leaders realized the need to train Jewish academicians and, as we have learned, encouraged rabbis to pursue doctorates and to consider a career in scholarship. More recently the trend has been to emphasize the rabbi's function as community leader and pastor. The increase in human relations courses at all three seminaries attests to the perceived value of this function. Based on this study, as well as my own personal experience, I would conjecture that the current trend is moving toward an interest in highlighting the rabbi's role as spiritual leader with a continued stress on the importance of the rabbi as community leader. The desire for greater spiritual care is a natural tendency for liberal Jewish movements which have previously based their study and practice on science and reason. The emphasis on scientific study and ritual practice based on reason led to a neglect of matters of the spirit. HUC-JIR has already attempted to address this issue in its recent curricular proposal.[3] RRC and JTS are also looking for ways to incorporate a greater sense of spirituality into both their subject matter and their teaching methods in order to facilitate spiritual growth while in

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[3] Eugene Mihaly et al., "'Innovators of Torah': Preparing Tomorrow's Rabbis for Reform Judaism," Report of the Task Force on the Rabbinic Curriculum of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. (unpublished) Cincinnati, 1988, 14-16.

rabbinical school.

In the course of the study, I became aware of certain tensions or dual sets of values which each administration was compelled to face. Many of the main differences between an "old" curriculum and the revised version and between the curricula of individual seminaries had to do with the emphasis placed on one side of the set over and above the other side. In a sense these tensions are all interrelated. I have labeled them "Talmud versus other," "must versus ought," "academic versus practical," and "lecture versus seminar."

Since the eastern European yeshivot did emphasize Talmud study almost to the exclusion of all other areas of Jewish study including Bible, every modern seminary has been obliged to confront the issue of how much weight Talmud study should carry in a diversified curriculum which has as its goal the mastery of numerous subjects and skills. Talmud and halakhic study were the bread and butter of the pre-modern rabbi; they no longer are. The seminaries whose curricula we examined covered the spectrum from a strong emphasis on Talmud and halakhic literature at all the European seminaries except for the Hochschule to minimal representation at the JIR. There were not only variations in the amount, but in the approach as well, which might be scientific, practical, comparative with the legal codes of other civilizations, or another strategy entirely. Having based this study primarily on the seminaries' catalogues it was often

difficult to ascertain which approach was used, but the evidence suggests that each school employed different methods or a combination of methods at different times. Certainly, both HUC and JTS used a scientific approach in their early years, but they also made a point of choosing texts for study such as tractates covering the laws of marriage and divorce which would be most germane to the practical rabbinate. In keeping with Kaplan's two-civilization philosophy, RRC tended to employ a historical-comparative approach.

In addition to amount and method of Talmud study, the seminaries had to consider the purpose of its inclusion, which leads into the next tension--that of "must versus ought." Why should a rabbi study Talmud once the rabbi no longer serves the function of legal decisor? The builders and revisers of rabbinical curricula had to determine the extent to which rabbis should possess knowledge of many Jewish subjects, including Talmud. My study of this subject has led me to the conclusion that one of the rabbi's functions is as a repository of tradition and, therefore, we are responsible for carrying on the tradition of Talmudic and biblical studies, even if we find no immediate use for them in our daily rabbinate. The Reform and Reconstructionist seminaries generally endeavored to require a sufficient introduction to Talmudic literature so that rabbis would be able to consult the sources and continue studying and teaching based on individual interest. Both seminary programs were also structured so that the student who so desired had the

option of choosing a larger number of courses in one area such as Bible, Talmud, or philosophy. JTS generally placed a greater emphasis on Talmud, both because they saw the Conservative rabbi as a repository of tradition, and because they continued to see Talmud as playing more of a central role in the Jewish community.

Related to the tensions between "Talmud versus other" and "must versus ought" is the tension between "academic versus professional." The European seminaries placed a heavy emphasis on the value of academic achievement, and the American seminaries all followed suit. Wise's curriculum was almost exclusively academic, in spite of all he had written about the need for professionally-trained American rabbis. Solomon Schechter also placed a high value on the pursuit of scholarship, as did Ira Eisenstein. There were two paths to confronting issues of the professional aspect in the rabbinical seminary curriculum. One was found in the creation of professional development courses such as speech, homiletics, education, cantillation, and counseling. The other was the employment of a method of study which emphasized the practical aspects of academic subjects, such as a parshat ha shavuah Bible course. In Charles Liebman's study, he concluded that the students at JTS felt that their teachers tended to neglect the practical and meaningful content materials of the subject matter in favor of a purely academic approach, especially with regard to text study.[4] My own limited experience tells me that this feeling is still shared by most

[4] Liebman, 42, 50-51.

rabbinical students at all three seminaries. Liebman noted that "seminaries value scholarship more highly than professional training."[5] Since many students have been concerned and will continue to be concerned with studying texts, and Judaism, in general, in such a way that the lessons can be shared with the general Jewish community, this tension will probably continue to exist in the rabbinical seminaries.

Lastly, the seminaries have all had to confront the tension of "lecture versus seminar." Along the way, HUC and JTS both introduced seminars in which students were required to participate more extensively in the presentation of the subject material. From its very inception, RRC taught most courses with a seminar approach. Currently, RRC students often complain that the seminar courses lack structure and direction, while JTS and HUC students complain that lecturers treat them as passive receptacles of information. Attempts have been made by the seminaries to strike a balance between the two approaches.

HUC-JIR and JTS are once again involved in preparations for a major curricular reform to be implemented over the next few years. RRC is also in the midst of ongoing curricular reform. These seminaries can benefit from examining the history of curricular development in the modern seminary and learning from the strengths and weaknesses of past curricula. All three seminaries are planning revisions rather than radical reform and are undergoing a process which involves input from students,

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[5] Ibid., 37.

faculty, and congregants. As each school makes its changes it will be expected to try to strike a balance between the tensions described above, and other tensions as well. Each will deal with the current concern with integrating a more spiritual approach into their programs. Another issue is integrating feminist concerns into the curriculum. Many feel that it was not enough merely to admit women into the rabbinical program; changes must be made throughout the structures of the liberal Jewish community, including the recognition of women's roles in the Bible, Talmud, and throughout Jewish history. Scholarship concerning Jewish women's history has made great progress in the last two decades, but all of the rabbinical seminaries lag behind in the systematic incorporation of this scholarship into the curriculum.

The history of American rabbinical seminary curricular development teaches us that changes occur slowly and as the result of a multitude of factors. There are many disagreements as to what a rabbi must and should know. But the fact that so many changes have been successfully implemented, coupled with the fact that the seminaries are currently continuing the dynamic process of curricular reform, demonstrates that the American liberal rabbinical seminary is alive and well, with prospects for a long and healthy process of continued change and development.

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