Judaic Studies

Shnayer Z. Leiman

Rabbinic Responses

to

Modernity

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Learning was his lifelong passion

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RABBINIC RESPONSES TO MODERNITY

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I. Introduction

In a very profound sense, the debate between *Torah only* and *Torah and derekh erez* enthusiasts is a misplaced one.[1] The extreme positions are imaginary constructs that no serious Torah scholar embraces. That is, no serious Torah scholar would deny the value of *derekh erez*, whether defined minimally as "gainful employment," or maximally so as to include in its purview secular wisdom and all aspects of general culture that enhance one's understanding and appreciation of God's creation: *the earth in its fullness, the world and its inhabitants* (Psalms 24:1).[2] He could do so only at the risk of undermining Torah itself. On the other hand, no serious Torah scholar who embraced *Torah and derekh erez* ever denied the centrality of Torah, or imagined that *Torah and derekh erez* were axiologically separate but equal realms.

Certainly, in the last three hundred years, the preeminent exemplar of *Torah only* was the Gaon of Vilna (d. 1797). The Gaon did not merely refuse to earn

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1 The binary terminology used here was introduced by R. Shimon Schwab, *These and Those* (New York, 1967), 7.

2 *Derekh Erez* in rabbinic parlance bears a variety of meanings, but never "secular study" or "general culture."See,e.g., the entry *derekh erez* in *Enzyklopedyah Talmudit* (Jerusalem, 1956), VII, 672 - 706. The plain sense of the term at its locus classicus, M. Avot 2:2: *"yafeh Talmud torah 'im derekh erez"* appears to be "worldly occupation" or "gainful employment." See, for example, R. David Z. Hoffmann's German translation of, and commentary to, M. Avot 2:2 in *Mischnaiot*2 (Berlin, 1924), 332. The broadening of the term *derekh erez* in that context to include secular study, and even more broadly to include general culture, while rooted in medieval commentary, is a modern phenomenon. For the medieval roots, see R. David b. Abraham Maimuni, *Midrash David*, commentary to M. Avot 2:2 (Jerusalem, 1991), 26. For pre-Hirschian broadening of the term in the modern period, see R. Yishmael ha-Kohen (d. 1811), *She'elot u-Teshuvot Zera' Emet* (Livorno, 1796), II, 119a, § 107. Cf. the usage by R. Samuel Landau (d. 1834) in a passage from 1816, cited below at p. 34.

a living; he refused to be gainfully employed either as a rabbi or rosh yeshiva. Instead, he devoted a lifetime to the diligent study of Torah for some twenty hours per day. Regarding his daily regimen, his sons reported as follows:

> Throughout his lifetime, he never slept more than two hours in any twenty-four hour period. He never slept for more than a half-hour at a time, and during that half-hour his lips recited *halakhot* and *aggadot* in a whisper. When the half-hour elapsed, he gathered strength like a lion, ritually cleansed his hands, and began learning in a loud voice, after which he went back to sleep for a half-hour. It was his practice to sleep three half-hours in the evening and one half-hour during the day.[3]

His singular devotion to Torah knew no bounds. Again, the testimony of his sons – who sometimes received the short end of his singlemindedness – is impeccable.

> He never inquired of his sons and daughters regarding their occupation or economic well-being. He never sent them a letter inquiring about their well-being. When any of his children came to visit him, even though he rejoiced greatly, for often they had not seen him for a year or two, he never inquired about the well-being of their family or regarding their occupation. After allowing his son to rest for an hour, he would urge him to return immediately to his studies, saying: "You must make amends in my house for the study time forfeited during your journey here."[4]

It is difficult to imagine what else one could do in

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3 Introduction to *Be'ur ha-Gra, Shulḥan 'Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim.*
4 Introduction to *Be'ur ha-Gra.*

order to surpass the Gaon as a *Torah only* enthusiast. Nevertheless, the Gaon's attitude toward secular wisdom was hardly rejectionist, as evidenced by the following passages:

R. Barukh Schick of Shklov (d. 1808):

> When I visited Vilna in Tevet 5538 [1778] . . . I heard from the holy lips of the Gaon of Vilna that to the extent one is deficient in secular wisdom he will be deficient a hundredfold in Torah study, for Torah and wisdom are bound up together. He compared a person lacking in secular wisdom to a man suffering from constipation; his disposition is affected to the point that he refuses all food. . . He urged me to translate into Hebrew as much secular wisdom as possible, so as to cause the nations to disgorge what they have swallowed, making it available to all, thereby increasing knowledge among the Jews. Thus, the nations will no longer be able to lord it over us – and bring about the profaning of God's name – with their taunt: "Where is your wisdom?"[5]

R. Abraham Simḥah of Amtchislav (d. 1864):

> I heard from my uncle R. Ḥayyim of Volozhin that the Gaon of Vilna told his son R. Abraham that he craved for translations of secular wisdom into Hebrew, including a translation of the Greek or Latin Josephus,[6] through which he could

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5 *Sefer Uklidos* (The Hague, 1780), introduction. It is unclear whether the justification given at the end of the passage cited here is to be ascribed to the Gaon of Vilna or to Schick. See David E. Fishman, "A Polish Rabbi Meets the Berlin Haskalah: The Case of R. Barukh Schick," *AJS Review* 12 (1987): 95 - 121, especially pp. 115 - 19, who argues persuasively that it is to be ascribed to Schick. Cf. his *Russia's First Modern Jews: The Jews of Shklov* (New York, 1995), 22-45.

6 Josephus was known to medieval Jewry via a garbled He-

fathom the plain sense of various rabbinic passages in the Talmud and Midrash.[7]

The Gaon of Vilna's sons:

By the time the Gaon of Vilna was twelve years old, he mastered the seven branches of secular wisdom. . . [8] First he turned to mathematics . . . then astronomy.[9]

R. Israel of Shklov (d. 1839):

I cannot refrain from repeating a true and

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brew version, which was thought to be the original Hebrew version addressed to the Jews, called *Yosippon*. Modern scholarship has established that this Hebrew version originated in the tenth century; see, e.g., David L. Flusser,, ed., *Sefer Yosippon* (Jerusalem, 1980), II, 3-252. This was distinguished by the Gaon and others from the original Greek text of Josephus (first published edition: Basel, 1544), and its many Latin translations (first published edition: Augsburg. 1470), addressed to the Romans, which were referred to as *Yosippon la-Romiyyim*. Obviously, the Gaon would have preferred a Hebrew rendering of the original Greek, but one suspects that this call for a translation was addressed to eighteenth century Jews adept in Latin.

7 Letter dated 1862 appended to Kalman Schulman's translation of Josephus' *The Jewish War, Milḥamot ha-Yehudim 'im ha-Roma'im* (Warsaw, 1862),II, v-vi.

8 The term *seven branches of wisdom* (Hebrew *sheva ha-ḥokhmot*) was unknown to classical Jewish literature prior to the medieval period, when it was often read into Proverbs 9:1. The concept, which seems to have originated with Varro (ca. 116-27 B.C.E.), culminated with the seven branches of learning of medieval scholasticism: the trivium of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, and the quadrivium of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. For two interesting "Jewish" versions of the seven branches of wisdom, see R. Baḥya b. Asher (end of thirteenth century), commentary on M. Avot 3:18, in R. Charles Chavel, ed., *Kitvei Rabbenu Baḥya* (Jerusalem, 1970) 591; and R. Jonathan Eibeschuetz, *Ya'arot Devash*, ed. Makhon Yerushalayim (Jerusalem, 1984), II, 122-23. In general, see Dov Rappel, *Sheva ha-Ḥokhmot: ha-Vikuaḥ 'al Limmudei Ḥol be-Yahadut* (Jerusalem, 1990), 12-66.

9 Introduction to the Gaon of Vilna's commentary on the Torah, *Adderet Eliyahu*, ed. M. Shulsinger (New York, 1950), 6.

> astonishing story that I heard from the Gaon's disciple R. Menahem Mendel . . . [10] It took place when the Gaon of Vilna celebrated the completion of his commentary on Song of Songs. . . . He raised his eyes toward heaven and with great devotion began blessing and thanking God for endowing him with the ability to comprehend the light of the entire Torah. This included its inner and outer manifestations. He explained: All secular wisdom is essential for our holy Torah and is included in it. He indicated that he had mastered all the branches of secular wisdom, including algebra, trigonometry, geometry, and music. He especially praised music, explaining that most of the Torah accents, the secrets of the Levitical songs, and the secrets of the *Tikkunei Zohar* could not be comprehended without mastering it. . . . He explained the significance of the various secular disciplines, and noted that he had mastered them all. Regarding the discipline of medicine, he stated that he had mastered anatomy, but not pharmacology. Indeed, he had wanted to study pharmacology with practicing physicians, but his father prevented him from undertaking its study, fearing that upon mastering it he would be forced to curtail his Torah study whenever it would become necessary for him to save a life. . . He also stated that he had mastered all of philosophy, but that he had derived only two matters of significance from his study of it. . . The rest of it, he said, should be discarded.[11]

Even if one allows for a measure of exaggeration in

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10 R. Menaḥem Mendel of Shklov (d. 1827) was instrumental in the renewal of the Ashkenazic community of Jerusalem during the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

11 *Pe'at ha-Shulḥan*, ed. Abraham M. Luncz (Jerusalem, 1911), 5 a.

these reports, in fact they were published by contemporaries of the Gaon (with the exception of the second report which, however, is reported in the name of a contemporary of the Gaon) who knew him personally. Moreover, the tradents themselves were men of integrity whose scholarly credentials were impeccable.[12] These, then, should hardly be treated as imaginary tales that were reduced to writing for the first time many generations after the events they

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12 R. Bezalel Landau, *Ha-Gaon he-Ḥasid mi-Vilna*, third edition (Jerusalem, 1978), 217 and 225-26, n. 16, questions the authenticity of Schick's report, suggesting that Schick's Haskalah leanings led him either to invent the report in its entirety or, at the very least, to misconstrue whatever it was the Gaon had said. While it is certainly true that some Haskalah enthusiasts recreated the Gaon in their own image – see, e.g., E. Etkes, "The Gaon of Vilna and the Haskalah: Image and Reality," (Hebrew) in *Perakim be-Toledot ha-Ḥevrah ha-Yehudit bi-Yemei ha-Beynayyim u-ve-'Et ha-Ḥadashah* (Jerusalem, 1980), 192-217 – there is no evidence whatever that Schick engaged in such activity. For the extent of his Haskalah leanings – if they can be called such – see Fishman's study (cited above, n. 5). His integrity, to the best of my knowledge, has never been called into question. The fact remains that Schick, a Polish talmudist who served as *dayyan* in Minsk, published his report during the lifetime of the Gaon. Its content complements and is in harmony with all else that is known about the Gaon's attitude toward *ḥokhmah*. R. Abraham Simḥah of Amtchislav (see above, n. 7), a nephew and disciple of R. Ḥayyim of Volozhin, the Gaon's disciple, refers to Schick's report approvingly; so too the editors of the classic biography of the Gaon, *'Aliyot Eliyahu*, ed. Lewin-Epstein (Jerusalem, 1970), 45, n. 25. Landau's suspicion, at least in this case, appears to be unwarranted. Cf. the more judicious treatment in D. Eliach, *Ha-Gaon* (Jerusalem, 2002), vol. 2, 594-601, especially notes 14 and 20. The Gaon's positive attitude toward *ḥokhmah* was sufficiently well known during his lifetime, and immediately afterwards, that many in Eastern Europe assumed he was the author of an anonymous desk encyclopedia of general science and Jewish thought that appeared in Hebrew in Bruenn, 1797. The true author, R. Pinḥas Eliyahu Hurwitz, was forced to reveal his name in the second edition (Zolkiev, 1807) in order to set the matter straight. See R. Pinḥas E. Hurwitz, *Sefer ha-Berit* (New York, 1977), second introduction, 7b.

purportedly describe. Clearly, the Gaon viewed secular wisdom positively and instrumentally, i.e., its value depended upon the light it could shed on Torah.

In recent years, the Gaon's positive view of secular wisdom appears to have received unexpected support from the publication of R. Hillel of Shklov's *Kol ha-Tor*. R. Hillel (d. 1838) was a disciple of the Gaon who settled in Jerusalem in 1809. His *Kol ha-Tor*, an eschatological work based on the Gaon's teaching, remained in manuscript form until 1946, when several fascicles of the original appeared in print. Fuller versions were published between 1969 and 1994 in Bnei Brak and Jerusalem. R. Hillel cites, in the name of the Gaon of Vilna, an elaborate eschatology in which the spread of secular wisdom among Jews at the end of time plays a decisive role in bringing about the ultimate redemption of mankind.[13]

Conversely, R. Samson Raphael Hirsch (d. 1888) and R. Azriel Hildesheimer (d. 1899), the modern architects of *Torah and derekh erez*, lived, breathed and taught the centrality of Torah. They repeatedly underscored their conviction that *derekh erez* was subservient to Torah (more about which see below, *passim*). The issue, then, is not whether secular wisdom may (or even: ought to) be pursued, but rather: which secular disciplines, under what circumstances, and by whom. The Gaon of Vilna, for example, was not

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13 See *Kol ha-Tor* (Bnei Brak, 1969); R. Menaḥem M. Kasher, *Ha-Tekufah ha-Gedolah* (Jerusalem, 1972), 409-575; and the recent, fuller, annotated version of *Kol ha-Tor* (Jerusalem, 1994), esp. pp. 115-126. Much mystery, however, surrounds the publication of *Kol ha-Tor*. The original manuscript has not been made available to the public. Thus, it is unknown how much of the original manuscript was published; how much of it was actually written by R. Hillel of Shklov; and whether or not the quotes in the name of the Gaon of Vilna were actually said by him.

prepared to interrupt his daily regimen in order to master Greek or Latin and read Josephus in the original. But he felt quite comfortable in encouraging other Jews, whose obligation to study Torah – at least in theory – was no different than the Gaon's to translate Josephus into Hebrew.

The extreme positions aside, a spacious middle ground remains, embracing a broad spectrum of opinion, ranging from those who tolerated general culture only under the most circumscribed of conditions, to those who, for example, embraced secular study enthusiastically, and even incorporated it in the yeshiva curriculum.

There can be no question that the dominant position of East European *gedolei yisrael* in recent memory has been the open rejection of general culture. This, despite – and sometimes due to – the advent of modernity and the opportunities and benefits it has provided for the Jewish community at large. The Ḥatam Sofer, R. Yosef Baer Soloveitchik (author of *Bet ha-Levi)*, the Ḥafez Ḥayyim, R. Elḥanan. Wasserman, the Ḥazon Ish, R. Aharon Kotler – and virtually every Ḥasidic Rebbe of note – are among the many Torah giants who shared this view,

Orthodox teaching, however, has never been in the habit of speaking in only one voice. Diverse figures such as Rabbis Samson Raphael Hirsch, Ẓadok ha-Kohen of Lublin, Israel Salanter, Abraham Isaac ha-Kohen Kook, and Joseph B. Soloveitchik reflect the incredible richness, depth, and latitude of Orthodox thought in the modern period. Alongside the dominant position of rejection of general culture, there were other *gedolei yisrael* – some sat on the *mo'eẓet gedolei ha-Torah* of Agudat Yisrael, others would occasionally join together on broadsides with members of the rabbinic court of the *'edah ha-ḥaredit* – who embraced general

culture. Some did so enthusiastically; others reluctantly. Some were natives of Central and Western Europe; others of Eastern Europe. Some thought it essential that the yeshiva curriculum address and incorporate aspects of general culture; others thought it proper for certain individuals to embrace general culture, but not institutions (i.e., yeshivot).

The aim of this essay is to present, if only in outline form, a representative account of *gedolei yisrael* in the early modern period (i.e., the nineteenth century) who sought to relate Torah teaching to general culture. Our focus will be primarily, if not exclusively, on their differing viewpoints vis-à-vis general culture, on the institutions they engendered, and on their impact on the Jewish community at large. This essay does not purport to be an exercise in either history or biography; nor does it make any claim toward comprehensiveness. Rather, it is an attempt to engage in intellectual prosopography, i.e., to present a portrait of one aspect – albeit a crucial one – of the attitudes of a select group of *gedolei yisrael* who confronted modernity with an openness to general culture. Any attempt to portray all *gedolei yisrael* in the modern period who, in one form or another, reacted positively to general culture would have resulted in a lengthy monograph, at the very least. Such a volume would surely have tested the patience of most readers, and – in any event – would have moved well beyond my ability.

No hidden agenda need be sought in the presentation. It is intended to be largely descriptive and, hopefully, accurate. Wherever possible, the positions of the *gedolei yisrael* will be presented in their own words.

One final word. Feelings run high about some of these figures and their respective positions on Torah and general culture. In the heat of argument, their

positions have often been misconstrued and misrepresented. It will be no small accomplishment if their views are set out dispassionately and accurately. To the extent that there is an agenda in this presentation, it is a transparent one: to demonstrate that the positions described in this essay are real, not imaginary. They are legitimate alternatives within Orthodoxy, to be accepted, rejected, but not ignored by those genuinely committed to traditional Jewish teaching.

II. Setting

Rabbinic responses to general culture do not occur in a vacuum. Since our focus is on the modern period, it is essential that we develop a sense of what distinguishes the modern from the premodern periods.[14] After a survey of some of the more important distinctions, we will turn our attention to an historical episode (involving R. David Friesenhausen) that vividly illustrates the tensions that pervaded Orthodoxy during its transition from the premodern to

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14 In preparing this discussion of the setting of the Jewish transition from the premodern to the modern periods, I have learned much from: Robert Chazan and Marc L. Raphael, eds., *Modern Jewish History: A Source Reader* (New York, 1969); Michael A. Meyer, *The Origins of the Modern Jew* (Detroit, 1967); Jacob Katz, *Out of the Ghetto* (New York, 1978); idem, ed., *Toward Modernity: The European Jewish Model* (New Brunswick, 1987); and Paul R. Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, eds., *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History* (New York, 1980). See also Jehuda Reinharz and Walter Schatzberg, eds., *The Jewish Response to German Culture* (Hanover, 1985); David Sorkin, *From East to West: Jews in a Changing Europe*, 1750-1870 (Oxford, 1991); and Steven Lowenstein, *The Berlin Jewish Community: Enlightenment, Family, and Crisis, 1770-1830* (New York, 1994). Important studies of the state of Jewish society just prior to the onset of modernity include: Azriel Shochet, *'Im Hillufei Tekufot* (Jerusalem, 1960); and Jacob Katz, *Tradition and Crisis: Jewish Society at the End of the Middle Ages* (New York, 1961).

the modern periods. Finally, a brief account of the state of Torah education in Western and Central Europe at the start of the nineteenth century will enable us to view in proper perspective the contributions of the *gedolei yisrael* who followed.

From Premodernity to Modernity

Writing in the seventeenth century, R. Nathan Hanover presented the following idealized portrait of Torah study in Poland:

> Matters that are well known need no proof, for throughout the dispersion of Israel there was nowhere so much learning as in the land of Poland. Each community maintained yeshivot, and the head of each yeshiva was given an ample salary so that he could maintain his school without worry, and that the study of the Torah might be his sole occupation. The head of the yeshiva did not leave his house the whole year except to go from the house of study to the synagogue. Thus he was engaged in the study of the Torah day and night. Each community maintained young men and provided for them a weekly allowance of money that they might study with the head of the yeshiva. And for each young man they also maintained two boys to study under his guidance, so that he would orally discuss the Gemara, the commentaries of Rashi, and the Tosafot, which he had learned, and thus he would gain experience in the subtlety of talmudic argumentation. The boys were provided with food from the community benevolent fund or from the public kitchen. If the community consisted of fifty householders it supported not less than thirty young men and boys. One young man and two boys would be assigned to one householder. And the young man ate at his table as one of his sons. Although the young man

received a stipend from the community, the householder provided him with all the food and drink that he needed. Some of the more charitable householders also allowed the boys to eat at their table, thus three persons would be provided with food and drink by one householder the entire year.

There was scarcely a house in all of Poland where its members did not occupy themselves with the study of the Torah. Either the head of the family was himself a scholar, or else his son or his son-in-law studied, or one of the young men eating at his table. At times, all of these were to be found in one house. Thus they realized all the three things which Raba said:[15]"He who loves the rabbis will have sons who are rabbis; he who honors the rabbis will have rabbis for sons-in-law; he who stands in awe of the rabbis will himself be a rabbinic scholar." Thus there were many scholars in every community. A community of fifty householders had twenty scholars who achieved the title *morenu or ḥaver* The head of the yeshiva was above all these, and the scholars were submissive to him and they would go to his yeshiva to attend his discourses.

The program of study in the land of Poland was as follows: The term of study consisted of the period which required the young men and the boys to study with the head of the yeshiva. In the summer it extended from the first day of the month of Iyar until the fifteenth day of the month of Ab, and, in the winter, from the first day of the month of Ḥeshvan until the fifteenth day of the month of Shevat. After the fifteenth of Shevat or the fifteenth of Ab, the young men and the boys were free to study wherever they preferred. From

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15 Shabbat 23b.

the first day of Iyar until the Feast of Weeks, and in the winter from the first day of Ḥeshvan until Ḥanukkah, all the students of the yeshiva studied Gemara, the commentaries of Rashi and Tosafot with great diligence. Each day they studied a *halakhah* – one page of Gemara with the commentaries of Rashi and Tosafot is called a *halakhah*.

All the scholars and the young students of the community as well as all those who showed inclination to study the Torah assembled in the yeshiva. The head of the yeshiva alone occupied a chair and the scholars and the other students stood about him. Before the head of the yeshiva appeared they would engage in a discussion of the *halakhah,* and when he arrived each one would ask him that which he found difficult in the *halakhah* and he would offer his explanation to each of them.

They were all silent, as the head of the yeshiva delivered his lecture and presented the new results of his study. After discussing his new interpretations the head of the yeshiva would discuss a *ḥilluk* (a distinction that explains away an apparent contradiction), which proceeded in the following manner: He would cite a contradiction that emerged from the Gemara, Rashi or Tosafot; he would question deletions or superfluous words and pose contradictory statements and provide solutions which would also prove perplexing; and then he would propose solutions until the *halakhah* was completely clarified.

In the summer they would not leave the yeshiva before noon. From the Feast of Weeks until the New Year, and from Ḥanukkah until Passover, the head of the yeshiva would not engage in so many discussions. He would study with the scholars the Codes such as the *Arba'ah Turim* (the

Four Rows) and their commentaries. With young men he would study Rav Alfas and other works. In any case, they also studied Gemara, Rashi, and Tosafot, until the first day of Ab or the fifteenth day of Shevat. From then on until Passover or the New Year they studied the Codes and similar works only. Some weeks prior to the fifteenth day of Ab or the fifteenth day of Shevat, the head of the yeshiva would honor each student to lead in the discussions in his stead. The honor was given both to the scholars and the students. They would present the discussion, and the head of the yeshiva would listen and then join in the disputation. This was done to exercise their intellect. The same tractate was studied throughout the land of Poland in the proper sequence of the Six Orders.

Each head of a yeshiva had a truant officer who daily went from primary school to primary school to look after the boys, both rich and poor, that they should study. He would warn them every day of the week that they should study and not loiter in the streets. On Thursdays all the boys had to be examined by the principal of the primary schools on what they had learned during the week, and he who knew nothing of what he had studied or erred in one thing was flogged by the truant officer at the command of the principal and was otherwise also chastised before the boys so that he should remember to study more diligently the following week. Likewise on Sabbath Eve all the boys went in a group to the head of the yeshiva to be questioned on what they had learned during the week, as in the aforementioned procedure. In this manner there was fear upon the boys and they studied with regularity. Also during the *shelosheth yemei hagbalah* (the three days preceding the Feast of Weeks) and during Ḥanukkah, the young men and the boys were obliged to review what they

had studied during that term, and for this the community leaders gave specified gifts of money. Such was the practice until the fifteenth of Ab or the fifteenth of Shevat. After that the head of the yeshiva, together with all his students, the young men and the boys, journeyed to the fair. In the summer they travelled to the fair of Zaslaw and to the fair of Jaroslaw, in the winter to the fairs of Lwow and Lublin. There the young men and boys were free to study in any yeshiva they preferred. Thus at each of the fairs hundreds of yeshiva heads, thousands of young men, and tens of thousands of boys, and Jewish merchants, and Gentiles like the sand on the shore of the sea, would gather. For people would come to the fair from one end of the world to the other. Whoever had a son or daughter of marriageable age went to the fair and there arranged a match. For there was ample opportunity for everyone to find his like and his mate. Thus hundreds and sometimes thousands of such matches would be arranged at each fair. And Jews, both men and women, walked about the fair, dressed in royal garments. For they were held in esteem in the eyes of the rulers and in the eyes of the Gentiles, and the children of Israel were many like the sand of the sea, but now because of our sins, they have become few. May the Lord have mercy upon them.

In each community great honor was accorded to the head of the yeshiva. His words were heard by rich and poor alike. None questioned his authority. Without him no one raised his hand or foot, and as he commanded so it came to be. In his hand he carried a stick, and a lash, to smite and to flog, to punish and to chastise transgressors, to institute ordinances, to establish safeguards, and to declare the forbidden. Nevertheless everyone loved the head of the yeshiva, and he that had a good portion such as

fatted fowl, or capons or good fish, would honor the head of the yeshiva with half or all, and with other gifts of silver and gold without measure. In the synagogue, too, most of those who brought honors would accord them to the head of the yeshiva. It was obligatory to call him to the Torah reading third, on the Sabbath and the first days of the Festivals. And if the head of the yeshiva happened to be a Kohen or a Levite, he would be given preference despite the fact that there may have been others entitled to the honor of Kohen or Levi, or the concluding portion. No one left the synagogue on the Sabbath or the Festival until the head of the yeshiva walked out first and his pupils after him, and then the whole congregation accompanied him to his home. On the Festivals the entire congregation followed him to his house to greet him. For this reason all the scholars were envious and studied with diligence, so that they too, might advance to this state, and become the head of a yeshiva in some community, and out of doing good with an ulterior motive, there comes the doing good for its own sake, and the land was filled with knowledge.[16]

We included this riveting, if prolix, passage in its entirety, not only because of its intrinsic merit, but also – and primarily – because it serves as a convenient foil against which one can measure the devastating effects of modernity on the traditional Jewish setting. Hanover's account correctly presupposes that rabbinic authority reigned supreme and went largely unchallenged; that governmental agencies made no attempt to regulate Jewish educational institutions or to impose

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16 *Yeven Meẓulah* (Venice, 1653; reissued: Jerusalem, 1965), 42-3. The translation, with minor modification, is taken from Abraham J. Mesch, trans., Nathan Hanover, *Abyss Of Despair* (New York, 1950), 110-16.

a minimum set of educational requirements on all citizens of the realm; that religious values dictated priorities in the Jewish community; and that a unified sense of purpose pervaded a more or less uniform and closed social and religious community. With the advent of modernity, all these presuppositions would evaporate into thin air.

In the premodern Jewish world of Nathan Hanover, Jews were neither Lithuanians nor Poles, neither Frenchmen nor Germans. Rabbis moved freely from Lithuania to Germany (e.g., R. Ezekiel Katzenellenbogen [d. 1749] of Brest-Litovsk served as rabbi of the triple community of Altona, Hamburg, and Wandsbeck in Denmark and Germany), from Holland to the Western Ukraine (e.g., R. Ẓevi Ashkenazi [d. 1718], who left Amsterdam to assume a post in Lemberg), and vice versa, thus reflecting the social cohesiveness of the Jewish communities in premodern Europe. By the middle of the nineteenth century – largely due to cultural spheres of influence – it would have been inconceivable for, say, R. Samson Raphael Hirsch (d. 1888) to have served as rabbi of Brest-Litovsk, or for R. Moshe Yehoshua Leib Diskin of Brest-Litovsk (d. 1898) to have served as rabbi of Frankfurt. Indeed, by the end of the nineteenth century, many lay Jews would openly characterize themselves as Frenchmen, Germans, and Englishmen "of the Mosaic persuasion." In short, whereas Jews had once been first and foremost Jews, they now developed multiple identities and loyalties.

In the premodern world, Jews lived in a Christian and alien society. Often, Jews were considered physically revolting, morally depraved, and religiously condemned. This led to a series of political, social, and economic restrictions that kept the Jews a people apart. For example, Jews were not permitted to settle

wherever they pleased. The Pale of Settlement in Czarist Russia was a modern vestige of this essentially medieval practice. It took another form in Bohemia and Moravia where, for example, the *Familiantengesetz* of 1726 decreed that only the eldest son in a Jewish household had the right to marry and settle in the locality where his family resided.[17] Jews often had to pay special taxes for the privilege of residing in a particular locality. They also had to pay a special tax, the *Leibzoll* (body tax), when travelling from one country to another. Severe restrictions were placed on the occupations in which Jews were permitted to engage. Jews were often expelled from particular localities at the whim of those in power. Thus, as late as 1744, the entire Jewish community was expelled from Prague, despite the fact that Jews had resided there for centuries.

In general, the Jewish communities were religiously autonomous. Rabbis and rabbinical courts were empowered by the state to adjudicate internal disputes that affected the Jewish community alone. Often, Jewish communal officials were responsible for collecting from all members of the Jewish community the taxes solicited by the governmental authorities. They also maintained internal discipline by means of the authority vested in them by the *kehillah* structure, in accordance with its rules and regulations. In effect, the Jewish and Christian communities were mutually exclusive, with no easy access from the one to the other. A Jew could opt out of the Jewish community almost exclusively by an act of apostasy.

The Age of Enlightenment, the French Revolution,

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17 See, e.g., Hillel J. Kieval, "Caution's Progress: The Modernization of Jewish Life in Prague, 1780-1830," in J. Katz, ed., *Toward Modernity*, 76.

and their aftermath would bring an end to the premodern world, as they ushered in modernity. For the Jews, modernity would be a long process, beginning in the Napoleonic lands, taking root in Germany, and ultimately spreading eastward. Some Jewish communities would first confront modernity in the twentieth century. Key turning points in the history of modernity were the promulgation of the Edict of Tolerance by Emperor Joseph II of Austria in 1781-82, and the granting of citizenship to Jews in France by the National Assembly in 1790-91. These would lead to the granting of citizenship and civil rights to Jews in almost every modern European state by the end of the nineteenth century. The upshot of these political gains was the undoing of all that defined the state of Jewry in the premodern period. Legally, at least, Jews were no longer living in an alien society; in theory, they enjoyed the same rights and privileges as Christians. Unrestricted residency would bring the ghetto walls crumbling down. Taxes that discriminated against the Jews were abolished. Restrictions against specific occupations were rescinded. The Jews entered into European society with a vengeance.

No less significant was the change in attitude toward Jews that accompanied these political reforms, at least initially. Erasmus, Grotius, Pufendorf, and Locke preached toleration, humanism, and the brotherhood of mankind. With Locke, reason became the arbiter of all truth. These teachings laid the foundation for the Enlightenment, which dominated eighteenth-century thought. Under the subsequent influence of Diderot, Voltaire, Rousseau, Hume, Lessing, and Kant, religion was approached rationally. Ultimate faith was placed in rational man, and universal principles that governed nature and society were sought. In intellectual circles, deism displaced traditional Christian teaching and masonic lodges were

established to help disseminate the new thinking. The idea of the secular state, and of the separation of church and state, came into being. All this led to a rethinking of the place of the Jew in general society. To the extent that a Jew was rational, and committed to the principles that bind all of mankind together, he could not really be denied his rightful place in society. With the Enlightenment, a new middle ground emerged where Jew and Christian could meet without having to pay the price of apostasy.

While all this was taking place, rabbinic authority was engaged in an act of self-destruction. In 1666, Sabbatai Ẓevi, a Jewish mystic who had been proclaimed the true Messiah, converted to Islam. Despite his conversion and subsequent death (in 1676), the movement he initiated continued throughout much of the eighteenth century. During his lifetime, he enjoyed the enthusiastic support of many prominent rabbinic authorities. After his conversion and death, rabbinic support for the Sabbatian movement waned, but did not disappear entirely. In the eighteenth century, rabbinic opposition would ultimately drive Sabbatianism underground but not without considerable internecine strife among the rabbis themselves. In 1751, a distinguished rabbinic scholar, R. Jacob Emden (d. 1776), accused one of the leading rabbinic authorities of his generation, R. Jonathan Eibeschuetz (d. 1764), of being a secret believer in Sabbatai Ẓevi. The controversy that ensued – the Emden-Eibeschuetz controversy – would pit rabbi against rabbi in Jewish communities throughout Europe. During the first half of the eighteenth century, R. Israel Baal Shem Tov (d. 1760) would lay the foundations for a new populist Jewish mystical movement, Ḥasidism. Not surprisingly, it met with stiff opposition from the rabbinic establishment. The Sabbatian debacle, the Emden-Eibeschuetz controversy, and the struggle

against incipient Ḥasidism left rabbinic authority largely in disarray. Thus, for example, the ultimate symbol, if not expression, of rabbinic power was the ban. During the Emden-Eibeschuetz controversy, Emden and his supporters placed all rabbinic supporters of Eibeschuetz under the ban. Eibeschuetz and his supporters placed all rabbinic supporters of Emden under the ban. Since virtually every major rabbinic figure alive at the time took sides in the controversy, everyone was under the ban, which, of course, rendered the ban meaningless. Ultimately, the ban fell into desuetude. In some places it was legislated out of existence by governmental authority; in others, it was simply no longer circumspect to invoke the ban, and it was allowed to die a natural death. Rabbinic authority would never again regain the stature it held in the premodern period. In the modern period, such rabbinic authority could no longer be imposed; its power would be wielded only among those who voluntarily consented to abide by it, or in the few instances where it continued to derive its authority from the secular state.

Concomitant with these developments, and others that perhaps more properly belong to the twentieth century and later (such as: advanced technology, secularism, rampant materialism, ethical relativism, and the like, all of which have either contributed to, or are manifestations of, man's alienation from God), the most distinctive feature of modernity vis-à-vis the premodern period has been the precipitous decline in spirituality, or if one prefers, in traditional religion. Whereas for Nathan Hanover religion was the central force of Jewish life – and one suspects that he took for granted that it had always been so in the past and would continue to be so in the future – for the modern Jew, as for modern man, religion is, at best, on the periphery of his consciousness. Religion can become

meaningful and fulfilling only with the greatest of effort, always against the grain, in a never ending struggle where absolutely nothing can be taken for granted.

The radical transformation that Jews have witnessed and experienced in the last two hundred and fifty years is perhaps best brought home when one considers the simple fact that Reform Judaism, Conservative Judaism, secular Jews, the academic study of Judaism, the emergence of the American Jewish community as the largest – and one of the most powerful – in the world, political Zionism, and the State of Israel neither existed, nor could have been reasonably predicted, two hundred and fifty years ago.

R. David Friesenhausen: Precursor of *Torah and Derekh Erez*

Doubtless, his colleagues in Berlin called him "Wrong Way" Friesenhausen. During the second half of the eighteenth century, Berlin had become the mecca of enlightened Jewry. Under the aegis of Moses Mendelssohn, leader of and spokesman for the burgeoning Haskalah movement, Berlin became the center of attraction for Jewish intellectuals the world over. Marcus Herz, David Friedlander, Isaac Satanov, Solomon Dubno, Hartwig Wessely, Mendel Lefin, and Solomon Maimon were among the many who made the trek to Berlin, in some instances from as far East as Podolia.[18] Friesenhausen, an intellectual no less talented than many of Mendelssohn's colleagues mentioned above, would, after a residency of close to ten years, leave Berlin for Hunsdorf [Hunfalu], a

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18 In general, see Alexander Altmann, *Moses Mendelssohn: A Biographical Study* (London, 1973), 346-420.

Hungarian village hidden in the deep backwater of the Carpathian Mountains. That he sought employment and a wife, and eventually found both in Hunsdorf, is clear. But why Hunsdorf?. Short of a chance archival discovery, historians will never know the answer to this question. But one suggestive solution has been proffered by Meir Gilon, a modern historian, and after a brief account of Friesenhausen's life, we will present it for the reader's consideration.[19]

Born in the Franconia region of Germany in 1756, Friesenhausen spent the first thirty years of his life as a *Torah Only* enthusiast. He studied at the yeshiva in Fuerth, devoting his time entirely to the Talmud and the Codes. Apparently, the effects of the Enlightenment eventually permeated the walls of the yeshiva at Fuerth, and Friesenhausen became an avid reader of treatises on science, mathematics, and even philosophy. He left Fuerth for Berlin in order to pursue his new interests. During his stay in Berlin (1786-1796), he continued to study Torah intensively, allocating no more than two hours per day to secular study. In 1796, his last year in Berlin, he published the first of two books he would publish in his lifetime, *Kelil Ḥeshbon*. *A* treatise on algebra and geometry written in lucid, almost elegant Hebrew, its unabashed purpose was to make the results of these secular disciplines available to those who could not read modern languages. *A* letter of approbation from R. Ẓevi Hirsch Levin (d. 1800), Chief Rabbi of Berlin, was appended to the work. In it, R. Ẓevi Hirsch attests that during Friesenhausen's entire stay in Berlin "his Torah study

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19 Meir Gilon, "R. David Friesenhausen: Between the Poles of Haskalah and Ḥasidut," (Hebrew), in Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, ed., *The Rabbinical Seminary of Budapest* (New York, 1986), Hebrew section, 19-54. Cf. Y.Y. Cohen, *Ḥakhmei Hungariyah* (Jerusalem, 1997), 250-251.

was primary and habitual, whereas his secular study was secondary and sporadic." Shortly after the publication of *Kelil Ḥeshbon,* Friesenhausen left for Hunsdorf, where he was appointed *dayyan* and served with distinction on its rabbinic court until he moved to Ujhely in 1808. There, he served eight years on the rabbinic court of R. Moses Teitelbaum (d. 1841), author of *She'elot u-Teshuvot Heshiv Moshe,* and founder of the first Ḥasidic dynasty in Hungary.[20] Friesenhausen left Ujhely in order to arrange for the publication of his magnum opus, *Mosedot Tevel,* a treatise on astronomy that advocated the acceptance by Jews of the Copernican theory. Indeed, Friesenhausen was among the first Jews to look kindly on Copernicus and his theory.[21] Published in Vienna in 1820, it also included a new proof for Euclid's eleventh axiom, as well as Friesenhausen's autobiographical last will and testament. With the publication of *Mosedot Tevel,* Friesenhausen retired from public activity, spending his last years in the home of his son in Karlsburg in southern Transylvania, where he died in 1828.[22]

Despite his advocacy of *ḥokhmah,* Friesenhausen stressed the centrality of Talmud study throughout his writings. Although *ḥokhmah* clearly had its place in the

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20 R. Yosef M. Sofer, *Ha-Gaon ha-Kadosh Ba'al Yismaḥ Moshe* (New York, 1984).

21 In general, see Andre Neher, "Copernicus in the Hebraic Literature From the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 38 (1977): 211-26; Hillel Levine, "Paradise Not Surrendered: Jewish Reactions to Copernicus and the Growth of Modern Science," in R. S. Cohen and M. W. Wartofsky, eds., *Epistemology, Methodology and the Social Sciences* (Boston, 1983), 203-25; and Michael Panitz, "'New Heavens and a New Earth': Seventeenth to Nineteenth Century Jewish Responses to the New Astronomy," *Conservative Judaism* 40:2 (1987-1988): 28-42.

22 R. Yekutiel Y. Greenwald, *Korot ha-Torah ve-ha-Emunah be-Hungariyah* (Budapest, 1921), 40-41 and notes.

curriculum, Friesenhausen never got his priorities confused. Indeed, he repeatedly criticized those on the (religious) left whose primary energy was expended on *ḥokhmah* at the expense of Torah. A careful reading of his descriptions of those on the left leaves no doubt that he had in mind the radical Haskalah, as it developed in the post-Mendelssohnian era. Friesenhausen, of course, witnessed that development first hand, and could speak about it with authority. With this in mind, Meir Gilon has suggested that Friesenhausen deliberately left Berlin for Hunsdorf as a protest against this new radical Haskalah, and in search of pristine territory where he could realize his educational goals free of its corrupting influences.[23]

Friesenhausen's critique, however, was hardly confined to the left; he also had to contend with the right:

> I appeal especially to all those who fear God and tremble at His word, that they not heed the false claims of those who plot against secular wisdom..., unaware that those who make such claims testify against themselves, saying: "We are devoid of Torah, we have chosen folly as our guide." For had the light of Torah ever shone upon them, they would have known the teaching of R. Samuel bar Naḥmeni at Shabbat 75a and the anecdotes about Rabban Gamaliel and R. Joshua at Horayot 10a. Also, they would have been aware of the many talmudic discussions that can be understood only with the aid of secular wisdom. Should you, however, meet a master of the Talmud who insists on denigrating secular wisdom, know full well that he has never understood those talmudic passages whose comprehension is dependent upon knowledge of

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23 Gilon, "R. David Friesenhausen," 26.

> secular wisdom. . . He is also unaware that he denigrates the great Jewish sages of the past and their wisdom, as well. Worst of all are those guilty of duplicity. They speak arrogantly in public, either to appease the fools and gain honor in their eyes, or out of envy of the truly wise, disparaging those who appreciate secular wisdom, yet in their hearts they believe otherwise.[24]

Friesenhausen was neither a founder of Reform Judaism, as some have suggested, nor a Maskil.[25]He was a precursor of the *Torah and derekh erez* movement. He was, perhaps, the first traditional Jew in modern times to address the curricular repercussions of *Torah and derekh erez* which, as we shall see, became the hallmark of the various educational institutions – ranging from the Jewish day school to the Jewish university – that combine Torah and secular study under one banner. This occurred when Friesenhausen proposed that a rabbinical seminary be established in Hungary for the training of rabbis and teachers.[26] Friesenhausen was motivated largely by a desire to rescue Jewish youth from the snare of the "smooth talkers, armed with secular knowledge garnered from the handbooks, who ingratiated themselves to the wealthy, and who hold talmudic scholars in disdain," i.e., the Berlin Haskalah of the 1790s.[27]His frustration over the failure of his publication to make *ḥokhmah* palatable to the traditional community also encouraged him to seek an alternate more direct route, in order to advance his cause. Friesenhausen prepared an elaborate curriculum in German and submitted it in

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24 *Kelil Ḥeshbon* (Berlin, 1796), 8b.

25 See Sandor Buechler, "A zsidó reform útörö Magyarországon," *Magyar Zsidó Szemle* 17 (1900): 107-19.

26 *Mosedot Tevel*, 89a-93a.

27 *Mosedot Tevel*, 89a.

1806 to the Hungarian government for approval. After much procrastination, it was officially rejected by the government in 1813 on the following grounds:

1. There were no Jewish funds available to finance the proposed institution, nor was it feasible to levy new taxes among Jews for this purpose;

2. The government's educational goal was to assimilate the Jew into general society by destroying Jewish insularity. Friesenhausen's proposal would perpetuate and solidify Jewish insularity; and

3. Jewish schools were no longer necessary, as Jews could now study in Christian schools.[28]

While those were the official reasons, it is likely that Jewish influence wielded behind the scenes contributed significantly to the rejection of Friesenhausen's proposal – and perhaps for good reason.[29] In any event, the second reason listed above may well have been the best compliment Friesenhausen ever received in his life. If the Hungarian governmental authorities really believed what they said, then they apparently understood better than most that *Torah and derekh erez* would save, rather than destroy, Judaism in the modern period.

Friesenhausen's mostly utopian proposal called for the establishment of three regional rabbinical seminaries, one each in Hungary, Galicia, and Bohemia-Moravia. In each region, a careful selection

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28 Buechler, "A zsidó reform," 118; Gilon, "R. David Friesenhausen," 31.

29 See below, (p. 29) regarding the likely response of the Jewish right and left to Friesenhausen's proposal. Doubtless, some of Friesenhausen's rabbinic colleagues were alarmed by the possibility that it would lead to governmental control of all Jewish institutions of higher learning in the Hungarian empire.

process would yield twenty students, aged nine to eighteen, who would make up the entering class. A two-tiered system would be instituted at the seminary: a lower level for ten students aged nine to thirteen, and an upper level for ten students aged fourteen to eighteen. Aside from being knowledgeable in Torah and personally observant, members of the faculty would have to be adept in secular study. The upper level teacher would have to be expert in Talmud; the lower level teacher would have to possess pedagogical talent. Appropriate stipends would be allocated to students in order to provide for all their needs. At age eighteen, a special fund would be established for the student so that he could study undisturbed for a period of ten years. When he married (at age eighteen or later), the funds would be transferred to him. During this ten year period, he would study Torah and *ḥokhmah,* after which he would be qualified to serve as a rabbi or teacher in the community. Fifteen years after the founding of the seminary and by government fiat, only graduates of the seminary would be allowed to officiate as rabbis and teachers.

Friesenhausen envisioned the following curriculum: At the lower level: students would arise early and study Bible and Hebrew grammar for one-and-a-half hours prior to prayers and breakfast. After breakfast, they would study Talmud until noon. At noon, they would devote an hour to physical education, followed by lunch and a rest period. The remainder of the afternoon (2:00 - 8:00 p.m.) would be devoted primarily to Talmud study. From two to three hours of the late afternoon would be set aside for secular study, which over a period of years would include: writing, arithmetic, language of the country of residence, German, and Latin. At the upper level, more intensive study of Talmud would be combined with the study of the Codes. Secular study would now include:

geometry, astronomy, physics, biology, history, and speech.[30]

Neither the right nor the left would have supported Friesenhausen's claim at exclusivity, which in effect would have rendered all *Torah Only* institutions obsolete, and would have forced all rabbis in the Hungarian empire to have been graduates of one of the three government approved rabbinical seminaries.

In his last will and testament, Friesenhausen elaborated on the ideal curriculum he wished his descendants to pursue. He wrote:

> From age thirteen to age seventeen or eighteen, let them focus primarily on those tractates and talmudic discussions relating to *Shulḥan 'Arukh Yoreh De'ah*. From then on, they should study in depth the talmudic tractates from the orders of *Nezikin* and *Nashim*. They should also study the four divisions of the *Shulḥan 'Arukh* in proper sequence, including all the decisions from the earliest times to the present. Among contemporary authorities, none sharpens the mind better than R. Jonathan Eibeschuetz [d. 1764], especially in his *Urim ve-Tumim*, a particularly profound work. *Ẓiyyun le-Nefesh Ḥayyah* by R. Ezekiel Landau [d. 1793], and *Pnei Yehoshua* by R. Jacob Joshua Falk [d. 1756] are well worth studying, especially when examining a *sugya* in depth."[31]

For those of his descendants not able or inclined to pursue a rigorous program of Talmud study, Friesenhausen prepared a no less pious alternate curriculum which, after the age of thirteen, focused on vocational training. In setting out the arguments in

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30 *Mosedot Tevel*, 89a-90a.
31 *Mosedot Tevel*, 76a.

favor of learning a trade, Friesenhausen wrote:

> In this age, when we have neither field nor vineyard to cultivate, even talmudists would do well to learn a trade. Unless, of course, their love of Torah leads them to make Torah their occupation, at which point God, in His merciful manner, will arrange for others to do their work for them. . . Know that any land whose inhabitants are not expert in the various occupations will not succeed. For how can a land thrive without experts in the various occupations? Whatever occupations they are lacking in create lacunae that are not filled. Indeed, when God will gather in the exiles of Israel, we will need experts in the various occupations. If we continue as we are today, how will the Jewish state be able to conduct its affairs? Will God open windows in heaven and lower down experts in the various occupations? Will we import them from the nations surrounding us? This is a sad state of affairs. I too have suffered in my old age because I did not learn a trade in my youth.[32]

Despite his commitment to *ḥokhmah,* Friesenhausen was on cordial terms with the leading *gedolei yisrael* of his time. During his peregrinations, he met and "discussed Torah" with R. Nathan Adler (d. 1800) and R. Pinḥas Horowitz (d. 1805) of Frankfurt, R. David Sinzheim (d. 1812) of Strasbourg, R. Mordechai Benet (d. 1829) of Nikolsburg, and R. Moses Sofer (d. 1839) of Pressburg. One of the more interesting of these discussions is worth repeating here. Friesenhausen, a confirmed Copernican, was troubled by the fact that

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32 *Mosedot Tevel,* 76b. For similar arguments regarding the necessity for Jews to engage in the various occupations when settled in the land of Israel, see R. Moses Sofer; *Ḥatam Sofer: Sukkah* (Jerusalem, 1974), 92 (ad Sukkah 36a); cf. his *Ḥatam Sofer 'al ha-Torah* (New York, 1977), 36a (*parashat Shofetim*).

several kabbalistic works contained astronomical drawings that were clearly Ptolemaic in character. He was assured by the two outstanding kabbalists in Frankfurt – Rabbis Adler and Horowitz – that the Ptolemaic drawings were borrowed from medieval astronomical treaties and inserted into the kabbalistic works; they were not part and parcel of kabbalistic teaching.[33]

In 1819, Friesenhausen met with the Ḥatam Sofer in Pressburg. The latter wrote a letter of recommendation on Friesenhausen's behalf. It reads in part:

> My colleague, the revered Rabbi David ha-Kohen of Fuerth, presently *dayyan* of Ujhely in Hungary, was known to me even when he was a youngster. He was among the most distinguished students in the yeshiva of Fuerth, renowned even then for the soundness and depth of his mind. By now he has added much Torah, for he has spent many years studying Torah, and has served as a decisor of Jewish law in many communities and lands. I have discussed Torah with him, orally and in writing. I have found him to be filled with the word of God, i.e., Torah. He is certainly worthy of appointment as rabbi in a large community and of establishing a yeshiva for older and younger students. Therefore, I take this opportunity to inform all members of the Jewish community about his credentials, so that all will honor him and his Torah, and so that a community seeking a rabbi will know to appoint him to the post. [34]

Friesenhausen's life foreshadows much that would occur in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Rabbis Jacob Ettlinger and Azriel Hildesheimer, for example,

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33 *Mosedot Tevel*, 23 a - b.
34 *Mosedot Tevel*, 13 a.

attempted to establish rabbinical seminaries whose curricula incorporated secular study and bore a remarkable resemblance to that of Friesenhausen. Only Hildesheimer would succeed in doing so. Essentially, three broad categories of Jewish responses to modernity were possible: assimilation, isolation, and confrontation. Friesenhausen ruled out assimilation and isolation, opting for confrontation as the only viable Jewish response. It was a daring stance, especially then, and a lonely one. He won no friends, influenced few people, and spent a lifetime as a wandering Jew who was almost denied his rightful place – at the very least – as a footnote in Jewish history.

Torah Education in Western and Central Europe at the Start of the Nineteenth Century

One manifestation of the devastating impact of the Enlightenment on West European Jewry was the utter collapse of the traditional yeshivot almost overnight. The famous yeshivot of Metz, Frankfurt, Mannheim, Fuerth, Karlsruhe, Altona-Hamburg, Halberstadt, and Prague were still flourishing in the middle to the late eighteenth century. By the beginning of the nineteenth century all were in a precipitous state of decline. Students were no longer attracted to the yeshivot; traditional *ḥadarim*, which had once served as feeder schools for the yeshivot, were disappearing. The social mobility that was made possible by modernity led students to seek other more "progressive" forms of education, Jewish and secular[35] Wealthy Jews, now

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35 Typical of the new schools that combined secular education with "progressive" religious education, was the Philanthropin in Frankfurt. Founded in 1804, it would mold several generations of Reform Jewish leaders. See Herman Baerwald and Salo Adler, eds., *Geschichte der Realschule der israelitischen Gemeinde (Philanthropin) zu*

under the influence of a new set of values, withdrew their support of the yeshivot.[36] Another manifestation of the devastating impact of the Enlightenment – certainly from an Orthodox perspective – was the founding and growth of the Reform movement, which introduced denominationalism into what had been a traditional and united Jewish community. The nineteenth century would be marked by internal Jewish polemic, and all the major players, whether Abraham Geiger, Zechariah Frankel, or Samson Raphael Hirsch, would be involved.[37]

A distinguished German Talmudist, R. Mendel Kargau (1772-1842), was a transitional figure who witnessed the rapid changes that were overtaking Orthodoxy. In one of his responsa, he wrote:

> The rabbis who preceded me were exceedingly great in Torah. Nonetheless, had they devoted themselves to even a smattering of secular study – instead of wasting precious time trying to explain away curious midrashic passages by a sophistry consisting of joining together unrelated passages – we would not be inundated now with the destructive forces that are tearing down traditional Judaism.[38]

Despite these ominous developments, there were occasional rays of light. In 1795, the first Orthodox Jewish day school, that is, an elementary school

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Frankfurt am Main 1804 -1904 (Frankfurt, 1904); cf. Mordecai Eliav, *Ha-Ḥinukh ha-Yehudi be-Germanyah bi-Yemei ha-Haskalah ve-ha-Emanẓipaẓyah* (Jerusalem, 1960), 71-141.

36 Eliav, *Ha-Ḥinukh*, 142 -55.

37 See Michael A. Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism* (Oxford, 1988).

38 *She'elot u-Teshuvot Giddulei Taharah*, §7, printed in Abraham Sofer, *He'arot ve-He'arot 'al Shtayim u-Sheloshim mi- Masekhtot ha-Shas* (Jerusalem, 1976), 24.

combining Jewish and secular study whose express purpose was the perpetuation of traditional Judaism, was founded by Ẓevi Hirsch Koeslin, a merchant in Halberstadt. Originally a freeschool for the poor, *Hash'arat Ẓevi* (the school was named after its founder and benefactor) eventually became a community school, introduced separate classes for girls in 1827, added a high school in 1866, and continued to thrive until the Nazi period. R. Azriel Hildesheimer was among the many graduates of *Hash'arat Ẓevi;* no better justification for the school's existence is needed. A similar school was founded by R. Samson Raphael Hirsch's grandfather, R. Mendel Frankfurter (d. 1823) – he served as *rosh bet din* of Altona – in Hamburg in 1805.[39] In a sermon delivered in 1816, R. Samuel Landau (d. 1834), son of R. Ezekiel Landau and *rosh bet din* of Prague, would announce:

> When a child is six or seven years old he should be taught the Torah in Hebrew, together with its translation into German, as it appears in the Hebrew Bibles printed in Berlin, Vienna, and Prague. He should master German and related subjects of importance. Anyone lacking the ability to read and write German cannot succeed in today's world. He will not gain entry to, nor become expert in, any profession. It is obligatory upon every father to teach his son the language and the laws of the state in which he lives. Moreover, parents shall see to it that their children grow in *Torah and derekh erez.* The children shall pursue both, moving from level to level until they are ten to twelve years of age, each according to his ability. When he is twelve years old, a judgment shall be made concerning his ability and character. If it is appropriate that he continue his studies, a determination will be

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39 See Eliav, *Ha-Ḥinukh,* 155-161.

made whether he should pursue secular study or Talmud with Rashi and Tosafot, leading to the rabbinate. If study is not for him, he should be taught a vocation or business skills, each according to his inclination. [40]

Orthodoxy's confrontation with modernity had begun. It is against this backdrop that the two architects of Orthodoxy in the modern period. R. Isaac Bernays and R. Jacob Ettlinger, appear on the horizon of Jewish history.

III. R. Isaac Bernays

On the surface, at least, Rabbi Isaac Bernays' (1792-1849) biography appears to parallel that of his younger contemporary, R. Jacob Ettlinger.[41] Like

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40 R. Samuel Landau's sermon is included in R. Ezekiel Landau, *Ahavat Ẓion* (Jerusalem, 1966), 37, sermon 12.

41 Unfortunately, Bernays left almost no writings, or so it would seem, making it extremely difficult to reconstruct his views on almost any topic. The more useful studies are: Leon Horowitz, "A History of Rabbi Isaac Bernays," *Kneset Yisrael* 1 (1886 - 1887), columns 845-54; Eduard Duckesz, "Zur Biographie des Chacham Bernays,"*Jahrbuch der juedisch-Literarischen Gesellschaft* 5 (1907): 297-322; Hans I. Bach, "Isaac Bernays," *MGWJ* 83 (1939): 533-47; Isaac Heinemann, "The Relationship between S. R. Hirsch and his teacher Isaac Bernays," (Hebrew) *Ẓion* 16 (1951): 44-90; Hans I. Bach, *Jacob Bernays* (Tubingen, 1974); Friedrich Schutz, "Skizzen zur Geschichte der jüdischen Gemeinde Weisenau bei Mainz: mit einer besonderen Würdigung der Familie Bernays," *Mainzer Zeitschrift* 82 (1987): 151-79; Rivka Horwitz, "On Kabbala and Myth in 19th Century Germany: Isaac Bernays," *PAAJR 59* (1993): 137-83 (cf. the shorter version in Eveline Goodman-Thau, Gerd Mattenklott, and Cristoph Schulte, eds., *Kabbala und Romantik* [Tubingen, 1994], 217-47; and the fuller Hebrew version in R. Horwitz, *Multiple Faceted Judaism* [Hebrew], [Beer-Sheva, 2002], 103-38); Werner J. Cahnman, "Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling and the New Thinking of Judaism," in Eveline Goodman-Thau et al., eds., *Kabbala und Romantik* (Tubingen, 1994), 167 – 205; and the entry "Bernays, Isaak" in Michael Brocke and Julius Carlebach, eds., *Biographisches Handbuch der Rabbiner* (München, 2004), vol. 1:1, 188-91. The fullest bibliographical

study is Willy Aron, "Ḥakham Isaac Bernays," *Jewish Forum* 32 (May, 1949), 102-104, 108; (July, 1949), #133. No discussion of Bernays, would be complete without reference to an anonymous two volume work entitled *Der Bibel'sche Orient* (Munich, 1820 - 1821), which was an immediate sensation upon publication. The volumes were, in effect, a programmatic essay addressed primarily to enlightened Germans (i.e., Christians) – and only secondarily to Jews – calling for a reassessment of their understanding of the Old Testament and the history of Jewish thought. The author nowhere identifies himself as a Jew; quite the contrary, he tries to create the impression that this was a book by a European intellectual intended for his colleagues. A profound work, it draws on classical Greek and Latin sources such as the Homeric epics and Virgil, Talmud and Midrash, Philo and Josephus, Masoretic studies, medieval Hebrew grammarians, medieval and modern Jewish philosophers – including Spinoza and Mendelssohn, and Lurianic Kabbalah. The book is suffused with the teachings of Bernays, even though his name is nowhere mentioned in it. According to most accounts, Bernays neither admitted nor denied his authorship of the work; though Graetz reports, second hand, that Bernays denied that he was the author. If Bernays wrote *Der Bibel'sche Orient*, it of course becomes the single most important source for Bernays' thought. His authorship would also underscore a radical change in the Orthodox rabbinate as it confronted modernity : here was an Orthodox rabbi, writing in the vernacular and addressing (primarily, at least) Christian intellectuals on philosophical and theological issues of concern to them. If Bernays did not author *Der Bibel'sche Orient*, it of course is not relevant for an intellectual portrait of Bernays. Or, at best, it could be used only with great caution. The most extensive study of the issue is Hans Bach, "*Der Bibel'sche Orient* und sein Verfasser," *Zeitschrift fuer die Geschichte der juden in Deutchland* 7(1937), 14-45, who concluded that Bernays authored this work. In recent years, Gershom Scholem ("Ein verschollener juedischer Mystiker der Aufklaerungszeit: E. J. Hirschfeld," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 7[1962], 249) and Arnaldo Momigliano ("Jacob Bernays," *Mededeligen Der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie Van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde*, 32:5 [1969], 7), citing Bach, concurred with his conclusion. Neither Scholem nor Momigliano provided any new evidence; and in a personal conversation with Momigliano in London shortly after he published the essay listed above, he admitted to me that he was entirely uncertain about who really authored *Der Bibel'scbe Orient*! Bach's study, unfortunately, is methodologically flawed; it proves only that whoever wrote *Der Bibel'sche Orient* was profoundly influenced by Bernays–a fact well-

Ettlinger, Bernays studied under R. Abraham Bing (d. 1841)[42] at Wuerzburg, found his vocation in the rabbinate, delivered his sermons in polished German, spent a lifetime in the battle against Reform, and left an indelible imprint on Rabbis Samson Raphael Hirsch and Azriel Hildesheimer. It is reported that Bernays and Ettlinger studied together in their yeshiva days at Wuerzburg; Bernays guided Ettlinger in the study of Maimonides' *Guide for the Perplexed,* whereas Ettinger guided Bernays in the study of *Shulḥan 'Arukh Yoreh De'ah*.[43] Their friendship ended only with Bernays' death in 1849. The graveside eulogy, and later a memorial address at the Great Synagogue in Hamburg, were delivered by Ettlinger.[44] Despite these many parallels and their close relationship, they were very different men; no one ever confused the one for the other.

Bernays was a child prodigy. At age seven, he was awarded the title *ḥaver* by R. Noaḥ Ḥayyim Ẓevi Berlin, then Chief Rabbi of Mainz. This would set the tone for

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known long before Bach. The book could have been written by any colleague or teacher of Bernays, Jew or non-Jew, who had easy access to Bernays' teaching–and joined Bernays' views to his own. See especially the studies by Rivka Horwitz listed above. The entire issue is hardly resolved and merits careful investigation. Until then, methodological grounds preclude citation from *Der Bibel'sche Orient* for purposes of this essay. Instead, our portrait of Bernays will be drawn almost exclusively from contemporary documents and from citations by eyewitnesses who attended Bernays' sermons and lectures.

42 He also studied under Rabbis Isaac Metz and Herz Scheuer at Mainz; see E. Duckesz, "Zur Biographie," 297-98.

43 E. Duckesz, "Zur Biographie," 298.

44 See Judith Bleich, *Jacob Ettlinger, His Life and Works: The Emergence of Modern Orthodoxy in Germany* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, New York University, 1974), 18. But. cf. Moses M. Haarbleicher, *Zwei Epochen aus der Geschichte der Deutsch-Israelitischen Gemeinde in Hamburg* (Hamburg, 1866), 399.

a lifetime of "firsts," almost always accomplished at a youthful age that virtually defies belief. While in his early 20s, he was appointed to the *bet din* of R. Abraham Bing in Wuerzburg.[45] Bernays' interests, however, were not confined to Talmud and rabbinic literature. In 1817, while serving on the *bet din* of Wuerzburg he published his first scholarly essay. It was a critical review in German of a scholarly book by a Protestant Bible scholar – Gesenius' *Lexicon of the Old Testament* (German edition) – and the review was published in a Protestant journal of theology! [46] Clearly, Bernays was standing at the threshold of a new order of Orthodox rabbi. At the University of Wuerzburg, he studied under Johann Jakob Wagner, a disciple of the German philosophers Hegel, Fichte, and Schelling. In 1819, Bernays spent an entire semester at the University of Munich, where he came under the influence of J. A. von Kalb, a German philosopher and theologian. Bernays learned much from his teachers – and taught them much as well. Both Wagner and Kalb refer to Bernays in their published works. Kalb, who testified that he spent four to five hours daily in discussion with Bernays throughout the semester they shared in Munich, wrote:

> His mastery of Jewish scholarship is bound up with a profound understanding of world history and politics. His proficiency in the latter was to a degree that I have rarely seen among Christian scholars, and have never seen among Jews.[47]

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45 See Horowitz, "Toledot Rabbi Yiẓḥak Bernays," column 847.

46 See I. Bernays, "Kritik des kleinen hebraeischen Handwoerterbuchs von Gesenius,"in *Neue Theologische Annalen* (*Jahrbuecher der Theologie und tbeologischen Nachrichten*) (Frankfurt, 1817),1, 180-95.

47 See Duckesz, "Zur Biographie," 298- 301.

In 1821, at age twenty-nine, Bernays was appointed Chief Rabbi of the free city of Hamburg which at the time, with over 6,000 Jews, was the largest Jewish community in Germany. [48] It was his first and only appointment as a rabbi .[49] Early in 1821, a member of the Hamburg Jewish community solicited a confidential assessment of Bernays – who was residing in Mainz at the time – from Wolf Heidenheim, a noted Jewish scholar and publisher. He wrote:

> My friend, what you ask is difficult indeed. In order to properly assess Bernays one must be Bernays. My limited judgment and meager knowledge do not suffice to measure his stature. He stands above and beyond our rabbis, masters of the Written and Oral Torah; above and beyond

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48 See Stephen M. Poppel, "The Politics of Religious Leadership: The Rabbinate in Nineteenth-Century Hamburg," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 28 (1983): 439-70.Interestingly, one of the candidates on the short list who lost out to Bernays was R. Asher Wallerstein (1754-1837) of Karlsruhe, a son of R. Aryeh Leib b. Asher (d. 1785), author of *Sha'agat Aryeh*, and a teacher of R. Jacob Ettlinger.

49 The Board of Directors of the Hamburg Jewish community insisted that the new rabbi be hired under the title *moreh-ẓedek*, as distinct from *rav av bet din* or *dayyan*. This was one of many stipulations by means of which the board intended to constrict the powers of the new rabbi and keep him subordinated to lay authority. In his negotiations with the board prior to his acceptance of the post, Bernays rejected the title *moreh-ẓedek* and chose instead the title *ḥakham*, hence Ḥakham Bernays. This was a clever move on Bernays' part: it signalled to the board that the new rabbi was hardly docile. Moreover, the choice of *ḥakham* reflected Bernays' perception that the title Rabbi by 1821 had depreciated to a point where it was bereft of dignity. Furthermore, in Hamburg, where the Portuguese Jewish community was equivalent to upper class society, the Sephardic title *ḥakham* provided Bernays with instant stature. In German documents, he always used the title *Geistlicher Beamte* (spiritual servant or cleric); it is unclear whether this was his choice, or the suggestion of the board that appointed him. One suspects that the board viewed Bernays as the servant of the community, whereas Bernays perceived of himself as the servant of the Lord.

> our philosophers, and historians of antiquity. It is said appropriately concerning him: *"A wise charmer"* (Isaiah 3:3). The moment he begins to discourse on Torah or wisdom all become charmed and silent.[50] Hearing him discuss Hebrew language and biblical exegesis, one believes he is listening to Ibn Ezra himself. If the discussion is about Mishnah, Talmud, Sifra, and Sifre, it is as if he has become Maimonides incarnate. In general knowledge, he is Plato incarnate. Regarding his character, he is pious, noble, and modest. . . Any community, large or small, that will have the good fortune to come under Bernays' leadership, will not long remain isolated. It will become an *'ir ve-'em be-yisrael* "and all the nations shall flow to it (Isaiah 2:2)."[51]

With such letters of recommendation – and there were more – [52] it is no wonder that Bernays got the job. Nor was it an accident that the offer was made and accepted in 1821. With the turn from the eighteenth into the nineteenth century, Hamburg's Jewish community began to move rapidly from the premodern into the modern period. In 1799, R. Raphael ha-Kohen – an inveterate foe of modernity who had banned the use of Mendelssohn's *Be'ur* – resigned as rabbi of the triple community of Altona, Hamburg, and

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50 *Hagigah* 14a.

51 Louis Lewin, " Zum hundersten Todestage Wolf Heidenheims," *MGWJ* 76 (1932): 11-12.

52 See, e.g., R. Abraham Bing's glowing remarks, as reported in Duckesz, "Zur Biographie," 298-99, n. 1. In Hirschian circles, a tradition was preserved that Bernays was a Talmudist of the same rank as R. Jonathan Eibeschuetz (a distinguished predecessor of his in the Hamburg rabbinate)! See Raphael Breuer, *Unter seinem Banner* (Frankfurt, 1908), 215-16. The tradition is cited in the name of contemporaries of Bernays who were in a position to render such a judgment. Perhaps the tradition originated with Hirsch's grandfather, R. Mendel Frankfurter, one of the few people who attended the lectures and sermons of both Eibeschuetz and Bernays.

Wandsbeck, in part because the governmental authorities had withdrawn his unilateral right to place under the ban those Jews who violated ceremonial law.[53] By 1811, the triple community was dissolved, each appointing its own rabbi. From 1807 on, Hamburg had no Chief Rabbi; Rabbis Eleazar Lasi and Barukh Oser officiated as its interim rabbis and as heads of its rabbinic court. During this interregnum, a significant segment of Hamburg Jewry had become acculturated to a point of no return to traditional Judaism. In 1817, a "New Israelite Temple Association in Hamburg" was established; in 1818, the association dedicated its new Reform temple with organ and choir. The organist, of course, was Christian; the choir consisted of Jewish school boys. In 1819, the Hamburg temple published the first comprehensive Reform prayer book, and by 1820, membership grew to over 100 families.[54] These developments did not go unnoticed, and the ensuing controversy would involve the leading halakhic authorities of the time, e.g., R. Akiva Eger, R. Mordechai Benet, and R. Moses Sofer. The unanimous verdict of the traditional rabbinic authorities was unequivocal: The use of the Reform prayer book was banned; and it was prohibited for any Jew to set foot in the temple. [55] Since, the Hamburg Jewish community –

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53 See E. Duckesz, *Ivah le-Moshav* (Cracow, 1903), German section, xxv-xxvi, for this and other probable causes that led to R. Raphael ha-Kohen's resignation. Jacob Katz has shown that governmental interference with regard to R. Raphael ha-Kohen's use of the ban in Altona and Hamburg dates back at least to 1782. See his "Rabbi Raphael Kohen: Mendelssohn's Opponent" (Hebrew), *Tarbiẓ* 56 (1987): 243-64; cf, his "The Changing Position and Outlook of Halakhists in Early Modernity" in Leo Landman, ed., *Scholars and Scholarship: The Interaction Between Judaism and Other Cultures* (New York, 1990), 93-106. Add to the references cited by Katz: Haarbleicher, *Zwei Epochen*, 29 -30.

54 See Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 53-61.

55 See *Elleh Divrei ha-Berit* (Altona, 1819; reissued by Gregg

like all Jewish communities in Germany at the time – was structured as a single, unified *kehillah* it became obvious that the best way to contain the spread of Reform, and to maintain at least a semblance of communal unity, was to seek a Chief Rabbi, at once traditional and modern, who could address the needs of the entire community. Bernays, who had turned down numerous appointments to rabbinic posts prior to the call to Hamburg, must have realized that destiny was calling. This was the challenge and opportunity for which he had been preparing all his life and for which he was uniquely qualified. It would be Bernays' task to initiate the Orthodox response to modernity.

If Mendelssohn was the first modern Jew, Bernays was the first modern Orthodox rabbi. This manifested itself not only in the outward concessions he made to modernity, e.g., he wore canonicals,[56] delivered a

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International Publishers, Farnsborough, 1969).

56 Specifically, Bernays donned a clerical robe (*Ornate*) and collar bands, the attire regularly worn by Christian clerics. (From Horowitz, "A History," column 850, it would appear that Bernays did not wear canonicals at the start of his rabbinic career in Hamburg.) See the various portraits of Bernays, especially the one reproduced in William Aron, *Jews of Hamburg* (New York, 1967), Hebrew section, between pp. 86-97, which hung in the study of Sigmund Freud (who was married to Bernays' granddaughter). Such canonicals were regularly worn by Reform preachers in the early nineteenth century. For a striking portrait of Bernays' Reform counterpart in Hamburg–in full clerical dress–see Alfred Rubens, *A History of Jewish Costume* (New York, 1973), 178; to the naked eye, at least, the Reform rabbi's attire does not differ substantively from that of Bernays. See also Michael A. Meyer, "Christian influence on Early German Reform Judaism," in Charles Berlin, ed., *Studies in Jewish Bibliography, History, and Literature in Honor of I. Edward Kiev* (New York, 1971), 301-2, n. 9, who notes that the use of clerical robes and collar bands by Jewish clergy is already attested in the seventeenth century. Aside from Bernays, Rabbis Seligmann Baer Bamberger of Wuerzburg and Samson Raphel Hirsch of Frankfurt were perhaps the most prominent Orthodox rabbis who regularly

sermon every Sabbath in German,[57] and conducted services in a decorous and aesthetically pleasing manner, but also and more importantly by Bernays' intellectual commitment to modern culture and contemporary scholarship. No less than Mendelssohn, Bernays had mastered contemporary German

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wore canonicals. In the case of Bamberger, he did so with the approval of R. Abraham Bing, Bernays' teacher. Regarding Bamberger, see Naphtali Carlebach, *Joseph Carlebach and His Generation* (New York, 1959), 225-30; cf. Benjamin S. Hamburger, *Nesi ha-Leviyyim* (Bnei Brak, 1992), 534-37 (in an anthology of books edited by Ẓevi Bamberger, *Kitvei Rabbenu Yizhak Dov ha-Levi-mi-Wuerzburg* [Long Beach, 1992]). See also R. Joseph Carlebach, "Würzburg and Jerusalem: A Conversation between Rabbi Seligmann Baer Bamberger and Rabbi Shmuel Salant," *Tradition* 28:2 (1994), 58-63. Regarding Hirsch, see Jacob Rosenheim, *Samson Rapbael Hirsch's Cultural Ideal and Our Times* (London, 1951), 59-62. For a portrait of R. Jacob Ettlinger of Altona in canonicals, see Ulrich Bauche, et al., eds., *Vierhundert jahre Juden in Hamburg* (Hamburg, 1991), 309. For halakhic discussion of the propriety of canonicals, see R. Marcus Horovitz, *She'elot u-Teshuvot Matteh Levi* (Jerusalem, 1979), part 2, Oraḥ Ḥayyim, §6; cf. R. Ḥayyim Ozer Grodzenski, "On Canonicals" (Hebrew), in R. Shlomo Yosef Zevin, ed., *Shiloh* (Jerusalem - Antwerp, 1983), 167 - 68.

57 Bernays introduced into the Orthodox synagogue in Germany three major innovations regarding the sermon. Whereas Orthodox rabbis ordinarily preached several times a year, Bernays preached every Sabbath. Whereas Orthodox sermons had always been in Yiddish, Bernays preached in German. Whereas Orthodox sermons were grounded in talmudic and midrashic passages and tended to be pilpulistic, Bernays' sermons were lectures on the Bible, Talmud, and Jewish thought, based on philological and historical analysis, never pilpulistic. Thus, Bernays' sermons were unlike those of his predecessors, even as they were unlike the "edifying" sermons of his contemporaries, i.e., the Reform preachers of Hamburg, Frankfurt, Berlin, Vienna, and the like. See, in general: Adolf Kober, "Jewish Preaching and Preachers," *Historia Judaica* 7 (1945): 103-34; and Alexander Altmann, "The New Style of Preaching in the Nineteenth-Century Germany," in A. Altmann, ed., *Studies in Nineteenth-Century Jewish Intellectual History* (Cambridge, 1964), 65-116. Regarding Bernays' sermons in particular, see Moses Mendelson, *Penei Tevel* (Amsterdam, 1872), 50-54.

philosophy and theology. But unlike Mendelssohn, who was not a talmudic scholar of note,[58] Bernays brought to bear his vast rabbinic erudition on modern German thought.[59] The teachings of Schelling, Fichte, Herder, and others were viewed through the prism of classical Jewish literature – and vice versa.

In particular, Bernays came under the influence of early nineteenth century romanticism. As applied to Jewish teaching by Bernays, this resulted in a more critical and less favorable approach to Maimonidean teaching. Bernays viewed R. Judah ha-Levi, Naḥmanides, and the Kabbalah as reflecting more authentically the unadulterated teachings of Scripture and the talmudic rabbis. Indeed, Bernays' most famous public lectures were an extended series of adult education lectures on the *Kuzari*. Based upon the romantics, Bernays developed an elaborate system of "speculative" etymologies which he applied to Hebrew, and an even more elaborate system of symbolic interpretations which he applied to the biblical narrative and to the commandments. Essentially, he taught, Judaism must be understood from within and against its historical backdrop. He railed against viewing the Bible and Talmud through Greek or Arabic lenses. And while the Jews were a people apart, they also had a mission, namely to spread monotheistic

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58 Mendelssohn regularly attended lectures in Talmud (see Mendelson, *Penei Tevel*, 229, 234), but devoted little scholarly attention to Talmud. One of his few talmudic insights, recorded for posterity, appears in R. Levi of Kaidany, *'Ateret Rosh* (Amsterdam, 1766), 1, 59b.

59 Indeed, Heinrich Graetz would write: "Bernays was the first to understand – in a far more profound manner than Mendelssohn – the significance of Judaism for world history; moreover, he had a deep understanding of the entire range of Jewish literature." See his *Geschichte der Juden*, ed. M. Brann, second edition (Leipzig, 1900), XI, 388.

teaching among the pagans. Since Christianity was suffused with pagan elements, the Jewish mission was as relevant in the modern period as it had been in antiquity. Jews, however, could properly undertake their mission only if they remained faithful to classical Jewish teaching (hence Bernays' rejection of the radical Haskalah and Reform Judaism) while engaging humanity at large – the ultimate arena of Jewish activity. For Bernays this meant, in part, that Jews had to participate in general culture, learn from it, and contribute to it.

These lofty teachings of a gifted intellectual and imaginative dreamer fell mostly on deaf ears. One venue for Bernays' teaching was his synagogue. Although his rabbinic contract did not require that he speak more than once a month, he in fact spoke – much to the chagrin of his lay audience – every Sabbath.[60] He was the first Orthodox rabbi to speak regularly in the vernacular (tickets were sold at sixty marks for the privilege of hearing the first German sermon by the "Rabbi and Gaon" Bernays at Hamburg)[61] ; and vivid eyewitness accounts of his preaching have been preserved. Heinrich Heine, after hearing Bernays speak, wrote: "He is an ingenious man and has more spirit within him than Dr. Kley, Salomon, Auerbach I and II," but added in the same breath, "None of the Jews understands him".[62] Similar assessments by admirers of Bernays make it clear that he regularly

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60 See Poppel, "The Politics of Religious Leadership," 451; cf. Mendelson, *Penei Tevel*, 53 and Haarbleicher, *Zwei Epochen*, 180.

61 See Horowitz, "A History," column 850.

62 See Altmann, "The New Style of Preaching," 78. Eduard Kley (d. 1867), Gotthold Salomon (d. 1862), Isaac Levin Auerbach (d. 1853), and Jacob Auerbach (d. 1887) were distinguished preachers at the Reform temples in Berlin, Frankfurt, and Hamburg.

spoke over the heads of his audience.[63] The situation is perhaps best captured in the following anecdote. In a sermon, Bernays mentioned in passing the Roman god Jupiter. After the sermon, a congregant was overheard asking his neighbor: "Who is Jupiter?" The neighbor responded: "I haven't the slightest idea, but if the rabbi mentioned him in a sermon he certainly must have been a famous Jew."[64] Apparently, only the intellectuals – among them Hirsch and Hildesheimer – appreciated Bernays' genius.

Another venue for Bernays' teaching was the day school founded in Hamburg by R. Mendel Frankfurter in 1805.[65] Despite Frankfurter's efforts, it had reverted back to a traditional *ḥeder* by the time Bernays arrived in 1821. Bernays applied himself with gusto to the day school and revitalized it by revamping the curriculum, expanding its hours, and hiring a new and competent faculty. His early plans called for the establishment of a teacher's seminary as a natural adjunct to the day school, but this would never materialize.[66] Bernays regularly taught the highest Talmud class at the day school – it rarely consisted of more than a handful of students aged fourteen and fifteen – until his death. One of the few documents by Bernays that has been preserved contains the ideal curriculum he drew up for implementation at the day school. Aside from German, history, geography, mathematics, and science, he called for instruction in the history of religions "for religion properly understood is on par with any other science regarding the significance of its content and its antiquity." More importantly, he required of his Jewish

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63 See Mendelson, *Penei Tevel*, 53.
64 See Heinemann, "The Relationship," 49.
65 See Eliav, *Ha-ḥinukh*, 159-61, and 232-34.
66 See Joseph Goldschmidt, *Geschichte der Talmud Tora Realschule in Hamburg* (Hamburg, 1905), 51 - 52.

faculty that they take into account in their teaching "the religions and beliefs of all other peoples, a comparative study of the languages of antiquity, a profound understanding of Scripture, and extensive study of Midrash."[67]

The day school, much improved, grew modestly under Bernays' aegis to some two hundred students. Deeply concerned about the welfare of his students, he carefully monitored their progress. The full impact of his influence, however, was confined to the few students who chose to study Talmud with him. The vast majority of students left the school at age thirteen or shortly thereafter, to venture into apprenticeships or family businesses. Bernays was particularly proud of the day school and its graduates; he considered it his greatest achievement. After his death, the elementary school would add a high school, and the enlarged school would eventually number over six hundred students and continue to thrive – as shaped by Bernays and others – until the Nazi period.[68]

Clearly, Bernays did not find intellectual fulfillment in the modern rabbinate. When there was talk about the possible appointment of a Jewish talmudist or theologian to a university post, Bernays repeatedly stated that, if invited, he would consider it his duty as a Jew to resign his post as rabbi of Hamburg and to accept the academic appointment instead.[69] Such an attitude presupposes an openness to general culture that was inconceivable among Orthodox rabbis in

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67 See Haarbleicher, *Zwei Epochen*, 248 - 51.

68 See Goldschmidt, *Geschichte;* cf. Aron, *Jews of Hamburg*, passim; and the references cited below, n. 70 and 74.

69 See Marcus Brann, *Geschichte des Juedisch-Theologischen Seminars in Breslau* (Breslau, 1904), 54, n. 1. The text speaks of an appointment to a "Jewish University"; the exact circumstances regarding this proposed institution appear to be unknown.

Germany prior to Bernays, even as it reflects, I suspect, Bernays' less than enthusiastic regard for the Hamburg rabbinate. Despite his frustrations as a rabbi, Bernays was held in esteem by virtually the entire Jewish community of Hamburg,[70] and left an indelible imprint on a small coterie of students who would become leaders of the Jewish community. These included Solomon Frensdorff, principal of the Jewish Teacher's Seminary in Hanover and a Masoretic scholar of note;[71] several *dayyanim* and Jewish educators who would succeed Bernays at Hamburg;[72] and above all, Rabbis

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70 In 1846, the Hamburg Jewish community celebrated Bernays' twenty-fifth anniversary as Chief Rabbi. Participants included members of the Hamburg Senate, members of the Jewish Board of Directors, the head of the Portuguese Jewish community in Hamburg, R. Jacob Ettlinger of Altona, and faculty, students, and graduates of the day school. A procession through the streets of Hamburg, musical interludes, and the striking of gold, silver, and bronze issues of a medallion in honor of Bernays – no other rabbi of Hamburg was accorded this honor – were some of the highlights of the celebration. For fuller detail, see Duckesz, "Zur Biographie," 314-19. For the medallion, see Max Grunwald, *Hamburgs deutsche Juden* (Hamburg, 1904), 134-36.

71 See Gerard E. Weil's prolegomenon to Solomon Frensdorff, *Massorah Magna* (New York, 1968), xxv-xxxii, and especially, n. 68. Frensdorff dedicated his first book, an edition of R. Moshe ha-Nakdan's *Darkei ha-Nikkud ve-ha-Neginot*, to his revered teacher Bernays.

72 For example, R. Leib Adler, a noted Jewish educator (see E. Duckesz, *Ḥakhmei AHW* [Hamburg, 1908], 149-50; R. Samson Nathan, Jewish educator and *dayyan* of Hamburg (see Duckesz, op. cit., 152 - 54); and R. Gottlieb Moses, *dayyan* of Hamburg (see Duckesz, op. cit., 130).

W. Aron, "Ḥakham Isaac Bernays," *Jewish Forum* 32 (March, 1949), 41, claimed that Nathan Marcus Adler (1803–1890), Chief Rabbi of the British Empire; Solomon Ludwig Steinheim (1789 – 1866), celebrated physician and philosopher; and Aaron Marcus (1843–1916), publicist for Ḥasidism in Western Europe, were "pupils" of Bernays. These claims appear to have no basis in fact. Nathan Marcus Adler was a student of R. Abraham Bing. The biographies of Adler available to me make no mention of his having

Samson Raphael Hirsch[73] and Azriel Hildesheimer[74] who were able to transform aspects of Bernays'

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studied under Bernays. If he was a student of Bernays, it could only have been prior to 1821, either in Mainz or Wuerzburg. Steinheim–who was three years older than Bernays–was an acquaintance of Bernays, not his student. Aaron Marcus was six years old when Bernays died! And in any event, as indicated above, Bernays taught only the highest classes in the Hamburg day school. We note in passing that it is often claimed that Nathan Marcus Adler was the first German –and Orthodox– rabbi in the modern period to have earned the Ph.D. degree. See, e.g., Leo Trepp, *Die Oldenburger Judenschaft* (Oldenburg, 1973),88, and Ismar Schorsch, "Emancipation and the Crisis of Religious Authority: The Emergence of the Modern Rabbinate," in W. E. Mosse, A. Paucker, and R. Ruerup, eds., *Revolution and Evolution: 1848 in German Jewish History* (Tuebingen, 1981), 208. It would appear, however, that this honor more properly belongs to another rabbi. A likely candidate is Abraham Alexander Wolff (1801 - 1891), a student of R. Abraham Bing who served with distinction for some sixty years as Chief Rabbi of Denmark. Wolff earned his doctorate at the University of Giessen in 1821 and was appointed Landesrabbiner of the province of Oberhessen in 1826. Adler earned his doctorate at the University of Erlangen in 1828 and was appointed Chief Rabbi of Oldenburg in the same year. Aside from the sources listed above, see the entries on Wolff and Adler in the various Jewish encyclopedias.

73 Hirsch refers to Bernays as his "unforgettable teacher." See, e.g., Hirsch's commentary to Genesis 4:26; cf. his commentary to Numbers 20:8 and to Psalms 16:1. Hirsch's reference to the "one star that guided me somewhat in the beginning" (*Nineteen Letters*, letter 19) is almost certainly to Bernays.

74 See, e.g., Hildesheimer's moving eulogy over Bernays in A. Hildesheimer, *She'elot u-Teshuvot Rabbi 'Azriel* (Jerusalem, 1976), II, 437-40, where Hildesheimer records several exegetical gems he heard from Bernays, and opines – in all seriousness – that Bernays' sermons were divinely inspired. Cf. Hildesheimer's introduction to R. Zalman Bonhard's *Minḥah Tehorah* (Pressburg, 1858), 9, n. 3. For other eulogies over Bernays, see M. S. Kruegar, *Zekher Zaddik: Rede zur Gedaechtniss Feier des sel. Chacham Isaac Bernays* (Hamburg, 1849); and R. Jacob Ettlinger, "Trauerrede," *Der Treue Ẓions-Waechter* 5(1849), 161-68. Ettlinger's eulogy has been translated from the original German into Hebrew; see Y.A. Horovitz, "The Arukh La-Ner's Eulogy over Ḥakham Bernays" (Hebrew), *Yerushateinu* 1(2006), 91-103.

intellectual teaching into a more practical form of Judaism, one that would revive Orthodoxy in Germany and ultimately impact on Orthodoxy the world over.

IV. R. Jacob Ettlinger

Rabbi Jacob Ettlinger [75] (1798-1871) studied under R. Asher Wallerstein (d. 1837) – a son of R. Aryeh Leib b. Asher (d. 1785), the *Sha'agat Aryeh* – at Karlsruhe, and under R. Abraham Bing at Wuerzburg, receiving his rabbinic ordination from the latter. While at the yeshiva in Wuerzburg, Ettlinger attended the university there. During his third year of study at the university, anti-Semitic riots broke out in Wuerzburg and Ettlinger was forced to flee, never completing his program of study. But the mere fact that a *gadol be-yisrael* – later to achieve great renown as the author of *'Arukh la-Ner*, a celebrated commentary on several tractates of the Talmud, and *She'elot u-Teshuvot Binyan Ẓiyyon*, a classic compendium of responsa – pursued a formal program of study at a secular university, and in fact excelled in his secular studies, reflected a change of prodigious proportions for traditional Judaism. Ettlinger, after all, did not pursue secular study because he sought a medical or any other professional degree. For Ettlinger, secular study was deemed

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75 The definitive biography of Ettlinger is by Judith Bleich, *Jacob Ettlinger, His Life and Works: The Emergence of Modern Orthodoxy in Germany* (see n. 44); we have relied heavily on her research for the account presented here. Important materials relating to Ettlinger are gathered together in R. Yehudah A. Horovitz, ed., *She'elot u-Teshuvot he-Arukh la-Ner* (Jerusalem, 1989), 2 vols. See also Yonah Immanuel, "Chapters in the History of R. Jacob Ettlinger" (Hebrew), *Ha-Ma'ayan* 12:2 (1972): 25-35; A. Abraham, "The True Guardian of Ẓion" (Hebrew), *Yated Neeman*, Nov. 29, 1991, 10-12; and the entry "Ettlinger, Jakob" in Michael Brocke and Julius Carlebach, eds., *Biographisches Handbuch der Rabbiner* (München, 2004), vol. 1:1, 287-90.

significant, perhaps even necessary, for a rabbi who wished to function in the modern world.[76] As we shall see, his genuine regard for aspects of secular study was reflected also in the language that he preached, in the curriculum he instituted in his day school in Altona, and in the curriculum he prepared for his proposed rabbinical seminary.

In 1825, Ettlinger was appointed *rosh yeshiva* of the *klaus* in Mannheim, while also serving as district rabbi of Ladenburg and environs. Some seventy students would study under Ettlinger in Mannheim, including, approximately for a year, R. Samson Raphael Hirsch. In 1836, Ettlinger assumed the post of Chief Rabbi of Altona where he would serve with distinction for some three and a half decades until his death. There too Ettlinger served as head of a yeshiva, and among its more illustrious graduates was R. Azriel Hildesheimer. Thus, the two central figures who shaped Orthodoxy in the Western world – R. Samson Raphael Hirsch and R. Azriel Hildesheimer – were disciples of Ettlinger, even as they had been disciples of Ḥakham Bernays.

It was no accident that Ettlinger preached in German. In fact, it was a condition of employment

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76 A colleague at the yeshiva of Wuerzburg would describe Ettlinger's university years as follows:

> He attended lectures in secular study only for several hours a day, several days a week. This he did because the times required it, in order to be knowledgeable in worldly matters, in order to be able to say to Wisdom "You are my sister" [cf. Proverbs 7:4], and in order to know how to respond to reformers and heretics. Even then, however, his mind concentrated on Torah, never ceasing to study Torah and observe the commandments diligently.

See Horovitz, *She'elot u-Teshuvot he-'Arukh la-Ner*, I, introduction, 13.

incorporated into his rabbinic contract![77] With the Enlightenment, the nature of the rabbinate changed drastically and rapidly. Whereas the pre-Enlightenment rabbi did not attend a university, did not ordinarily preach every Sabbath, and certainly did not preach in German, by the middle of the nineteenth century, virtually all Orthodox rabbis in Germany were college educated and preached every Sabbath in German.[78] In part this was due to governmental interference, which required rabbis to be college educated or, at the very least, to pass equivalency examinations in secular study; in part it was due to the new social setting in which rabbis found themselves. After all, logic dictates that a rabbi preach in the language his congregants understand. In many parts of Germany, government agencies did all they could to curtail the powers of the rabbinate. Their ultimate goal was to control and speed the process of Jewish acculturation to German culture. Thus, for example, rabbis were no

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77 The contract is reprinted in Horovitz, *She'elot u-Teshuvot he-'Arukh la-Ner*, I, introduction, 18. For a less charitable view of rabbis who preach in the vernacular, see R. Moses Sofer, *She'elot u-Teshuvot Ḥatam Sofer, Ḥoshen Mishpat* (Jerusalem, 1972) , 74b, §197. For a nuanced understanding of the Ḥatam Sofer's position, see R. Moses Schick's responsum in *Likkutei Teshuvot Ḥatam Sofer* (London, 1965), §82.

78 See Ismar Schorsch, "Emancipation" (above, n. 72), 205-47 (and the appended qualifying remarks by H. A. Strauss). Interestingly, of the 67 rabbis with doctorates in Germany in the 1840s (listed by Schorsch), 13 percent studied under R. Abraham Bing at Wuerzburg. The list, of course, does not include Ettlinger, Bernays, and others who enrolled at the University of Wuerzburg but did not earn the Ph.D. degree while studying under Bing. Was it the proximity of the yeshiva to the university that best accounts for this statistic, or is it possible that Bing played a more active, perhaps even pivotal, role in the transition of the rabbinate from the pre-modern to the modern period? The matter deserves investigation. See, tentatively, Isaac Bamberger's biography of Bing in R. Abraham Bing, *Zikhron Avraham* (Pressburg, 1892), 5 - 12.

longer to decide civil disputes in accordance with Jewish law. Jews, as budding citizens of the realm, were to petition the same courts of justice as everyone else. Ettlinger, who served in Altona, then under the aegis of the kingdom of Denmark, retained the right to adjudicate civil disputes among the Jews under his authority. This state of affairs continued until 1863, when Denmark adopted the policy of virtually all the principalities in Germany and revoked the dispensation it had provided for Ettlinger.

Ettlinger's use of the German language and of new literary formats for Jewish expression was part of a carefully crafted plan to use the very tools of the Enlightenment against its more corrosive aspects. He founded two major periodicals of Jewish thought – long before it had become fashionable to do so in Orthodox circles. They were *Der Treue Zions-Waechter,* a German periodical which appeared as a weekly from 1845-1850 and as a bi-monthly from 1851-1854; and *Shomer Ẓiyyon ha-Ne'eman,* a bi-monthly Hebrew periodical which appeared from 1846-1856. These pioneer periodicals paved the way for the later, more influential Orthodox journals, such as Hirsch's *Jeschurun,* Lehmann's *Israelit,* and Hildesheimer's *Die juedische Presse.*

In 1839, Ettlinger founded a Jewish day school in Altona. It featured an integrated curriculum of Jewish and secular study that included the study of the Danish language. Nine to thirteen hours per week – approximately 30 percent of weekly instructional time – were devoted to Jewish studies. Boys and girls were taught in separate classes from the start, in contrast, for example, to Hirsch's Realschule. Jewish and non-Jewish teachers taught in the school; the non-Jewish teachers taught secular studies. The appointment of non-Jewish teachers was made

necessary by the dearth of Orthodox teachers adept in secular study and by Ettlinger's refusal to appoint non-Orthodox Jews to his faculty.[79] Once again, Ettlinger served as a trailblazer, restructuring the form and substance of traditional Jewish education in order to render Orthodoxy viable in a modern world.[80]

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79 The appointment of Christian rather than non-Orthodox Jewish teachers of secular studies was first instituted by Ḥakham Bernays in the day school at Hamburg. See Goldschmidt, *Geschichte*, 57 - 58.

80 In a carefully worded manifesto on behalf of Torah study in the *yishuv* in Palestine, written by R. Eliyahu Guttmacher (d. 1874) and cosigned by Ettlinger, the two rabbis called for the establishment of "universal" yeshivot in Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias, and Safed. Diaspora Jewry was urged not only to support the yeshivot, but to send its youth to study in these new world centers for Torah study. Regarding the students at these new yeshivot, the manifesto predicts:

> They will surely excel in secular wisdom in a holy way, as did our holy forefathers, in comparison to whom present day sages, even those knowledgeable in secular study, are as naught... Consider Saadia Gaon, Maimonides, Ravad, and the tens of thousands of others who mastered all of secular wisdom, yet merited ultimate perfection from the light of Torah that shone over them. . . The day will come, perhaps, when every parent who wishes to instill Torah, fear of God, and secular wisdom in his child . . . will send him to the Holy Land . . . and after [studying Torah at the yeshiva] he will learn how to engage in business, then marry, thus combining Torah with worldly success.

The manifesto should hardly be viewed as an endorsement of the introduction of secular studies into the yeshivot in the Holy Land. One suspects that the two rabbis had a far more subtle–and innocuous– notion in mind, i.e., the notion that if Torah is studied properly and intensively all wisdom can be derived from it. Nonetheless, the formulation – intended to attract European students to the yeshivot in the *yishuv* – is striking and worth noting. Also noteworthy is the rather clear indication that graduates would not be bankrolled indefinitely by Kollel funds or by the *ḥalukkah*; they were expected to join the work force. The full text of the manifesto, dated 1862, is available in Guttmacher's *Mikhtav me-Eliyahu* (Jerusalem, 1990), 124-37; and in Horovitz, *She'elot u-Teshuvot he-'Arukh la-Ner*, II, 140-45.

Perhaps the boldest of Ettlinger's educational programs was one that never got off the ground. It was a proposal for the establishment of a rabbinical seminary with him as its head. Given the radical transformation of the rabbinate and the lay community during the Enlightenment period, Ettlinger felt that it was essential that Orthodoxy train a new generation of rabbis and teachers who could cope with modernity and earn the respect of the lay community. While yet in Mannheim in 1829, Ettlinger received a tentative invitation to serve as head of a projected rabbinical seminary in Amsterdam. Although the appointment never materialized, he indicated in his response to the authorities in Amsterdam that he had already given much thought to a similar proposal which would have transformed the *klaus* in Mannheim into a rabbinical seminary.[81] Ettlinger then describes in some detail the curriculum he envisioned for the rabbinical seminary in Mannheim. Beyond what would be studied at any *yeshivah gedolah,* it included instruction in Hebrew grammar, biblical exegesis, Jewish philosophy and theology, and in the art of preaching. An even more ambitious proposal, once again involving Ettlinger, appeared in his *Der Treue Zions-Waechter* in 1846. The anonymous proposal appeared as the lead article and could only have been printed with Ettlinger's approval. After justifying the need for an Orthodox rabbinical seminary, the detailed proposal delineates the administrative structure, student requirements, and curriculum of the projected rabbinical seminary. Applicants aged fifteen to eighteen would be accepted into the program upon presenting documents attesting to their background in Jewish and secular study, and upon passing a required entrance examination. The

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81 Ettlinger's response is printed in Jaap Meijer, *Moeder in Israel* (Haarlem, 1964), 80-91.

purpose of the entrance examination was to enable the student to demonstrate his proficiency not only in Talmud, but also in German, mathematics, history, and geography. Those accepted into the program would follow an eight-year course of study that included courses in German, philosophy, mathematics, logic, history, and geography. As Judith Bleich has shown, the seminary was to have been established in Altona, and Ettlinger was to have served as president of its Board of Directors. It failed only because of the sudden death of the benefactor upon whom the entire proposal was dependent "and without flour there can be no Torah" (*M. Avot* 3:17).[82] What Ettlinger could only dream about would be implemented by his disciple, R. Azriel Hildesheimer.

Ettlinger was first and foremost a traditional rabbinic scholar whose talmudic commentaries and responsa follow in the footsteps of his predecessors, the *gedolei ha-Torah* of Germany. Remarkably, without any apparent diminution in either the quality or quantity of his Torah teaching and publication, he laid the foundations for the Orthodox response to modernity. His guarded blending of the old and the new is perhaps best exemplified by this brief citation from his responsum endorsing the use of machine-made *maẓẓot* during Passover:

> I, together with all those who fear God and have a clear understanding of how the machine – in these lands – works, take delight at the improvement it has wrought. In my native city,

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82 See the full account in Bleich, *Jacob Ettlinger*, 276-90. It should be noted that Ettlinger's approval of rabbinical seminaries was not indiscriminate. See Horovitz, *She'elot u-Teshuvot he-'Arukh la-Ner*, II, 160 and 270.

Karlsruhe, it is already several years that the rabbis instituted the practice that *maẓẓot* are made by machine. So too the Chief Rabbi of Wuerzburg [R. Seligmann Baer Bamberger (d. 1878)], author of *Melekhet Shamayim*, instituted the same practice in Wuerzburg and in the district under his authority. We are all in agreement in praising the improvement it has wrought in the production of kosher *maẓẓot*. I am therefore surprised that you write that several rabbis in your country have banned its use. It would appear that those rabbis, despite the finest of intentions, have no idea how the machine works. Hearing reports about the machines is no substitute for seeing them first hand. If they reject the machines precisely because they are new, know that we – the authentic rabbis of Germany – also keep our distance from all that is new pertaining to Torah and the commandments. But why shouldn't we accept the advances in modern technology that aid us in understanding and observing God's commandments even better than before?[83]

V. R. Samson Raphael Hirsch

The passages listed below, drawn from the writings of R. Samson Raphael Hirsch's (1808-1888) contemporaries – admirers and opponents – bear eloquent testimony to his powerful impact on German Jewry.

Hirsch has great influence over me; he has made life very sweet for me here at Bonn. . . I already

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83 The responsum was reprinted in Horovitz, *She'elot u-Teshuvot he-'Arukh la-Ner*, II, 26-27.

knew him at Heidelberg. . . One evening both of us bemoaned the loneliness of the Jewish students of theology and we decided to found an orator's club. This club has exercised a distinct influence over me and has led to the formation of the strongest ties of friendship between Hirsch and myself After his first lecture, we talked at very great length, and I learned to admire his exceptional eloquence, the keenness of his intellect, and his quick and lucid grasp. This debate, however, did not draw us close to each other, since we touched at times upon the religious aspect as well. . . That winter and the following summer we studied the tractate *Zebaḥim* together. Gradually, there resulted mutual love and esteem. I respected his lofty qualities of spirit, his rigorously moral deportment, and I loved the goodness of his heart. His comradeship brought me great benefit and pleasure.

Abraham Geiger [84]

To Samson Raphael Hirsch, the spirited champion of historic Judaism, the unforgettable teacher, the fatherly friend, in love and gratitude.

Heinrich Graetz[85]

The man who exerted the greatest influence upon my young life and imbued me with the divine ardor of true idealism was none other than the representative of what was called Neo-orthodoxy, Samson Raphael Hirsch, the pupil of

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84 Abraham Geiger, *Nachgelassene Schriften* (Berlin, 1878), V, 18 - 19. The translation cited here is from Mordecai Breuer, "Samson Raphael Hirsch," in Leo Jung, ed., *Guardians of Our Heritage* (New York, 1958), 268.

85 Heinrich Graetz, *Gnosticismus und Judenthum* (Krotoshin, 1846), dedication page.

Isaac Bernays, the Ḥakam of Hamburg, author of the anonymous book, *Der Bibel'sche Orient,*[86] and of Jacob Ettlinger when Klaus rabbi in Mannheim. Though he kept himself at a distance from his pupils, as he never invited us to his home nor manifested any personal interest in our welfare or progress, his strong personality was such as to work like a spell upon his hearers. Whether he spoke in the pulpit or expounded the Scripture to large audiences, or led us through the discussions of the Talmud, there was a striking originality and the fascinating power of genius in his grasp of the subject. His method of reading and explaining the Scripture or the Talmud was quite different from the usual way; he made us find the meaning of the passage independently, though his own system of thought was peculiar. His was a strange combination of Hebrew lore and German culture, which culminated in his concept of the *Jisroel-Mensch* that is of a humanity which finds its highest expression in loyal, traditional Judaism. Every Saturday night in my letter to the dear ones at home I gave a faithful synopsis of the sermon I heard in the morning and the impressive teachings laid down in the *Horeb* and other works by Hirsch became part and parcel of my innermost life.

Kaufmann Kohler[87]

Hirsch made it a point to appear always in faultless apparel, almost stylish, according to the fashion of the period. Nothing in his manner or figure was to be strange to the crowd. This

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86 See n. 41.

87 Kaufmann Kohler, "Personal Reminiscences of My Early Life," in his *Studies, Addresses, and Personal Papers* (New York, 1931), 475.

remained so during his whole life and I can still see him as an octogenarian, immaculately dressed in the finest black suit and top hat, like a born aristocrat. A striking feature was his head, so well-shaped and adorned with the most beautiful and brilliant eyes, which kept their fiery luster up to the last moments of his life. I think nobody could ever forget his countenance, animated by the magnetic glance. And whilst his outward manner was prepossessing and attractive, his character showed a strength and earnestness uncommon for any man, almost too earnest. He did not freely make friends and even his friends he kept at a distance; nor was he easily approached, his serenity and dignity warded off intimacy. Bold and fearless he upheld his convictions. Only once did he yield to outside pressure, when – in Oldenburg – he allowed *Kol Nidre* to be abolished.[88] In later years he made no concessions, no adjustment of views was possible and, in questions of principle, he never accepted any compromise, nor did he permit any of his communities to interfere with his opinions and beliefs.

As a scholar he lived his own life. His intercourse with other scholars was scanty. He did not need them. Feared as an antagonist, he was born a fighter and he hit hard. Mendelssohnian tolerance was unthinkable for him. He lived in his study amidst his books and papers, where the air was thick with smoke clouds, issuing from his long much-loved pipe.

Needless to say, the Religionsgesellschaft was very proud of their rabbi. His reputation as one

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88 For details regarding this episode, see Mordecai Breuer, "Chapters in the History of Samson Raphael Hirsch: The Annulment of the Recital of Kol Nidre at Oldenburg" (Hebrew), *Ha-Ma'ayan* 4:2 (1964), 7 - 12

of the greatest living scholars was a source of the deepest satisfaction, but it was in the first place his eloquence that thrilled their minds. He spoke always spontaneously, without any notes; all his addresses were presented extemporaneously. He was a marvelous orator; his noble language, the rapid flow of his speech, the originality of his thoughts, the force of his arguments, together with his whole personal appearance, made his sermons irresistible and secured him a magic influence.

Saemy Japhet [89]

One word about his success as a preacher. With a preacher like Hirsch it is as with a great singer. The effect of the performance must be felt but cannot be described and is lost to posterity. Whenever in his sermons some struggle, some hesitation was noticed, it was because he was applying to himself the reins, not the spur. He had to restrain the great copiousness in the outpour of ideas, in the exuberant flow of words which suggested themselves to him; and with the greatest skill he selected on the spur of the moment those that were most fitting. The effect his addresses had on his audience was always electric. Suffice it to say that the instances were by no means few, that men of culture and education entered the synagogue with opinions antagonistic to his, and left it again with serious doubts as to the correctness of their views, to end in becoming his most ardent followers.

But it was by his pedagogical achievements in the founding of and presiding over schools, and by

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89 Saemy Japhet, "The Succession From the Frankfurt Jewish Community under Samson Raphael Hirsch," *Historia Judaica* 10(1948), 104-6.

his statesmanlike qualities in the organization of communities, that he exhibited himself most as a man of action. That he knew his own mind and never acted at random, but always in accordance with settled principles, is evidenced by his many articles on communal affairs. Again I am unable to discuss them, and must therefore request my readers to inquire for themselves if they wish to know Hirsch in quite another character. That his theories were sound, that his activity proceeded in the right direction, cannot be shown better than by pointing to the congregation which he created in Frankfort-on-the-Main.

Samuel A. Hirsch [90]

Hirsch was an awesome figure. Much has been, and will continue to be, written about him – with little fear that what remains to be said is anywhere near exhaustion. Following a brief biographical sketch, we shall focus primarily on Hirsch's central teaching: *Torah and derekh erez*.[91]

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90 Samuel A. Hirsch [no relation to Samson Raphael Hirsch], "Jewish Philosophy of Religion and Samson Raphael Hirsch," *Jewish Quarterly Review*, old series, 2(1890), 136.

91 Biographical studies of Hirsch abound. No one has written more intelligently about him than the historian Mordecai Breuer in a series of essays published in *Ha-Ma'ayan* and elsewhere, several of which are cited in these notes. In general, see Eduard Duckesz, "Zur Genealogie Samson Raphael Hirsch's," *Jahrbuch der Jüdisch-Literarischen Gesellschaft* 17(1926), 103-32; Isaac Heinemann, "Studies on R. Samson Raphael Hirsch" (Hebrew) *Sinai* 24(1949), 249-71; idem, "Samson Raphael Hirsch: The Formative Years of the Leader of Modern Orthodoxy," *Historia Judaica* 13(1951), 29-54; Isidor Grunfeld, "Samson Raphael Hirsch: The Man and his Mission," in his edition of Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Judaism Eternal* (London, 1956, I, xiii-lxi; idem, "Introduction to Samson Raphael Hirsch's Horeb," in his edition of Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Horeb* (London, 1962)), I, xix-cliii; Pinchas E. Rosenblüth, "Samson Raphael Hirsch, sein Denken und Wirken," in Hans Liebeschutz and Arnold Paucker, eds., *Das*

Born in Hamburg in 1808, Hirsch studied mostly with private tutors until 1821, when Bernays was appointed to the Hamburg rabbinate. Hirsch was profoundly influenced by Bernays; in effect, he would devote his life to transforming Bernays' teachings into a living reality for Orthodox Jewry in Germany.[92] Even before Hirsch had graduated from the local *Gymnasium*, and at his parents' request, he began serving as an apprentice for a business concern – the typical profession engaged in by Hamburg Jews. But Hirsch's heart was set on the rabbinate. At Bernays' suggestion, Hirsch, at age twenty, left for Mannheim to study at the yeshiva of R. Jacob Ettlinger.[93] His studies at the yeshiva lasted for little more than a year, after which Hirsch enrolled for a year of study at the University of Bonn, where he studied, among other

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Judentum in der Deutschen Umwelt 1800-1850 (Tübingen, 1977), 293-324; Robert Liberles, *The Resurgence of Orthodox Judaism in Frankfurt am Main 1838-1877* (Westport, 1985); Yonah Immanuel, ed., *Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch: His Teaching and System* (Hebrew), (Jerusalem, 1989); and the numerous studies strewn throughout *Nachalat Ẓewi* (1930-1938) and *Ha-Ma'ayan* (new series: 1964 on)– two periodicals devoted largely to the thought of Samson Raphael Hirsch. Regarding Noah Rosenbloom's iconoclastic *Tradition in an Age of Reform: The Religious Philosophy of Samson Raphael Hirsch* (Philadelphia, 1976), see Mordecai Breuer's review in *Tradition* 16:4 (1977), 140-48. An informative biography of Hirsch is R. Eliyahu M. Klugman's "Treatise on 'There Was a King in Jeshurun'" (Hebrew), in Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Shemesh Marpe* (Brooklyn, 1992), 273-367. Far more comprehensive, even magisterial, is his *Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch: Architect of Torah Judaism for the Modern World* (New York, 1996).See also the entry "Hirsch, Samson Raphael" in Michael Brocke and Julius Carlebach, eds., *Biographisches Handbuch der Rabbiner* (München, 2004), vol. 1:1, 439-45.

92 For Bernays' impact on Hirsch, see Isaac Heinemann, "The Relationship Between S. R. Hirsch and his teacher Isaac Bernays" (Hebrew), *Ẓion* 16 (1951), 44-90.

93 See Mordecai Breuer, "Chapters in the History of Samson Raphael Hirsch: At the Yeshiva of R. Jacob Ettlinger in Mannheim" (Hebrew), *Ha-Ma'ayan* 12:2 (1972), 55-62.

topics, classical languages and literature and experimental physics.[94] This was clearly part of a carefully laid-out plan that would provide him with the education and credentials necessary to succeed in the German rabbinate. Like Bernays and Ettlinger, Hirsch did not earn a college degree. In 1830, Rabbi Dr. Nathan Adler – who would later serve with distinction as Chief Rabbi of the British Empire – resigned his post as Chief Rabbi of Oldenburg, just northwest of Bremen in Lower Saxony. Upon the receipt of a strong letter of recommendation from Bernays, Adler recommended Samson Raphael Hirsch, then only twenty-two years old, as his successor.[95] Hirsch served eleven years in Oldenburg.[96] There he would marry, father the first of his ten children, and write *The Nineteen Letters* (1836) and *Horeb* (1837), two works that would catapult the young Hirsch to the front line of leadership of Orthodox Jewry in Germany. In 1841, he accepted an appointment to serve as Chief Rabbi of the districts of Aurich and Osnabrueck in the province of Hanover and took up residence in Emden. It was in Emden that Hirsch issued for the first time the rallying call for *Torah and derekh erez*.[97] In 1846, Hirsch was appointed Chief Rabbi of Nikolsburg, and *Landesrabbiner* of Moravia and Silesia. His predecessors at Nikolsburg included the Maharal of Prague, R. Yom Tov Lipmann Heller, R. David Oppenheim, and R. Mordechai Benet.

This should have been his most distinguished and

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94 See Raphael Breuer, *Unter seinem Banner: Ein Beitrag zur Würdigung Rabbiner Samson Raphael Hirschs* (Frankfurt, 1908), 214-15.

95 For the text of Adler's recommendation, see Trepp, *Die Oldenburger Judenschaft*, 119, and the accompanying photograph between pp. 120-21.

96 The definitive study of Hirsch's Oldenburg years is Trepp, *Die Oldenburger Judenshaft*, 119-207.

97 See n. 112.

perhaps final appointment as Chief Rabbi. But events proved otherwise. Despite some successes at Nikolsburg, e.g., Hirsch successfully led the struggle for the emancipation of Austrian and Moravian Jewry, factionalism took its toll on Hirsch. The traditional Orthodox viewed his modern dress as well as some of his innovations, such as the broadening of the yeshiva curriculum and the performance of weddings in the synagogue, with suspicion. Liberal Jews were scandalized by Hirsch's refusal to introduce reforms in the liturgy and in Jewish practice. Not able to satisfy either constituency, Hirsch sought a new venue for his rabbinical talent and aspirations.[98] Upon the death of Bernays in 1849, Hirsch informed the Jewish communal authorities in Hamburg that he was prepared to leave Nikolsburg and assume Bernays' post. The Jewish communal authorities, however, were not prepared to meet Hirsch's terms.[99] Instead, in 1851, Hirsch accepted an invitation to serve as a rabbi of a small breakaway group of Orthodox Jews in Frankfurt who wished to preserve an island of Orthodoxy within the predominantly Reform Jewish community of that city. Here, Hirsch would realize his life's mission by becoming the champion of Orthodoxy. For the first time in his rabbinic career, Hirsch was not responsible for addressing the religious needs of an entire Jewish community, consisting of the full spectrum of Jews from the most liberal to the most Orthodox. Instead, he could focus all his energies on establishing an ideal

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98 For details concerning Hirsch's tenure at Nikolsburg, see Yiẓḥak Ze'ev Kahana, "Nikolsburg," in Yehudah Leib Maimon, ed., *'Arim ve-Immahot be-Yisrael* (Jerusalem, 1950), IV, 285-301; and Gertrude Hirschler, "Rabbi and Statesman: Samson Raphael Hirsch, Landesrabbiner of Moravia," *Review of the Society for the History of Czechoslovak Jews* 1 (1986 - 1987), 121-49.

99 Poppel, "The Politics of Religious Leadership: The Rabbinate in Nineteenth Century Hamburg," 464.

Jewish community. This he did with great gusto and considerable skill. He shaped the synagogue service, designed the school curricula, created the institutions, and authored the literature that would revive Orthodoxy not only in Frankfurt but throughout Germany and Western Europe.

In 1850, the predominantly Reform-minded Jewish community in Frankfurt consisted of some 5,000 Jews. Eleven Jews, representing a larger group of approximately 50 to100 Orthodox Jews, petitioned the Frankfurt Senate for the right to create a religious society committed to Orthodox teaching and practice, and for the right to appoint a rabbi. The petition was approved and the separatist *Israelitische Religionsgesellschaft* (henceforth: IRG) came into being. The Senate made it clear, however, that the IRG was recognized as a society, not as an independent Jewish community. Thus, all members of the society remained members of and paid dues to the official Jewish community of Frankfurt.[100] When Hirsch arrived in

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100 In 1876, through the efforts of Hirsch, the Prussian parliament approved a law of secession that enabled Orthodox Jews to withdraw from the official Jewish community without abandoning their Jewish status and without jeopardizing their status as citizens of the realm. Hirsch urged all members of the IRG to withdraw from the official Jewish community of Frankfurt, with little success. Some 75 percent of Hirsch's *kehillah* preferred to retain membership in (and pay dues to) both the official Jewish community and the IRG. In general, see Japhet, "The Secession" and Judith Bleich, "The Frankfurt Secession Controversy," *Jewish Action* 52:1 (1991-1992), 22-27, 51-62. For its repercussions in a later period, see Matthias Morgenstern, *Von Frankfurt nach Jerusalem: Isaac Breuer und die Geschichte des 'Austrittsstreits' in der deutschjüdischen Orthodoxie* (Tübingen, 1995).

On the relationship between Hirsch's commitment to secession and his espousal of *Torah and Derekh Erez*, see Jacob Katz, "R. Samson Raphael Hirsch: Rightist and Leftist" (Hebrew), in Mordecai Breuer, ed., *Torah 'im Derekh Erez* (Ramat Gan, 1987), 13-31.

1851, the IRG had neither synagogue nor school. By the time he died, the IRG consisted of a community of over 400 families with a total population of 1,000 to 2,000 Jews; a day school and high school with over 500 students; and a synagogue that seated 1,000 congregants.[101] Hirsch was first and foremost an educator. His spirited oratory and facile pen essentially accomplished his mission for him. His first work, *The Nineteen Letters,* was a foundation document that encapsulated virtually all that Hirsch would teach throughout his life. Its electrifying effect alone assured Hirsch a permanent place in the history of the revival of Orthodoxy in modern times. This was followed by *Horeb,* a comprehensive digest of Jewish law which made available to the Jewish youth of Germany the essence of Torah teaching in an updated, palatable, even attractive format. Aside from a rich polemical literature against Reform and incipient Conservative Judaism, Hirsch published his monumental *Commentary on the Torah, Commentary on Psalms, Commentary on the Siddur,* and *Commentary on the Passover Haggadah.* In 1854, he founded the periodical *Jeschurun,* a forum in which he published many of the well-over 100 essays, articles, and pamphlets he would author aside from his books. Many of these essays were gathered together and published posthumously in his *Gesammelte Schriften.*[102] Although his published work was written almost exclusively in German, Hirsch also wrote in fluent, even eloquent Hebrew. Many of his *ḥiddushim* and legal responsa were written in classical Hebrew – and they have been gathered

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101 See Liberles, *The Resurgence,* passim.

102 Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Frankfurt, 1902-12), 6 vols. An English edition, entitled *The Collected Wrirings* (New York, 1985-95), 8 vols., has been published by Philipp Feldheim, Inc.

together and published in recent years.[103] These recent publications explode the myth that Hirsch was a second-rate Talmudist who really couldn't hold his own against his contemporaries in Frankfurt. When he wanted to, Hirsch could joust with the outstanding Talmudists of his day – and on their own terms.[104] His mission, however, was not to the intellectual elite but, rather, to the lay community. Hirsch would produce a community of committed lay Orthodox Jews that would become the envy of the decaying, splintered, and beleaguered Jewish communities of Eastern Europe. He would not produce *gedolei yisrael*.

In 1835, the young Hirsch would write as follows:

> Our century wants to think, and that is its greatest merit. Whatever can be rationally

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103 See, e.g., the list of printed responsa in Isidor Grunfeld's edition of S. R. Hirsch, *Judaism Eternal*, I, lxi; R. Barukh Goitein, *Zikhron Avot* (Tel Aviv, 1971)), 167-68, responsum77; Mordecai Breuer, ed., "R. Samson Raphael Hirsch's Essay on Aggadah in Rabbinic Literature" (Hebrew), *Ha-Ma'ayan* 16:2 (1976), 1-16 [for an English translation of this essay, see Joseph Munk, "Two Letters of Samson Raphael Hirsch: A Translation," *L'Eylah* 27 (1989): 30-35]; idem, ed., "Letters by R. Samson Raphael Hirsch" (Hebrew), *Ha-Ma'ayan* 29:1 (1988), 17- 34; idem, ed., "Responsa, Letters and Handwritten Documents by R. Samson Raphael Hirsch" (Hebrew), *Ha-Ma'ayan* 29:2 (1989): 1 - 18; Yonah Immanuel, "An Exchange of Letters between Rabbi S. B. Bamberger and Rabbi S. R. Hirsch on Hirsch's Commentary to Leviticus 11:36" (Hebrew), *Ha-Ma'ayan* 29:2 (1989): 35-58; and Els Bendheim, ed., *Liepman Philip Prins: His Scholarly Correspondence* (Hebrew; Hoboken, 1992), which includes letters by Hirsch. A treasure trove of unpublished Hirschian correspondence in Hebrew, including halakhic responsa, rests in an archive at Bar Ilan University. See tentatively David Farkas, ed., *Guide to Manuscripts and Printed Matter from the Legacy of R. Samson Raphael Hirsch: The Sanger Collection* (Hebrew; Ramat Gan, 1982). Many, but hardly all, of Hirsch's responsa and talmudic novellae have been gathered together in S. R. Hirsch, *Shemesh Marpe*, 1-269.

104 See R. Yaakov Perlow, "Rav S. R. Hirsch: The Gaon in Talmud and Mikra," in R. Eliyahu Glucksman, et al., eds., *The Living Hirschian Legacy* (New York, 1988), 75-89.

explained and is capable of being presented as idea and concept and can stand the test of rational thinking, has nothing to fear. But one can only analyze, test and meditate upon things with which one is acquainted. Among Jews, however, nothing is less well known than Judaism itself. I dare to submit Judaism as it appears to me to intellectual analysis; I shall perhaps be blamed for it from all sides. But just because of that I must not and will not be silent. If I knew of even one person more capable than myself of pleading the true cause of Israel, my incapable and inexperienced pen would have rested for a long time yet. As it is, however, I see an older generation in which Judaism has become an inherited mummy; a generation which shows veneration for Judaism, it is true, but a veneration without spirit; some of that generation, therefore, see only tombstone inscriptions in Judaism and thus despair of the eternal validity of the only thing that makes life worth living. On the other hand, I see a younger generation aglow with noble enthusiasm for Judaism – or rather for Jews. These young men do not know about authentic Judaism, and what they believe they know of it they consider as empty forms without meaning. One must admit, however, that this ignorance is not entirely their fault; and thus the young generation is in danger of undermining Judaism while striving for Jews. I see no one in our day capable of disclosing to the young generation the meaning behind what they wrongly consider as empty forms, of reviving the mummy and taking our young generation to a vantage point from which they can behold the shining light of Judaism. And in such conditions should we condone a dreamy, inactive silence? No; it is a duty to speak out if one is only to hint at a route which others might valiantly follow. I must speak simply because no one else does so;

> this is the only justification for my coming forward. God will help me.
>
> The weakest feature in Israel's present parlous condition is in respect of Jewish scholarship, the way in which Bible, Talmud, and Midrash have been studied for the last hundred years. We are now paying dearly for this mistaken method of study. Because life has long since been banished from the study of the Torah, the Torah has been banished from life.[105]

Hirsch's writings reflect a dual commitment to rationalism and German idealism. Clearly influenced by a host of Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment philosophers, Hirsch rarely mentions their names.[106] At once a rationalist and romantic, Hirsch's writings, though carefully reasoned and sober, are addressed more often to the heart than to the mind. A hortatory tone pervades his writings. A typical passage reads as follows:

> Although the Jewish community must be administered by its official representatives, the success of Jewish communal life is not dependent on these leaders. Neither boards nor committees, neither rabbis nor preachers make a Jewish community. *For if you will guard faithfully* (Deuteronomy 11:22) "It is you, you who must

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105 "Letter to Z.H. May," in I. Grunfeld's edition of Hirsch, *Horeb*, I, cxlii-cxliii.

106 See Noah H. Rosenbloom, "The Nineteen Letters of Ben Uziel: A Hegelian Exposition," *Historia Judaica* 22 (1960), 23-60; Howard L. Levine, "Enduring and Transitory Elements in the Philosophy of Samson Raphael Hirsch," *Tradition* 5 (1963), 278-97; and Mordecai Breuer, *Jüdische Orthodoxie im Deutschen Reich 1871-1918* (Frankfurt, 1986), also available in Hebrew under the title *'Edah u-Deyoknah* (Jerusalem, 1990), and in English under the title *Modernity Within Judaism: The Social History of Orthodox Jewry in Imperial Germany* (New York, 1992). Cf. R. Shelomoh E. Danziger, "Clarification of R. Hirsch's Concepts–A Rejoinder," *Tradition* 6 (1964), 141-58.

rally around the Torah as its guardians," the Rabbis (*Sifre, ad loc.*) say to the people – or to the "laity" the elegant term used in modern theology. Do not say, "We have elders, or notables, or prophets for that purpose;" it is you and you alone that must stand on guard for the Torah. The Torah that Moses brought to us is the heritage of the community of Israel... All of you must stand together before the Lord, your God, the totality of Jewish men, including the woodcutter and the water carrier. If the Jewish community as a whole does not bear responsibility for the preservation of the Torah, the Torah will perish.

Therefore the Jewish individual should not think he has acquitted himself of his duty to the community just because he has made his contribution to the communal treasury and cast his vote in the communal elections. If the men you have elected do not perform their duties in such a manner as to promote the religious welfare of your community, if the penny you have turned over to the communal treasury is not spent for the religious welfare of your community, if, despite a rabbi, a board and committees, religion does not fare well in your community, then you have not discharged your obligation towards the community. You must find out why the sacred values of Judaism are doing badly in your community and you must summon all your energies to improve the situation. Remember, in heaven there are no "laymen" or "clergymen." There are only Jewish men and women; there is only a "priestly community," all of whom will be held accountable for the welfare of the sacred values that have been entrusted to their care and who cannot shift this awesome responsibility to the shoulders of others.

As a matter of fact, even if you feel you can tell

> yourself happily that the sacred values of Judaism are flourishing within your own circle, that the men to whom you have entrusted the care of your sanctuary are performing their functions properly, that the school, the synagogue and all the institutions needed for the religious life of any Jewish community are thriving, you have not done your part entirely unless you have been able to convince yourself beyond doubt that this flowering is not an accident but the gratifying fruit of the way in which the community is run, a flowering that will withstand decay. You must be able to assure yourself that some day you may go quietly to your eternal rest, knowing that the flowering you hailed will continue under the care of your children, and that when the men who are now guiding the affairs of the community are gone, they will be replaced only by men with the same attitude and spirit. As long as you cannot be certain of all this, you also have not yet performed your duty as a Jew.[107]

Hirsch was not a philosopher. He nowhere presented a systematic account of his thought. But his voluminous writings are incredibly consistent and often repetitive. The avid reader will have little difficulty grasping the essence of his teaching. In his earliest works, Hirsch criticized severely what he considered to be the skewed form of Judaism of the ghetto:

> The spirit predominant in the most recent form of Jewish education was chiefly devoted to abstract and abstruse speculation. A vivid awareness of the real world was lacking, and therefore study was not conducted with a view to application in

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107 S. R. Hirsch, *The Collected Writings* (New York, 1990), VI, 14-15.

life, or to the acquisition of understanding for the world and our duty. Study became the end instead of the means, while the actual subject of the investigation became a matter of indifference. People studied Judaism but forgot to search for its principles in the pages of Scripture. That method, however, is not truly Jewish. Our great masters have always protested against it. Many pages of the classic works of Jewish literature are filled with the objections of their authors to this false and perverted procedure. The Bible and the Talmud are to be studied with one sole object in view, namely, to ascertain the duties of life which they teach, "to learn and to teach, to observe and to do." There is no science which trains the mind to a broader and more practical view of things than does the Torah, pursued in this manner.

A life of seclusion devoted only to meditation and prayer is not Judaism. Study and worship are but paths which lead to action. "Great is study, for it leads to the practical fulfillment of the precepts," say our sages, and the flower and fruit of our devotions should be the resolve to lead a life of action, pervaded with the spirit of God. Such a life is the only universal goal.

Certain misunderstood utterances were taken as weapons with which to repel all higher intellectual interpretation of the Talmud. No distinction was made between the question "What is stated here?" and the query "Why is it so stated?", and not even the category of *Edoth*[108] which, according to its whole nature, was designed to stimulate the mind to activity, was

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108 *Edoth* is the Hirschian term for the symbolic commandments, i.e., commandments obviously intended to reflect an idea or to stimulate thought. See *Nineteen Letters*, chapter 13, and cf. Isidor Grunfeld's discussion of Hirsch's classification of the commandments in Hirsch, *Horeb*, I, lii-lxx.

> excluded from the excommunication of the intellect. Another misunderstood passage (*Sanhedrin* 24a, *Tosafot*, s. v. *"belulah"*) even led to the suppression of Bible study, an error against which almost prophetic warning had been given long ago (*Soferim* 15:9). The inevitable consequence was, therefore, that since oppression and persecution had robbed Israel of every broad and natural view of the world and of life, and the Talmud had yielded about all the practical results of life of which it was capable, every mind that felt the desire for independent activity was obliged to forsake the paths of study and research open in general to the human intellect, and to take recourse in dialectic subtleties and hair-splittings.[109]

Nor did the Enlightenment improve matters:

> For a spirit had come from the West which mocked at everything holy, and knew no greater pleasure than to make the commandments sound ridiculous. Together with it there entered a longing for sensual enjoyment, which eagerly embraced the opportunity to rid itself so easily of burdensome restrictions. These motives combined to induce people to tear down the barriers erected by the Law , until human conduct became one dead, dull level.[110]

Hirsch's solution was a call for the restructuring of Jewish education, one that would allow for the revival of Judaism in modern times.

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109 S. R. Hirsch, *The Nineteen Letters on Judaism*, ed. J. Breuer (New York, 1960), 99-100, 121. Breuer's translation, followed here, is based upon S. R. Hirsch, *The Nineteen Letters of Ben Uziel*, trans. B. Drachman (New York, 1899; reissued: New York, 1942). See also the translation by Karin Paritzky, with commentary by R. Joseph Elias, in *The Nineteen Letters* (Jerusalem, 1995).

110 Hirsch, *The Nineteen Letters on Judaism*, 126.

There is one way to salvation – atonement must begin where the sin was committed. That one way is to forget the inherited views and prejudices concerning Judaism; to go back to the true sources of Judaism, to the Bible, Talmud and Midrash; to read, study and comprehend them in order to live by them; to draw from them the teachings of Judaism concerning God, the world, mankind and Israel, according to history and precept; to know Judaism out of itself; to learn from its own utterances its wisdom of life. The beginning should be made with the Bible. Its language should first be understood, and then, out of the spirit of the language, the spirit of the speakers therein should be inferred. The Bible should not be studied as an interesting object of philological or antiquarian research, or as a basis for theories of taste, or for amusement. It should be studied as the foundation of a new science. Nature should be contemplated with the spirit of David; history should be perceived with the ear of an Isaiah, and then, with the eye thus aroused, with the ear thus opened, the doctrine of God, world, man, Israel and Torah should be drawn from the Bible, and should become an idea, or system of ideas, fully comprehended. It is in this spirit that the Talmud.should be studied. We should search in the Halachah only for further elucidation and amplification of those ideas we already know from the Bible, and in the Aggadah only for the figuratively disguised manifestation of the same spirit.

The results of such study must be carried over into life, transplanted by the schools. Schools for Jews! The young saplings of your people should be reared as Jews, trained to become sons and daughters of Judaism, as you have recognized and understood and learned to respect and love it as the law of your life. They should be as familiar with the language of the Bible as they are with

the language of the country in which they live. They should be taught to think in both. Their hearts should be taught to feel, their minds to think. The Scriptures should be their book of law for life, and they should be able to understand life through the word of that Law.

Their eye should be open to recognize the world around them as God's world and themselves in God's world as His servants. Their ear should be open to perceive in history the narrative of the education of all men for this service. The wise precepts of the Torah and Talmud should be made clear to them as designed to spiritualize their lives for such sublime service to God. They should be taught to understand, to respect and to love them, in order that they may rejoice in the name of "Jew" despite all which that name implies of scorn and hardship. Together with this type of instruction they should be trained for breadwinning, but they should be taught that breadwinning is only a means of living, but not the purpose of life, and that the value of life is not to be judged according to rank, wealth or brilliance, but solely in terms of the amount of good and of service to God with which that life is filled.[111]

For Hirsch, the Torah was a living Torah to be applied to all spheres of life, including – as he would make abundantly clear in his later writings – general culture. In effect, Hirsch affirmed general culture by declaring it, like all other aspects of life, subservient to Torah. The theological notion that all aspects of life, including general culture, are shaped by and subservient to Torah was summed up by Hirsch in the phrase *Torah and derekh erez*. Although the phrase does not occur in Hirsch's earliest writings, its theological

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111 Hirsch, *The Nineteen Letters on Judaism*, 127-129.

underpinnings were already adumbrated in them. The phrase itself would first appear in an 1844 broadside against Reform.[112] In it, Hirsch called repeatedly for the establishment of Jewish schools whose teachers are expert in Torah and *madda*,[113] and whose curriculum would combine Torah and *ḥokhmah* or Torah and *derekh erez*.

Before assuming his new post in Frankfurt, Hirsch issued his last circular to the Jewish communities in Moravia. It read in part:

> Neither should you lend your ears to those who alienate themselves from life and science, believing that Judaism must fear them as its worst enemies. They are mistaken in believing that Judaism and all that is holy to it can only be saved by shutting off the sanctuary of Israel within its four walls and by locking the door against any gust of the fresh wind of life, or any beam of the light of science. Listen only to the voice of our Sages (who said): If there is no Torah there is no *derekh erez*, and if there is no *derekh erez* there is no Torah.[114]

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112 S. R. Hirsch, "Open Letter in Response to the Braunschweig Rabbinical Conference" (Hebrew), in Ẓevi H. Lehren and Eliyahu A. Prins, eds., *Torat ha-Kenaot* (Amsterdam, 1844), 3b-5b; reissued in *Nachalat Ẓewi* 1 (1930-1931), 102-12, in Yonah Immanuel, ed., *Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch*, 323-35, and in Hirsch, *Shemesh Marpe*, 188-96.

113 Thus, Hirsch provided an early precedent for what would become the motto of Yeshiva University, "Torah and Madda." For the history of the term and its use at Yeshiva University, see Jacob J. Schacter, "Torah u-Madda Revisited: The Editor's Introduction," *Torah u- Madda Journal* 1 (1989): 1- 22

114 See Mordecai Breuer, "'Torah and Derekh Erez' According to the Teaching of R. Samson Raphael Hirsch" (Hebrew), *Ha-Ma'ayan* 9:1 (1969): 1-16, 9:2 (1969): 10-29. Cf. the English version, Mordecai Breuer, *The Torah-im-Derekh-Eretz of Samson Raphael Hirsch* (Jerusalem, 1970), 47.

So central was the theme of *Torah and derekh erez* in Hirsch's *Weltanschauung* that it was embedded in the foundation stone of his synagogue. The text of the scroll buried in the foundation stone read:

> May we merit to raise up together our sons and daughters to *Torah and derekh erez,* as we were instructed by the founding fathers of our nation, the true sages.[115]

Similarly, emblazoned in gold letters on the banner of the Jewish day school founded by Hirsch was the phrase: *yafeh talmud torah ' im derekh erez.*[116]

In his writings from the Frankfurt period, Hirsch would address the issue of the relationship between Torah and general culture again and again. Well aware that the phrase *Torah and derekh erez* lent itself to misinterpretation – some Jews would equate the terms *Torah* and *derekh erez,* others would make *Torah* subservient to *derekh erez* – Hirsch attempted to nip these misinterpretations in the bud. We allow Hirsch to speak for himself:

> We hereby declare before heaven and earth that if our religion indeed required us to renounce that which men call civilization and culture, we would be ready to do so without hesitation, precisely because we truly regard our religion as religion, because it is to us the Word of God in which all other considerations must defer. . .
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> But is this really necessary? Judaism was never alien to genuine civilization and culture. In almost every era, its followers stood at the very heights of the culture of their day; indeed, they often outstripped their contemporaries in this

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115 Breuer, "Torah and Derekh Erez," 9.

116 Breuer, "Torah and Derekh Erez", 9. Cf. Hermann Schwab, *The History of Orthodox Jewry in Germany* (London, 1950), 43.

respect. If, in recent centuries, the German Jews remained more or less alien to European culture, the fault lay not in their religion but in the coercion, the tyranny from the outside that forcibly confined them to the alleys of their ghettos and shut them off from communication with the outside world. . .

If, then, our own objectives, too, include the earnest promotion of civilization and culture, if we have expressed this objective in unambiguous terms in the motto of our *Religionsgesellschaft,* "Torah study combined with *derekh erez* is a good thing," thus merely building upon the same foundations as those set as standards by our Sages of old, what is it that separates us from the followers of "Religion Allied with Progress?"

Just this, what *they* want is *religion allied with progress.* We have already seen how this principle, from the outset, negates the truth of what they call religion. What *we* want is *progress allied with religion.*

To them, progress is the absolute on which religion is dependent. To us, religion is the absolute on which progress depends.

They accept religion only to the extent that it does not interfere with progress. We accept progress only to the extent that it does not interfere with religion. . .

The more we understand that Judaism reckons with all of man's endeavors, and the more its declared mission includes the salvation of all mankind, the less can its views be confined to the four cubits of one room or one dwelling. The more the Jew is a Jew, the more universalist will be his views and aspirations, the less alien will he be to anything that is noble and good, true and upright in the arts and sciences, in civilization and culture. The more the Jew is a Jew, the more

joyously will he hail everything that will shape human life so as to promote truth, right, peace and refinement among mankind, the more happily will he himself embrace every opportunity to prove his mission as a Jew on new, still untrodden grounds. The more the Jew is a Jew, the more gladly will he give himself to all that is true progress in civilization and culture – provided that in this new circumstance he will not only maintain his Judaism but will be able to bring it to ever more glorious fulfillment.[117]

The merciful father of mankind has, in our days, stirred up the spirit of righteousness and humanity in the world, a spirit that has opened the gates of the ghettos and introduced the sons of authentic Judaism into the sphere of European civilization as equal citizens. Could the Jew, under these conditions, find a loftier task than to preserve his ancestral heritage beneath the light of justice and religious freedom, even as he did during the centuries of darkness and under the oppression he suffered in a world of error and delusion? Can the Jew not absorb everything in European culture that is noble and good, godly and true, everything that accords with the teachings of his own ancestral faith? For is not European culture itself, in all its finer and nobler aspects, a daughter of that Divine heritage which the Jew himself has introduced among mankind? Now that his energies have been liberated and he has been given freedom of movement, can he not utilize these opportunities to activate all the lofty, sacred, godly, true, noble and good qualities of his own historical, eternal Judaism with even more zeal and devotion? Can he not bring these qualities out into the light of the larger world, so

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117 Hirsch, *The Collected Writings* (New York, 1990), VI, 120-23.

that the Jews, as Jews, may compete with all their neighbors of European humanity in working to promote the happiness and salvation of all mankind?[118]

Let us assume that Moses were to visit our communities today to see whether, thousands of years after his death, we still were his communities. Of course, welcoming committees of communal trustees would be waiting to show him our resplendent synagogue edifices and our beautiful Torah arks; they would let him listen to our choirs singing jubilant hymns; they would take him to visit the offices of our trustees, the treasuries and properties of our communities, the humanitarian institutions of our charities. But Moses would turn away from the bewildered trustees and go looking, first of all, for our children. He would stop the first Jewish boy he encountered in the street and ask him, "What biblical verse did you study today?" Let us assume that the lad would answer him with a patronizing smile, "Strange old man! I do not understand your question. A biblical verse? What is that? I had classes today in German, French, English geography, history, physics and natural science. And now I am on my way to my class in religion. I will be Bar Mizvah this summer, and that is why I am having two hours of religion each week with my teacher." Moses would leave the trustees alone with their synagogues and choirs, their offices and treasuries, their properties and institutions, and sadly walk away, because they would not be his communities. Not without good reason did Moses repeat, over and over again, in the Name of God, the words "You shall keep my commandments; you shall keep my laws; you shall keep my statutes; you shall

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118 Hirsch, *The Collected Writings*, VI, 21-22.

keep and observe." Not without good reason did he consistently emphasize the keeping of the Law. "To keep means to study." This is the constant refrain with which the Divine oral tradition exhorts us to study the Law. To keep means to study; "that which is not studied will not be practiced," that which is neglected in theory will be lost in practice. In vain do you build synagogues, write Scrolls of the Law and clothe them in purple and gold, gather books and establish libraries. With all this, you have done nothing to help preserve the Torah, that treasure which God has entrusted to you for safekeeping, unless you study the Law yourselves and have your children study it. If you do not know the Law and the youth does not study it, if the Law does not live within the spirit of the nation, then the arks in your synagogues and your libraries are nothing but magnificent mausoleums of the Law.[119]

Ever since we have attempted to make some small contribution with voice and deed and pen within the Jewish community and for the cause of Judaism, it has been our endeavor to demonstrate precisely and how intimately Judaism – we mean Judaism in its unabridged totality – is wedded with the spirit of all true science and knowledge. It has been our aim to show that this Judaism, this *complete* Judaism, "The Lord's Torah is perfect," does not belong to an antiquated past but to the vigorous, pulsating life of the present. In fact, all the future, with the answers that men expect from it to all their social and spiritual problems, belongs to that very Judaism, that whole, complete Judaism. The gap that still separates our actual achievements from what we seek to accomplish is not the point under

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119 Hirsch, *The Collected Writings*, VI, 77-78.

discussion here. But the fact that precisely this is our aim and our ambition can be seen clearly from our each and every word, and this is the subject of our discussion. And precisely because this is our objective, precisely because we want to see Jewish life and Jewish scholarship understood in the light of true science and knowledge, because (to the extent of our limited insight) we can see the survival and future flowering of Judaism only in terms of an intimate union with the spirit of true science and knowledge in every age, we are the most avowed foes of all spurious science and knowledge and of any attempt, under the misappropriated mask of scientific research, to lay the ax to the very roots of our sacred Jewish heritage. Any spurious scholarship of this sort undermines not Judaism – because Judaism will outlive us all – but the flowering of true scholarship in Judaism, for such "research" must of necessity give any sincere Jew who is not familiar with scholarship the impression, based on his own limited experience, that any endeavor at scientific, scholarly research is a threat to Judaism.

And that is why we regard Dr. Beer[120] and his associates as the most dangerous enemies of scholarly research in Judaism. For if it were indeed true that there was no alternative, if any attempt at scholarly research per se were indeed capable of shaking the very foundations of Judaism as it was given to the House of Israel for its eternal mission, never to be abridged, if we had only a choice between Judaism and science,

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120 Dr. Bernhard Beer (1801-1861), scholar and bibliophile, was a close associate of Zechariah Frankel, founder of the "positive historical" school of Judaism, i.e., what is known today as Conservative Judaism. Hirsch was a bitter opponent of Frankel, and Beer had come to Frankel's defense. For the Hirsch-Frankel controversy, see Hirsch, *The Collected Writings*, V, 209-330.

> then we would simply have no other alternative. In that case, every Jew would decide, without a moment's hesitation:"Better to be dubbed a fool all my days than to be wicked before God for even a moment" (M. *Eduyoth* 5:6). *Better a Jew without science than* a *science without Judaism.*[121]

In sum, the primacy of Torah and the subservience of *derekh erez* were central to Hirsch's affirmation of *Torah and derekh erez.*

Yet another fundamental misunderstanding of *Torah and derekh erez* is the claim that Hirsch himself believed that his attitude toward general culture was a *hora'at sha'ah,* e.g., a timebound stance. The argument runs that Hirsch did what he had to do in order to stem the tide of Reform. His theme of *Torah and derekh Eerez* was intended for nineteenth century German Jewry alone. Hirsch, it is claimed, would not have called for an openness to general culture in Eastern Europe or anywhere else where circumstances differed substantively from those of nineteenth century Germany.[122] It is, of course, impossible to know with

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121 Hirsch, *The Collected Writings,* V, 287.

122 For vigorous rebuttal of this fundamental misunderstanding of Hirsch, see Jacob Rosenheim, *Samson Raphael Hirsch's Cultural Ideal and Our Times* (London, 1951), 44; R. Yehiel Y. Weinberg, *She'elot u-Teshuvot Seridei Esh* (Jerusalem, 1977), IV, 366-69; R. Joseph Breuer, "Torah and Derekh Erez–A Timebound Measure?" (Hebrew), *Ha-Ma'ayan* 6:4 (1966): 1-3; and R. Shimon Schwab, *These and Those* (New York, 1966), 16. Such misrepresentation of Hirsch's views needs to be distinguished carefully from those who understood Hirsch's views correctly but disagreed with them. Thus, many East European *gedolim,* while expressing genuine admiration for Hirsch, denied that the principle of *Torah and derekh erez* was applicable outside of Germany. Some even expressed reservations about the results of its implementation in Germany. See, e.g., R. Israel Salanter's comments cited in R. Isaac J. Reines, *Shnei ha-Me'orot* (Piotrkow, 1913), II, 44-48; in R. Yehiel Y. Weinberg, *Seridei Esh,* II, 14, §8; and in Immanuel Etkes, *Rabbi Israel Salanter and the Beginning*

certainty how Hirsch would have responded to differing sets of circumstances. It is quite clear, however, that Hirsch viewed *Torah and derekh erez* as an operating principle that applied to Jews at all times and at all places. In any given epoch and in any given locality, Torah was to be applied to all spheres of life, including general culture. In his tragic confrontation with R. Seligmann Baer Bamberger,[123] Hirsch wrote:

> The *Religionsgesellschaft* has set a shining example, evoking widespread enthusiasm and emulation, showing that our timeless Judaism is capable of rebirth and of proving itself in the midst of all modern trends. It has become visible testimony to the fact that this ancient, timeless Judaism, with its Law and its scholarship, does not belong to a past that has already been buried or that is ripe for burial but is a most vital part of the present and the future. It attests most cogently to the truth of the saving and healing principle of *Torah and derekh erez* which the *Religionsgesellschaft* wrote upon its banner at the time of its establishment and with which it has entered the arena of the present day. It is true that you, dear Rabbi, are not altogether in favor of this principle, but *Torah and derekh erez* is nevertheless the one true principle conducive to "truth and peace," to healing and recovery from all ills and all religious confusion. The principle of *Torah and derekh erez*

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of the Musar Movement (Hebrew; Jerusalem, 1984), 307. Cf. R. Ḥayyim 'Ozer Grodzenski's view of the Orthodox rabbinate in Germany, in R. Abraham I. Karelitz, *Iggerot Hazon Ish* (second edition, Bnei Brak, 1956),II, 171-173 (reissued in: R. Ḥayyim 'Ozer Grodzenski, *Aḥiezer: Kovez Iggerot* [Bnei Brak, 1970], II, 443-44, and in R. Ben Ẓion Shapiro, ed., *Iggerot le-Ra'ayah* [second edition, Jerusalem,1990], 457-8, letter 318. See too the carefully worded formulation in R. Shlomo Wolbe, '*Alei Shur* (Jerusalem, 1988), I, 296, §§5 and 8.

123 See Hirsch, *The Collected Writings*, VI, 189-317. Cf. the references cited above, n. 100.

> can fulfill this function because it is not part of troubled, time-bound notions; it represents the ancient, traditional wisdom of our sages that has stood the test everywhere and at all times. These sages and they alone, have always been, and still are, our true sages.[124]

We have already seen that Hirsch applied. the principle of *Torah and derekh erez* to the Jewish communities of Moravia.[125] The same is true regarding the Jewish communities in Lithuania. In 1881, Hirsch wrote a letter of recommendation on behalf of the Kolel Perushim of Kovno, an institute for the advanced study of Talmud founded by R. Israel Salanter and R. Isaac Elḥanan Spektor. Apparently, Hirsch had been informed that the members of the institute would study, aside from Torah, the vernacular and science. Hirsch wrote:

> This institution trains brilliant young men to become great scholars, while at the same time imparting to them a knowledge of the language of the country as well as of other subjects important for their general education. This institution seems to be a true salvation for the religion which has been on the retreat in that great realm for many years. As a matter of fact, this is the first case, and the only one for the time being, of leading rabbis and Torah scholars of distinction proclaiming the study of the local language and the study of the general sciences a permitted and even desirable undertaking. This way the principle on which our community, too, is based, is safeguarded against attack from different quarters and especially on the part of our brothers in Eastern Europe. And, indeed, this is the principle in which we see the only remedy

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124 Hirsch, *The Collected Writings*, VI, 221.
125 See above, p. 77, and n. 114.

against the regrettable religious aberrations of our time, and here we see it declared above all doubt as a model example worthy of imitation.[126]

A year later, Hirsch addressed the following letter to R. Isaac Elḥanan Spektor:

> I have come to inform you that on behalf of the publishers of the periodical "Jeschurun" in Hanover, some pages will be sent to you in which there is an article on the problem of the Jews in your country. Special reference is made to the desire of the government to bring about a closer proximity between the Jews and the other citizens regarding the knowledge of their language and the wisdom of their writers. It is the purpose of the article to find a true solution to this matter, as follows: Although it is necessary and very useful to comply, in this respect, with the wishes of the government, whose intentions are undoubtedly good, at the same time an even greater duty will devolve upon every man in Israel not to leave the path of the Torah and the fear of God which have been our heritage forever; for the Torah and the true *Derekh Erez* and their sciences fit together and do not contradict each other at all, and only by disregarding the truth have the rulers of your country failed to achieve their aim so far, nor will they ever achieve it, as long as they regard the Jewish religion and true general culture as contrary to one another, imagining that the rabbis and learned men are full of hatred for the sciences, and as long as they try to turn the hearts of the Jews toward love of knowledge with the help of rabbis and teachers who are neither faithful nor God-fearing and are lacking in the

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126 Breuer, *The "Torah-Im-Derekh -Eretz" of Samson Raphael Hirsch*, 48.

knowledge of Torah.[127]

Similarly, Hirsch advocated the spread of *Torah and derekh erez* to Hungary. In 1869, when a struggle relating to secular study ensued between various factions of the Hungarian Orthodox rabbinate, Hirsch wrote:

> Let no one cast aspersions on the memory of the rabbis of yore, may they rest in peace, or on their living counterparts among our brethren in Eastern Europe. Their suspicions regarding general culture are to be respected. They emanate from genuine concerns about all that is holy in Israel. These concerns are easily comprehended in the light of the corrupt practices of their opponents. Nonetheless, they are in error. Indeed, there is no hope for the future of the Jewish community until this error is rectified, and until those very rabbis become the leaders of the faction that welcomes general culture into its midst. They must inscribe on their banner with total dedication the adage taught us by the true sages – the slightest deviation from which has cost us dearly in the past- -the *study of Torah with derekh erez is an excellent thing*, this is to say, the cultivation of general culture in conjunction with Torah study, while living in accordance with the Torah, is an excellent thing.[128]

Clearly, according to Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Torah and derekh erez* was intended for all Jewish communities, for all times, and for all places.

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127 Breuer, The *"Torah-Im-Derekh Eretz" of Samon Raphael Hirsch*, 49.

128 S. R. Hirsch, "Die jüdischen Hoffnungen in Ungarn," *Jeschurun* 15(1869, 20-22, cited in Mordecai Breuer, "Outside the Partition" (Hebrew), *Ha-Ma'ayan* 21:3 (1981), 43.

VI. *Torah and Derekh Erez:* Practice

It was one thing to preach *Torah and derekh erez;* it was quite another to implement it. In reality, Hirsch had to contend with a right and left wing within Orthodoxy – even in Frankfurt – that often viewed Hirsch with suspicion, either as being too liberal or too fundamentalist. More importantly, he had to contend with Reform, Orthodoxy's most successful rival in the Post-Enlightenment period in Germany. He also had to contend with governmental interference relating to the implementation of his educational program. Thus, for example, Hirsch's schools devoted more time to secular than to religious study – despite his commitment to the subservience *of derekh erez* to Torah – precisely because educational institutions were rigorously regulated by governmental agencies. [129]

In light of the above, Hirsch's openness to general culture took a variety of forms. In the early years of his rabbinate he was either clean shaven or wore a closely trimmed beard. He grew a fuller beard upon assuming the rabbinate in Nikolsburg, and retained it thereafter. Throughout his rabbinate (with the exception of the years in Nikolsburg) he wore canonicals.[130] He introduced a choir and communal singing into the synagogue service. These and similar innovations were

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129 See Eliav, *Ha-Ḥinukh*, 227-32. Cf. Breuer, *Jüdische Orthodoxie im Deutschen Reich: 1871-1918*, 91-139 (Hebrew edition: 91-136; English edition: 91-147).

130 See the various portraits of Hirsch in Rosenbloom, *Tradition in an Age of Reform*, opposite the title page; in Rubens, *A History of Jewish Costume*, 171; in Trepp, *Die Oldenburger Judenschaft*, opposite p. 120; in Liberles, *The Resurgence of Orthodox Judaism*, between pages 135 and 138; and in Grunfeld's *Judaism Eternal*, I, opposite the title page. Regarding canonicals, see the references cited in n. 56.

bold moves designed to make the synagogue service decorous and aesthetically pleasing, while defeating his Reform competitors at their own game.

Hirsch, of course, would preach, teach, and write in German. Aside from his college study, Hirsch read widely and could cite copiously from Greek and Latin literature, Shakespeare, and German philosophical literature. In 1859, Hirsch's day school joined in the commemoration of the one hundredth birthday of Friedrich von Schiller, the distinguished German dramatist, poet, and historian. Aside from the school's participation at a public ceremony in Frankfurt, where the school's banner with its *Torah and derekh erez* insignia was unfurled and displayed for all to see, Hirsch convened an assembly in his school. As headmaster, he delivered a stirring address filled with quotes from Schiller's poetry, which paid homage to this German cultural hero, while pointing to parallels to Schiller's teaching in biblical and rabbinic literature.[131]

While serving as Chief Rabbi of Oldenburg, Hirsch provided quarters in his home for a budding, young scholar – later the famed historian – Heinrich Graetz. The nineteen-year-old Graetz was in the throes of a spiritual crisis when Hirsch's *Nineteen Letters* appeared in print. Upon reading the book, Graetz petitioned Hirsch to serve as his mentor and tutor, and Hirsch agreed. In his diary, Graetz recorded the curriculum that Hirsch had prepared for him.[132]

4-6 A.M. Talmud; *Shulḥan 'Arukh*
6-8 A.M. Prayer and breakfast

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131 See Herman Schwab, *Memories of Frankfort* (London, 1955), 9.

132 Heinrich Graetz, *Tagebuch und Briefe* (Tübingen, 1977), 47-48.

8-10 A.M. Talmud
10-12 A.M. Greek
1-3 P.M. History, Latin, Physics
3-5 P.M. Mathematics, Geography
6-8 P.M. Bible, *Halakhah*

Here was an early adumbration of the curriculum that Hirsch would implement in his schools.

Clearly, Hirsch's greatest success came in the day school and later the two high schools – one for boys and one for girls – that he founded in Frankfurt.[133] Here he moved beyond Bernays and Ettlinger by founding the first Orthodox Jewish high schools. These would serve as models for all the Orthodox Jewish high schools that would follow elsewhere in Germany and Western Europe, and ultimately in the United States and Israel.

No rabbinic leader articulated the need to incorporate secular study into the Jewish curriculum more forcefully and boldly than Samson Raphael Hirsch:

> Who among us did not know Mr. Y., that wonderful man who was so thoroughly imbued with the true Jewish spirit, with Jewish learning, Jewish punctiliousness and Jewish religious fervor? His home was a well-known shining example of a pious Jewish abode in which the Torah was studied and the commandments were practiced so that it stood out like an oasis in the wilderness of present-day moral and spiritual corruption. Anything that bore even the faintest tinge of un-Jewish thought or un-Jewish belief was kept far away from the threshold of that home. Is there anyone who does not remember this father as one of the outstanding and devoted

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133 See the references cited in n. 129.

champions of tradition in Jewish communal life, how he fought against all forbidden innovations at the synagogue and at our school, and saw to it that the religious institutions of our community should remain painstakingly faithful to the requirements of Jewish law? He regarded ignorance of things Jewish as the greatest of all evils. He viewed so-called modern education as the worst threat to Jewish survival because he felt it would supplant Jewish learning. Mr. Y. therefore regarded it as a sacred matter of conscience not only to get his sons to perform the duties of Judaism most scrupulously but also to make them competent Torah Jews by seeing to it that the sacred writings of Judaism should remain virtually their only intellectual and spiritual nourishment. Moreover, in order to protect them from the poison of modern education, he not only anxiously isolated them from every contact with the "moderns" but filled them with arrogant contempt for all other knowledge and scholarship that he deemed as nothing compared to the study of the knowledge given us by God.

It is said that this man died of a broken heart, grief-stricken because not even one of his sons remained Jewish in feeling and practice. All of them, as youths and later in manhood, had been spiritually ruined by the very tendencies from which he had so zealously sought to protect them in their education. Anyone who knew this man and knows his sons today will see no reason to doubt the truth of this tragedy.

But anyone who would have evaluated his father's educational approach by the standard of *Train a lad in accordance with the path he will have to follow* (Proverbs 22:6), our maxim of education, could have predicted these sad results from the outset. The best way to have our children catch

cold the very first time they go out of doors is to shelter them most anxiously from every breeze, from every contact with fresh air. If we want our children to develop a resistance to every kind of weather, so that wind and rain will only serve to make them stronger and healthier, we must expose them to wind and rain at an early age in order to harden their bodies. This rule holds good not only for a child's physical health but equally for his spiritual and moral well-being.

It is not enough to teach our children to love and perform their duties as Jews within the home and the family, among carefully chosen, like-minded companions. It is wrong to keep them ignorant of the present-day differences between the world outside and the Jewish way of life, or to teach them to regard the un-Jewish elements in the Jewish world as polluting, infectious agents to be avoided at all costs.

Remember that our children will not remain forever under the sheltering wings of our parental care. Sooner or later they will inevitably have contacts and associations with their un-Jewish brethren in the Jewish world. If, in this alien environment, they are to remain true to the traditions and the way of life in which they were raised at the home of their parents; if we want them to continue to perform their duties as Jews with calm, unchanging determination, regardless of the dangerous influences and, even more dangerous, the ridicule and derision they may encounter; indeed, if the contrast they note between their own way of life and that of the others will only make them love and practice their sacred Jewish heritage with even greater enthusiasm than before, then we must prepare them at an early age to meet this conflict and to pass this test. We must train them to preserve their Jewish views and to persevere in their

Jewish way of life precisely when they associate with individuals whose attitude and way of life are un-Jewish.We must train our children, by diligent practice, to be able to stand up against ridicule and wisecracks. We must train them so that they may be able to draw upon the deep wellsprings of Jewish awareness and upon their own sound judgment based on true Jewish knowledge in order to obtain the armor of determination and, if need be, the naked weapons of truth and clarity, from which frivolity and shallowness will beat a hasty retreat.

Finally, it would be most perverse and criminal of us to seek to instill into our children a contempt, based on ignorance and untruth, for everything that is not specifically Jewish, for all other human arts and sciences, in the belief that by inculcating our children with such a negative attitude we could safeguard them from contacts with the scholarly and scientific endeavors of the rest of mankind. It is true, of course, that the results of secular research and study will not always coincide with the truths of Judaism, for the simple reason that they do not proceed from the axiomatic premises of Jewish truth. But the reality is that our children will move in circles influenced and shaped by these results. Your children will come within the radius of this secular human wisdom, whether it be in the lecture halls of academia or in the pages of literature. And if they discover that our own Sages, whose teachings embody the truth, have taught us that it is God Who has given of His own wisdom to mortals, they will come to overrate secular studies in the same measure in which they have been taught to despise them. You will then see that your simpleminded calculations were just as criminal as they were perverse. Criminal, because they enlisted the help of untruth supposedly in order to protect the

truth, and because you have thus departed from the path upon which your own Sages have preceded you and beckoned you to follow them. Perverse, because by so doing you have achieved precisely the opposite of what you wanted to accomplish. For now your child, suspecting you of either deceit or lamentable ignorance, will transfer the blame and the disgrace that should rightly be placed only upon you and your conduct to all the Jewish wisdom and knowledge, all the Jewish education and training which he received under your guidance. Your child will consequently begin to doubt all of Judaism which (so, at least, it must seem to him from your behavior) can exist only in the night and darkness of ignorance and which must close its eyes and the minds of its adherents to the light of all knowledge if it is not to perish.

Things would have turned out differently if you had educated and raised your child *in accordance with the path he will have to follow;* if you had educated him to be a Jew, and to love and observe his Judaism together with the clear light of general human culture and knowledge; if, from the very beginning, you would have taught him to study, to love, to value and to revere Judaism, undiluted and unabridged, and Jewish wisdom and scholarship, likewise unadulterated, in its relation to the totality of secular human wisdom and scholarship. Your child would have become a different person if you had taught him to discern the true value of secular wisdom and scholarship by measuring it against the standard of the Divinely-given truths of Judaism; if, in making this comparison, you would have noted the fact that is obvious even to the dullest eye, namely, that the knowledge offered by Judaism is the original source of all that is genuinely true, good and pure in secular wisdom, and that secular learning is merely a preliminary, a road

> leading to the ultimate, more widespread dissemination of the truths of Judaism. If you had opened your child's eyes to genuine, thorough knowledge in *both* fields of study, then you would have taught him to love and cherish Judaism and Jewish knowledge all the more.[134]

Hirsch's legacy to modern Judaism was his vision of *Torah and derekh erez*. His openness to general culture even as he understood the primacy of Torah teaching was largely responsible for the revival of Orthodoxy in Western Europe, and set the tone for contemporary non-isolationist Orthodoxy in the United States and Israel.

VII. R. Azriel Hildesheimer

> Rabbinic leaders in [nineteenth century] Germany were experts in the field of Jewish education. That is why they succeeded in raising whole generations of Jews who were at once pious and secularly educated. No such success can be ascribed to the rabbinic leaders of Lithuania and Poland. They did not know how to attune Jewish education to their time and circumstance. R. Israel Salanter, after returning to Eastern Europe from Germany, told how he had witnessed R. Azriel Hildesheimer teaching Bible and Codes to young women. He commented: If a Lithuanian rabbi would ever institute such a practice in his community, he would be fired, and justly so. Nevertheless, may my share in the World to Come be the same as that of R. Azriel Hildesheimer!

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134 See S. R. Hirsch, "Pädagogische Plaudereien: Erziehe den Knaben nach Massgabe seines einstigen Lebenweges," in his *Gesammelte Schriften* IV, 408-16. The translation presented here is from Hirsch, *The Collected Writings*, VII, 413 - 17.

R. Yeḥiel Yaakov Weinberg[135]

I am not of sufficient stature to provide a letter of approbation for the great Gaon, disseminator of Torah and fearer of the Lord in Germany, our master, Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer, of blessed memory. He lived in the generation that preceded the previous generation; great was his fame due to his good deeds. The Gaon R. Yiẓḥak Elḥanan of Kovno referred to him as the "the great Gaon;" many others praised him for his greatness in Torah and for his fear of God. Who am I to follow in the footsteps of kings? (Who are "the kings"? The rabbis.) Moreover, it is stated in Scripture: *Do not stand in the place of nobles* (Proverbs 25:6). Now that his grandson has undertaken to publish his (i.e., Hildesheimer's) novellae on various tractates of the Talmud, we wish him every success. . . May the merit of his grandfather, the Gaon, assure him success in every matter.

R. Eleazar Menaḥem Shach [136]

A younger contemporary of R. Samson Raphael Hirsch, R. Azriel Hildesheimer was born in Halberstadt in 1820.[137] He attended Halberstadt's

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135 Weinberg, *She'elot u-Teshuvot Seridei Esh*, II, 14, §8.

136 Letter of approbation to A. Hildesheimer, *Ḥiddushei Rabbi Azriel: Yebamot, Ketubot* (Jerusalem, 1984), 7.

137 In general, see David Ellenson, *Rabbi Esriel Hildesheimer and the Creation of a Modern Jewish Orthodoxy* (Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 1990). Earlier biographies (not mentioned by Ellenson) include G. Karpeles, *Dr. Israel Hildesheimer: Eine biographische Skizze* (Frankfurt am Main, 1870); and Yaakov Mark, *Gedolim fun unzer zeit* (New York, 1927),174-90 [Hebrew edition: (Jerusalem, 1958), 154-67]. See also the excerpt from Henriette Hildesheimer Hirsch's "Memoirs of My Youth" (unpublished manuscript) published in Monika Richarz, ed., *Jewish Life in Germany: Memoirs from Three Centuries* (Bloomington, 1991), 173 - 80; Esriel Hildsheimer, "A Pioneer in the

Orthodox day school – the first elementary school combining Jewish and secular study whose express purpose was the perpetuation of traditional Judaism[138] – then left for Altona-Hamburg, where he studied under Bernays and Ettlinger. In 1843 Hildesheimer enrolled at the University of Berlin where he studied physics, mathematics, history, philosophy, and classical and Semitic languages. He continued his studies in the University of Halle, where he earned his doctorate in Jewish studies in 1846. The very fact that he earned a doctorate (in contrast to Bernays, Ettlinger, and Hirsch who did not do so), and that his field of concentration was Jewish studies, would serve as harbinger of a life-long commitment to *Wissenschaft des Judenthums*. That same year Hildesheimer assumed his first role in public affairs by accepting an appointment to the post of "secretary" of the Jewish community of Halberstadt. Here, Hildesheimer's administrative talents came to the fore, though hardly at the expense of time devoted to Torah study. While administering the affairs of the Jewish community and, in effect, serving as Assistant Rabbi to

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Renaissance of Orthodox Jewry: Rabbi Esriel Hildesheimer," *Jewish Action*, Fall 1993: 86-88; Hans-Joachim Bechtoldt, "Dr. Israel Hildesheimer, Rabbiner und Seminar-Direktor," in his *Die jüdische Bibelkritik im 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1995), 53 - 63; Jacob H. Sinason, *The Rebbe: The Story of Rabbi Esriel Glei-Hildesheimer* (Jerusalem, 1996); and the entry "Hildesheimer, Esriel" in Michael Brocke and Julius Carlebach, eds., *Biographisches Handbuch der Rabbiner* (München, 2004), vol. 1:1, 437-47.

Dr. Marc Shapiro discovered a copy of Hildesheimer's doctoral dissertation (long considered lost), together with a short biography prepared by Hildesheimer himself. For an annotated text of the autobiography, see M. Shapiro, "An Autobiography of Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer" (Hebrew), *Alei Sefer* 17 (1992-1993), 149-50. For a photograph of the autobiography, see the essay by Esriel Hildesheimer listed above.

138 See above, pp. 33-34.

the aging Chief Rabbi of Halberstadt, R. Mattathias Levian, Hildesheimer found time to lecture to a small cadre of devoted disciples. One of them, Marcus Lehmann – who would later serve as rabbi of the separatist Orthodox community of Mainz and as editor of the *Israelit* – recorded for posterity Hildesheimer's schedule of lectures in Halberstadt:

> Each morning, R. Azriel lectured on *posekim* from 4 to 6 A.M. From 8 to 10 A.M. he lectured on tractate *Gittin,* and from 10 A.M. to noon he read German literature with his students.[139] From 2 to 4 P.M. he lectured on tractate *Ḥullin,* and from 8 to 10 P.M. he lectured again on *posekim*. On Sabbath we prayed at an early service, and then studied tractate *Shabbat* from 8 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. Friday evenings during the winter season he lectured on tractate *Shavu'ot*.[140]

In 1851 – the same year that Hirsch assumed his historical rabbinic post in Frankfurt – Hildesheimer

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139 The study of German literature (in this context) surely reflects the extent to which Orthodox Jews in nineteenth- century Germany were immersed in German culture and *Bildung*. Hildesheimer's daughter, Esther Calvary, records the following interesting episode in her memoirs:

> On Yom Tov, between *minḥah* and *ma'ariv,* when no *zemirot* were sung, Father would seat himself in the large armchair in the bedroom, we children around him. I remember sitting at his feet on the footstool, with my brothers Levi and Aaron standing beside him, and Mother and the little ones on the sofa. Then Father would sing to us German *Lieder*. And each time for us, his children, the high point was when he sang his favorite, Heine's *Die Zwei Grenadiere*.

See Esther Calvary, "Kinderheitserinnerungen, " *Bulletin des Leo Baeck Institute* 8(1959), 187-93. Cf. Gertrude Hirschler and Shnayer Z. Leiman, "Esther Hildesheimer Calvary: The Hildesheimers in Eisenstadt," *Tradition* 26:3 (1992), 87-92.

140 Cited in Meir Hildesheimer, "Toward a Portrait of Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer" (Hebrew), *Sinai* 54(1964), 73.

was appointed Chief Rabbi of the Austro-Hungarian community of Eisenstadt. Almost upon his arrival in Eisenstadt, Hildesheimer founded the first yeshiva (i.e., secondary and post-secondary Jewish talmudical academy) to include secular study in its curriculum.[141] Moreover, the language of instruction was the vernacular (German), not Yiddish. In its early years, the faculty consisted almost exclusively of Hildesheimer. He taught all the Jewish studies courses, totalling some 25 hours of instruction per week. He also taught most of the secular studies courses, including German language and literature, Latin, mathematics, history, and geography, totalling some 12 hours of instruction per week. Starting with 6 students in 1851, Hildesheimer's yeshiva eventually became the second largest in Hungary, with over 150 students in 1869. Leading rabbis in Hungary, including R. Judah Aszod (d. 1866) and R. Moses Schick (d. 1879), sent their sons to study at Hildesheimer's yeshiva.[142]

Nonetheless, Hildesheimer's success did not come without a struggle. He was severely criticized from the right and the left. For the most part, Hungarian Orthodoxy was not prepared to grant legitimacy to a yeshiva that included secular study in its curriculum. Fundamentalists such as R. Akiva Joseph Schlesinger (d. 1922) labelled Hildesheimer a heretic and had him placed under the ban.[143]

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141 See Mordecai Eliav, "Torah and Derekh Erez in Hungary" (Hebrew), *Sinai* 51(1962), 127-42.

142 Hildesheimer, "Toward a Portrait," 75. Cf. idem, "R. Judah Aszod and R. Azriel Hildesheimer" (Hebrew), in Azriel Hildesheimer and Kalman Kahana, eds., *Sefer ha-Zikkaron le-Rav Yehiel Yaakov Weinberg* (Jerusalem, 1969), 285-302; and Hildesheimer's moving tribute to Aszod in *Zefunot* 13(1992), 78-80.

143 See, e.g., Schlesinger's *Kol Nehi mi-Ziyyon* (Jerusalem, 1872). Cf. R. Hillel Lichtenstein's *Tokhahat Megullah* (Jerusalem, 1873) and his *Teshuvot Bet Hillel* (Szatmar, 1908), 10b- 11b, § 13.

Hildesheimer was undeterred. He engaged in polemical exchanges with the right, treating his critics with respect even as he defended his approach to modernity.[144]

There was never a trace of apology, regret, or compromise in the positions he staked out for himself. He genuinely believed that his approach to modernity was the only one that made sense for Orthodoxy. His critics from the left – the leadership of the Reform movement in Hungary – were relentless in their pursuit of him. They understood clearly that a successful rapprochement between Orthodoxy and modernity would pull the rug out from under their feet. Upon reading the first annual report of Hildesheimer's yeshiva and seeing the list of courses taught by him, Leopold Loew (d. 1875), the leading Reform rabbi in Hungary at the time, published a scathing review in which he referred sarcastically to Hildesheimer as "Rabbiner, Direktor und Professor aller Wissenschaften."[145] Hildesheimer responded to the substance, but not to the style, of Loew's critique.[146] Indeed, like Hirsch, much of Hildesheimer's career was devoted to countering Reform.

Despite his differences with the right wing, Hildesheimer felt sufficiently comfortable in Hungary – even as late as 1862 – that he seriously considered an offer to become Assistant Rabbi of

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144 Hildesheimer responded to Schlesinger in a major essay on the importance of secular study which, although extant, has never been published. See Mordecai Eliav, "Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer's Role in the Struggle to Shape the Image of Hungarian Jewry" (Hebrew), *Ẓion* 27 (1962), 67.

145 Leopold Loew, "Neuester Fortschritt der juedisch-theologischen Studien in Ungarn," *Ben-Chananja* 1(1858), 248.

146 Azriel Hildesheimer, *Offener Brief an den Redacteur der Monatsschrift Ben-Chananja Leopolod Loew in Szegedin* (Vienna, 1858).

Pressburg, sharing the rabbinate of Pressburg with R. Abraham Benjamin Sofer (d. 1871), son and successor of the Ḥatam Sofer.[147] Indeed, in order to attract Hildeshimer, Rabbi Sofer was prepared to incorporate secular study in the Pressburg yeshiva curriculum, following the model of Hildesheimer's yeshiva in Eisenstadt.[148] Apparently, word of the pending concession reached the right wing, which intervened and prevailed upon the Pressburg authorities to rescind the offer to Hildesheimer. Hildesheimer began to realize that the differences that separated him from his colleagues on the right were in fact irreconcilable. When the possibility of a government sponsored rabbinical seminary was being considered by Hungarian Jewry in 1864, Hildesheimer urged that Orthodoxy support such a seminary so long as it remained under Orthodox auspices. Hildesheimer was bitterly opposed by the right, which was not prepared to recognize the legitimacy of a rabbinical seminary that incorporated secular study in its curriculum. Since the major supporters – other than Hildesheimer – of the government sponsored rabbinical seminary were the Reformers, Hildesheimer was placed in the untenable position of seemingly being aligned with the Reformers against the Orthodox. The antagonism unleashed by the Orthodox against Hildesheimer made him painfully aware of just how isolated his position was in Hungary.[149] He certainly was not about to relinquish his vision of Orthodoxy. On the other hand, he realized that a change of venue was essential if he

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147 Eliav, "Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer's Role," 64.

148 Eliav, "Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer's Role," 65, n. 2 1.

149 Aside from Ellenson (n. 137) and Eliav (n. 144), see Aron Moskovits, *Jewish Education in Hungary: 1848-1948* (New York,1964) and Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, ed., *The Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest: 1877-1977* (New York, 1986).

wanted to find a receptive audience for his program. In 1869, he abandoned his yeshiva in Eisenstadt and accepted a call from the separatist Adass Jisroel congregation in Berlin.[150] By 1873, the Orthodox rabbinical seminary that had eluded him in Hungary became a reality in Germany.

Azriel Hildesheimer was keenly aware that Jewish day schools and high schools would, at best, produce committed lay Jews. The teachers' seminaries at Wuerzburg and Duesseldorf could, at best, be counted upon to produce the faculty that would staff the day schools and high schools.[151] Who would produce rabbis? Who would produce the Torah elite that would teach the teachers? The answer, of course, was an Orthodox rabbinical seminary, but none existed in Germany.[152] Hildesheimer often discussed the need for an Orthodox rabbinical seminary during his 18 years in Eisenstadt:

> The only hope for Orthodoxy is the establishment of a rabbinical seminary. Those who agitate against the establishment of a rabbinical seminary, claiming we see the results of the existing rabbinical seminaries, are sorely mistaken. For we see only the results of seminaries headed by the non-Orthodox. If, on the other hand, there would be a rabbinical seminary headed by God-fearing faculty, it would be a sanctification of God's Name. It is the

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150 See Mario Offenberg, ed., *Adass Jisroel, Die juedische Gemeinde in Berlin (1869-1942): Vernichtet un Vergessen* (Berlin, 1986).

151 Regarding the teachers' seminaries in Wuerzburg and Duesseldorf, see Breuer, *Juedische Orthodoxie im Deutschen Reich 1871-1918*, 133-37 (Hebrew edition: 131-134; English edition: 140-45) and notes.

152 In general, see Meir Hildesheimer, "Documents Pertaining to the Establishment of the Rabbinical Seminary in Berlin" (Hebrew), *Ha-Ma'ayan* 14:2 (1974), 12-37.

only remedy that remains.[153]

> Let us not deceive each other. Although our common goal is to magnify Torah and glorify it, the different means toward realizing the goal that we espouse are as far removed from each other as East is from West. I say frankly that in the years ahead the only solution will be the establishment of a rabbinical seminary. Similarly, there is no hope except through the establishment of schools where students study primarily Torah but also all the secular disciplines taught in Christian and leftist schools. Not only are we obligated to tolerate the existence of such institutions, i.e., we may not oppose them, we are also obligated to support them. I am convinced that there is great danger in always saying "No! No!," i.e., in always fighting against what others propose, rather than proposing what we really want. [154]

In 1872, Hildesheimer appealed to ten prominent and wealthy Orthodox lay Jews in Germany, asking them to provide the seed money for the establishment of an Orthodox rabbinical seminary in Germany. Hildesheimer explained that nothing less than the future of Orthodoxy was at stake. The Reform and Conservative movements had founded institutions of higher Jewish learning in Berlin and Breslau. If Orthodoxy was to remain competitive, it too would have to establish an institution of higher Jewish learning that would train Orthodox rabbis. Berlin, with its university and its large Jewish population, presented the ideal setting for the creation of an Orthodox rabbinical seminary. Hildesheimer concluded his appeal as follows:

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153 Mordecai Eliav, ed., *Rabbiner Esriel Hildesheimer Briefe* (Jerusalem, 1965), Hebrew section, 34, letter 13, dated May 29, 1864.

154 Eliav, *Rabbiner Esriel Hildesheimer Briefe*, Hebrew section, 42-43, letter 18, dated May, 1867.

> Only a seminary will strengthen and increase the power of Orthodox Judaism internally and raise its esteem externally. . . . From the day Israel was exiled from its land, no matter has been more important than this.[155]

Hildesheimer's appeal did not fall on deaf ears. In short order, the indefatigable Hildesheimer managed to raise the necessary funds, acquire the building, gather together a distinguished faculty (initially he was joined by Professors David Hoffmann and Abraham Berliner; a year later Professor Jacob Barth joined the faculty), and recruit the students.[156]

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155 Hildesheimer, "Documents", 17-18.

156 Interestingly, Hildesheimer (throughout his Berlin years) did not hesitate to raise funds in Hungary for the rabbinical seminary in Berlin! When a distinguished Hungarian rabbi took him to task for doing so, Hildesheimer responded:

> It has been appropriate now for more than thirty years that I should take all the Hungarian rabbis to task for not having provided the remedy before the disease took hold, i.e., for not having established a proper rabbinical seminary in Budapest. You accuse me of raising funds in Hungary for my rabbinical seminary, despite the fact that "hundreds of rabbinical scholars, including *geonim*, have banned such a seminary." You ask: "Does not the bibilical rule: 'always follow a majority' [cf. Exodus 23:2] apply in this case?" Let me assure you that it does not apply at all to this case. This case requires no legal decision, which in any event would not require "hundreds of rabbinical scholars" or "*geonim*" in order to render it. The laws that apply to all Jews are promulgated in the *Shulḥan 'Arukh*. Everyone must abide by its decisions. Matters, however, that do not call for a legal decision, e.g., enactments, cannot be decided upon and implemented for an entire country even by a thousand rabbis. Only the Great Sanhedrin had the authority to make enactments and impose its views on the entire Jewish community, as stated in the first chapter of Maimonides' *Code:Hilkhot Mamrim*. Rabbis and communal leaders can only make enactments that apply to their city. Indeed, I have never raised funds in a city whose rabbi opposed my cause. Regarding all other cities, permission has been granted to me.

Hildesheimer served as *rosh yeshiva* and administrator of the fledgling institution. Not surprisingly, it came to be known as "Hildesheimer's Rabbinical Seminary." Thus the seeds that had been sown in Eisenstadt came to fruition in Berlin.[157] Two features in particular distinguished the Hildesheimer Rabbinical Seminary from the traditional yeshiva. First and foremost was its commitment to secular study. Students were allowed to matriculate only after earning a high school diploma or its equivalent. More importantly, all rabbinical students also enrolled at the University of Berlin, where they earned doctorates while they pursued their rabbinical studies at the seminary. Second, the Hildesheimer Rabbinical Seminary was committed to the study of *Wissenschaft des Judenthums*. In his inaugural address delivered at the opening of the rabbinical seminary, Hildesheimer said:

> It is impossible that the quest for knowledge in one area of learning will not build bridges to other areas of learning. . . . We have neither the leisure nor the desire to pursue all areas of secular study. Due to our focus on Talmud and ritual practice, we must confine our pursuit of

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See Eliav, *Rabbiner Esriel Hildsheimer Briefe,* Hebrew section, 57, letter 27, dated November 5, 1878.

157 In general, see Moshe A. Shulvass, "The Rabbinical Seminary in Berlin" (Hebrew), in Samuel K. Mirsky, ed., *Mosedot Torah be-Eropa* (New York, 1956), 689-713; Breuer, *Jüdische Orthodoxie im Deutschen Reich,* 120-133 (Hebrew edition: 118-130; English edition: 125-40) and notes; and the references cited in Hildesheimer, "Toward a Portrait," 80, n. 72. Cf. A. Posner, "The study of the Talmud at the Orthodox Rabbinical Seminary in Berlin" (Hebrew), *Ha-Darom* 12 (1959), 182-194; Isi J. Eisner, "Reminiscences of the Berlin Rabbinical Seminary," *Year Book of the Leo Baeck Institute* 12(1967), 32-52; and Mordecai Eliav, "Das Orthodoxe Rabbinerseminar in Berlin," in Julius Carlebach, ed., *Wissenschaft des judentums.: Anfänge der Judaistik in Europe* (Darmstadt, n.d. [circa 1992]), 59-73.

secular study to those of its aspects essential for our learning. This minimal commitment to secular study, however, cannot be compromised. We will engage in these various areas of secular study with the same devotion we apply to religious study, for all our study is for the sake of Heaven. The second half of this century has brought several changes: the new *Wissenschaft des Judenthums* has come into its own, and areas that have been known for a long time, i.e., biblical exegesis, demand investigation from a new perspective and require the use of rich linguistic and philological materials, to the extent possible. In our desire to engage in these areas as our own, we will attempt to work in them with absolute academic seriousness and for the sake of, and only for the sake of, the truth.[158]

Hildesheimer's commitment to *Wissenschaft des Judenthums* was reflected in the faculty he appointed to, and in the curriculum he designed for, the rabbinical seminary and in his scholarly publications. In the published volumes of Hildesheimer's novellae on the Talmud (see below), for example, he cites extensively and approvingly from the writings of Jacob Reifmann, an outstanding practitioner and advocate of *Wissenschaft des Judenthums.*[159] In typical Hildesheimer

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158 Azriel Hildesheimer, "Rede zur Eroeffnung des Rabbiner-Seminars,"*Jahresbericht des Rabbiner-Seminars fuer das Orthodoxe Judenthum pro 5634 (1873-1874)* (Berlin, 1874), cited in Hildesheimer, "Toward a Portrait," 80-81. Cf. David Hoffmann, "Thora und Wissenschaft,"*Jeschurun* 7(1920), 498-99. Hoffmann's remarks were delivered at the opening session of the winter semester at the Hildesheimer Rabbinical Seminary, 1919. For an English translation of his address, see Marc B. Shapiro, "Rabbi David Ẓevi Hoffmann on Torah and *Wissenschaft*," *Torah u-Madda Journal* 6(1995-96), 129–37.

159 Hildesheimer's admiration for Reifmann was not confined to citations and words alone. He regularly provided financial support for the poverty-stricken Reifmann, and even went public (in

fashion, these citations stand side by side with citations from traditional rabbinic classics such as R. Aryeh Leib b. Asher's *Sha'agat Aryeh,* R. Aryeh Leib Heller's *Kezot ha-Ḥoshen,* and R. Jacob of Lissa's *Netivot ha-Mishpat.*

Starting with twenty students in 1873, the Hildesheimer Rabbinical Seminary continued to thrive until the notorious *Kristallnacht* in 1938, when its doors were closed forever.[160] The impact of its hundreds of rabbinic graduates on Western Jewry is a matter of record.[161] Some of the more prominent family names (often including father and son; sometimes including brothers) among its graduates were: Altmann, Auerbach, Bamberger, Biberfeld, Cahn, Carlebach, Horovitz, Marx, Munk, Nobel, and Unna. Aside from practicing rabbis, many of its graduates were distinguished Jewish educators, academicians, lawyers, and doctors. Two graduates merit special mention here. R. Moses Auerbach (d. 1976) was the founder and first headmaster of *Havazelet,* the Warsaw *gymnasium* for Jewish girls.[162] Dr. Leo Deutschlaender (d. 1935)

Juedische Presse) with a plea for community wide financial support on behalf of Reifmann. See Meir Hildesheimer, "The Correspondence Between R. Azriel Hildesheimer and R. Jacob Reifmann" (Hebrew), *Ha-Darom* 21 (1965), 148-64.

160 For the failed attempt in the 1930s to transfer the Hildesheimer Rabbinical Seminary to Palestine, see Christhard Hoffmann and Daniel R. Schwartz, "Early but Opposed–Supported but Late: Two Berlin Seminaries which Attempted to Move Abroad," *Year Book of the Leo Baeck Institute* 36(1991), 267-304. For R. Yeḥiel Yaakov Weinberg's angry critique of the tactics used by those who thwarted the attempt, see Daniel Schwartz, "Between Berlin, Lithuania, and the Distant East" (Hebrew), *Kiryat Sefer* 64(1992-1993), 1086-87.

161 See Eisner, "Reminiscences"; and cf. M. Eliav and E. Hildesheimer, eds., *The Rabbinical Seminary in Berlin: 1873-1938* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1996). The latter includes an annotated listing of students who attended the Hildesheimer Rabbinical Seminary.

162 See Auerbach's "Memoirs" (in Hebrew), *Ha-Ma'ayan* 21:3(1981), 6-36; 21:4(1981), 10-37; and 22:1(1981), 3-23.

helped Sarah Schenierer establish the Beth Jacob network of schools for Jewish girls, which still flourishes today in the United States and Israel. He also headed the Beth Jacob Teachers Training College for Women in Cracow.[163]Hildesheimer was an early advocate of Jewish education for women, and it comes as no surprise that graduates of the seminary he founded would devote their lives to this cause.

Hildesheimer succeeded in creating the institution that would provide intellectual leadership for Orthodoxy in the Western world. As such, his efforts complemented those of Samson Raphael Hirsch, whose primary focus was on creating the institutions that served the needs of the laity. Interestingly, Hildesheimer and Hirsch came under the influence of the same set of teachers – Bernays and Ettlinger – and both students became champions of Orthodoxy in its confrontation with modernity. Clearly, there was more Ettlinger than Bernays in Hildesheimer, even as there was more Bernays than Ettlinger in Hirsch. Hildesheimer was first and foremost a Talmudist and *posek*, whereas Hirsch was primarily a Jewish thinker, preacher, and writer. While they had much in common, and knew and respected each other well,[164]they differed considerably.[165] Aside from the

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163 See Judith Grunfeld, "Leo Deutschlaender," in Leo Jung, ed., *Sages and Saints* (New York,1987), 297-320..

164 See, for example, Hirsch's reliance on Hildesheimer in halakhic matters in Hirsch, *Shemesh Marpe*, 72, §55. Hildesheimer, on the other hand, openly acknowledged Orthodoxy's "eternal gratitude" to Hirsch for singlehandedly "restoring Orthodoxy in our day." See, e.g., Eliav, *Rabbiner Esriel Hildesheimer Briefe*, German section, p. 119, letter 34, and p. 120, letter 36. Not insignificant is the fact that Hildesheimer delivered a eulogy at Hirsch's funeral. See Eliyahu M. Klugman's biography of Hirsch, appended to Hirsch's *Shemesh Marpe*, 364.

165 For a discussion of the basic issues that separated them,

differences alluded to above, they differed particularly in their attitude toward general culture.[166] Both subscribed to *Torah and derekh erez*, using the term freely and programmatically.[167] In a certain sense, Hirsch seems to have had a broader view of *derekh erez*. For him, it encompassed any and all aspects of culture that advanced or enhanced civilization. As such, they were worthy of pursuit, valuable in and of themselves, while subservient to Torah. For Hildesheimer, *derekh erez* had instrumental value only. *Derekh erez* was important only to the extent that it advanced the cause of Torah. Ironically, Hirsch, despite his broad view, found no place in his curriculum for *Wissenschaft des Judenthums*. Hildesheimer, despite his narrower view, was a staunch advocate of *Wissenschaft des Judenthums*. This parting of the ways between Hirsch and Hildesheimer would be reflected in the institutions they founded and in the communities they influenced. Indeed, some of the very tensions that marked the differences in character between Frankfurt and Berlin are still felt in their successor communities in the United States and Israel.

Despite his serving as rabbi of a congregation, principal of a congregational school, and rector of the

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see Azriel Hildesheimer, "From an Exchange of Letters Between R. Azriel Hildesheimer and R. Samson Raphael Hirsch and His Supporters" (Hebrew) in Yehiel Y. Weinberg and Pinhas Biberfeld, eds., *Yad Shaul* (Tel Aviv, 1953), 233-51, and idem, "An Exchange of Letters Between R. Azriel Hildesheimer and R. Samson Raphael Hirsch on Matters Relating to the Land of Israel" (Hebrew) *Ha-Ma'ayan* 2(1954), 41-52. Cf. Berthold Strauss, *The Rosenbaums of Zell* (London, 1962), 40-41.

166 See, e.g., Eliezer Stern, *The Educational Ideal of Torah 'im Derekh-Erez* (Hebrew) (Ramat Gan, 1987), 89-112..

167 For Hildesheimer's use of the term *Torah 'im derekh erez*, see, e.g., Eliav, *Rabbiner Esriel Hildesheimer Briefe*, German section, p. 118, letter 34, and Hebrew section, p. 58, letter 27.

Rabbinical Seminary, Hildesheimer managed to publish over 150 books and articles during his lifetime.[168] These include his magnum opus, an almost 700-page critical edition of and commentary on *Halakhot Gedolot* based on a Vatican manuscript (Berlin, 1880-90).[169] Two studies in particular demonstrate his mastery of Greek, mathematics, and astronomy: "Die Beschreibung des herodianischen Tempels im Traktate Middoth und bei Flavius Josephus," *Jahresbericht des Rabbiner-Seminars* (Berlin, 1877); and "Die astronomischen Kapitel in Maimuni's Abhandlung uber die Neumondsheiligung," *Jahresbericht des Rabbiner-Seminars* (Berlin, 1881). Several important works published posthumously include: *She'elot u-Teshuvot Rabbi Azriel* (Tel-Aviv, 1969 and 1976), 2 vols.; and *Ḥiddushei Rabbi 'Azriel* (Jerusalem, 1984 and 1992), 2 vols.

Like Hirsch, Hildesheimer lived to a venerable age and saw the fruits of his labor. If the ultimate mark of greatness is the ability to reproduce it in a worthy successor, Hildesheimer was great indeed. Shortly before his death, Hildesheimer designated his disciple in Eisenstadt and colleague in Berlin, R. David Ẓevi Hoffmann, as his successor. Hoffmann would lead the Hildesheimer Rabbinical Seminary into the twentieth century, while serving as the supreme halakhic authority for Orthodox Jewry in Germany until his

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168 See Esriel Hildesheimer, *Rabbi Esriel Hildesheimer: Bibliographie seiner Schriften* (Jerusalem, 1987). The German version is drawn from Azriel Hildesheimer, "Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer: A Bibliography" (Hebrew), "*Alei Sefer* 14(1987), 143-62.

169 Many of Hildesheimer's comments have been incorporated in the Makhon Yerushalayim edition of *Halakhot Gedolot* (Jerusalem, 1992). Neither the Hildesheimer nor the Makhon Yerushalayim edition should be confused with the critical edition prepared by Hildesheimer's grandson Azriel, *Halakhot Gedolot* (Jerusalem, 1971-1987), 3 vols.

death in 1921.[170]

Upon Hildesheimer's death in 1899, the Jewish communal leaders of Berlin turned to Hoffmann for a ruling as to whether it was permissible to bring Hildesheimer's bier into the synagogue so that eulogies could be delivered in the synagogue where he had served as rabbi. Hoffmann ruled as follows:

> Although R. Abraham Danzig railed against the practice of bringing a bier into the synagogue, explaining that it was permitted only for the Gaon of Vilna, who was unique in his generation, there is no question that it is permissible in our case. R. Azriel Hildesheimer was unique in his generation. He was endowed with every good quality: sanctity, holiness, sharpness of mind, and erudition. He studied Torah day and night; sought diligently to observe the commandments and to do good deeds; strove mightily to work on behalf of the poor in the land of Israel and elsewhere; and fought bravely on behalf of our faith against its detractors. All this he did freely without recompense.[171] He never sought honor.

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170 On Hoffmann, see, e.g., the vignettes by Louis Ginzberg, *Students, Scholars and Saints* (Philadelphia, 1928), 252-62; Chaim Tchernowitz, *Massekhet Zikhronot* (New York, 1945), 244-64; Alexander Marx, *Studies in Jewish History and Folklore* (New York, 1944), 369-376; idem, *Essays in Jewish Biography* (Philadelphia, 1947), 185-222; Yeshayah Aviad-Wolfsberg in Leo Jung, ed., *Guardians of our Heritage* (New York, 1958), 363-419; David Ellenson and Richard Jacobs, "Scholarship and Faith: David Hoffman and His Relationship to Wissenschaft des Judenthums," *Modern Judaism* 8:1 (1988), 27-40; and Hans-Joachim Bechtoldt, *Die jüdische Bibelkritik im 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1995), 363-438. A definitive intellectual portrait of Hoffmann remains a scholarly desideratum.

171 Hildesheimer was married to Henriette Hirsch, daughter of a wealthy Halberstadt industrialist. Due to his wife's family, Hildesheimer would remain a man of independent means throughout his life. Thus, in Eisenstadt, he distributed his salary among the poor. In Berlin, he served gratis as rabbi, principal of the congrega-

Quite the contrary, he was genuinely humble. He honored all scholars who came into contact with him as if they had been his teachers. The list of virtues could continue *ad infinitum*. It is appropriate indeed that we honor Torah, Worship, and Good Deeds by having his bier brought into the synagogue.[172]

VIII. Afterword

The approaches to general culture initiated by the *gedolei yisrael* in nineteenth-century Germany, as well as the educational institutions they founded, would resonate far beyond the confines of time and place in which they first appeared.

The twentieth century, for example, not only witnessed a resurgence of interest in the writings of Hirsch and Hildesheimer in Jewish communities throughout the world, but, more importantly, it yielded a small but disproportionately influential group of *gedolei yisrael* whose attitude toward general culture was remarkably open. Indeed, with respect to the interface between traditional Jewish teaching and modern scholarship in a variety of specific disciplines, these *gedolim* moved well beyond the efforts of their nineteenth-century predecessors. Moreover, their influence were hardly confined to a single geographic or cultural area. Such *gedolim* as Rabbis Isaac Jacob Reines (d. 1915), David Hoffmann (d. 1921), Eliyahu Klatzkin (d. 1932), Abraham Isaac ha-Kohen Kook (d. 1935), Isaac Herzog (d. 1959), Ḥayyim Heller (d. 1960), Yeḥiel Yaakov Weinberg (d. 1966), and Joseph B. Soloveitchik (d. 1993) were among the outstanding

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tional school, and rector of the rabbinical seminary. See Hildesheimer, "Toward a Portrait," 89.

172 *She'elot u-Teshuvot Melammed le-Ho'il* (Frankfurt, 1927; reissued: New York, 1954), II, 110, §106.

Talmudists, *posekim*, rabbis, and *rashei yeshiva* of their generation, even as they confronted general culture and its impact on Torah scholarship and – with regard to the land of Israel in particular – on Jewish life.[173]

As a native of Lithuania, a graduate of Mir and Slabodka, and last Rector of the Hildesheimer Rabbinical Seminary in Berlin, R. Yeḥiel Yaakov Weinberg[174] certainly spoke with authority when he contrasted the *Torah and derekh erez* approach in

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173 For their massive contribution to rabbinic literature, see the standard Jewish encyclopedias and the ever- burgeoning bibliographical entries (under their names) in the card (or on-line computer) files at any of the major libraries of Judaica

Regarding their attitudes toward general culture, suffice it to note that five of the eight *gedolim* listed – Rabbis Hoffmann, Herzog, Heller, Weinberg, and Soloveitchik – earned doctorates, respectively, at the universities of Tuebingen, London, Wuerzburg, Giessen, and Berlin. Rabbis Reines, Klatzkin, and Kook, while lacking in formal secular education, read widely in, and were deeply influenced by, the philosophical, scientific, and literary classics of general culture. Regarding Rabbi Reines, see Ge'ulah Bat Yehudah, *Ish ha-Me'orot: Rabbi Yiẓḥak Yaakov Reines* (Jerusalem, 1985). Regarding Rabbi Klatzkin, see below, n. 178. Regarding Rabbi Kook, see, e.g., Benjamin Ish-Shalom, *Rabbi Kook: Between Rationalism and Mysticism* (Hebrew: Tel Aviv, 1990), and idem and Shalom Rosenberg, eds., *The World of Rav Kook's Thought* (New York, 1991).

174 In general, see Marc B. Shapiro, *Between the Yeshiva World and Modern Orthodoxy: The Life and Works of Rabbi Jehiel Jacob Weinberg 1884-1966* (London, 1999). Interestingly, Weinberg was, for a while, an academician by profession. He was a member of the faculty at the University of Giessen. A close associate of the Christian Orientalist and Masoretic scholar, Paul Kahle (d. 1965), Weinberg agreed to collaborate with him on a series of scholarly studies relating to *genizah* fragments of the Mishnah. See Paul Kahle and Jehiel. J. Weinberg, "The Mishnah Text in Babylonia," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 10(1935), 185-222. Although Weinberg's name appears as coauthor, the article was written entirely by Kahle. Weinberg's planned contribution was announced in the article, but (not surprisingly) did not appear in subsequent issues of the *Hebrew Union College Annual*, a scholarly periodical sponsored by the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati.

Germany with the *Torah only* approach in Lithuania:

> Rabbinic leaders in [nineteenth-century] Germany were experts in the field of Jewish education. That is why they succeeded in raising whole generations of Jews who were at once pious and secularly educated. No such success can be ascribed to the rabbinic leaders of Lithuania and Poland. They did not know how to attune Jewish education to their time and circumstance.[175]

In a letter written in 1995, Weinberg thanked Dayyan Isidor Grunfeld for translating Hirsch into English. Weinberg added:

> I am persuaded, as you are, that in our day the only antidote to assimilation and to alienation from Judaism is the spread of the *Torah and derekh erez* approach of the *gedolim* of Germany. Much to my dismay, in certain circles... opposition to this approach has increased. It is essential, therefore, that we increase our efforts on behalf of *Torah and derekh erez*. There is no better means of doing so than the dissemination of the writings of the Gaon Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch.[176]

Rabbi Weinberg was not the first East European *gadol* who found Jewish education in Eastern Europe wanting, when compared to the new approaches of the *gedolim* in Germany. In a scathing indictment of a group of rabbis in Jerusalem who, at the end of the nineteenth century, tried to impose East European style educational standards on West European Jews who immigrated to the land of Israel, R. David Friedman (d. 1917) of Karlin, a leading East European *posek*, wrote as

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175 See above, p. 96, n. 135.

176 See M. Shapiro, "Letters From Rabbi Y.Y. Weinberg" (Hebrew), *Ha-Ma'ayan* 32:4 (1992), 19.

follows:

> Those East European rabbis in the diaspora who banned the study of languages and secular study, never issued a blanket ban, to be applied under any and all circumstances. They kept secular study at a distance so long as circumstances warranted it. Even in this guarded approach, they were not successful, for many students could not cope with the ban and were led astray when exposed clandestinely to secular study. Far more successful were the West European rabbis, leaders of the Orthodox Jewish community, who were zealots for the Lord and His Torah. They established educational institutions that provided Torah study on the one hand, and secular study on the other.[177]

Still other East European *gedolim*, exposed to Western culture and enamored by the response of the West European *gedolim*, saw – perhaps more profoundly than others – that in the modern world both approaches, *Torah and derekh erez* and *Torah only*, were indispensable. The issue was no longer one of cultural spheres of influence. Wherever Jews resided in significant numbers both approaches would be necessary if Judaism was to thrive. Thus, R. Eliyahu Klatzkin,[178] a former Chief Rabbi of Lublin who settled

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177 See his *'Emek Berakhah* (Jerusalem, 1882), 14b. Cf. my discussion "R. David Friedman of Karlin: The Ban on Secular Study in Jerusalem," in *Tradition* 26:4 (1992), 102-5.

178 Rabbi Klatzkin, whose formative years were spent in the talmudic academies of Shklov and Eishishok, developed a profound interest in medicine, pharmacology, chemistry, mathematics, history, and geography. He was a regular subscriber to the *Medizinische Wochenschrift* and an avid reader of the *London Times*. He was conversant in Greek, Latin, German, French, English, Russian, and Polish. Among his favorite masters of belles lettres were Victor Hugo, Guy de Maupassant, and Leo Tolstoy. One observer offered the following vivid description of Klatzkin's insatiable passion for

in Jerusalem, where he occasionally joined together on broadsides with members of the rabbinic court of the *'edah ha-ḥaredit,* wrote as follows:

> Those who are exposed to danger in their youth, drinking spring water tinged with arsenic, find themselves invigorated and strengthened in adulthood. Similarly, those inoculated with infectious microbes carrying diphtheria, rabies, and the like, develop a resistance to the disease and suffer no deleterious effects. It is essential, however, that the inoculations be administered in proper dosage and be carefully monitored. Now Maimonides has already explained that disease of the soul is comparable to disease of the body. When secular education is carefully monitored and properly applied, it is possible not only to

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knowledge:

> [His] wide knowledge of geography was incredible. I doubt if there was anyone better acquainted with the subject even among the specialists in the field. No point on the globe was unfamiliar to him. Even small, remote settlements, wilderness, streams, brooks, swamps, hills, and valleys were an open book to him with their details of boundaries, climate, lines of communication and population. The maps in general use were inadequate for him and he used to carp at their slightest inaccuracy. He tried as far as he was able to obtain the scientific and especially military maps which were issued by cartographic societies. His maps covered every region and province, every city and town, and he would spread them on the floor, examining them until he was familiar with every road in every land, including all auto highways and the streets of every large city. He was conversant with most of the railroads in the world, their stations and schedules, and could recite all the timetables in effect in Russia, Germany, France and England.

See "My Father, Rabbi Eliyahu Klatzkin" (Hebrew), in Jacob Klatzkin, *Ketavim* (Tel Aviv, 1953), 304-20. An abridged English translation of this essay is available in Leo Jung, ed., *Jewish Leaders* (Jerusalem, 1964),319-41.

ward off dangers, but to invigorate one's self and gain strength. Students properly educated are able to neutralize and overcome those who would deprecate the Torah and the commandments, and who would entice them away from Jewish teaching and practice. Due to their solid education, they stand firm in their religious views, despite any peregrinations or other unforeseen circumstances that may overtake them. The experience of our brethren – observers of the Torah and the commandments – in Frankfurt is decisive. Due to the Torah oriented educational institutions they established, they were able to win over many new adherents to the cause of God and His Torah. Yet, aside from those educational institutions, we must also support another type of Jewish educational institution, in which students will devote almost all their time to Torah study alone. These institutions will help train a cadre of experts in Talmud and Jewish law who will fathom the depths of Jewish teaching and wage war on behalf of the Torah, while following in the footsteps of the *geonim* and rabbis of the past. [179]

Interestingly, the late Rabbi Shimon Schwab (d. 1995), a prominent twentieth century Torah sage who was raised in Western Europe but studied in the great East European *yeshivot* prior to World War II, arrived at a conclusion strikingly similar to that of R. Eliyahu Klatzkin.

The immediate context of Rabbi Schwab's remarks was the appearance in print, in 1963, of a scathing critique of *Torah and derekh erez* by Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler (d. 1953), leading member of the Musar movement, *mashgiaḥ* of the Ponoviez yeshiva in Bnei

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179 *Devar Halakhah* (Lublin, 1921), 57. Cf. his *Even Pinnah* (Jerusalem, 1930), introduction.

Brak, and profound thinker.[180] Labeling *Torah and derekh erez* "the Frankfurt approach," Rabbi Dessler conceded that very few graduates of the *Torah and derekh erez* educational institutions defected from traditional Judaism, and that was certainly a strength. But, argued Rabbi Dessler, precisely because secular study was incorporated into the curriculum, the Frankfurt approach was doomed to failure. In effect, it produced no *gedolei yisrael* and precious few rabbinic scholars (*lomedim*) of note. In contrast, the East European *yeshivot* had only one educational goal: the production of *gedolei yisrael*. Secular study was banned from the yeshiva curriculum because nothing short of total immersion in Torah study would produce *gedolei yisrael*. The *gedolim* in Eastern Europe were well aware that heavy casualties would result from this single-minded approach to Jewish education. But that was a price they were prepared to pay in order to produce *gedolei yisrael*.

Rabbi Schwab responded, in part, as follows:

> The rabbis of the previous generation, indeed the ancestors of Rabbi Dessler who were the founders of the Musar movement, R. Israel Salanter and his disciple R. Simhah Zissel,[181] addressed this issue.

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180 The critique, which first appeared in the periodical *Ha-Ma'ayan* 4:1 (Tishre, 1963), 61-64, is included in Rabbi Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler, *Mikhtav me-Eliyahu* (Jerusalem, 1963),III, 355-60. Regarding Rabbi Dessler, see Lion Carmell, "Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler," in Leo Jung, ed., *Guardians of Our Heritage* (New York, 1958), 675-99; and Yonoson Rosenblum, *Rav Dessler* (Brooklyn, 2000). See also Rabbi Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler, *Ḥiddushei ha-Gaon Rabbi Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler 'al Shas* (Jerusalem, 1992).

181 R. Simhah Zissel Broida (d. 1897), as indicated by Rabbi Schwab, was a disciple of R. Israel Salanter and a pillar of the Musar movement in Lithuania and Russia. He founded Torah institutions in Kelm (in Lithuania) and Grobin (in Latvia) that advanced the educational program of the movement. At those institutions, some three hours per day were devoted to secular study, including

I have heard that their view on these matters came very close to that of R. Samson Raphael Hirsch, but that they were outnumbered and opposed by the majority of East European rabbis at the time. It seems to me that this was always the case historically. The majority of rabbis refused to engage in secular study, lest they be ensnared by it. On the other hand, in every generation a minority of Torah sages engaged in secular study, using it as a handmaiden to serve the cause of Torah. That minority pursued its own path and sanctified God's name throughout the universe. . .

Regarding Germany, the truth is that some 200 years prior to Mendelssohn, great *gedolim*, by and large, were no longer being produced there. Already then, the vast majority of rabbis in Germany and Western Europe were imported from Poland, Lithuania, and Russia. Certainly when Mendelssohn's disciples began to spread their heretical teaching throughout Germany, there were few *geonim* born and raised in Germany. At that time, virtually all the rabbis in Germany and Holland were natives of Lithuania, Poland, and other Eastern countries. Surely in those days none of our ancestors engaged in secular study; nevertheless, they did not produce *geonim* in Torah. Who knows why one country produces Torah sages over several generations, then ceases to do so, and another country produces them instead? In the period following Mendelssohn, the only great *geonim* born in

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instruction in Russian language, history, arithmetic, and geography. In general, see Dov Katz, *Tenu'at ha-Musar* (Tel Aviv, 1954), II, 26-219; Eliezer Ebner, "Simha Zissel Broida (Ziff)," in Leo Jung, ed., *Guardians of Our Heritage*, 319-335; and Israel Isidor Elyashev, "A Chapter in the History of the Musar Movement" (Hebrew), in Immanuel Etkes, ed., *Mosad ha-Yeshivayh be-Shelhi Yemei ha-Beynayim u-ve-'Et ha-Ḥadashah* (Jerusalem, 1989), 204-32.

Germany were the Ḥatam Sofer, R. Nathan Adler,[182] and R. Wolf Hamburger.[183] Shortly afterwards there was R. Jacob Ettlinger, author of *'Arukh la-Ner* – but he was learned in secular study, and attended the University of Wuerzburg for one year together with his colleague, the gaon R. Mendel Kargau,[184] author of *Giddulei Taharah*. So too Ḥakham Bernays, the teacher of R. Samson Raphael Hirsch, who would follow in Bernays' footsteps. The upshot of all this is that the "Frankfurt approach" alone cannot be blamed for the lack of production of Torah sages in Germany. . .

Who knows! It may well be that both approaches, *Torah and derekh erez* and *Torah only*, are true, both reflecting the essence of Torah. What is crucial is that one's intent be for the sake of Heaven, always according the Torah primary status, and making secular study secondary. No rabbinic court ever banned secular study. Indeed, the Torah scholars of the various generations never ruled officially in favor of the one approach over the other. Everyone is free to select whichever approach finds favor in his eyes. Let him consult his teachers and follow in the footsteps of his forefathers. The followers of the one approach must respect the followers of the other approach.

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182 R. Nathan Adler (d. 1800), distinguished talmudist and kabbalist, was a teacher of the Ḥatam Sofer. In general, see Josef Unna, "Nathan Hacohen Adler," in Leo Jung, ed., *Guardians of Our Heritage*, 167-85.

183 R. Wolf Hamburger (d. 1850), prolific author of rabbinic responsa and novellae, was among the last great *roshei yeshiva* in Germany. He headed the yeshiva in Fuerth, where R. Seligmann Baer Bamberger (see n. 56) was among his many disciples.

184 R. Mendel Kargau (d. 1842; see above p. 33) was a disciple of Rabbis Ezekiel Landau, Nathan Adler, and Pinḥas Horowitz. He too taught at the yeshiva in Fuerth, and was a close associate of R. Wolf Hamburger.

> They may not cast aspersions on the approach they reject. To the contrary, they must provide support for each other. . .
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> Those who wish to dedicate their lives to the study of Torah alone, come under the category of "the tribe of Levi" as described by Maimonides. But I worry about all the tribes of Israel . . . the vast majority of Jews cannot live with a ban on secular study. We need to provide institutions that service the needs of the majority of Jews, wherever they may be, even as we view it a great *mizvah* to support the minority who study Torah only. And so I say, both approaches are well-grounded in the sources. Both are necessary ingredients for the continued existence of the Jewish people in our time. [185]

When a Torah sage speaks, the wise listen attentively. How much more so when two Torah sages, nurtured at opposite ends of the European cultural spectrum, arrive at the same conclusion!

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185 For the full text of Rabbi Schwab's response, see "A Letter Regarding the Frankfurt Approach" (Hebrew), *Ha-Ma'ayan* 6:4(1966), 4-7. Cf. Shnayer Z. Leiman, "R. Shimon Schwab: A Letter Regarding the "Frankfurt" Approach," *Tradition* 31:3(1997), 71-77. For another response to Rabbi Dessler's critique of the "Frankfurt approach," see William Z. Low, "Some Remarks on a Letter of Rabbi E. E. Dessler," in H. Chaim Schimmel and Aryeh Carmell, eds., *Encounter: Essays on Torah and Modern Life* (Jerusalem, 1989), 204-18.